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Investigating Vocabulary Acquisition Challenges for Primary School Pupils: the Case Study of 3rd Year Pupils at Khelif Mohamed Primary School in Biskra

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Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree in Sciences of the Language

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Declaration

I, **Hanane Chenna** do hereby declare that this work is the product of my own effort, and has neither submitted nor published to any institution or University for any degree before.

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Dedication

First, I would like to thank **Allah** for blessing me during my journey of 18 year of studies and for helping me to finish it successfully.

I dedicate this work to the most precious people to my heart my beloved **parents** and my grandmother "**Dahouia**", thank you for the care, love, prayers and encouragement.

To my sisters "**Imene**", "**Ikram**" and my best friends "**Maissa**", "**Amira**" for their continuous support all along this work.

I also dedicate it to the soul of my dear brother "**Okba**" may blessing of Allah be upon him.

I am grateful to anyone who contributed in a way or another to the fulfilment of this dissertation.

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Abstract

Teaching vocabulary is very important because learning a new language necessitates being conversant in its vocabulary, and it is the main emphasis of the language curriculum in primary schools for developing children's language acquisition. However, it definitely creates many difficulties for pupils that make it hard for them to learn the language successfully. This study aims to investigate the difficulties that faced by pupils when acquiring vocabulary and the effective strategies to implement to address these difficulties. To collect data we used a descriptive qualitative research approach depending on three data collection tools; a questionnaire for five primary school teachers, a classroom observation and an interview with a primary school teacher. The study show that the difficulties faced by students are: misunderstanding, misspelling, confusing similar words, mispronunciation and memorization. These difficulties are a result of the lack of classroom materials, the quantity of words that pupils have to learn per session is extremely large, overcrowded classrooms the lack of motivating environment. The study shows that integrating visual aids such as flashcards and using educational songs and games improve pupil's engagement, motivation and English vocabulary learning.

Key words: challenges, pupils, teaching vocabulary

List of abbreviations and acronyms

TOEFL: Test of English as a foreign language

IELTS: International English Language Testing System

EFL: English as foreign language

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General introduction

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Introduction

During the past decades, the English language has become an international language that is a lingua franca. It has become dominant in many different fields such as business, science, technology, and medicine, etc. With the global rise of its importance in these different domains, its significance as a second language has grown. As a result, various non-speaking English countries started assigning English as a second or sometimes third language in schools, particularly primary schools. Algeria serves as a prime example for that. It officially issued a policy to teach English in primary schools starting from third year level from the academic year 2022/2023.

Many studies confirm that teaching English to young children is an opportunity to learn it proficiently because children's minds are more receptive to learning new vocabulary. Since vocabulary is important in language acquisition, it is difficult to teach, especially in primary schools to young learners. Thus, addressing children's difficulty in learning English vocabulary requires understanding their needs at this level and proposing effective plans and strategies that can minimize these difficulties and develop teaching and learning experiences.

1. Statement of the Problem

After the government's decision to make English a second language alongside French, and include it in primary schools starting from the third year. This transition will face many difficulties because learning a second language is not an easy task for pupils. One of the major difficulties is poor vocabulary because mastering any language is related to how many words a learner ought to know. Vocabulary is important in developing children's language acquisition.

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Therefore, addressing the difficulties that young pupils face in learning vocabulary is important for the success of the learning and teaching process. This study aims to help students and teachers to identify the difficulties that primary school pupils face when learning vocabulary and suggest effective strategies to reduce them.

2. Aims of the study

- Identify the common problems that primary school pupils face in learning and acquiring vocabulary.
- Suggest some effective methods to enhance vocabulary learning and teaching.

3. Research Questions

- What are the difficulties that pupils encounter when acquiring vocabulary?
- What strategies to implement to overcome these difficulties effectively?

4. Methodology

This study relies on the qualitative method for data collection and analysis. Because qualitative data is used to gain insights into people's feelings and thoughts and understanding of real life problems. For data collection tools, we relied on classroom observation, an interview and questionnaire.

5. Research Design

This study seeks to shed light on the challenges and the major difficulties that face primary school pupils when learning vocabulary. The aim of doing this is to enhance vocabulary acquisition methodologies and learners' competence in acquiring English.

6. Data Collection Tools

To address the research questions, various tools are used to collect data and information. The first method is classroom observation, in which the researcher visits and

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observes a third year class in primary school. Additionally, an interview was conducted with an English teacher in a primary school seek more information about the vocabulary learning process. Finally, a questionnaire answered by primary school teachers regarding their experiences teaching language to young learners and the difficulties they encounter.

7. Population and Sample

The current study covers third-grade primary learners at Khelif Mohamed Primary School in Biskra during the 2023/2024 academic year. We picked the sample of students for the classroom observation and teachers for the questionnaire and interview randomly.

Chapter one:

The current status of the English language in Algeria

Section One:

The English Language in the Algerian Educational System

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Introduction

Algeria is a multicultural and multilingual-speaking country where the native languages are Arabic and Berber with its different dialects. Most Algerians can also speak French, the colonial language, with which the country has a long history with. Seeing how English has become a large universal force, Algerian policy makers have decided to give it a more impactful role among citizens in general and students in particular. This chapter explores the current status of English in Algeria. Furthermore, it examines the policy of teaching English in primary schools and the language development of early language learners and characteristics of young language learners. Additionally, the chapter discusses the syllabus and structure of the textbook of the English class in primary schools.

8. The current status of the English language in Algeria

Mapping the linguistic landscape of Algeria, it is evident that the country exemplifies “linguistic plurality”. Classical Arabic serves as the national language in media, while Algerian Colloquial Arabic and Berber are used in everyday informal conversations. Due to the long history with the colonial French. France has exerted the French language as the dominant language in education, culture, administration, and other important domains throughout the 138 years of occupation. French is employed as a second language or a primary foreign language. It is the first foreign language that is taught to children from an early age and is what citizens use in their daily communication. Conversely, English is considered a foreign language or a second foreign language, and it is not used socially like

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English. While other countries have accepted English as a lingua franca, Algeria, for the longest time, has had different views on integrating English in the sociolinguistic scape.

Despite this, English asserts itself as an international language that has been widely used for various purposes over the years, gradually integrating into the Algerian sociocultural sphere. English has gained popularity in recent years, especially among the young generations. Algerian youth seems to consume and be more interested in English-speaking media and entertainment. As the importance of English grows in different forms and contexts, its significance is increasingly recognized. Consequently, English is now taught in Algerian middle schools, secondary schools, most universities, and recently in primary schools.

Furthermore, in July 2023, Kamel Baddari, the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, issued a decision to use English as the instruction language in universities starting the coming academic year 2023/2024. The ministry informed university directors that they needed to organise meetings and form pedagogical teams before the summer vacation to prepare for the adoption of English as the new language of instruction replacing French. As a part of implementing the new decision, it also provided programs and formations for teachers and PhD students to learn English (Elchorouk, 2023).

The national curriculum emphasizes that proficiency in English is a core competency for students, enabling them to participate in the global economy and function effectively in the 21st-century social and cultural environment as responsible citizens. The curriculum mandates that English as a foreign language (EFL) students should be taught four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, in an integrated manner to enhance their overall proficiency (Djebbari, Djebbari, 43).

9. The Policy of Teaching English in Primary Schools

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On September 21, 2022, third year students in primary schools have returned to encounter a significant change in their school program, alongside to French, they are now required to study English too at the age of nine. This has been announced two months prior by our President Abdelmajid Tebboune on July 2022; he has declared that English will be part of the primary school's program. Starting with the 2022/2023 school year.

For many Algerians, this announcement was not surprising, the idea of introducing English has been proposed multiple times as a solution to improve the performance of Algerian universities on international rankings and as a substitute for French, referred to as "an extinct language." This move is also seen as a way to counter French influence, especially when French leaders criticize Algerian's domestic policies, and to replace the language of the former colonizer (Boukhlef, 2022).

10. Language development of early language learners

Sharmila Bhanu Tirukovela defines language development as "the process of learning to use language. It involves the understanding and use of words, phrases, and sentences in order to communicate with others"(Tirukovela). Language Development is not strictly about speaking, but it also includes listening, writing, reading, spelling, and other skills (Tirukovela).

Language development is important of a child's cognitive, social, and literacy development. It improves the child's ability to communicate and express themselves. It also helps improve their ability to learn process information, think critically, and solve problems. It assists kids in making sense of their surroundings and developing relationships and social skills, as well as boosting their self-esteem and confidence (Avashni, 2021).

There are four primary components for language development which can be summed up in: phonetics and phonology which is about learning to pronounce speech sounds and

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comprehending the rules that govern the production of these sounds, semantics which is learning words and how they are assigned certain meanings to them, syntax and morphology which is understanding the rules of word arrangement in a sentence, and lastly pragmatics which is understanding the social rules surrounding language including non-verbal language like gestures and facial expressions (Sword, 2021).

Language development at an early stage is an essential key to a child's reading and writing skills. Parents and caregivers should give children speaking and listening opportunities. Since children learn best by observing and copying adult behaviour, it is important to offer them the opportunity to practice and be a part of everyday conversation.

Ninuk Indrayani states that the parents are responsible for the success of their children's language development. "Language development starts from the first cry until a child is able to speak a word" (Indrayani, 280). Adults should encourage kids to babble and coo to later pronounce full words, interact with them in clear simple language, use signs, gestures, and facial expressions, repeat what the children say, listen to them, and allow them the time to respond (Avashni, 2021). Not encouraging language development early on can lead to delayed language development, which can be associated with learning disabilities, academic and social difficulties, and behavioural problems (Hope).

11. Characteristics of Young Learners

Edward Povey writes that it is important to recognise that young learners differ from older children or adults in how they learn new languages. Young learners learn better through play, unlike adults who are generally comfortable with traditional abstract learning. Additionally, Young learners have short attention spans and are more prone to get bored and lose interest in the learning material. It is necessary for teachers to present their material in an interesting and engaging way that ensures that their learners do not get distracted. Teachers

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can use coloured and fun photos and posters. Moreover, Povey remarks that “incorporating different kinds of audio-visual aids such as playing songs, TV or movie clips, or YouTube videos can help keep children’s attention and interest” (Povey).

Furthermore, young learners are energetic and physically active, they find it difficult to sit still for long periods. Hence why teachers should incorporate activities and plays that demand physical energy. Activities that include making crafts, drawing or painting, problem-solving such as riddles, and playing games can be helpful. In addition, children are spontaneous and are not afraid of participating or being judged (Povey).

They are also naturally curious and receptive to new ideas. Teachers should present them with interesting material that can arouse their curiosity and encourage them to pay attention. Discussing unfamiliar topics, new concepts, and different cultures than their own can be interesting for children to learn. As much as they are curious, they are also imaginative. Activities that tickle their imagination are a source of enjoyment for them. Learners can use their creativity to retell a story or reenact plays and stories. Teachers should incorporate children’s stories, talking animals, and fantasy characters like wizards, monsters, and heroes in their teaching methods (Povey).

Moreover, young learners are egocentric and can relate more to new ideas and concepts when they are associated with themselves. Teachers should allow learners to talk about themselves and their lives as a part of the learning experience. They are more likely to engage with the material when they can personalise it and connect to it. In addition, children tend to learn through social interactions and imitation. Teachers should provide their learners with opportunities where they can interact and do activities together. “Teachers should have a balance of activities that allow students to have a various types of interaction, such as student-student in pairs, students-students in groups, teacher-student one-on-one, and teacher-

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students as a whole class” (Povey). As important as it is for learners to work alone, it is important for them to have different types of interaction with their peers and teacher.

4.1 How Young Learners Learn

Language acquisition starts with single sounds, then it turns into more complex combinations of common and refined sounds to form words, and finally, children become familiar with these words, increasingly fluent, and their vocabulary expands (Sword, 2021). As children grow, their language develops. Berger writes that “language skills begin to develop as babies communicate with noises and gestures and then practice babbling” (Berger, 1969). At this stage, between 3 to 12 months, children are active listeners and observers. They learn to detect sounds and noises to which they react to by cooing, smiling, babbling, and gesturing. They can utter two syllable words such as “mama” and “baba”.

Between 12 and 18 months, children can understand more words even if they are unable to pronounce them. They understand simple instructions such as “sit down”, “come here”, “eat”. They use noun words to indicate how they are feeling or what they want to do, for example, they can use “milk” to express that they are hungry and want to eat, or “dog” to indicate that they want to play with their dog toy (Sword, 2021). Children in this stage can identify family members and familiar objects by name or by pointing at the person or object (Al-Harbi, 2020).

By age two, the children are able to make most of the consonants. They use what is known as “a rudimentary sentence, or rather a word series without grammar” (Al-Harni, 2020) For example, they may say “I long hair”. They combine words in telegraphic speech and cannot produce full grammatically correct sentences. As they grow older, they start speaking more clearly, using present, past, and future tenses, and their conversational skills improve. By age four, they start using longer and more complex sentences, telling stories and

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jokes, and following requests (Sword, 2020). Learners between the ages of eight and ten are able to form arguments and concepts, they can tell the difference between reality and fiction, they can decide what helps them the most to learn and know how to ask questions (Al-Harni, 2020).

12. Teaching English in Primary School

Teaching English in primary schools is crucial due to the unique characteristics of young learners, such as being egocentric, imaginative, active, easily bored and have difficulties in distinguishing between concrete and abstract concepts. They also have low concentration levels, prefer individual tasks, and enjoy learning new things. The primary purposes of teaching English are interaction and socialisation. Interaction helps children acquire and use information, develop physical skills like reading and writing. Socialisation helps children recognize and engage with a boarder society and work with their peers.

Learning English in primary schools can enhance the students' awareness of their first language. For example, Algerian students with good English skills might lack proficiency in Arabic. Therefore, a strong foundation in their native language is essential before learning English. Additionally, learning English can increase global awareness and intercultural competencies, helping students understand and respect cultural differences and fostering a positive, respectful, and tolerant attitude (Cahyati, Madya, 396-397).

5.1. The Curriculum Framework

The curriculum framework is a comprehensive guide for implementing educational principles and program focuses from primary school through secondary school. It aligns with the vision, mission, and goals of the educational program, providing strategies and teaching approaches that meet the educational standards. The framework outlines core concepts, teaching methods, and assessment strategies, and is based on theoretical foundations. The

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curriculum is viewed through three stages: desired results, assessment evidence and learning plans, all emphasizing a constructivist-humanistic and sociological approach, with the students as the central figure in the learning process. (English Curriculum, 2022)

Once a curriculum framework is established, other important documents, such as subject or learning area syllabuses and textbooks, can be developed. This framework requires practical principles and criteria for selecting and organizing content, interacting with students, organizing the classroom, and choosing teaching materials. The fundamental assumptions of a curriculum framework must be internally consistent, clearly articulated, and acceptable to all stakeholders. (Singh, 2005)

5.2. The Teacher's Professional Development

Teachers play a very important role in the learning process, therefore they must possess certain talents and meet certain requirements to be able to plan and organize the lesson and use effective learning strategies. A successful educator possesses a range of essential skills and abilities. These include the ability to recognize words and cues that indicate a student's ability to comprehend or the lack of it, as well as the skill to build friendly and familiar relationships, fostering a relaxed and stress-free learning environment. Effective management of discussions with learners, the capacity to accommodate individual differences, and valuing each student's behaviour are also crucial (Zaytoun, 2004).

Additionally, diagnosing and addressing learning challenges, expressing oneself clearly, articulating ideas, and listening carefully are vital skills. The ability to ask questions, provide thinking time, and consider postponing responses, along with conducting continuous research to stay informed and updated further enhance an educator's effectiveness. Utilizing audio-visual aids effectively, controlling the behaviour, emotions, and enthusiasm of learners, and

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managing and organizing work in large or small groups are also key components of a successful teaching strategy (Zaytoun, 2004).

5.3 The Classroom Environment

Alongside the teacher's development, preparing a proper educational environment is also necessary for both the teacher and the students. That includes providing psychological and social help, using the best teaching methods and tools, and providing the necessary equipment for the classroom.

To achieve this, the Ministry of National Education has aimed to equip new English teachers with the necessary requirements and competencies for the classroom. This includes managing order and discipline, providing appropriate educational experiences, observing students, monitoring their progress, and evaluating them. Additionally, teachers are trained to motivate students to learn more, be creative, and be efficient while taking into account their psychological and social needs during the learning process. Teachers are also prepared to address boredom and restlessness, consider individual differences in learning abilities, manage time effectively, and organize classroom interactions to achieve educational goals (Jawzah, 2024).

Conclusion

The English language has proven its immense impact in the different domains from economy to education to science and technology to communication all over the world. It was a crucial and effective decision for the Algerian decision-makers to give English a more important role in administrative and educative spaces. This chapter explains the status of the English language in Algerian society and schools. It shows how the English language is now a part of the primary schools' curriculum when it was previously only taught in middle and high schools along universities. The chapter also examines the characteristics of young

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learners and their language development. In addition, it covers the environment, syllabus, and curriculum appropriate for early language learners as well as the syllabus and structure of the primary school textbooks. In conclusion, considering the power the English language holds universally, it is essential for Algerian children to learn it from such an early age.

Section two:

**Vocabulary teaching and learning at
primary school**

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Introduction

Vocabulary is the main emphasis of the language curriculum in primary schools when it comes to first-time language learners. Since it is widely accepted that teaching vocabulary should begin with a methodical and consistent foundation, many academics and educators have recently turned their attention to this subject and have realized how crucial vocabulary learning is. This chapter's goal is to give readers a thorough grasp of the fundamental ideas that underpin vocabulary acquisition and learning in the context of primary school education. Additionally, several efficient techniques and approaches for improving vocabulary that help expand the vocabulary banks of language learners who are not native speakers will be tackled. Then, the light will be shed on the major elements of vocabulary as well as the procedures involved in teaching it.

13. Definition of vocabulary

Learning a new language necessitates being conversant in its vocabulary. Researchers and academics have examined vocabulary from a variety of angles to emphasize its complexity. According to the definitions of some experts, vocabulary can mean different things. For example, Ur (1996) defined vocabulary as the total number of words that a person learns in a foreign language class. Hornby (2006) defined vocabulary as the collection of words that a person knows and uses in a language. Richards and Rodgers (1986, p. 255) state that "vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how learners speak, listen, read and write" referring that Learners struggle to reach their full potential without an extensive vocabulary. "Knowing what a word means knowing how frequently it occurs, the company it keeps, its suitability in different circumstances, its syntactic behaviour, its underlying form and derivations, its word associations, and its semantic features" is defined as "being aware of a word" by Nation and Newton (1996)

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From the definitions that were above stated, we may define vocabulary as the collection of words that a person knows and can use in a specific language. It encompasses both the vocabulary one is familiar with and the words they use when speaking or writing. We also conclude that vocabulary development is a crucial component of learning a foreign language, and that in addition to vocal communication skills, students must possess a large vocabulary in order to be successful in their language studies.

14. The importance of vocabulary

For a number of reasons, vocabulary is essential to learning a foreign language; in fact, it is thought to be the fundamental component of all languages.

The importance of learning vocabulary in any language has been highlighted by Laufer (1998) who states that "vocabulary correlates with holistic assessments of writing and general proficiency, and is the best single predictor of reading comprehension." Additionally, Pickett (1978) said, "This brings me to the subject of learning vocabulary, which seems to me to be the key to any language." I don't mind pronouncing words incorrectly or making grammatical errors, but I have to learn words eventually.

English vocabulary is very important for both spoken and written communication. According to Wilkins (1972), "without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed," a number of studies indicate that vocabulary is a crucial skill that can be learned by reading and listening. As a result, increasing language exercise is necessary for learners to expand their vocabulary and acquire new terms.

Tadjouri (2017) claims that because of their limited vocabulary, pupils find it challenging to express their thoughts and opinions in a foreign language. Students think they won't be able to express their ideas and reflections in the target language if they don't have a large vocabulary. This demonstrates that the main goal of language learning should be to teach

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vocabulary. Words are the essential building blocks of language, and it is the medium through which all learning takes place.

However, as Qian (1998) noted, "people who perform better on a spelling quiz likely see a greater amount of the words in messages they read than people who score lower do," pupils with a strong vocabulary find it easy to perform in the target language. A person with a bigger vocabulary can speak and even think more clearly when using the language, claim Stahl and Nagy (2006:5). This suggests that in order for the students to go on to the next level, their vocabulary mastery needs to be reinforced.

In order to effectively communicate in the target language, vocabulary is seen as a bridge between the teacher and his students. It is crucial for students to grasp that expanding vocabulary necessitates continuously learning new terms and their definitions in order to be fully prepared for studying the English language.

15. Types of vocabulary

Understanding vocabulary also entails being able to distinguish between its various forms. There are two types of vocabulary, according to Harmer (1991): productive vocabulary, also known as active vocabulary, and receptive vocabulary, also known as passive. It is important for teachers to distinguish between the two types of vocabulary and make their decisions based on the needs and surroundings of their students. These two categories of words are essential to your capacity to speak clearly and articulately in every circumstance.

3-1 Productive vocabulary

A productive vocabulary is one that you can actively employ when writing or speaking. These are the terms that you can quickly and effortlessly remember and use in your speech. "Wanting to express a meaning through speaking or writing and retrieving and producing the

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appropriate spoken or written word form" is what Nation (2001) defined as productive vocabulary.

Building productive vocabulary requires learning unfamiliar words, performing their usage in statements, and actively employing them in conversations and writing. It is proposed that learners' receptive vocabulary is bigger and more significant than their productive vocabulary. In the words of Nation and Webb (2011), "productive vocabulary knowledge is more important for language users than receptive vocabulary knowledge because it is the productive knowledge that allows them to communicate effectively".

Learning words necessitates active involvement with the language and the words themselves, as noted by Nation (2011). Because many words may become active if a student is exposed to them enough, as Haixia (2015) noted, learners will get more comfortable using new terms whether speaking or writing.

Productive vocabulary is essentially the words that a person may create and use in communication. It is a dynamic aspect of language acquisition that enables students to communicate orally.

3-2 Receptive vocabulary

Conversely, words that you can read or hear in English are often referred to as belonging to your Receptive vocabulary. "Perceiving the form of a word while listening or reading and retrieving its meaning" is how Nation (2001) defines receptive vocabulary.

Melka (1997) defined passive or receptive vocabulary as words that learners are able to identify and understand without having to generate. These are terms that you might not always use in your own writing or speech, but that you might be able to identify and understand when they appear in written texts or spoken conversations.

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For the purpose of language acquisition and interpretation, it is essential to develop a broad receptive vocabulary. To do this, expose oneself to a variety of English language resources, including books, articles, and "Good receptive skills often require the reader or the listener to actively anticipate the words that will occur," according to Milton (2009).

Nation (2001) provides a table to distinguish between receptive vocabulary (R) and the productive vocabulary (P):

Spoken	R what does the word look like ?
	P How is the word pronounced ?
Written	R What does the word look like?
	P How is the word written and spelled
Word part	R What parts are recognisable in this word
	P What word parts are needed to express the meaning ?
Form and meaning	R What meaning does this word form signal ?
	P What word form can be used to express this meaning ?
Concept and 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 ?
Grammatical functions	R In what patterns does the word occur?
	P In what pattern must we use this word ?
Collocations	R What words or types of words occur with this one?
	P What words or types of word must we use with this one?
Constraints 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?

Table 1: nation's summary of distinguishing between receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary

To sum up, productive and receptive vocabulary are both very important component to learn when you want to speak English well. If you want to get better at English, you need to know the difference between these two kinds of words and practice using them more.

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16. Aspects of vocabulary

Meaning, form, and usage are the three primary components of vocabulary comprehension. A word's definition or the idea it stands for are considered its meanings. The word's structure and sound, including its spelling and pronunciation, are related to its form. Finally, the way a word is used takes into account its acceptable usage and grammatical purpose as well as how it is applied in various settings. "The words are not isolated systems and levels," claims Nation (2001). This means that there are several levels of knowledge and numerous things to know about every one term.

4-1 Meaning

Knowing a word is "understanding how frequently it occurs, the company it keeps, its appropriateness in different situations, its syntactic behaviour, its underlying form and derivations, its word associations, and its semantic features," according to Nation and Newton (1997)

4-2 Form

The first aspect of the word that student learn is its form. Ur (1996) asserts that being aware of a word's shape also entails being aware of its spelling and writing. According to Krashen (1987), "the form is the focus, not the meaning." Because they must read aloud word for word, students seldom give the content their full attention”.

4-3 Use

In addition to developing language skills, vocabulary use in primary school pupils establishes the groundwork for both academic performance and lifetime communication ability. Nation (2001) asserts that effective word use requires knowledge of collocations, restrictions, and grammatical functions. Therefore, to emphasize how important it is to utilize

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the terminology Qian said that "people who perform better on a spelling quiz likely see a greater amount of the words in messages they read than people who score lower do" (1998)

We conclude with some features that teachers should consider of a vocabulary item that are mentioned by (Gower, Philips, and Walters ,1995)

- **The form**
 - ❖ **Is the word a verb, preposition, noun, or other component of speech?**
 - ❖ **What is the spelling pattern—is it erratic or regular?**
 - ❖ **How is the word or mixture of words pronounced? - Where is the stress in a word or multiple syllables?**
 - ❖ **How does the term relate to other words around it? Does it belong in a set expression?**
- **The meaning**
 - ❖ **A lot of words can have many meanings. Which specific concept and context do you wish to emphasize?**
 - ❖ **What does the item's connotation mean?**
 - ❖ **Is it possible that various persons may interpret the vocabulary item differently?**
- **The use**
 - ❖ **How is the word used in the vocabulary?**
 - ❖ **Is there a limited use for it? Does it fit within a specific register or style?**

(Source: Rohmatillah (2014))

17. The importance of vocabulary development to pupils

The development of a child's vocabulary is an important part of their education that is frequently disregarded as they grow and learn. A student's capacity to grasp difficult ideas,

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Speak clearly, and perform well in school is greatly influenced by their vocabulary. As Wilkins (1972) noted, "there is not much value in being able to produce grammatical sentences if one does not have the vocabulary that is needed to convey what one wishes to say...", building a large vocabulary may significantly enhance students' language learning abilities. Nothing can be spoken without language, but very little can be said without grammar. Additionally, "vocabulary knowledge is central to communicative competence and to the acquisition of a second language" according to Schmitt (2000)

Building significant vocabulary is crucial for primary school students to improve their communication skills since it is a continuous process of language and literacy development that starts in early infancy and continues through school and beyond. According to Sinatra, Zygoris-Coe, and Dasinger (2011), children's comprehension and proper word usage during language actions such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing are influenced by their knowledge of vocabulary meanings. The intricacies and subtleties of children's thought processes, their oral and written language communication skills, and their comprehension of printed texts are all influenced by this information. Furthermore, Richards and Rodgers (2001) proposed that "developing a practical vocabulary is essential to primary level foreign language learning."

18. Vocabulary learning strategies

Despite its challenges, expanding one's vocabulary is crucial to improving language proficiency, which is why educators and learners often rely on a variety of teaching techniques to meet the demands of their pupils. Diverse academics may identify diverse language learning methodologies. Schmitt is one of the top researchers in this field. The two main stages of vocabulary acquisition procedures are "consolidating new word forms and

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meanings" and "discovering new word meanings," according to Schmitt (1997). Schmitt's taxonomy is illustrated in the following figure:

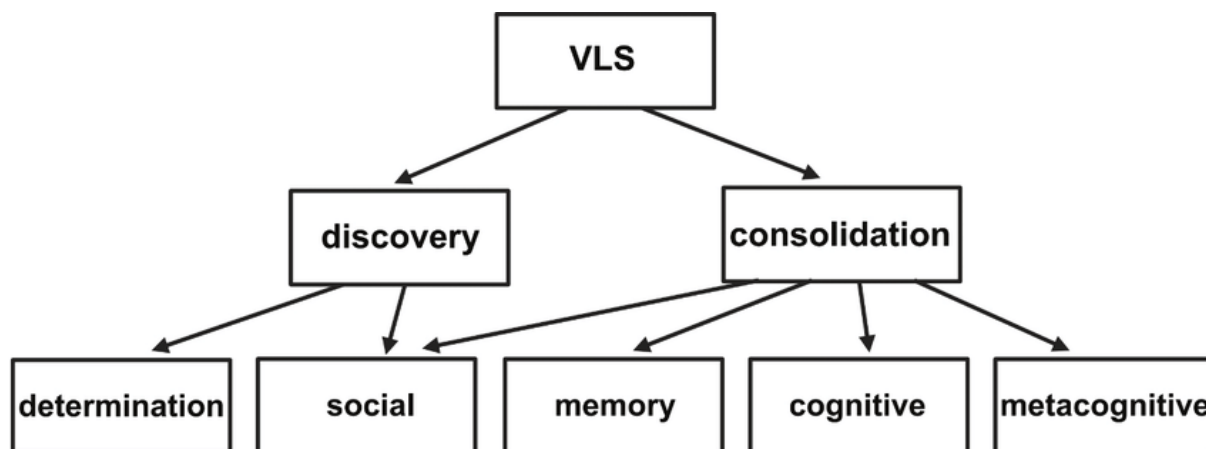


Figure 1: Schmitt's taxonomy (1997)

The above figure refers to the Schmitt's taxonomy of VLS .they are divided into two main groups: direct or discovering strategies and indirect or consolidating strategies. Each group into its main strategies that are used

6-1 Determination Strategies

Using a dictionary, asking the teacher, guessing terms based on prior knowledge, or asking someone else without knowing the definitions of the words are examples of determination techniques. It occurs when students pick up words from their readings and search up their meanings using other resources and context. Learners typically employ this tactic when they come across unfamiliar terms for the first time, trying to deduce the meaning on their own.

A determination strategy example would be: Estimating a word's meaning.

6-2 Social strategies

Asking people, instructors, or other students for further information about unfamiliar words is one way to use social strategies. It is dependent upon social contact. Oxford (1990)

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asserts that social strategies facilitate language acquisition through social interaction. It entails striking up conversations with other individuals and making use of devices like radios, TVs, and cell phones.

An illustration of a social strategy is: Providing synonyms, defining terms via paraphrase and the understanding of others, and introducing new words into sentences.

6-3 Memory strategies

According to Schmidt (1997), memory strategies are "approaches which related new materials to existing knowledge." Students usually use memory techniques to help them retain the terms they have already learnt. Schmitt (2000) added that grouping, using imagery, and making connections between new words and previously learned material are all useful memory techniques. This can be achieved by associating the new term with previously learned information, such as familiar words or events, or by employing mental imagery to help recall the meaning of the word.

An illustration of a memory technique recalling vocabulary.

6-4 Cognitive strategies

Oxford (1990) defines cognitive strategies as those that "share the common function of the learner manipulating or transforming the target language" . With this approach, students concentrate on processing repetitions and employ various methods to comprehend words.

An illustration of a cognitive strategy is: labeling and repeating words

6-5 Metacognitive strategies

The awareness and comprehension of your own thought processes is referred to as metacognition. With the help of this technique, students may take charge of and focus on

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their language acquisition via their general proficiency. Students that apply metacognitive techniques develop into more autonomous and strategic vocabulary learners.

An illustration of metacognitive techniques using media, including movies, music, and newspapers.

The table below shows the classification of these strategies and their Sub-strategies that are incorporated into lessons implementations (Oxford, 1990):

Type	Primary strategies	Secondary strategies
Direct Strategies	Memory strategies	A. creating mental linkages B. applying images and sounds C. reviewing well D. employing action
	Cognitive strategies	A. practicing B. receiving and sending messages C. analysing and reasoning D. Creating structure for input and output
	Compensation strategies	A. guessing intelligently B. Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing
Indirect Strategies	Metacognitive strategies	A. Centering your learning B. Arranging and planning your learning C. Evaluating your learning
	Affective strategies	A. Lowering your anxiety B. Encouraging yourself C. Taking your emotional temperature
	Social strategies	A. Asking questions B. Cooperating with others C. Empathizing with others

Table 2: Oxford's classification for vocabulary learning strategies and their sub strategies

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19. Difficulties of vocabulary learning for primary school pupils

By offering suitable solutions that could decrease the severity of these difficulties, addressing kids' difficulties with acquiring English vocabulary improves the teaching-learning process and offers important insights into their requirements at the primary school level. While expanding one's vocabulary. Pronunciation, spelling, length and complexity, memory, focus, and other skills may be difficult for students..

7-1 Pronunciation:

First of all, one major difficulty that pupils may face during learning vocabulary is pronunciation. Pronunciation is the most crucial component of learning any new language . In the words of Nation and Webb (2011), "productive vocabulary knowledge is more important for language users than receptive vocabulary knowledge because it is the productive knowledge that allows them to communicate effectively" . Even when they are aware of a word's spelling, students often mispronounce words. Some students even mistake the sounds /p/ and /b/, as well as /f/ and /v/. As stated by O'Connor (1980, 3), "Anyone who claims that you can acquire a good English pronunciation without effort is talking garbage, unless you are among the extremely fortunate few who find pronunciation to be fairly effortless." Most of us have to put forth a lot of effort».

7-2 Memorization

Memory plays a major part in language learning, namely in the development of vocabulary. As per Richards and Schmidt (2002, 327), the act of memorizing information is known as memorization. Typically, the phrase "memorizing" describes the conscious processes. Memorization techniques include practice, associative learning, rote learning, and more. (Zeina, 2017). Too many words for the majority of primary school students to memorize prevents the brain from meaningfully organizing and rearranging information.

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Thornbury (2002) states that acquiring vocabulary necessitates memorization of words, which can be challenging for younger students.

7-3 Long and complex words

For a variety of reasons, learning long words can be challenging, particularly for pupils attending elementary school. Because they often have more syllables, long words are more difficult to pronounce and recall. In addition, the word's length increases its abstraction and reduces its familiarity, making it harder for people to grasp and recall.

7-4 The effect of the first language:

Arabic students frequently make errors when learning English or any other foreign language. These errors arise from the linguistic variances between Arabic and English. There may occasionally be an effect on students' acquisition of a second language even if the instructor instructs in her own tongue. It has been demonstrated that first language interference occurs when phonetics, syntax, and use impede the learning of other important words.

20. Effective techniques in teaching vocabulary

Teaching Vocabulary poses several difficulties to pupils that hinder successful language acquisition. Teachers face several challenges when teaching vocabulary. They should use different techniques in teaching vocabulary. Many linguists have suggested various strategies now used in learning vocabulary. Grains and Redman (1986) divided strategies of teaching vocabulary into visual techniques and verbal techniques. These strategies are adopted to teach and present new vocabulary items. Some are more popular. More often used than others. Teaching vocabulary effectively involves a combination of visual and verbal techniques. These methods enhance the learning experience. They make it more engaging and memorable for students.

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8-1 Visual techniques

As pupils face difficulties in the process of learning vocabulary, teachers must adapt effective teaching strategies. One technique is using visuals which play an important role in helping learners to learn English. Harmer (2007, p.83) stated that “a good primary classroom mixes play and learning in an atmosphere of cheerful and supportive harmony”

Thornbury (2002) suggest that "there are three forms visual techniques; realia, pictures, and mime or gestures.” that can support students’ learning and help them reach their objectives

Visuals can be integrated into language lessons in a several ways by developing tasks based on visual tools such as images and videos. Brophy (1991) suggested that: “Skilled teachers have a repertoire of such representations available for use when needed to elaborate their instruction in response to student comments or questions to provide alternative explanations for students who were unable to follow the initial instruction.”

Wright (1990) suggested the use of drawings to make learning vocabulary easier and stated: "Drawings provide an immediately available source of pictorial material for the activities. Student and teachers' drawings also have a special quality, which lies in their immediacy and their individuality”

The use of pictures also helps to create a mental image. When students encounter one of the words, it is easier for them to remember other related words.

8-2 Verbal techniques

This technique contains the use of illustrative situations like synonyms, opposites, or definition...etc. Some language items are best explained by being used in a variety of contexts, with the teacher commenting on the use. Ajabshir (2011) stated that Verbal

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techniques allow pupils to learn vocabulary effectively in many aspects and will develop their memories.

8-2-1 Translation

The use of translation remains relevant, particularly for young learners in primary education. It is an approach for obtaining the exact definition of a word. Translation can provide opportunities for learners to learn about the language, and help them to bridge the gap between their L1 and target language. Sometimes the English teachers introduce their pupils with a word in English through the use of other word in the same language. It is a quick solution for difficulties in explaining complex words that may take much time to learn.

8-2-2 Synonyms and antonyms

Teaching synonyms and antonyms gives the language learners an opportunity to enhance their memory and positively affect the students' long term memory for words. Higa (1963) suggested that learners are more likely to be confused by words that are similar in meaning than words that do not have close semantic relations. So that the teacher should always give the students the synonyms and antonyms of new learned words.

8-2-3 Use of illustrative situation (oral/written)

Illustrative sentences in teaching are usually used as examples. It is suitable for teaching abstract words for pupils. To make sure that pupils understand, teachers usually use more than one situation.

8-3 Use songs

As seen in the methods explained above, songs also play a critical role in the learning of a foreign language especially those learnt by children. According to Nation (2013) Songs can be an effective tool for vocabulary acquisition in the course of teaching since this will

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make learning more interesting and effective and this. Bourke (2006) also stated that: “when we plan a syllabus for young learners we should make sure it is experientially appropriate. It should contain songs, chants, and rhymes”

Songs and Music instruments in its repetitive pattern can help pupils remember vocabulary and make it in teaching vocabulary and structures effectively to pupils. Griffee (1995) stated that songs are: “good at introducing vocabulary because they provide a meaningful context for the vocabulary” (p.5)

To sum up, the use of songs have many benefits like: Enhancing Memory Retention, Improving Pronunciation and Intonation and Creating a Positive Learning Environment

Conclusion

At least, in this chapter we have spotted light on Vocabulary learning especially in primary school. Vocabulary acquisition is regarded as the main core of learning any language despite the fact that vocabulary obtaining may not be so simple. In this chapter, we have discussed the difficulties that may encounter pupils while learning vocabulary. To overcome these challenges. We also mentioned some strategies that learners and teachers tend to depend on and should be conscious of the vocabulary improvement strategies. In conclusion, learning vocabulary presents a number of serious obstacles for elementary school students, such as memory problems, the effect of their native tongue, pronunciation problems, etc. and by comprehending and resolving these issues, primary school instructors might better assist their students in building a solid and useful vocabulary, providing the groundwork for their future language acquisition and general academic achievement.

Chapter three

Data Analysis and Discussion of Results

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Introduction

This chapter presents the practical part of the research. It provides a full description of the methodology used in conducting the research. It also explains the population and sample that we targeted for the research. Additionally, it describes the tools used to gather data, primarily classroom observation, interview, and teacher's questionnaire. Lastly, it analyses and discusses the data gathered to answer the research questions.

3.1. Methodology

The research investigates vocabulary acquisition challenges for primary school pupils; therefore, it relies on the qualitative approach to achieve the research's aim and answer the research questions. It employs qualitative data collection tools: classroom observation and teacher's questionnaire. It also gathers data from primary sources: interview; and secondary sources: books, journals, articles, dissertations, etc.

3.2. Population and Sample

The case study of the present research is 3rd grade primary pupils of the Khelif Mohamed primary school in Biskra of the 2023/2024 academic year. We randomly select the sample of pupils to conduct the research on. Moreover, we choose random primary school teachers to answer the teacher's questionnaire. In addition, the teacher we select for the interview is one of the teachers who answer the questionnaire.

3.3. Data Collection Tools

To answer the research questions, we employ different tools to gather data and information. The first tool is classroom observation through which we attend different sessions to observe the learning process. Then an interview with a primary school English teacher to question them about the learning process and the challenges the pupils face when it comes to learning vocabulary. The last tool we use to collect information is a questionnaire

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submitted to primary school teachers to require about their experience teaching vocabulary to young learners and the challenges the latter may face.

3.3.1. The Classroom Observation

3.3.1.1 Description of the Classroom Observation

To obtain detailed information and insight about the factors that could affect children's process of learning English vocabulary, we opt to observe a classroom. We focus on the pupils' learning of vocabulary and the challenges they face in the classroom following a list (see Appendix C) of pre-scheduled factors. The list consists of five difficulties, which we observe and look for at every session. After explaining the research topic to the targeted teacher and getting her agreement, we plan a schedule that works for both of us. We attend six sessions with a 3rd primary class at Khelif Mohamed school between the 6th and 23rd of May. We sit at the back of the classroom to minimise any interruptions or distractions for the pupils. These sessions are audio-recorded on a phone.

3.3.1.2 Analysis of the Classroom Observation

Throughout the six sessions we attend to observe how 3rd primary pupils learn vocabulary, we follow a list of difficulties we think children might face. The results of which are as follows:

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Difficulties	Days
Misunderstanding	03
Misspelling	06
Confusing similar words	04
Mispronunciation	05
Memorising	05

Table 3: Difficulties in learning vocabulary

The table above shows the various challenges we observe the pupils struggling with in learning vocabulary in the classroom and how many days out of six they commit mistakes related to the mentioned difficulties.

3.3.1.1 Misunderstanding

We observe that pupils misunderstand the meaning of vocabulary. They cannot correctly comprehend the meaning due to the lack of proper meaningful context. Children learn better, when they are provided with context or examples, especially if these examples are centered around them since children are ego-centric and they are more interested in learning if they can relate to the lesson. We observe the lack of visual materials. The teacher does not introduce new vocabulary using materials such as flashcards or photographs. It is difficult for children to imagine what the teacher describes without seeing it. Moreover, the teacher sometimes opt to explain vocabulary in Arabic when the children are irresponsive to her explanations in English.

3.3.1.2 Misspelling

It is common for EFL learners to have difficulties in spelling. The rules of spelling in English are unlike those of Arabic, which makes it unfamiliar for learners. Spelling rules such as silent letters and irregularities make it difficult for learners to learn correctly how to spell. Additionally, they rely on phonetic spelling, which means they spell a word the way it sounds

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rather than how it is correctly spelled. EFL learners at this age focus more on spoken language rather than written language. Teachers should pay close attention to how learners spell words to correct them and provide them with more exposure to the written language.

3.3.1.3 Confusing similar words

Primary school learners can confuse the meaning of similar words such as “red” and “read”. We notice that they confuse written words more than spoken ones. That can be due to their inability to properly read and spell. They also confuse the meaning of words that exist in both English and French. Moreover, sometimes when the teacher asks for a word, pupils answer with its translation in French. That happens with as basic words as numbers and colors.

3.3.1.4 Mispronunciation

Mispronunciation is a common issue for any EFL learner, especially when English does not sound anything like their mother tongue. English has various irregularities that make it difficult to remember how to pronounce words. Silent letters; for example, pose a challenge for young learners. Learning to pronounce words such as “Wednesday” and “talk” correctly demands constant repetition and correction from the teacher. Learners also confuse pronunciation of words and even alphabets in English and French. Pupils often cannot differentiate between how to pronounce “I”, “A”, and “E” in English and French. Learners need constant exposure to the spoken language to better improve their pronunciation. They also ought not to shy away from practicing without the fear of sounding wrong.

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3.3.1.5 Memorising

We observe that the pupils struggle with recalling the meaning of words that they have already learnt. Not only the meaning, but they also have difficulties remembering how to pronounce and spell these words correctly. These struggles can be justified by the great number of words they are introduced to regularly. Additionally, not having sufficient practice or the opportunities to use the vocabulary they learn makes it harder to remember them. Teachers should give children more chances to practice what they learn inside the classroom as they should encourage their pupils to use the acquired vocabulary outside the classroom.

3.3.2. The Interview

3.3.2.1 Description of the Interview

We designed an interview of six questions (see Appendix A) to further inquire about the difficulties young learners face while learning vocabulary of a foreign language. We ask the interviewee questions to obtain data about the challenges that primary school pupils struggle with when learning English vocabulary.

3.3.2.2 Analysis of the Interview

Question 01: Is learning vocabulary important for foreign language primary school learners? Why?

Teacher: “Yes, because learning vocabulary means learning new words to better explain oneself. It also helps learners, especially young ones to read and write better.”

We ask the interviewee how important it is for young pupils to learn vocabulary. The teacher insists that learning vocabulary is important in improving learners’ writing and reading skills and that it helps them better express themselves and communicate with others.

Question 02: how do you usually introduce new words to your learners?

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Teacher: “By defining the words that they deal with in class in an easy, playful way.”

We ask this question in an attempt to understand how primary school teachers introduce new words to their learners. The teacher explains that she uses fun and playful techniques that attract children.

Question 03: which visual aids do you incorporate in class when teaching vocabulary?

Teacher: “To explain the difficult words I use flashcards and pictures. I also use videos and audios.”

The teacher thinks that incorporating visual materials in teaching foreign vocabulary is helpful. She says that she uses visual materials such as flashcards, pictures, videos, and audios.

Question 04: what do you think are the most effective techniques that help pupils learn vocabulary?

Teacher: “Listening and repeating are helpful to learn new words. I think children should practice the new vocabulary they learn and discover.”

The teacher thinks that practice and repetition are an effective technique for primary school pupils to learn vocabulary.

Question 05: Do primary school pupils have difficulties learning vocabulary? What are these difficulties?

Teacher: “They can’t pronounce or read the new English words they learn. They also can’t memorize the vocabulary they already learnt.”

We ask the teacher about the challenges her pupils face when learning new vocabulary to which she answers that primary school pupils have trouble pronouncing and

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reading new vocabulary. Additionally, she says that they have difficulties memorizing and remembering the words they learn.

Question 06: How do you think these difficulties should be addressed?

Teacher: “In order for children to learn vocabulary without forgetting it, teachers should use tools like videos and audios and make them practice and repeat the words they learn.”

The last question is about how teachers can address the difficulties young pupils face in learning vocabulary of a foreign language. The interviewee thinks that visual aids are the most effective to teach vocabulary. Primary school teachers can incorporate aids such as audios and videos in their sessions.

In conclusion, the interviewee thinks that learning vocabulary is important for young learners. It helps develop their other literacy skills such as writing and reading. It also improves children’s communication skills and ability to express themselves. Moreover, the teacher thinks young children learn better through fun activities. She also notes the importance of visual materials in learning vocabulary. She says that some of the challenges her pupils face in learning new vocabulary are memorisation, pronunciation, and reading. She thinks the way to overcome these challenges is by incorporating visual materials in class and encouraging repetition and practice.

3.3.3. Teachers’ questionnaire

3.3.3.1. Description of the Teacher’s Questionnaire

The questionnaire (see Appendix B) seeks to gather data and answer the research question about the difficulties primary school pupils face when learning vocabulary of English as a second foreign language. The questionnaire asks nine close-ended and open-ended questions. We submit the questionnaire to five primary school teachers of English of

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the 3rd grade. We select them randomly according to their availability and readiness to answer the questions and provide justifications when necessary.

3.3.3.2. Analysis of the Questionnaire

Question 01: Does vocabulary development impact primary school pupils' overall learning development?

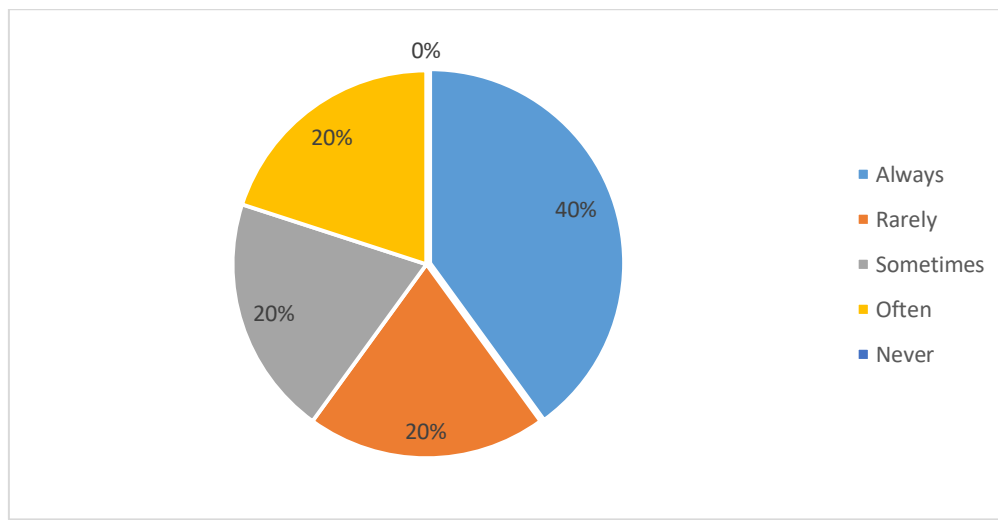


Figure 2:Effect of Vocabulary Development

Figure 3.1 shows how primary school teachers think vocabulary development affects young learners' overall learning development. The results show that 40% of the teachers believe that vocabulary development always has an effect on overall language learning for young pupils and 20% think it often has. In contrast, 0% of them think it has no effect at all. Moreover, one of the teachers thinks vocabulary rarely affects the general development of language learning while another one thinks it sometimes does. The figure suggests that most teachers think that the development of vocabulary can affect the development of language learning.

Question 02: How is vocabulary important for young learners' language development?

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Importance	Teachers	Percentage
It enables them to effectively express themselves	2	22%
It develops their comprehension of spoken and written language	3	34%
It improves their reading and writing skills	1	11%
It enhances their critical thinking skills	1	11%
It improves their communication skills and social interactions	2	22%

Table 4:Importance of Vocabulary

The table above explains how vocabulary is essential for the development of primary school learners' language. According to the table, 34% of the teachers think that vocabulary helps develop children's comprehension of spoken and written language. While 22% of the teachers believe that it enables them to express themselves effectively, another 22% think that it improves their communication skills and social interactions. Lastly, 11% of the teachers think that vocabulary enhances young learners' critical thinking skills; equally, the remaining 11% believe that it improves their reading and writing skills. This data shows how teachers view the importance of learning vocabulary in primary school pupils' foreign language learning.

Question 03: Do primary school pupils have difficulties learning vocabulary?

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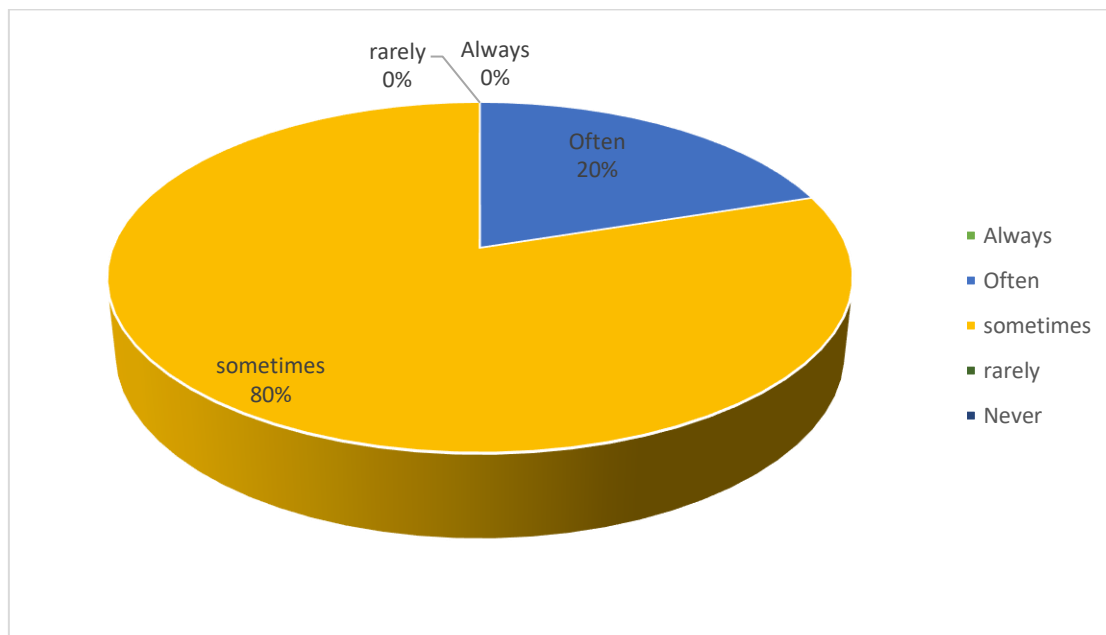


Figure 3:How Often Young Learners Face Difficulties Learning Vocabulary

The figure above presents how often primary school learners face difficulties learning vocabulary. The majority of teachers (80%) thinks that children sometimes have difficulties when learning vocabulary while the rest (20%) thinks that they often do. The results show that primary school learners struggle to learn new words in English.

Question 04: What are these difficulties?

The figure (3.3) below highlights the type of difficulties young learners face in learning a second foreign language's vocabulary. Four teachers say that the challenges

Primary school pupils face when it comes to learning vocabulary are memorization, spelling, and pronunciation of new words. Additionally, two of the teachers think that the struggle in learning vocabulary is due to lack of context. Equally, two teachers believe that homophones, which are words that sound the same but are spelled differently, and homonyms, which are words that share the same spelling and pronunciation but differ in meaning, pose a challenge for young learners. Lastly, one teacher thinks that these difficulties

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can lay in comprehending abstract words, complexity of the word, psychological factors such as lack of motivation and short attention span. The teachers agree that there are various difficulties young learners face in learning vocabulary.

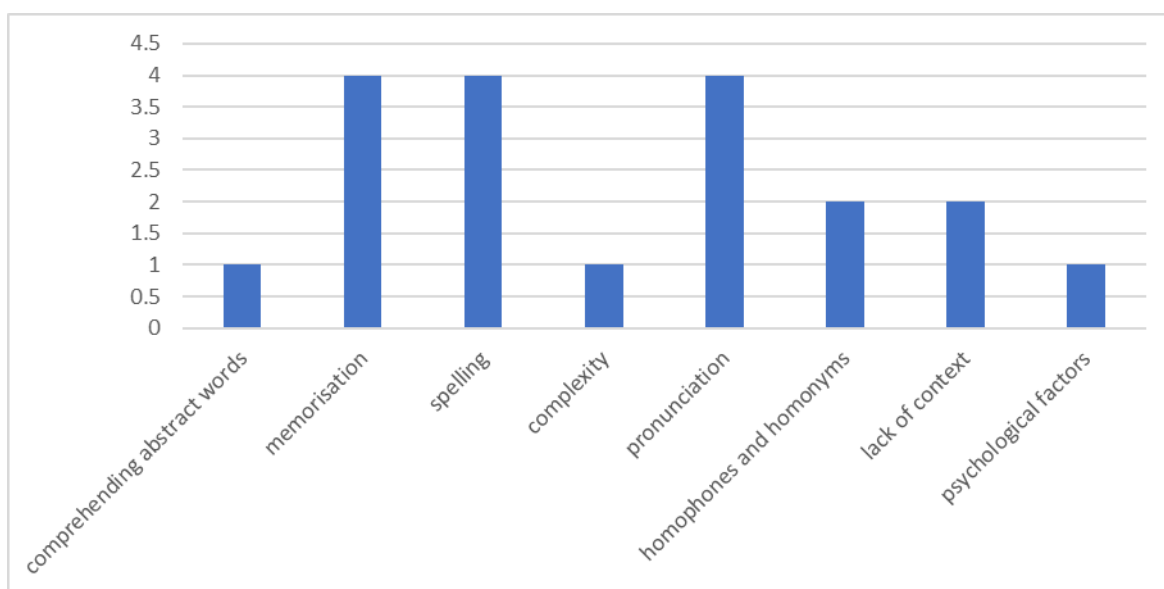


Figure 4: Difficulties of Learning Vocabulary

Question 05: How do you address such difficulties?

Techniques	Teachers
Provide meaningful context	1
Use visual aids	4
Integrate vocabulary in other subjects	1
Incorporate role-play and interactive games	4
Encourage the repetition and use of the learned vocabulary	2

Table 5: How to Address the Difficulties

In the table above, the data shows which techniques teachers think are most effective to overcome the difficulties EFL young learners face in learning vocabulary. Majority of the

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teachers think that the most effective methods to use that help children better learn vocabulary are visual aids, role-play, and interactive games. Additionally, two of the teachers encourage repetition and use of the learned vocabulary in order for children to learn these words effectively. While one of the teachers says providing meaningful context helps pupils learn better, another says that primary school teachers should integrate vocabulary in other subjects. The results observed in the table show that teachers use different techniques to make it easier for young pupils to learn. Although teachers think the methods mentioned in the table are all helpful, they agree that through using visual materials and incorporating games and role-plays, children are more likely to better grasp and learn new vocabulary.

Question 06: Which visual aids are effective in teaching vocabulary?

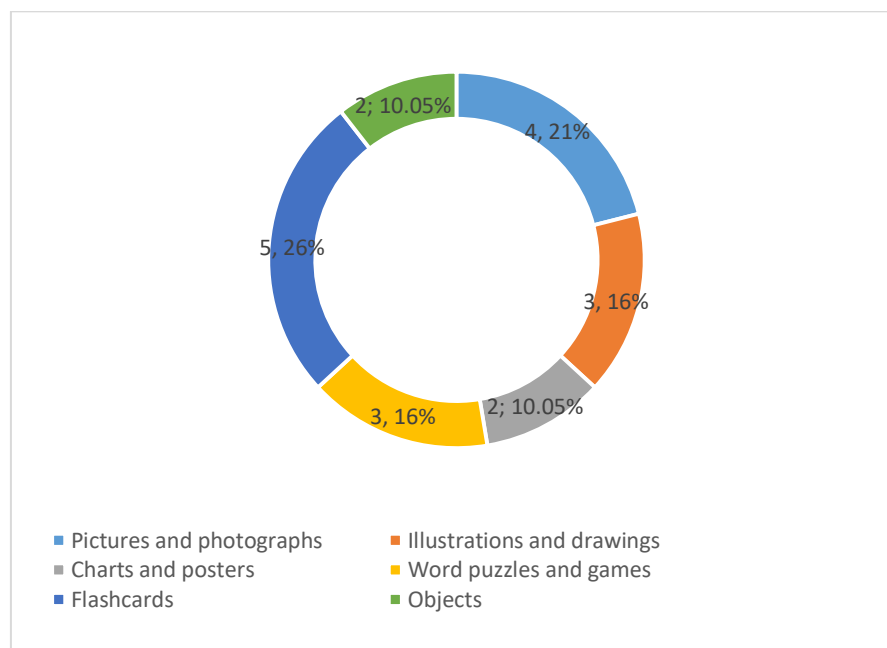


Figure 5: Effective Visual Aids

The chart above (Figure 3.4) illustrates which visual materials teachers think are more useful to incorporate in the classroom. The highest percentage of teachers thinks that flashcards are the most effective visual techniques in teaching words to children. Moreover, 21% of them think that using pictures and photographs also attract pupils' attention and help

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them learn better. Additionally, 16% of teachers think that word puzzles and games make learning fun for children and improve their learning. Another 16% of them think illustrations and drawings are also effective materials to teach vocabulary to pupils. Lastly, 10.05% choose charts and posters and the remaining 10.05% choose real objects as useful and effective visual materials for teaching vocabulary. According to the data presented in the figure, teachers opt to use multiple techniques in their classroom to ensure that primary school pupils learn vocabulary effectively.

Question 07: Do you use the mother tongue (Arabic) in the classroom?

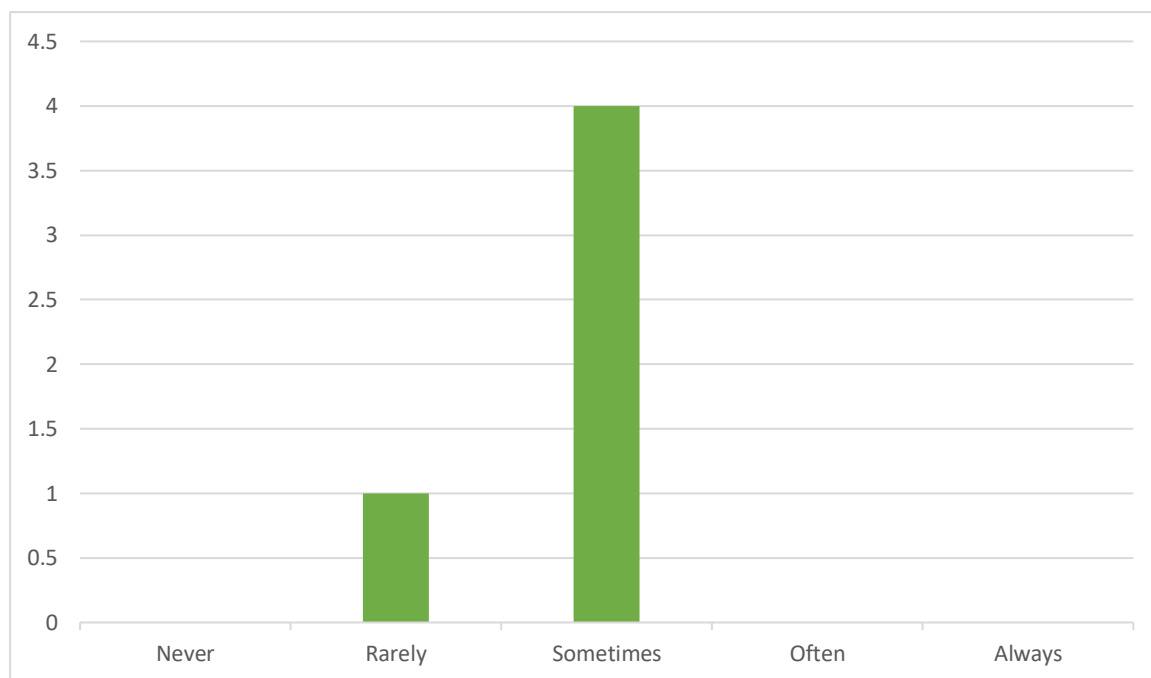


Figure 6: Use of Arabic in Classroom

Figure (3.5) highlights how often teachers use their mother tongue (Arabic) in class as a method to teach vocabulary to EFL primary school pupils. Most of the teachers note that they sometimes switch to Arabic to explain the meaning of the new words that they introduce. In contrast, zero percent of the teachers say they never or always use it. One of the teachers say that they rarely use Arabic, assuming that they use it as a last solution to explain

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words to their learners. The data shows that in some cases, teachers opt to use their mother tongue to help pupils comprehend the meaning of a word.

When asked to justify their answers, one of the teachers says, “The use of the first language is considered as an effective way in some cases.” This further proves what is said above that sometimes only Arabic can explain a word to EFL learners. The rest of the teachers did not justify their answers.

Question 08: Learning two foreign languages at the same time can cause challenges in learning vocabulary.

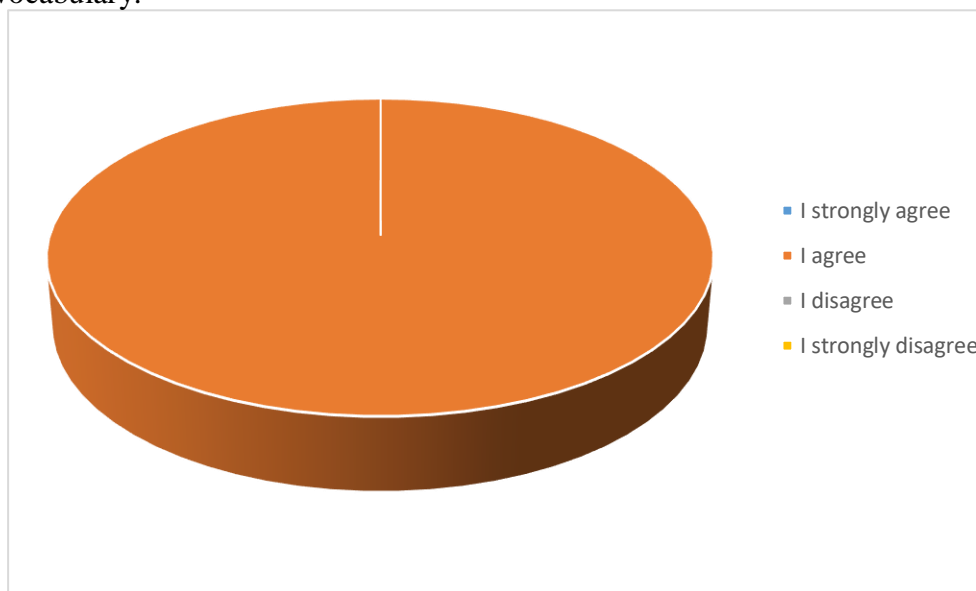


Figure 7: Learning two foreign languages can cause challenges

The chart above (Figure 3.6) illustrates what teachers think about simultaneously learning two foreign languages to young pupils. The results show that all of the teachers agree that learning two foreign languages can cause challenges in learning vocabulary for young children.

When asked to justify their answers, one of the teachers writes, “Learning two foreign languages at the same time causes young students to confuse and misunderstand words, especially their pronunciation.” Another teacher agrees but says that it completely depends on

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the individual abilities of learners. A third teacher says it is because of the learner's individual cognitive differences. They add that the difficulties pupils face may be due to "intelligence of young learners, strategies used by the teacher, different styles." They did not explain what they mean by styles.

Question 09: We asked the teachers to write any additional opinions or suggestions; however, they did not write any.

3.4 Discussion of Results

3.4.1 Classroom Observation

Based on the classroom observation, primary school learners seem to struggle with a number of difficulties: misunderstanding, misspelling, confusing similar words, mispronunciation, and memorization. These difficulties are a result of various reasons but mainly lack of proper context, lack of visual materials, complexity of the English language, large number of vocabulary, and lack of practicing opportunities. Primary school learners demand special environment to be able to learn effectively, as well as fun and attractive learning techniques that can attract them and grab their attention. It is difficult for young learners to remain focused on the lesson unless they are interested. Therefore, it is important for teachers to use engaging and interactive activities such as games and plays. It is also important for teachers to apply different teaching methods that cater to the different learning styles of the pupils. For example, visual learning methods like flashcards and photographs, and auditoria methods such as songs.

3.4.2 Teacher's Interview

According to the interview, the teacher believes that vocabulary development is crucial for young learners' language acquisition development. She notes that learning vocabulary enhances their reading and writing skills. She adds that it also improves their

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social interactions and communication skills. Her answers show that primary school pupils face difficulties learning vocabulary. Based on what she said, young learners have problems with pronunciation, spelling, and reading the new vocabulary they learn. Additionally, she stresses that memorizing and remembering words pose another challenge for children trying to learn English as a foreign language. She suggests that for young children to learn the language better, teachers ought to use techniques that attract children's attention and keep them focused and interested in the lesson. Finally, she insists that visual materials are effective ways to introduce new vocabulary to learners. She notes that young learners need to constantly practice and repeat what they learn to ensure they memories it. Practicing inside and outside the classroom and using the acquired vocabulary help overcome the challenges young learners face.

3.4.3 Teacher's Questionnaire

The results of the teacher's questionnaire show that most teachers think the development of vocabulary can affect the development of language learning. According to the teachers' answers, learning vocabulary helps young learners to effectively express themselves and communicate with others. It also develops their comprehension of spoken and written language, and improves their reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. Moreover, all the teachers agree that primary school learners face challenges in learning vocabulary. These difficulties can be linked to memorization, spelling, and pronunciation. They also have a difficult time comprehending meaning due to the lack of context. Another difficulty they face is confusing homophones and homonyms. In addition, teachers agree that learning two foreign languages also poses a difficulty in learning vocabulary especially that English and French are similar languages. Finally, to overcome these challenges, teachers suggest using visual aids; primarily flashcards, pictures, and photographs. Incorporating role-play, interactive games, and word puzzles is an effective vocabulary teaching technique. The

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teachers also encourage the repetition and employment of the learned vocabulary. Most of them sometimes opt to use the mother tongue to define and explain words when the learners are unable to comprehend the meaning in English.

Conclusion

This section presents the practical part of the research. It focuses on gathering, analyzing, and discussing the findings. It provides descriptions of the tools used to gather data, which are classroom observation, teacher's interview, and teacher's questionnaire. Moreover, the data shows the difficulties young learners face when it comes to learning vocabulary. It also presents some methods that teachers can use to overcome these difficulties.

General conclusion and recommendations

General conclusion

Teaching and learning vocabulary is a challenging task. Since it is the main emphasis of the language curriculum in primary schools when it comes to first-time language learners. Researchers show that building up a useful vocabulary can improve all language skills. However, any difficulties faced while learning vocabulary can affect other skills. Therefore, the present study investigates 3rd year primary school pupils difficulties when learning English vocabulary.

This research work explores the difficulties that faced by primary school pupils when learning vocabulary, the causes of these difficulties and the effective methods to deal with them. To collect data to this study we used a mixed-method research design. First a classroom observation was performed at Khelif Mohamed primary school in Biskra to obtain detailed information and insight, a questionnaire for five primary school teachers and an interview with primary school teacher who was one the teachers who answered the questionnaire. As a result, this study shows that primary school pupils face difficulties in terms of misunderstanding the new words, confusing similar words, pronunciation and memorization.

A specific result are reached by the present study, which are based on the findings and analysis of data collection tools primary school pupils face difficulties; the poor understanding for new words, memorizing them, pronouncing them correctly and confusing the meaning of similar words. These difficulties are a result of the lack of classroom

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materials, the huge number of words that pupils have to learn per session and the lack of motivating environment. Based on the research results, integrating visual aids like flashcards and using educational songs and games can improve pupils' engagement, motivation and English vocabulary learning.

Limitations of the Study

While conducting the research, we faced some challenges:

- **The teacher with whom we scheduled to interview could not meet for an interview so we had to look for another interviewee, which cost us time.**
- **The limited number of English primary school teachers made it difficult to find more than five teachers that can answer the questionnaire for us.**

Recommendations of the Study

The present research attempted to study the difficulties primary school learners face in their learning of English vocabulary. It only focuses on 3rd year pupils, we recommend examining the difficulties the fourth-year pupils face and comparing them to what they deal with in the 3rd year.

To overcome the difficulties that primary school pupils struggle with in learning English, we suggest that:

- **Teachers pay attention to the different learning styles (visual, verbal, auditory, etc.) and introduce vocabulary to them accordingly.**
- **Teachers employ visual materials such as flashcards, photos, and posters in their sessions.**
- **Teachers incorporate fun activities and interactive games to maintain pupils' attention and interest.**

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- **Teachers provide more opportunities for children to practice what they learn inside the class and outside it.**

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Appendices

Appendix A: difficulties in learning vocabulary

Difficulties	Days
Misunderstanding	
Misspelling	
Confusing similar words	
Mispronunciation	
Memorising	

Appendix B: The teacher’s Interview

Question 01: Is learning vocabulary important for foreign language primary school learners?
Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.Question 02: how do you usually introduce new words to your learners?

.....

.....

.....

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Question 03: which visual aids do you incorporate in class when teaching vocabulary?

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.....
.....
.....

Question 04: what do you think are the most effective techniques that help pupils learn vocabulary?

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.....
.....
.....

Question 05: Do primary school pupils have difficulties learning vocabulary? What are these difficulties?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Question 06: How do you think these difficulties should be addressed?

.....
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.....
.....

Appendix C : Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

We are conducting a research for the accomplishment of a master dissertation under the title "Investigating Vocabulary Acquisition Challenges with Primary School Pupils". You are kindly asked to answer the following questionnaire. The data gathered is used for research purposes only. Thank you for your collaboration and your time.

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1-Does vocabulary development impact primary school pupils' overall learning development?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

2-How is vocabulary important for young learners' language development?

- It enables them to effectively express themselves
- It develops their comprehension of spoken and written language
- It improves their reading and writing skills
- It enhances their critical thinking skills
- It improves their communication skills and social interactions
- Other...

3-Do primary school pupils have difficulties learning vocabulary?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

4-What are these difficulties?

- Comprehending abstract words
- Memorisation
 - Spelling
- Complexity
- Pronunciation
- Homophones and homonyms
- Lack of context
- Psychological factors such as lack of motivation and short attention span

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Other:

5-How do you address such difficulties?

Provide meaningful context

Use visual aids

Integrate vocabulary in other subjects

Incorporate role-play and interactive games

Encourage the repetition and use of the learned vocabulary

Other:

6-Which visual aids are effective in teaching vocabulary?

Pictures and photographs

Illustrations and drawings

Charts and posters

Word puzzles and games

Flashcards

Objects

Other:

7-Do you use the mother tongue (Arabic) in the classroom?

Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Often

Always

*Please justify your answer:

.....

.....

8-Learning two foreign languages at the same time can cause challenges in learning vocabulary.

I strongly agree

I agree

I disagree

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I strongly disagree

*Please justify your answer:

.....

9-If you have any additional suggestions or opinions about the topic, please share them here

.....

.....

.....

Thank you

الملخص

يعد تعليم المفردات أمراً في غاية الأهمية لأن تعلم لغة جديدة يتطلب الإلمام بمفرداتها، وهو المحور الرئيسي لمناهج اللغة في المدارس الابتدائية لتطوير اكتساب اللغة لدى التلاميذ. ومع ذلك فإنه يشكل بالتأكيد العديد من الصعوبات للتلاميذ مما يجعل الأمر صعباً لتعلم اللغة بنجاح. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الإجابة على الأسئلة التالية؛ ما هي الصعوبات التي يواجهها متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية الأجنبية عند اكتساب المفردات؟ وما هي الاستراتيجيات التي يجب تنفيذها لمعالجة هذه الصعوبات بشكل فعال؟ لجمع البيانات استخدمنا نهجاً بحثياً نوعياً وصفيًا يعتمد على ثلاثة أدوات لجمع البيانات؛ استبيان لخمسة معلمين لغة إنجليزية في المدارس الابتدائية، ملاحظة ستة حصص، ومقابلة منظمة مع أحد معلمي المدارس الابتدائية. وأظهرت الدراسة أن الصعوبات التي يواجهها الطلاب هي: الفهم، الأخطاء الإملائية، الخلط بين الكلمات المتشابهة، النطق والتذكر. هذه الصعوبات هي نتيجة لنقص مواد الفصل الدراسي، وكثرة الكلمات الجديدة التي يجب أن يتعلمها التلاميذ في كل حصة، وازدحام الفصول الدراسية، وعدم وجود بيئة محفزة. أظهرت الدراسة أن دمج الوسائل البصرية مثل البطاقات التعليمية واستخدام الأغاني والألعاب التعليمية يعزز مشاركة التلاميذ وتحفيزهم وتعلمهم لمفردات اللغة الإنجليزية.