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## **Investigating the Impact of Social Media on Improving EFL students' Vocabulary**

A Case Study of the Second Year LMD Students at the English Division  
In the University of Abd Elhafid Bousof - Mila

**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Partial  
Requirement of the Fulfilment of the Master 2 Degree in Sciences of Languages.**

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## Dedication

*With all love that covers my heart, I dedicate this work:*

*To The light of my life and the dearest person to my heart : my father “**Naamane**”*

*who has helped me to make my dream a reality. Thank you Dad .*

*To my mother “**Latifa**” who believes in me and surrounded me with her care and*

*love.*

*To my lovely grandfather, may Allah rest his soul in peace .*

*To the flowers of my family , my brothers , **Walid, Chouaib, Chihab and Aale Edine***

*To my grandmothers, my grandfather, to my aunts and uncles.*

*To all my friends and classmates and to my dears : **Hadjer, Zina,Wafa , Salima***

*,**Asma, Soumia ,Khalisa and Fouzia** .*

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## **Abstract**

This study attempted to investigate the impact of using social media to improve vocabulary knowledge for 2<sup>nd</sup> year EFL students of the English division at Mila University. In order to obtain sufficient data for this research, we used the descriptive method. As a first step we hypothesized that social media would be an aid for students to enrich their vocabulary, and those who learn vocabulary through social media would be more inclined to improve their vocabulary knowledge than those who do not use it. The present work consists of an introductory chapter in which we provided general information about vocabulary. In the second chapter, we dealt with the main aspects related to social media and its relation to learning and teaching vocabulary. Finally we relied on three means of research: a teachers' interview, a student's questionnaire and an audio-visual survey administered to different students. First, the teachers' interview had been submitted to collect data about the techniques used when teaching new words in their lessons and their opinion about using social media for improving EFL students' vocabulary knowledge. Second, a questionnaire was administered to EFL students for the sake of knowing their behaviour towards social media as a learning material. The survey is in form of video, which contains students' opinions about whether social media is a helpful tool to improve vocabulary or not. The results showed that it is effective to use social media in learning and teaching vocabulary and integrating them in the learners' life which can help them to improve their lexical knowledge. Accordingly, it is recommended that EFL students should be in touch with social media for the sake of learning new words in order to improve their knowledge repertoire. It should be also incorporated in teaching materials.

## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**L1:** First language

**L2:** Second Language

**WAN:** Wide Area Network

**ARPANET:** Advanced Research Projects Agency

**NSFNET:** National science foundations net

**CSNET :** computer science net

**EUNET :** European network

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# **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

## **Introduction**

People use language to express their ideas, opinions and thoughts. It's impossible for us to communicate without mastering the vocabulary of a certain language because in the language learning process, one of the important parts in creating and understanding the language is vocabulary learning. Low vocabulary repertoire also makes language users unable to express their opinion properly.

In Algeria, English is becoming more and more important. It is one of the foreign languages which are taught in middle schools, secondary schools, and universities. Vocabulary is one of the aspects which is needed to improve the four English skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To make students motivated in learning vocabulary, students besides teachers should be creative in using a variety of strategies in learning and teaching ; one of the strategies that can be used is social media. Social media is powerful stimulus for students' engagement, because EFL students will find it an enjoyable and easy tool to learn new words; they can do both learning new vocabulary and enjoy their time.

### **1. Statement of the problem**

Vocabulary knowledge enables students to master the language in order to communicate appropriately. EFL students; however, face serious troubles regarding this aspect of language and they are still unable to communicate by using English language. This research attempted to bring a new strategy to improve vocabulary through social media, and also we tried to demonstrate whether social media can be used as a strategy to improve the students' vocabulary at the University of Mila during the academic year 2015 / 2016.

## **2. Aim of the study**

The general purpose of the current study is to shed light on the effects of social media to improve EFL student's vocabulary storage ,at the University of Mila in the academic year 2015 / 2016 . Moreover, to investigate how the social media is used as an educational tool. This general purpose can be categorized into some specific aims. These can be interpreted as follows:

1. To encourage students to look for modern and suitable ways in order to enhance their vocabulary mastery.
2. To examine how Mila's university students of English build their vocabulary in this language by the use of social media .
3. To come up with a set of recommendations that could help the students and the teachers to overcome the vocabulary problems.

## **3. Significance of the study**

This study is significant for students because through using social media, EFL students will get an enjoyable way to learn new vocabulary. The results of this study, hopefully, will improve their vocabulary storage. I t is signifcant also for teachers , they will try to involve social media in their classes as a teaching method by allowing their students to connect with them and share ideas beyond the classroom wall, in order to improve their students' vocabulary.

## **4. Research questions**

Our study tried to answer two related questions :

- What is the impact of using social media on students' vocabulary?

- Do students who use social media learn more vocabulary than those who do not use it?

## 5. Research hypotheses

To answer the above research questions, we hypothesized that:

- Social media is an additional tool for students to improve their vocabulary.
- Students who learn vocabulary through social media will be more inclined to improve their vocabulary knowledge.

## 6. Research Methodology

In this study, we used the descriptive method in order to discover the importance of using social media to improve students' knowledge of vocabulary.

**The choice of method** we used this method (descriptive) because it is the appropriate one to acquire and gather data about this issue.

**Research tools** in order to obtain sufficient data for this research, we used a questionnaire administered for students and an interview for EFL teachers. Besides a survey with EFL students in form of video .

**Sampling** our current work is concerned with students and teachers at Mila University. We administered a questionnaire to students of second year and the interview to a number of EFL teachers, but the survey was administered to different students from different divisions at both universities , Mila and Biskra university .

## 7. Structure of the Study

The present research is basically divided into three main chapters. . It starts with a general introduction that deals with the statement of the problem and the aim of the study.

It includes also the hypotheses and the research questions. The general introduction ends up with the tools of research and the structure of the dissertation. The first and the second chapters are concerned with the theoretical background of our research and the last chapter is concerned with the practical part.

The first chapter includes the most important aspects of vocabulary; it includes the definition, the importance and the main steps of teaching and learning vocabulary as well as the strategies of learning vocabulary. Then we introduce the best ways to improve ones vocabulary.

The second chapter includes the main concern of our study which is social media; we spoke about the definition, the history, and its terminology.

The last chapter is concerned with the analysis of the obtained results. In this chapter, we will deal with the research tools which will be analyzed and discussed. Furthermore, at the end, we put forward some recommendations on using social media for improving learners' vocabulary knowledge.



## **Chapter One: Learning and Teaching Vocabulary**

### **Introduction**

English language is one of the languages in the world used by many people in many countries. Studying a language cannot be separated from studying vocabulary because the knowledge of vocabulary is one of the important parts in achieving skills of any language and understanding it. Students need ,in communication, vocabulary which can help them to produce meaningful sentences and for that reason they have to develop their vocabulary knowledge and master it in order to be able to communicate with others. The more vocabulary students learn the more ideas they should have, so they can communicate by using their thoughts more effectively. Many studies have been achieved on syntax and phonology, as well as recently much more importance has been given to lexis, this is why we have chosen it as a field of interest. We believe that learning a language goes hand in hand with knowing its vocabulary and its words because words are the building blocks of any language and the units of meaning from which sentences, paragraphs and whole texts are formed . In this part of research, we will discuss the place of vocabulary in learning English as a foreign language. it includes also some hints concerning types of vocabulary, steps of teaching and learning vocabulary, and some techniques used by the teacher and learner to improve the learners' vocabulary knowledge.

### **1.1. Definition of Vocabulary**

Vocabulary learning is an essential part in foreign language learning . Any language requires knowing its vocabulary which is defined in (Oxford dictionary, 2007) as” the total number of words that make up a language”. The word vocabulary entered the English [lexicon](#) in the 1530s and it is derived from the Latin word “vocabularium” which

means : “a list of words” (What Are the Different Types of Vocabulary? ). The definition of vocabulary often relates to the different views about the nature and use of vocabulary.

Many authors have similar definitions about vocabulary. According to Hubbard (1983,P.67), vocabulary can be defined as a powerful carrier of meaning. Additionally, Siriwan (2007,p.19) suggested : “Vocabulary learning is referred to as learning a collection or the total stock of words in a language that are used in particular contexts”. This means that without establishing a strong vocabulary base first, comprehension and use of a language will not be achieved. Some authors suggest more complex definitions about vocabulary . Nation (2001,p.22) states that vocabulary knowledge implies knowing a word in the spoken form of the word and the spoken form can be recognized and understood it in and out of context rather than guessed. Hatch and Brown (1995,p.2 ) consider vocabulary as a list of words for a particular language or a set of words that an individual speaker of a language might use. In short, what the definitions above about vocabulary have in common is the fact that vocabulary knowledge requires not only word meanings knowledge, but it requires also the use of the words in the appropriate context and in a natural way and also includes the relationship between new words acquired and the ones already acquired.

## **1.2. Types of Vocabulary**

Some experts divided vocabulary into two types: active and passive vocabulary. Harmer (1991,p.25) distinguishes between these two types of vocabulary. The first type of vocabulary refers to the one that the students have been taught and that they are expected to be able to use. The second one refers to the words that the students will recognize when they meet them, but which they will probably not be able to pronounce . Hatch and Brown (1995,p25) indicated two kinds of vocabulary, namely receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary is words that learners recognize and understand when they are used in context, but which they cannot produce . However ; Productive

Vocabulary is the words that the learners understand and can pronounce correctly and use constructively in speaking and writing. It involves what is needed for receptive vocabulary plus the ability to speak or write at the appropriate time. Therefore, productive vocabulary can be addressed as an active process, because the learners can produce the words to express their thoughts to others .Webb (2005,p25 ).

### **1.3. What is a word?**

All languages obviously have words because any language emerges first as words. “We use words to think; the more words we know, the finer our understanding is about the world” Stahl (1999,p.11 ) . According to Clark (1993,p.1) , words are the starting point and without words and children will not be able to express their thoughts about people , places or things. Moreover, McCarthy (1994,p.5 ) states that it’s not enough to know only the meaning of a word , but learners should know also three principle points which are :

- a) what words it is usually associated with.
- b) whether it has any particular grammatical characteristics.
- c) how it is pronounced.

### **1.4. What is involved in knowing a word?**

<b>Form</b>	Spoken	Receptive	What does the word sound like?
		Productive	How is the word pronounced?
	Written	Receptive	What does the word look like?
		Productive	How is the word written and spelled?
	Word parts	Receptive	What parts are recognizable in this word?
		Productive	What word parts are needed to express this meaning?
<b>Meaning</b>	Form & meaning	Receptive	What meaning does this word form signal?
		Productive	What word form can be used to express this meaning?
	Concept & referents	Receptive	What is included in the concept?
		Productive	What items can the concept refer to?
	Associations	Receptive	What other words does this make us think of?
		Productive	What other words can we use instead of this one?
<b>Use</b>	Grammatical functions	Receptive	In what patterns does this word occur?
		Productive	In what patterns must we use this word?
	Collocations	Receptive	What words or types of words occur with this one?
		Productive	What words or types of words must we use with this one?
	Constraints on use (register, frequency...)	Receptive	Where, when and how often would we expect to meet this word?
		Productive	Where, when and how often can we use this word?

**Table 1.** “What is involved in knowing a word? “Nation (2001, p. 27)

knowing a word is a complex cognitive process, and it involves understanding many aspects of word knowledge. Researchers have identified different types of word knowledge. Nation (2001, p .27) points out that knowing a word involves knowing its form, meaning and use. And each category is broken down into receptive and productive knowledge. Each of these three categories can be found in table the above which signifies that the word knowledge requires three main stages . Starting by the word form, the word meaning and then the word use. The word form contains the knowledge of the spoken and the written form besides its different parts. The second component is the word meaning. It deals with the relation between the form and the meaning of a specific word . Finally, the last stage of knowing a word is being familiar with its use. It deals with the application of the word meaning in context.

#### **1.4. How Many Words Does a Student Needs to Know?**

According to Claiborne (1983, p. 5), reports of the size of the English language in the popular press have a very wide range: from 400,000 to 600,000 words . Thornbury (2002, p. 20) argues that most second language learners ‘will be lucky to have acquired 5,000 word families even after several years of study’. It has been calculated that a classroom learner would need more than eighteen years of learning to supply the same amount of vocabulary input that occurs in just one year in natural settings. Thus , the number of words that the student needs to know depends on the learner’s needs. A learner needs a core vocabulary that will serve him in most situations; this core would be about 2,000 words. Vocabulary knowledge size must take into account productive and receptive knowledge, then there is knowledge of spelling and pronunciation, of derivative forms and of different shades of meaning .Again, these different aspect of ‘knowing’ suggest that the task of acquiring a functional lexicon is more complicated than simply memorizing words. It is not easy to predict learner’s needs nor to ensure that the words that have been given in a course of study will be learned. To answer the previous question, i-e, how many words does the learner need to know, pace (2013) suggested that :

1. 250 words constitute the essential core of a language, those without which you cannot construct any sentence.
2. 750 words constitute those that are used every single day by every person who speaks the language.
3. 2500 words constitute those that should enable you to express everything you could possibly want to say, albeit often by awkward circumlocutions.
4. 5000 words constitute the active vocabulary of native speakers without higher education.

5. 10,000 words constitute the active vocabulary of native speakers with higher education.
6. 20,000 words constitute what you need to recognize passively in order to read, understand, and enjoy a work of literature such as a novel by a notable author.



### 1.5. The Importance of Vocabulary

In production, when we have a meaning or concept that we want to express, we need to have a store of words from which we can select to express this meaning or concept. “When students travel, they don’t carry grammar books, they carry dictionaries” Krashen, as cited in Lewis (1993, p. 25). Many researchers argue that vocabulary is one of the most important, if not the most important, components in learning a foreign language and it is the first step to be taught before teaching other aspects of language. Vocabulary is very essential in conveying messages, and grammar is not sufficient in learning any language. This is supported by Wilkins in Thornbury (2002) who states that “Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” p.13.

Moreover ,The linguist Carol Griffiths (2013,P.46) sum up the importance of vocabulary learning and he states :

If you spend most of your time studying grammar, your English will not improve very much. You will see most improvement if you learn more words and expressions. You can say very little with grammar, but you can say almost anything with words !

It means that learners cannot improve better if they only spend lots of time for learning grammar. They can improve their English if they focus more in words and expressions. In other words , they can see what others say by looking the grammar, but they almost can speak everything using words.

In short, vocabulary has an important role in teaching learning process. According to Scrivener ( 1994,p.75) , in classroom there are five roles of vocabulary, which are:

1. Vocabulary is very important and needs to be dealt with systematically in its own right ; it is not simply an add-on to grammar or skills lessons.
2. We need to distinguish between vocabulary for productive use and for receptive recognition.
3. The learner will be difficult to finish the work, if they have first met some new vocabulary.
4. We need to deal not only with single word lexical items. But also with longer, multi word items.
5. Training in the use of English-English dictionaries provides learners with a vital tool for self-study.

## **1.6.Sources of Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is the most important element in teaching learning process, therefore we must improve our vocabulary. To improve vocabulary, we must know where the source of vocabulary comes from so that the student will find it easy to learn English. According to

Harmer (2001,p. 56), there are some sources to learn vocabulary in teaching learning process, which are:

**a. Words list :** is a way of organizing vocabulary for learning and it doesn't matter a great deal if they are put together in a random way. Students can learn vocabulary wherever they are, because it is easy to bring.

**b. Vocabulary book :** It is also integrated into skills work . There are many vocabularies and tasks in vocabulary book which can be an exercise for the students.

**c. The teacher:** has the great influence in improving the student's vocabulary. He is a potential fruitful source of vocabulary input. Not only in terms of an accidental learning, but also as a means of introducing vocabulary through teacher talk. He must make students feel enjoy in learning vocabulary. So they will be easier in remembering new vocabulary that they have gotten

**d. Learner:** each student can improve his/her vocabulary by discussion and sharing ideas with other students, so that they learn new words and find it an easy task to communicate with others and understanding what they have read or hear.

**e. Short text :** Short text for vocabulary improvement purposes ,whether spoken or written , have several advantages over learning words from lists.

## **1.7. Steps of Learning Vocabulary**

Since “without grammar very little can be conveyed and without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” Thornbury (2002, p. 13), language teachers should be more interested in how learners can improve their vocabulary. As a result, learners should be provided with a large range of vocabulary which enables them to exchange ideas and discuss any topic. This can be done through five steps that are essential for learners in their vocabulary learning. These steps are suggested by Brown and Payne (1995,p.267) as it is shown in (figure 2) . The five steps are:



**1.7.1 encountering new words:** The first main step for vocabulary learning is encountering new words; which means looking for sources forwards. Here, The learners' task is to read books, magazines, newspapers, stories, or to listen to English songs.

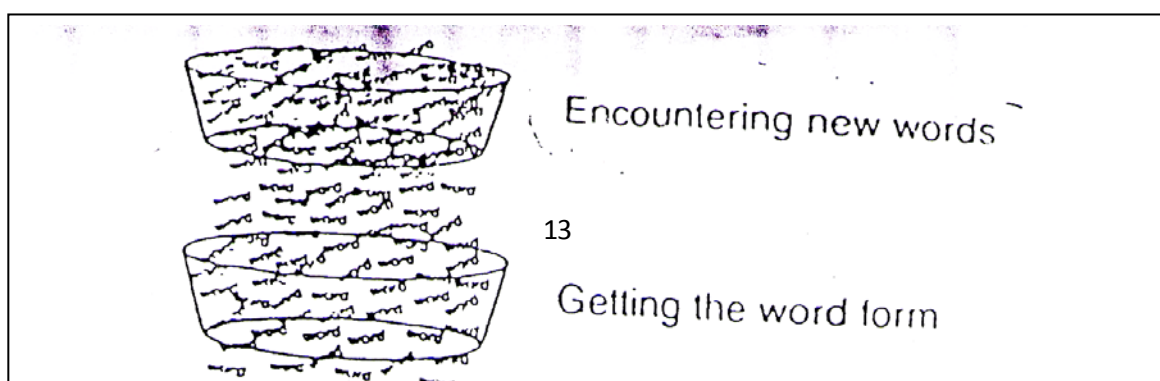
**1.7.2. Getting the word form :** The second essential step for vocabulary learning is getting a clear image of the word form, spelling and pronunciation. Getting the form of a word is considered a very important step ,especially, when learners are asked to define words.

**1.7.3. Getting the word meaning :** The third step for vocabulary learning is getting the word meaning. It is done through some strategies such as asking the native speakers or people who know the learners' native language about the meaning of the word , stating the meaning to someone in order to enable them to give the exact word. Another way of getting word definition is having a bilingual friend or teacher in order to help the learner to get the word meaning. Finally, the most popular way of learning the word meaning is by contextualization or putting words in situation. The learner then will guess the meaning of new words easily.

**1.7.4. consolidating word form and meaning in memory :** The fourth main step is to emphasize the consolidation of word form and meaning in memory. It is learning word through their appropriate context in which learners can acquire the word meaning and form at the same time.

**1.7.5. Using the words :** The final step in learning vocabulary is using the words.

Finally , learners need all these five steps in order to improve their vocabulary and learn full knowledge of the words they want to learn. This can be done through a variety of activities, strategies, or techniques that the learners apply in each step.



**Figure 1.** Five Essential Steps to Learn New Words . Hutch and Brown(1995, p.373)

The figure above summarized the five steps suggested by Brown and Payne , which are very essential for learners in their vocabulary learning process. Because learners should be provided with a large range of vocabulary, which enables them to exchange ideas and discuss any topic. This can be done through these five steps.

## **1.8. Steps of Teaching Vocabulary**

In the field of teaching vocabulary , Nation and Newton (1997, p.39) proposed that the teachers must take into consideration three main principles ,In designing a vocabulary course ,which are :

### **1.8.1. Selection**

Early researchers looked for the best vocabulary that can result to a best learning. They brought lists of the most widely used words in early stages of learning. In addition, they took as a second variable of vocabulary selection the range of words used in spoken

language. However, frequency and range are not the only two factors; there are also other factors such as combination, definition and substitution of words. The most appropriate learning strategy here is “selective attention” i.e. the teacher should draw the learners’ attention to the target word and he should ensure that he notices it.

### 1.8.2. Sequencing

teaching vocabulary is based on two main sequences .The first one is levels of vocabulary; and the second one is grouping and ordering words. The table below is adapted from Nation and Newton (1997,p.239) which represents the division of levels of vocabulary.

Levels	Number of Words	Text Coverage %
High frequency words	2 000	87
Academic vocabulary	800	08
Technical vocabulary	2 000	03
Low frequency words	123.200	02
Total	128 000	100

**Table 1.2:** Levels of Acquiring Vocabulary . Nation and Newton (1997.p. 239)

The table above signifies that The use of English is based on 2000 high frequent words. When the learner acquires these words, he moves to the next level which is academic vocabulary. However, low frequency words cannot be read in academic texts or in novels. They are learnt for the use of English for social purposes. Technical vocabulary has a very narrow range because each field has its own technical words. For instance, medicine, chemistry and mathematics have different vocabularies and terminologies.

### **1.8.3. Presentation**

Vocabulary lists can be a tool which used to make the teaching learning process easier for the teacher and learner. High frequency vocabulary is taught through vocabulary exercise or individual learning because this type of vocabulary includes few numbers of frequent words. However, in low-frequency words there are words that do not deserve the teachers' attention. They are rather guessed from the context . There are several ways or general principles for dealing with high and low frequency vocabulary. They can be put into practice directly or indirectly. Both of these approaches require reflection and planning on the part of the teacher. In a direct approach to vocabulary teaching there will certainly be explicit vocabulary exercises However , In an indirect approach to vocabulary teaching, the teachers' concern for vocabulary learning will not be so explicit.

## **1.9. Techniques of Teaching and Learning Vocabulary**

Teachers and learners have to be conscious about the way they learn and teach . Here are some techniques used in EFL teaching and learning.

### **1.9.1. Techniques of Learning Vocabulary**

Researchers have observed that the majority of EFL students are facing the obstacles of learning vocabulary because they are living in non-native English speaking country. Teachers and learners have to pay much attention not only to 'what to learn' but also 'how to learn'. In order to improve the learners' vocabulary , the focus is placed on the learning techniques. The language learning techniques are special ways to help EFL students to realize, to learn, to memorize new words and to enhance their abilities of vocabulary knowledge. Thornbury (1988, p. 161) sums up the learning vocabulary techniques as follow:

- 1-He focused initially on what was necessary for the sake of achieving a minimum level of effective communication.
- 2-At the early stages of learning, he used to memorize the items instead of learning the rules.
- 3-He used to review what he had learned through the principle of distributed practice
- 4-He avoided pressing himself while reviewing what he had learned .
- 5-He acquired a critical mass of words he thinks to be sufficient as a core vocabulary for the reading of texts.
- 6-He chose texts whose content was known to him.
- 7-He inferred words he would learn intentionally, and highlighted them on the page.
- 8-He constantly reviewed the target items.
- 9-He used to repeat the new sounds, in order to stick them in his memory.
- 10-He explained the sound of words to facilitate storage in memory.
- 11-He used sub vocalisation techniques to assist memory.

### **1.9.2. Techniques of Teaching Vocabulary**

Whenever we start learning a new language and try to use it , We should learn vocabulary. However, studying a specific language causes some problems, because many students consider learning vocabulary as a boring activity. Teacher should keep looking for ways to make learning vocabulary easier and more pleasant. Teaching techniques is the teachers' task to use appropriate techniques of vocabulary teaching in order to motivate and help the students in learning process. These techniques are very important in teaching learning process and according to Campillo (1995, p.45), it's divided into three main types : visual techniques , verbal techniques , and translation.

1)Visual techniques :

In teaching the meaning of words , we have to establish a link between the word and its meaning and the visual presentation of a word includes using different tools such as : paper of song lyrics, pictures ,drawings, flashcards ,slides , gestures or actions .

## 2) Verbal techniques :

There are other techniques which can be used to present vocabulary by giving examples, using illustrative situations to explain abstract word , providing definitions , synonyms and opposites.

## 3) Translation

EFL learners find different difficulties in learning and they see that the use of native language can be a facilitator .In order to familiarize learners with L2 words, the teacher can use translation in the classroom. Using this technique can be helpful in conveying meanings .It saves time , allows us to check correct comprehension. It can be concluded that translation is a good technique. However, teachers need to look for other techniques to be used as alternatives. For example, they can sometimes use visual presentation in addition to or instead of using translation.

## **1.10. Assessment of Vocabulary**

Schmitt (2000) stated : “Most obviously, if vocabulary is considered to be an important component of language knowledge, then it naturally needs to be assessed in some way.”p.163. Hence, vocabulary knowledge can be measured in different ways. According to Lee (2005,p67), there are two ways of assessing vocabulary knowledge. One is informal and the other is formal. It should be understood that students know more words than they use in their day –to- day conversations. It has been once said : “*Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.*” Therefore, Our students’ knowledge of vocabulary have to be

assessed relative to what their skills are. It could be done by doing formal assessments or informal assessments.

#### **1.10.1. The Formal Type**

Formal assessment of vocabulary relies on standardized tests or periodical exams at university level.

#### **1.10.2. The Informal Type**

This informal way of assessing vocabulary is to construct a vocabulary inventory by selecting words from the "text book" the student uses in the classroom.

### **1.11. Problems in teaching and learning vocabulary**

Learning vocabulary is not an easy task. There are many problems occurring in learning vocabulary faced by the students. Roger (1995,p.43) states that the difficulty of vocabulary items depends on a number of factors. Which are:

**a. Similarity to L1 :** The difficulty of vocabulary items often depends on how a similar item is in form and meaning to the students' first language.

**b. Similarity to English words already known:** Once the students have some English words that relate to an English word that they are already familiar which is easier than one, which is not. For example, if students have already met the word *conscious*, they should be able to guess the meaning of *unconscious*.

**c. Connotation :** Connotation of the word is another difficult aspect that the learners have to take into consideration. For example, either *skinny* or *slim* could be used to describe someone who is thin. But these two words have very different in their connotation and by choosing one of them however; the speaker actually conveys a particular attitude. *Skinny* is negative connotation, while *slim* is positive connotation.

**d. Spelling and pronunciation :** The spelling of English word can cause problems for EFL learners. Particular spelling patterns can also cause confusion where the pronunciation concerned. For example: Tough, Dough, through

**e. Multi- word items :** A lexical item may consist of more than one word, as in a compound like *babysitter*, or *supermarket* or a phrasal verb such as *to break something in*.

**f. Collocation:** lexical item collocation can also causes difficulty. For example we say that persons injured or but things are damaged.

## **1.12. Improving students' Vocabulary**

Limited vocabulary prevents the learners from expressing their thoughts and ideas , whereas, a strong vocabulary gives them the right words to use at the right time. In order to improve the students' vocabulary, According to Edwards (2006, p.71), there are efficient ways which are:

### **a. Be aware of words**

Many students with poor vocabularies do not pay attention to the words around them. The first step to improve vocabulary is start paying attention of the word.

### **b. Reading**

Reading is an essential way which can help learners to find new and interesting words. Like reading : magazines, books and newspapers. Identify the words that you don't know and write them down.

### **c. Use dictionaries**

Using the dictionaries is helpful to look up the meaning of the words that you find while reading." The dictionary is filled with information about words and the use of words" (Mullen, 1963, p. 29). It can be a basic reference tool when the learner using words in doing the task.



#### **d. Use index cards to study**

Students should write the new word on an index card. Then write the definition and a sentence using the word on the back of the card. This card should be always with the students wherever they go.

#### **e. Review vocabulary words regularly**

Keep the index cards, and study them although just a few minutes. The words that have written in index card must be always present everywhere. So the learner can read the words.

#### **f. Try vocabulary–building books**

Some students have great success with vocabulary-building books or website. These can be an excellent help if the learner enjoy doing the exercise.

### **Conclusion**

Through the foregoing chapter, we have tried to discuss some ideas related to teaching and learning vocabulary such as definition, vocabulary types and its importance, Furthermore, this chapter provided and explained the steps of vocabulary teaching and also learning and many techniques for learning and teaching vocabulary. At the end, we showed and explained the difficulties students face when learning vocabulary. As a conclusion, we can say that it is not enough when teaching vocabulary to provide learners with a number of words, but it is more difficult and complicated process .In the process of learning a foreign language , learners need to learn and to understand a large amount of words. Moreover, the teacher needs to change learners' perspectives on vocabulary learning and makes them aware of different techniques that can help them to realize their goal which is being knowledgeable about language vocabulary. He also has to look for ways that may encourage them and create the desire to learn better. The teacher's

responsibility appears in providing learners with clear hints about what they need in order to learn any word, and how they can enlarge their word knowledge.

## **Chapter Two: Social Media in Teaching and Learning Vocabulary**

### **Introduction**

Our contemporary society calls 21<sup>st</sup> century: “the century of information” and they are right in this description. The current chapter goes over one of the discoveries of 21<sup>st</sup> century, social media , which is not a new concept .It is the fastest growing web application in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Social media has impacted many aspects of human lives, thereby impacting learning and teaching EFL. It provides EFL learners with unlimited resources of authentic written, audio, and video materials in order to supplement lessons. EFL students can find a wide and different collection of materials for learners to study in class or after class for independent learning and to encourage learner autonomy. More recently, the social media websites has created new opportunities for EFL learners to interact in reliable ways that were previously difficult to realize.

This chapter introduces a general overview of the topic of study that relates to social media and EFL learners and their vocabulary improvement. First, what is internet and its history are discussed, followed by a brief description of the terminology of social media and some of its famous forms , including : Facebook, tweeter , blogs , wikis , Electronic mail and Google + , . Then, the use of social media in EFL settings and vocabulary improvement are presented. Finally, the chapter concludes the advantages that social media offers in the area of EFL learning. However, we are also going to point out the problems that these media might present.

## **2.1 Definition of Internet**

The word internet is a short for “internetworking “. According to Keith and Ruskin (1998, p. 1004) , it is a global system of interconnected networks of computers linking many different types of computers all over the world . It is a very large wide area network (WAN) which connect computers and networks around the world, and that makes it possible for millions of users to connect to one another via telephone lines, cable lines and satellites.

Robert, Kahn and Vinton (1999, p. 2) stated that The Internet has connect the technology of communications and computing to provide instant connectivity and global information services to its users at very low cost. The internet is a great boon in our life because it plays a major role in people’s lives today. Formally, students use the Internet for instance, when searching for information and when completing tests. ( Harmer , 2007, p. 2,19) writes that there is a great deal of information on the Internet, if one only knows how and where to find it .However , informally or in their free time they chat with friends, play online computer games and are involved in fan fiction, i.e. using published material to create pictures and films etc. ( Scheller & Wikström 2010).

## **2.2 History of internet**

The history of internet began with the development of electronic computers in the 1950’s and the origins of the internet date back to the 1960’s when research was commissioned by the US government. APRANET was the first WAN and had only four sites in 1969. In 1983, it was replaced by TCP/ IP (internet protocol) which became the most widely used network protocol in the word . Later, In 1989 , the US government lifted restriction on the use of INTERNET , and allow its usage for commercial purposes as well . In 1990, ARPANET was transferred to NSFNET which was then connected to the

CSNET this linked universities around North America .It was then connected to the EUNET that connected research centers in Europe. Robert, Kahn and Vinton (1999, p. 6, 11).

### **2.3. Definition of Social Media**

Dewing (2010 , p.1) defined social media as follow: “ The term social media refers to the wide range of internet-based and mobile services that allow users to participate in online exchanges, contribute user-created content, or join online communities” . The term social media was first known , in 1994 -1995, when the first web- based social networking site, Geocities, was founded (Goble, 2012.p34 ) .In fact, there are various definitions of social media concept because it is a broad term covering a large range of websites .

( Lieb 2009) defined social media as follow : “Social media is digital, content-based communications based on the interactions enabled by a plethora of web technologies”p56. Social media is generally defined in (Merriam-Webster dictionary) as “forms of electronic communication as web sites for social networking and micro blogging through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content such as videos” .

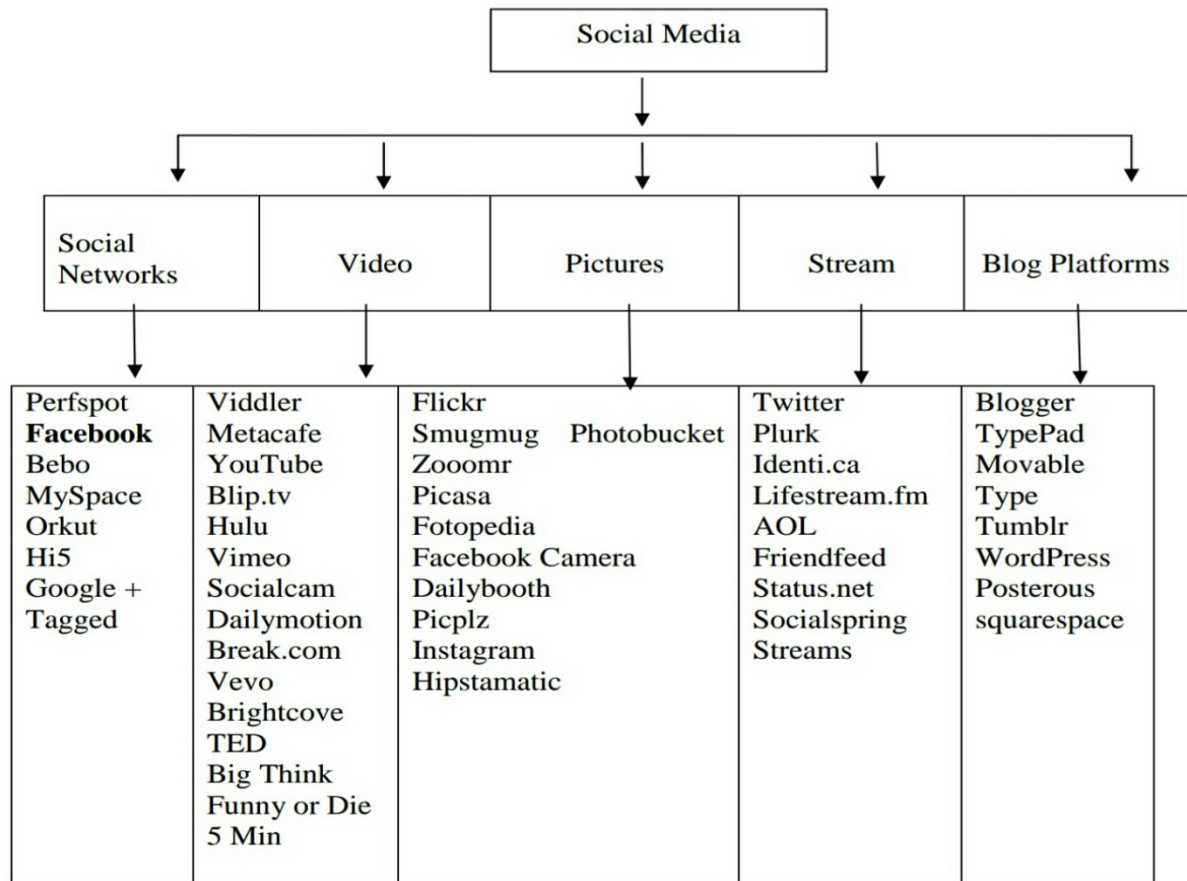
### **2.4. Social media Vs Social networking**

The terms social media and social networking are used interchangeably. Social media refers to social software in the form of web sites and other online communities, such as social networking and micro blogging created by a large group of people (known as users) to share information, ideas, personal messages, conversations, or to develop Social and professional contact .However , social networking is the online communities in which

people interact with each other . Its users can create and organize a profile for themselves, edit and comment on each other's posts and share information with others.

Davis, Amen, Aguilar and Canché (2012,p. 82) defined social media technology as web-based and mobile applications that allow individuals and organizations to create, engage, and share ideas or existing content in various forms of communications in digital environments. In other words, social media sites are applications that enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and sending e-mails and instant messages between each other. These personal profiles can include any type of information, including photos, video, audio files, and blogs (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 63). According to (Solis, 2012,p24), Social networks include Perspot, Facebook, Bebo, MySpace, Orkut, Hi5, Google+ and Tagged . In short, The difference between social media and socialnetworking is that social media is a broader term, whereas social networking sites are one category of social media (Davis et al., 2012,p.59 ).

Table (1) shows some categories of social media including social networks, videos, pictures, streams, and blogs, as well as examples of each category .



**Table .1** “Introducing the Conversation Prism,” . Adapted from Solis (2012, p24).

## 2.5. Social Media Forms

According to Dewing (2010,p.5) , social media Web sites, such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook, have become extremely popular among Internet users who wish to share their ideas, videos, and other activities online . Social media covers many digital tools such as : Facebook , YouTube ,Instagram , twitter , linked ,del.icio.us , MySpace . Even Email and SMS are social media tool too .

### 2.5.1. Facebook

Facebook is a huge, online community that being one of the most famous sites on the internet, it is founded in 2004 by “Mark Zuckerberg”. (Rosen, 2007.p.17) explains that the name Facebook originates from “the small photo albums that colleges once gave to

incoming freshmen and faculty to help them cope with meeting so many new people”. Facebook allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and videos, send messages or join common interest user groups and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. (Kent Joshi, 2011, p.05) stated that: “in a paper facebook, you see photos and biographies of your classmates. On Facebook, you see your friend’s latest photos and videos with, at times, an extensive biography”. Hence, Facebook has become one of the most successful social media sites because of its features platform that set itself apart from other social media , and that made the word “*social media*” become well known .



Figure 1. A Profile page on Facebook

## 2.5.2.Blogs

The word blog is taken from the word web log. Blogs are another representative of social media. According to (Weber, 2009,p.36 ), Blogs let user to publish and participate in a multithreaded conversations online .



Figure.2 . A profile Page on Blogs

### 2.5.3. Wikis

The word “ wiki “ comes from the Hawaiian word meaning “quick “ or “fast “. It is a free, open content online encyclopaedia. The first Wiki was developed in 1994 by Ward Cunningham. Anyone can sign in to Wikipedia, edit , delete or modify the content and many people are constantly improving Wikipedia by making thousands of changes per hour. (Web Dictionary) .

### 2.5.4.

A  
servic  
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Figure.3. Page on Wikipedia

microblogging  
ows registered  
wing networks  
at am I doing”

.Twitter members can broadcast tweets and follow other users' tweets by using multiple platforms and devices. Tweeter users can follow people with whom you’re interested in.

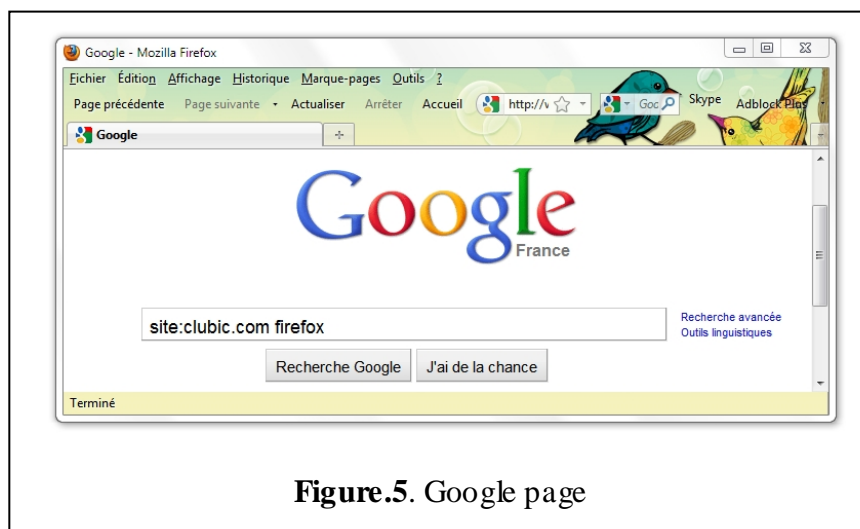


Figure.4. a page on twitter



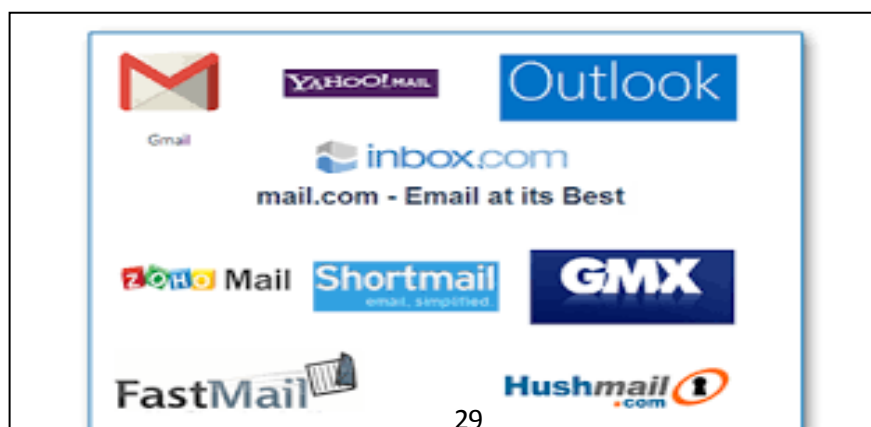
### 2.5.5. Google+

It is Google's social networking project, designed to replicate the way people interact offline more closely than is the case in other social networking services. The project's slogan is “Real- life sharing rethought for the web.” (Web dictionary)



### 2.5.6. Electronic mail

Pranjal ,Bogawar and Kishor (2012,p.420) stated that ectronic mail often abbreviated as Email which founded by “ Ray Tomlinson “. It is a method of exchanging digital messages from one person to another one .



**Figure.6.** Some Email Service Providers

## **2.6. Students and Social Media**

Nowadays, students are digital learners and continuously use social media to communicate with each other. Students are equipped with laptops, iPads, different Smart phones, tablets, and all these provide them with easier access to social networks. Introducing social media in education is not an easy step, however; Jones and Shao (2011, p.87) found that students positively respond to the incorporation of new technologies into the teaching and learning process provided that the technology usage is well-conceived, purposeful, and properly integrated into the learning process. According to Phillips, Baird, and Fogg (2011, p.3), students spend as much (or more) time online in an informal learning environment--interacting with peers and receiving feedback--than they do with their teachers in the traditional classroom.

## **2.7. The Application of Social Media in EFL Classrooms**

Social media have been increasingly replacing traditional media such as newspapers, magazines and television during the last decade. It has been used in many areas and for different purposes. For example, it is used in news media to provide news to audiences, or in business for advertising products or surveying customers' needs. Social media are also used in the educational setting (e.g. EFL settings). Social media has grown quickly in both personal and academic use. As Chen and Bryer (2012, p.89) stated, "Social media have grown quickly for academic use and infiltrated the education area". Thus, it brings the world to the classroom and enables students to communicate across the world and it breaks down time, distance and accessibility barriers and brings many opportunities for learning to happen anywhere and anytime. For this reason, many studies have been

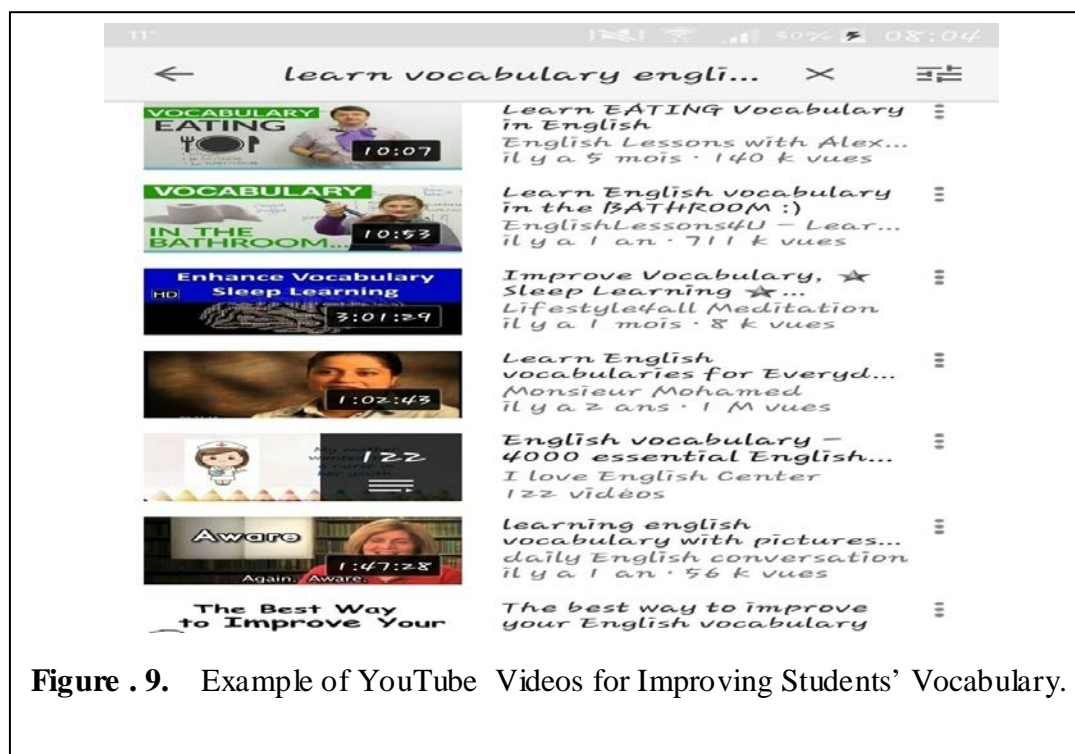


There is also another website which is Facebook. It is the most successful social networking site and an excellent way to communicate, it may motivate learners to share ideas and thoughts that would be very difficult to duplicate in a classroom setting. Using facebook may impact the students' vocabulary by joining groups that have been set up specifically for learning English and learning new vocabularies . The following figure will represent an example of a page on facebook ,that is named “Vocabulary Page “,which contains thousands of followers who post every day new words with pictures to make other members understand well and memorise these new words.



In addition , YouTube is another popular social media website and a vast resource for educational content,which has millions of different videos about learning English and its vocabulary . It can be a perfect tool for EFL students to improve their vocabulary competence because some people learn better by watching than reading . Through

YouTube videos , EFL learners can bring scientists , professors and experts into their classroom to help them learn from great tutorials . The following figure is just one result of a search about vocabulary on youtub channel .



## 2.9. Advantages of Social Media in EFL Classes

Many have pointed to the educational benefits of these media and all agree that with the right guidance ,the advantages outweigh the disadvantages (Connolly, M. 2011 ).He claimed also that : “The internet and social media train our brains to skim and scan “. So, social media can be used as an educational tool and to facilitate EFL learning by allowing interaction between the teacher and the learner with different tools and websites via the social media platform students can learn from each other as well as socializing with their peers and develop their communication skills . (Smith, 2009.p.45) mentioned that social scientists have concluded that being involved in groups ,via social networking sites , has a positive impact on health and well-being. Social media can also be a source to increase doing projects on groups .Moreover, the social media sites give EFL students the

opportunity to learn about other cultures, and to communicate directly with native speakers who can help them improving their vocabulary knowledge .

### **1.10. Disadvantages of social media in EFL Classes**

Using social media by EFL learners creates bad habits such using too many short forms in writing. Moreover ( Manan et al2012) pointed out that engaging with social media may also increase the usage of poor English quality because students tend to use non-standard English when interacting with each other online . A negative effect of social media in terms of learning English is that it may not provide a suitable environment for formal teaching and learning , Shih( 2011,p.67). Social media can a mother tongue language , which disturb them from improving their level of EFL. Using social media all the time can result in miscommunication and makes students isolated from peers and society because the writing can be lacking in the opportunities for expression, explanation, and clarification that are found in face-to-face interactions (Zaidieh, 2012,p. 18,21). In short , social media can affects students' well-being, and affects their academic outcomes.

### **Conclusion**

It can be concluded that Social media has already made a big impact on education , especially in EFL learning, in just less than five years of its existence . It has definitely revolutionized the way students communicate today. Social media contains motivating and enjoyable activities that make EFL students' interaction with the language easier and more useful. In addition, it allows learners to learn by themselves. It can be a complement tool to the traditional educational system in higher education. Hence, there are significant advantages to motivate using social media in order to reduce geographical dispersions and support learning. That's why almost all learners are frequent users of online technology

and they all use social media in a similar way to interact with other engaged factors. Since social media plays an increasingly important role in the daily lives of university students in nowadays , it is important to pay attention to its use in teaching and learning. Social media in EFL class is simply a new tool for timeless goals to create, share, and connect with our educational community , Whether between classmates with each other or with teachers, . Moreover, social media have many characteristics, which help the teacher to teach vocabulary in a useful and appropriate way, and as much as they use it, they will be more developed. Dealing with social media web sites will expand learners' vocabulary knowledge since they focus on learning new words. More significantly, teachers can use it to practice or even to assess learners' vocabulary.. In short, we can use Social media to break down the walls of our current and traditional system and expand the opportunity for learning. There are a number of ways to use social media websites to encourage EFL students to produce their own materials to share on the Internet , and it is now possible to use these online tools to improve students' English vocabulary knowledge .

## **Chapter Three : Discussion of the the Students' Questionnaire and Teachers' Interview**

### **Introduction**

The present research represents the investigation of what have been mentioned in the theoretical part concerning exploring the impact of using social media as a teaching-learning method to develop students' knowledge of vocabulary. To serve the needs of our hypotheses, we are going to deal with presenting and analyzing the gathered data that was collected through a questionnaire and a written interview. The questionnaire was given to second year students and an interview to their teachers .This chapter is devoted to the presentation and the analysis of the data. As a first step, we start by introducing the sample of the study; second, we describe, analyze and interpret the questionnaire and the interview results, which in turn help us confirm or disconfirm our hypotheses about the effects of using social media in improving vocabulary. To conclude, we are going to present our research findings.

### **1. Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire**

#### **1.1. Sample Description**

The (35) students who responded to the questionnaire were chosen among the total number of the second year LMD students' population (120) at the University of Mila. Second year EFL students during the academic year 2016/2017 are divided into (3) groups and each group contains from (35) to (45) students.

#### **1.2. Questionnaire Description**

The students' questionnaire is designed to obtain data concerning the students' opinion about the learning situations and their attitude towards using social media for improving their vocabulary knowledge . The questionnaire is made of 16 items. The type of questions used are a combination of close- ended questions where the participants are



asked to tick the appropriate answers, and open-ended questions where they are given the chance to provide their own answers or justification. The questionnaire includes items that organized in three sections, each section intended to investigate and provide particular information .The first section includes general information which contains four items. Section two contains an overview on learning vocabulary which has 5 items. The last section discusses social media as a learning strategy, which contains seven items.

### 1.3. Analysis of the Results

#### Section one: back ground Information

The current section is intended to gather data about the general information about students, as well as their choice of English. It also highlights how they assess their levels in English.

**Question Item 1:** *Specify your gender.*

- a. Female
- b. Male

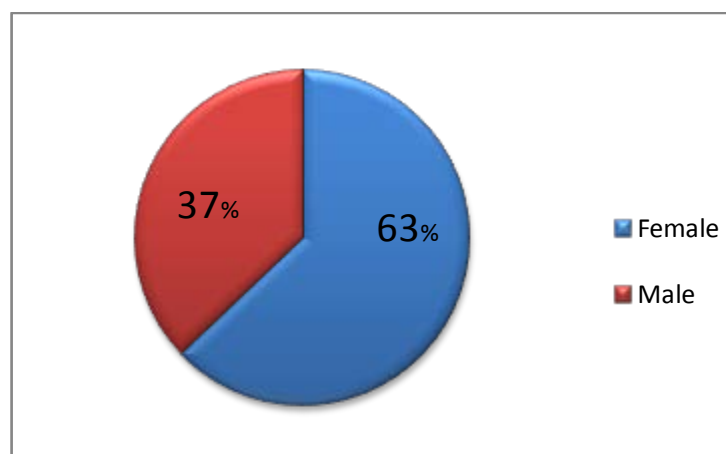


Figure.1 : Students Gender

The first question aims to notice the respondent students age, and from the figure, it is clear that the highest majority of students are female. This high female' representation in the English Department at Mila University shows that females are more interested in

studying foreign languages especially English. Maybe because boys prefer to study other branches .

**Question Item 2:** *Why have you chosen English to study?*

- a. To get a job
- b. To travel
- c. I love it

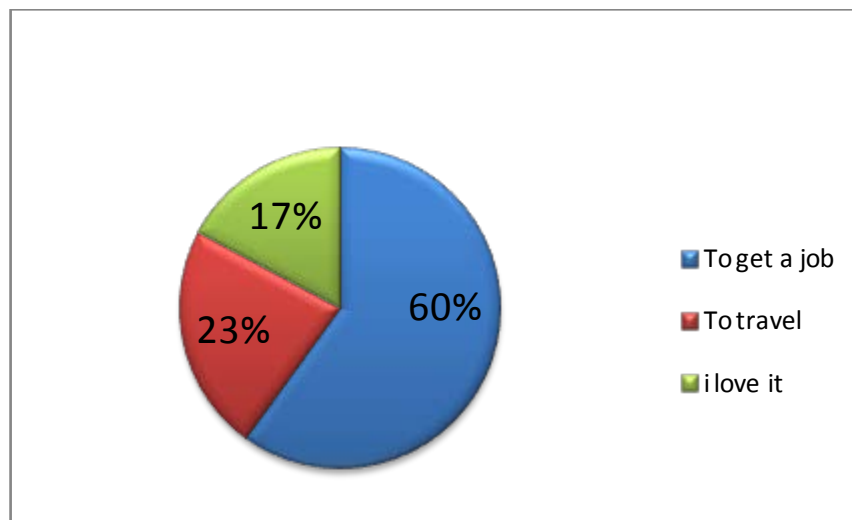


Figure 2 : Reasons of Choosing English

This question seeks to know the reason behind choosing English language to study .The figure shows that the majority of students (60%) are chosen English language, in order to get a job. (23 %) of students need it to travel, others (17 % ) have chosen English because they love it . These results ensure that most EFL students at Mila university did not study English because they love it , but for getting a job.

**Question Item 3 :** *How long have you been studying English ?*

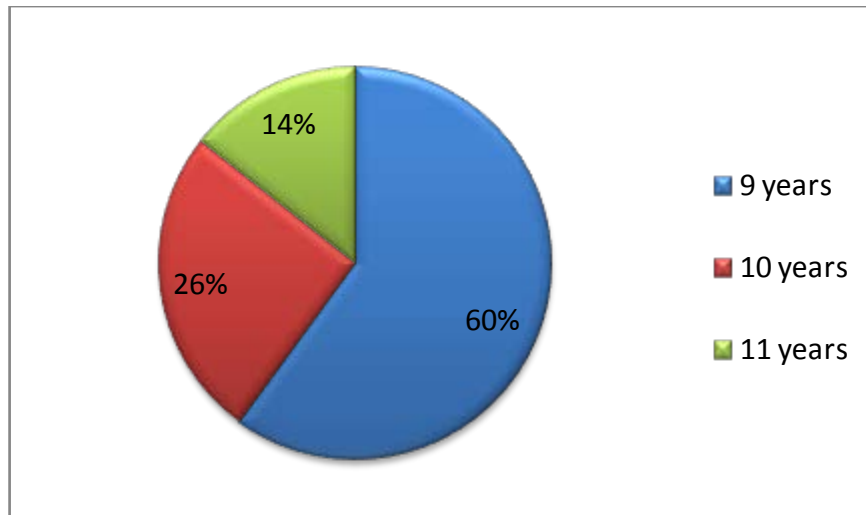


Figure. 3.years of studying EFL

We asked this question to measure the students' experience in learning EFL. The majority of the students (21) making up (60%) stated that they have been studying English for nine years. This is believed to be the normal number. However, those (09) who stated that they have been studying English for ten years (26%) and those (05) who declared that they have been studying it for eleven years or more (14%) are believed that they have repeated one or many years.

**Question Item 4 :** *How do you consider your level in English ?*

- a. Very good
- b. Good
- c. Average
- d. Poor

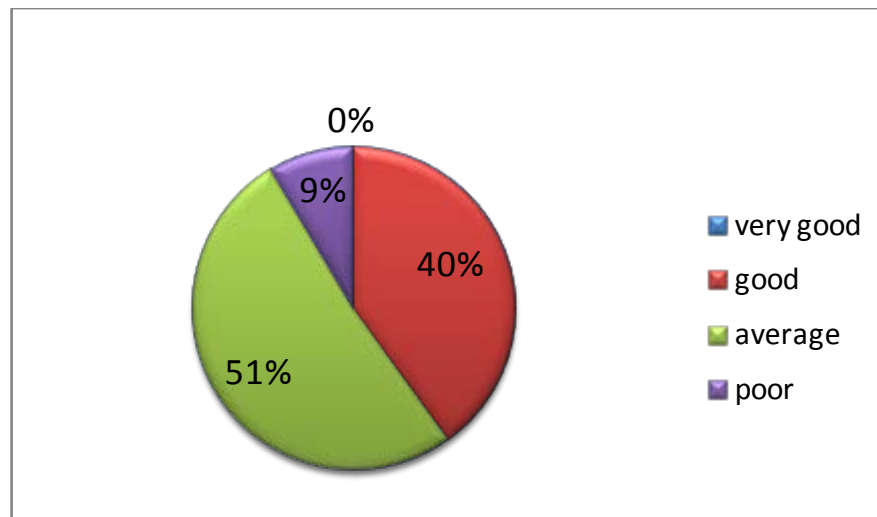


Figure.4: Students' Level in English

This question item is meant to notice the students opinion towards their level in English language. The results show that most of the students (51%) claimed that their level in English is average. Others (40%) stated that they are good in English .Whereas the least percentage of students showed that their level is poor. This rate indicates that students have diverse levels and that may back to the previous knowledge or the learning methods used by students.

## Section Two: An Overview on Learning Vocabulary

This section deals with the students' perception of learning vocabulary. It investigates also whether students have difficulties with vocabulary improvement, despite the different techniques they use to learn and improve their vocabulary knowledge.

**Question Item 5:** *How would you rate your vocabulary knowledge level?*

- a. Excellent
- b. Poor
- c. Good
- d. Fair

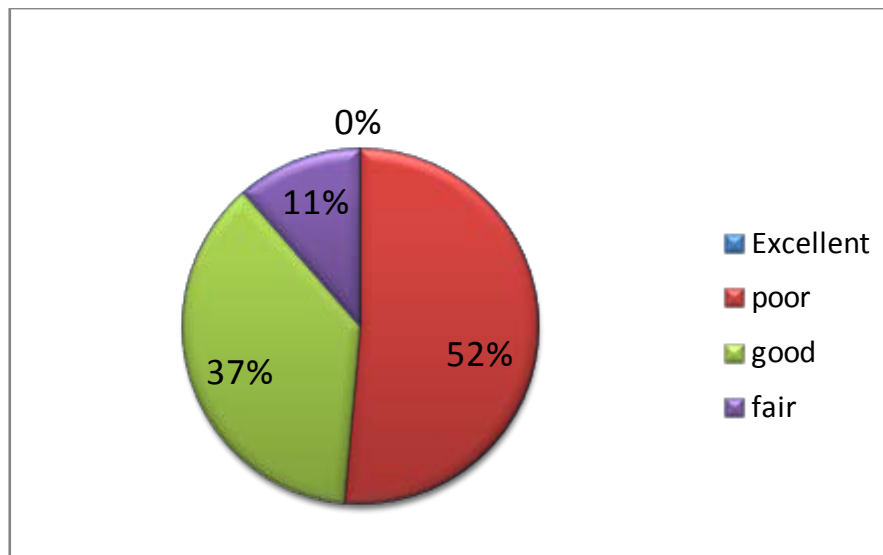


Figure.5: Students' Level in Vocabulary Knowledge

From this question , we want to realize the students views about their level in vocabulary knowledge .As expected, no one from students rate his/ her level as excellent. However, the majority of students (52 %) evaluated their vocabulary knowledge level as poor. (37%) of them stated, that it is good and the rest claimed that their vocabulary level is fair .That shows the big problem faced by EFL students which is the weak storage of vocabulary.

**Question Item 6 :** *Do you learn new English vocabulary in your daily life ?*

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Sometimes

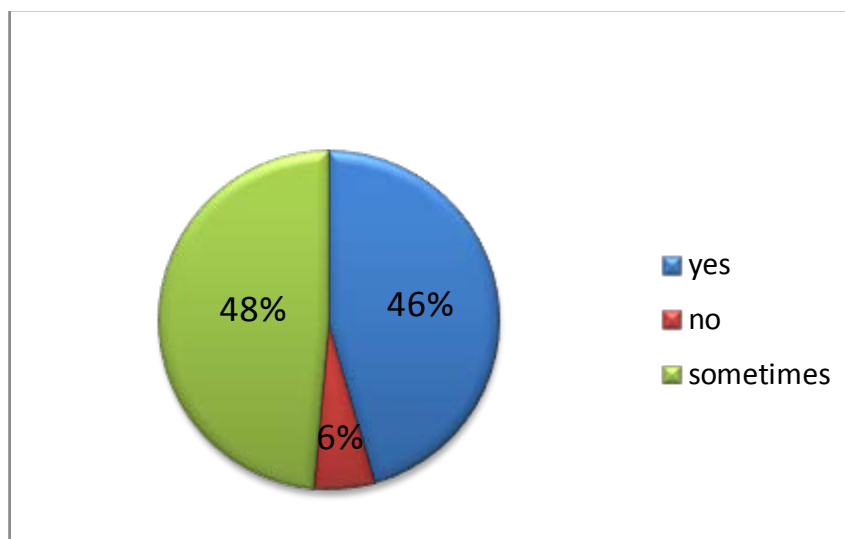


Figure .6 : Learning Vocabulary in Students Daily Life

We aim from this question to know if EFL students learn vocabulary in their daily life. According to the results displayed on the figure, (48%) of students replied that they sometimes learn new vocabulary in their daily life, and (46%) of them learn vocabulary always in their daily life. However only (6%) of them claimed that they do not.

**Question Item 7:** *When you learn new vocabulary, how often do you use the following strategies?*

- a. Translation
- b. Definitions
- c. Synonyms / Antonyms
- d. Facebook
- e. Skype
- f. YouTube
- g. Wikipedia

Options and percentage %	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	If necessary	Never
<b>Translation</b>	23 / 65%	08 /22%	00 /00%	04 / 13%	00 /00%
<b>Definitions</b>	00 / 00%	09 /25%	05 /14%	18 /51%	03 /10%
<b>Synonyms/ Antonyms</b>	00 / 00%	04 /13%	00 /00%	20 / 57%	11 / 30%
<b>Face book</b>	25 /71%	06 /17%	00 / 00%	00 /00%	04 /12%
<b>Skype</b>	08 /23%	11 /31%	06 /17%	00 / 00%	10 /29%
<b>YouTube</b>	15 /43%	08 /23%	02 /6%	04 /11%	06 / 17%
<b>Wikipedia</b>	05 /14%	06 /17%	00 /00%	19 /55%	05 / 14%

Table. 1: Strategies Used for Learning New Vocabulary

This question tries to identify the most used strategies in learning vocabulary. It appears that using translation and facebook are widely used because (65%) and ( 71%) of the respondents stated that they “always” use them. It also seems that there is another strategy used always by students (43%) which is YouTube. Skype is used sometimes by a least percentage of students (31%) . In general, EFL learners do not appreciate the use of definitions and synonyms / antonyms always in learning new vocabulary. (57% ) and (55%) of students states that they use synonyms / antonyms besides Wikipedia “only if necessary”. That rate can confirm that social media sites ,especially facebook, remains the most used tool among the EFL students to learn new words . In other words, students can acquire better by using enjoyable ways rather than traditional ones .

**Question Item 8 :** *To what extent you give importance to vocabulary in learning English language?*

- a. Very much
- b. Much
- c. Little
- d. Not at all

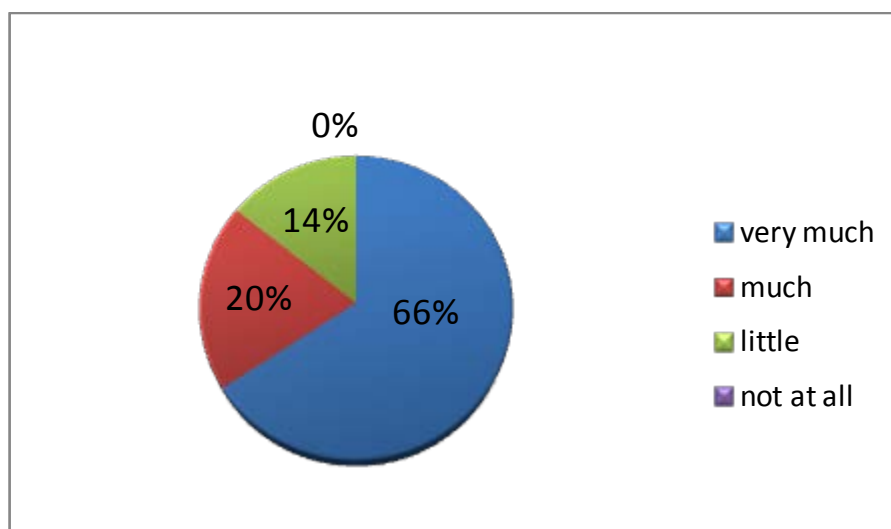


Figure .7: The Importance Given to Vocabulary in Learning English Language

This question is about the importance given by EFL students to vocabulary .We observe from the results showed that most of students (66%) are aware of the importance of vocabulary in learning English language .Whereas the least percentage of them (14%) give “a little” importance to vocabulary. We can conclude that the importance that EFL students give to vocabulary learning depends on their attitude towards the language itself. The majority of learners believe that learning the English language requires improving its vocabulary. As a result, learners who are interested to learn and master the language will give much importance to its vocabulary learning. However, those who give small concern to the language , they give only a little importance to it .



**Question Item 09:** *Do you have difficulties with vocabulary improvement?*

a. Yes

b. No

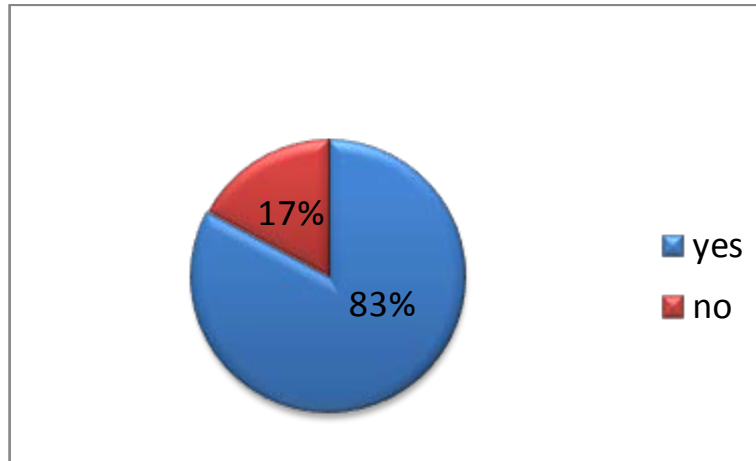


Figure.8: Difficulties with Vocabulary Improvement

From the figure above, we notice that most of the students confirm that they really have difficulties with vocabulary improvement .However, only six students (17%) claimed that they do not have difficulties in this matter. This rate shows that vocabulary improvement is a common problem that EFL students suffer from .

**Justifications:** students stated the following reasons behind difficulties of vocabulary improvement:

- The practice absence of English language outside the class .
- More importance is given to reading rather than to speaking.
- Problem of memorizing new words .
- The lack of practicing the new words learned .

### Section Three: Social Media as a Learning Strategy

This section deals with the EFL student's perception towards the social media. It investigates also their goal beyond using these sites and if it helps them in improving their vocabulary knowledge.

**Question Item 10:** *Do you use social media in your daily life?*

- a. Yes
- b. No

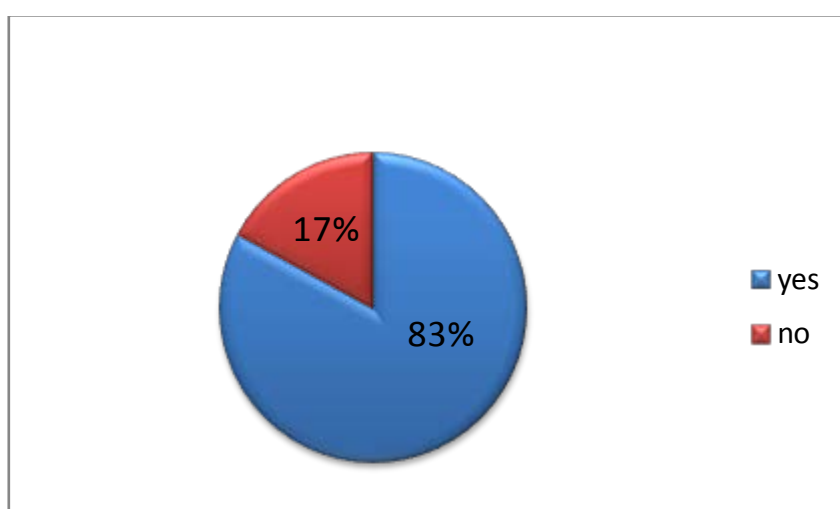


Figure.9: Using Social Media in Students' Daily Life

The table indicates that (83%) of students use social media websites in their daily life. Only 6 students do not use it. That ensures that nowadays students are digital learners who use social media in their social and educational lives.

**Question Item 11:** *If yes , what websites do you use the most ?*

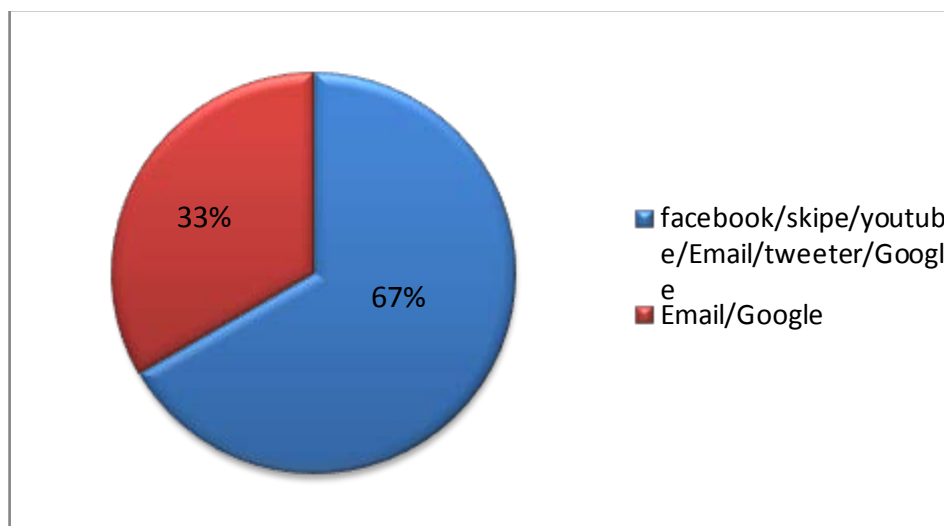


Figure.10.The Most Social Media Sites Used by Students

The results showed that 67% of the respondents use: Facebook , Skype , YouTube , Email, Google , tweeter .However , only 33% of students use just Email and Google. In other words, students prefer to use the most enjoyable sites rather than others .

**Question Item 12:** *Do you think using social media can be useful for:*

- Learning grammar
- Learning vocabulary
- Learning language skills

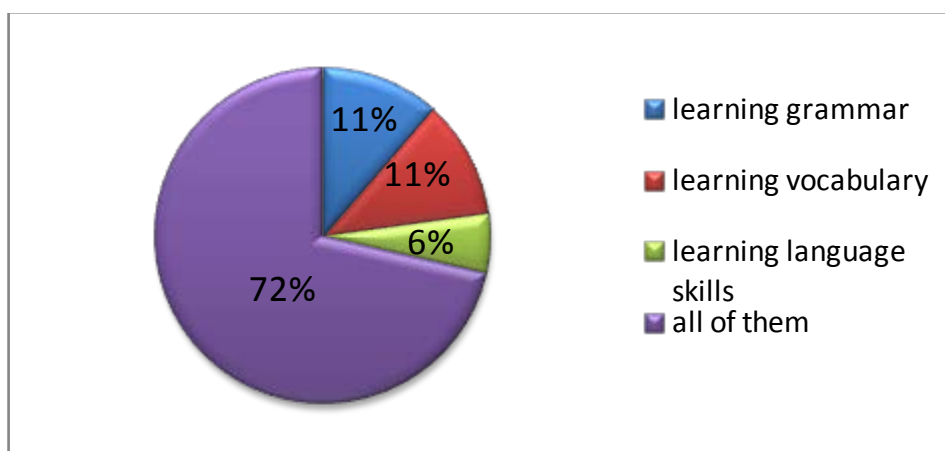
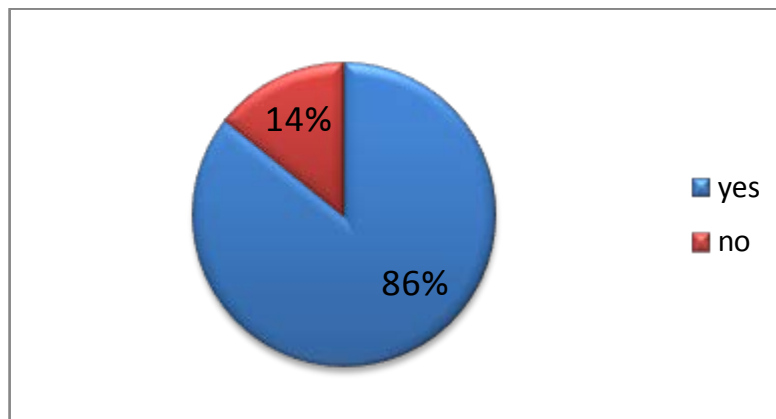


Figure . 11: Social Media Usefulness in Learning EFL

The majority of students (72% ) agree that social media is useful for learning grammar, vocabulary and the language skills . Only two students (6%) think that its usefulness is only for learning language skills. (11%) of students claimed that SM is useful for learning vocabulary, and the same percentage of them chose leaning grammar . This indicates that students are conscious about the important of social media on learning language skills.

**Question Item 13:** *Do you think that the use of social media will ameliorate students' vocabulary?*

- a. Yes
- b. No



Figur. 12: Students' view on Improving Vocabulary Through Social Media

The results confirm that (86%) of participants assert the effectiveness of social media in improving learners' vocabulary . For example , in facebook , tweeter or skipe , they chat with others and with natives in English and ask each other or get more explanation about a certain word meaning .They assert that social media is really effective to encourage vocabulary learning. Most students justify their answer by declaring that social media helps them to communicate with their mates, teachers and with native speakers in English and that can help them to learn new words and ameliorate their vocabulary knowledge . However, those who do not agree that social media will ameliorate students' vocabulary,

justify their answers by stating that reading books and watching movies are more beneficial for them.

**Question item 14:** *Do you think that students who use social media learn more vocabulary than those who do not?*

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Sometimes
- d. I don't know

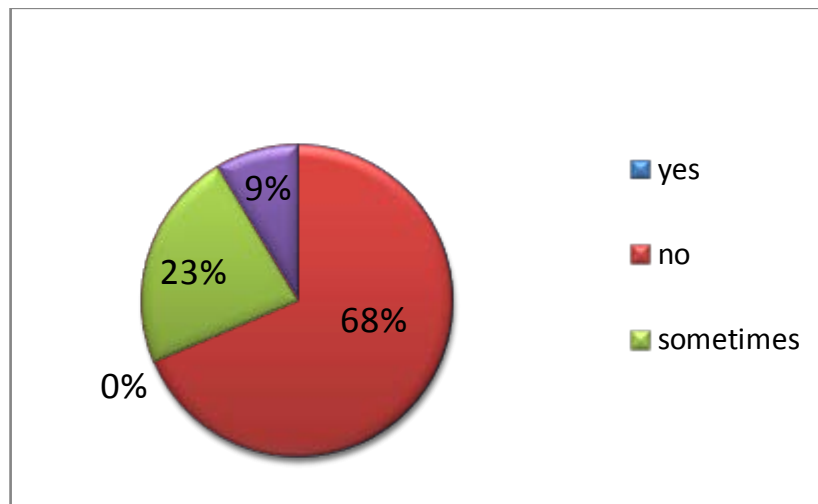


Figure .13: Students Expectation From Using Social Media

Through the results displayed on the figure above, we notice that (68%) of the participants agree that Students who learn vocabulary through social media will be more inclined to improve their vocabulary knowledge than those who don't use it. 23% of them chose "sometimes" as a response and only three participants chose "don't know". This show that social media has a great influence on vocabulary learning.

**Question Item 15 :** *Do you communicate with your teachers outside classroom by using social media ?*

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Never

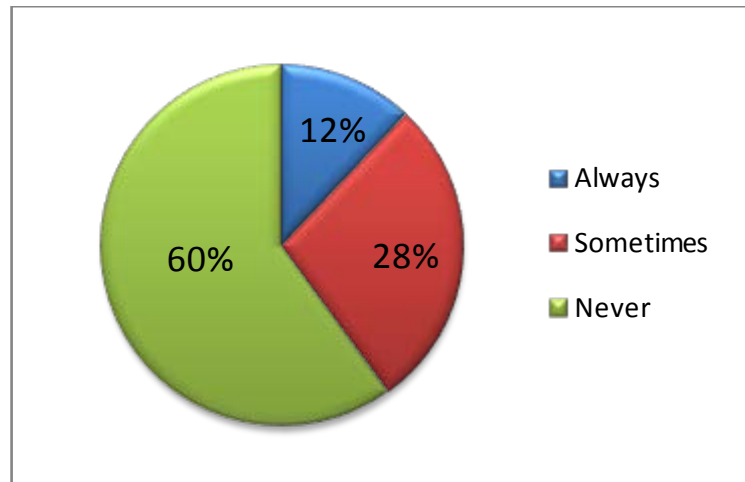


Figure. 14: Use of Social Media to Communicate With Teachers Outside Classroom

This question seeks to know if the teacher-learner relation goes beyond the classroom walls. The figure reveals that the majority of students (60%) never communicate with their teachers outside classroom. 23% of them do sometimes and only 17% of them communicate always with their teachers outside classroom. These results show that there is an absence of communication between learners and teachers. That may cause problems in students academic achievement because the more teachers connect with their students, the more likely they will be able to help students learn at a high level.

**Question Item 16 :** *Do you have any suggestions to improve students' vocabulary?*

At the end of the questions, we gave our students a free space to suggest what they think about using social media to improve their vocabulary knowledge. Here are the obtained suggestions :

- Students must practice English outside and inside the classroom.
- They must study hard in improving our vocabulary .
- They also have to use SM for learning purposes.
- EFL students have to communicate with natives in order to ameliorate their English level.
- Students should read books and use dictionaries .
- They should also exploit the power of social media for improving their vocabulary.

#### **1.4. Discussion of the Students' Questionnaire Findings**

The students' questionnaire is designed with the purpose to explore the students attitudes towards using social media to improve their vocabulary knowledge .The analysis of the questionnaire allowed us to come out with the following findings. The questionnaire interpretation made us notice the students' awareness of the vocabulary importance in learning EFL. Consequently, they follow different strategies to learn new words and to overcome the difficulties that they face in improving their vocabulary. Moreover, most of students lack the practice of English language outside the class because they give more importance to reading rather than to speaking ; besides ,their problem of memorizing new words . As what concerns what they use to learn new words, the learners showed their preferences to using translation and Facebook .To sum up , most students agree that social media helps in improving their vocabulary and learning new words through communicating with their mates or English native speakers. Hence, the majority of students are in touch on Facebook , Skype , tweeter and other websites.

## **2. The Analysis of the Teachers' Interview**

### **2.1. Sample description**

This written interview is devoted to EFL teachers. The five (05) teachers, who responded to the interview, were chosen among all the EFL teachers at the University of Mila. The interview was conducted with only five teachers because some teachers had apologized for not taking part in the interview due to their personal reasons.

### **2.2. Interview Description**

The interview is designed to obtain data concerning the teachers' opinion about using social media for improving EFL students' vocabulary knowledge. In order to get their opinions, they were asked to answer Sixteen open-ended questions related to their perception of the current research.

The interview includes items that organized in three sections, each section intended to investigate and provide particular information. The first section includes general information which contains three items. Section two contains an overview on teaching vocabulary which has four items. The concluded section discusses social media as a teaching strategy, which contains nine items.

### **2.3. Analysis of the interview**

#### **Section One: General Information**

**Question Item 1:** *How many years have you been teaching English as a foreign language?*

The first question is designed to know the teachers experience in EFL teaching. From this question, we notice that the longest teaching experience is 13 years and the shortest is 2 years. This indicates that the respondent teachers have different levels of experience in teaching English language.



**Question Item 2 :** *How many years have you been teaching English at university level ?*

This question was asked to know the teachers experience at university level. It is clear from the responses that the longest teaching experience at university level is 10 years; however, the shortest is 9 months.

**Question Item 3 :** *What degree do you have ?*

This question was used to know teachers' level. Answers show that our teachers qualification differ to include 3 teachers who hold a magister degree , where as one teacher hold a master degree and only one teacher have a doctorate diploma. These results indicated the diversity of the educational level among the respondent teachers.

**Section Two : An Overview on Teaching Vocabulary**

**Question Item 4:** *Do you present new words in every lesson? If yes, for what purpose?*

This question was intended to know the importance attributed to teaching vocabulary by teachers. Three teachers had the same response by answering “yes”. They justified their answer by stating that learning vocabulary is the basis for learning any language , and taht they are responsible to enrich their students' vocabulary knowledge . However, one teacher indicated that it is depends on the lecture of the subject matter. The last one claimed that it depends on the students' level because his responsibility is to help the learners to enrich their repertoire of lexical items. This in turn will result in better self expression . These results show the importance that EFL teachers give to the teaching vocabulary considering it as an important component of their teaching of the English language.

**Question Item 5 :** *Do students have difficulties with vocabulary improvement ? why?*

This question was asked to teachers to know if their students have difficulties with vocabulary improvement and all teachers of English language answered by “yes” .Two respondent teacher stated that these difficulties are because of the influence of the learners'

mother tongue . One teacher said that it's because they do not read much and the lack of practicing the language ; however , the other three teachers agreed that vocabulary improvement difficulties are due to the little exposure to language and the distraction which impacts memory abilities .

**Question Item 6 :** *How do you help your students to overtake vocabulary difficulties ?*

We asked this question to know teachers ways to help students to overtake vocabulary difficulties .Teachers claimed that they can help their students by:

- Asking them to use dictionaries.
- Making them use new vocabulary in their own examples.
- Simplifying for them and explain by using gestures, synonyms and pictures.
- Asking them to read either for specific purposes or just for pleasure .
- Introducing words in context or using media.
- Asking them to practice English outside classroom with mates.

**Question Item 7 :** *Do you follow a specific strategy or technique to teach vocabulary correctly ? If “yes” , which one and why ?*

The main goal behind this question is to investigate whether teachers use certain strategies in teaching vocabulary. One teacher said that he had never used a specific strategy, and four teacher answered by “yes”. One of them stated that he uses discussion inside classroom and brings texts which contain new words. The second one declared that there are many techniques for teaching vocabulary, but she relies on using songs' lyrics. The two other teachers share the same opinion , they claimed that reading literature and filling gaps activity are the best ways to improve students' vocabulary.

### **Section Three : Social Media as a Teaching Strategy**

**Question Item 8:** *What is your general opinion about social media ?*

This question seeks to know teachers opinion about social media in general. All teachers agree that SM is a new developed way which can used teaching and learning .

**Question Item 9:** *Do you consider social media as a teaching-learning strategy? Justify please.*

This question was asked to explore teachers' attitudes towards the social media as a teaching-learning strategy. Only one teacher thought that any teaching-learning strategy must be well studied and checked before considering it so. However, the other four teachers agree that SM is a new and good teaching-learning strategy ,because it makes language learning become easy and it exposes learners to natural language .

**Question Item 10:** *Do you use the social media? If yes, what websites do you use the most?*

We asked the current question in order to know if teachers are aware about the benefits and the advantages of using social media in teaching vocabulary. Results obtained reveal that all the respondent teachers are users of social media . Email , Fecebook , Whatsapp , tweeter , YouTube , Google , are the most websites used by three teachers . However, the other teacher uses only Google and Email .These results imply that our teachers are active users of social media .

**Question Item 11:** *Do you use the social media to communicate with your students? If yes, what websites do you use the most ?*

The question seeks to notice if there is a contact between EFL teachers and students at university of Mila. Through the results obtained, we found that two teachers have never contact their students outside classroom and they disagree this idea, and that because of the misunderstanding of students . However , three teachers used to communicate with their students using only facebook and Email .

**Question Item 12:** *Do you use the social media as a tool when teaching English (outside class)? Justify.*

This question was asked for knowing whether respondent teachers use social media as a tool of teaching EFL or not . Two teachers claimed that they do not teach English outside class by using social media because there is no interaction between them and their learners. The others do by chatting with them in English, giving them home works to do and present it via social media websites .

**Question Item 13 :** *Do you think that the social media can be an additional teaching resource ?*

All teachers showed their acceptance to social media as an additional teaching resource. No one of them answered by “No”.

**Question Item 14:** *Do you consider social media as an aide for students to ameliorate their vocabulary knowledge? Please justify your answer.*

We asked this question to confirm our research hypothesis .As we expected, all teachers answered by “Yes”. One of the teachers justify by saying that SM can help students to improve their vocabulary if their topics of discussion are interesting and academic. Two teachers share the same opinion that students can chat with each other and with natives and that may ameliorate their repertoire of English vocabulary. The other teacher claimed that using SM by students can creates more opportunities to use the language naturally synchronously. The last one said that SM has a good side , if the student well use it, because most of them use the abbreviations of words and chat in their mother tongue language .

**Question Item 15:** *In your opinion , do students who learn vocabulary through social media will be more inclined to improve their vocabulary knowledge than those who do not? Justify please.*

In this question, we confirm that social media can be a tool to improve vocabulary knowledge of EFL student .Because all teachers approve our research question .They declared that users of social media have great opportunities for practicing the language and are more motivated to learn new words . One of the teachers said that the more students get exposed to language , the more they expand their knowledge of it, and the more they produce it and get feedback.

**Question Item 16:** *We should greatly appreciate any further suggestions to develop students' vocabulary.*

At the end of this written interview, we gave the respondent teachers a free space to write further suggestions to develop students' vocabulary knowledge .Nearly all teachers' comments were similar about the current topic. They argue that:

- Teachers have to find a developed strategy that should be followed by all teachers to allow students to have the same opportunity.
- Free reading is the most successful technique for improving and developing vocabulary whether the sources are print or electronic .
- Reading literature through multimedia is greatly helpful and very exciting.
- Students can follow several and different strategies to improve their knowledge of vocabulary like chatting with natives via social media websites.
- Using social media websites for the sack of learning new vocabulary , because acquisition occur when the filter is low ( no anxiety) .
- Advice students to practice English language all the time .

## **2.4. Discussion of the Teachers' Interview Findings**

The teachers' interview is designed in order to explore the teachers attitudes towards using social media as a teaching strategy to improve the students vocabulary knowledge. The analysis of the interview allowed us to come out with the following findings. The results obtained through the analysis of the current interview ,about teaching vocabulary, showed the importance given by teachers to teaching vocabulary using different techniques. However, we explored the difficulties that students face in developing their vocabulary career, besides reasons behind these difficulties and solutions proposed by teachers to overtake it. Concerning social media, teachers are active users of this developed tool. Facebook , skipe , Email , Google , Whatsapp, are the most used websites by teachers. As a result, we conclude that all the respondent teachers agree that social media can be an additional tool which can help students to develop their vocabulary repertoire . These results can confirm our two hypotheses .

## Conclusion

The results obtained from the analysis of the students' questionnaire, the teachers' Interview and the survey revealed the major points that have been conducted in this research. It provided us with the necessary overviews about the research. The students' questionnaire affirmed that the majority of second year LMD students of English at University of Mila work hard to improve their vocabulary knowledge. This of course will facilitate the process of learning vocabulary, and it will increase the learner's efforts to ameliorate their vocabulary storage. Concerning the social media task, we deduced that the students are conscious about the importance social media if it used for learning purposes, , and most of them confirmed that social media websites help them in gaining much vocabulary. However, the teachers' interview proved that the participants have a good experience in teaching, and this would be very helpful in encouraging the students to be active and proficient language learners . In order to make good vocabulary storage for the learners, teachers should be conscious about the importance of social media and use it with their students for vocabulary improvement aim. Thus, students will be more competent, and their vocabulary curiosity will be very high. When we were doing the survey also, most of the sample asked had the same point of view ; that is to say, social media can be an effective tool which can be used to improve students' vocabulary .

## **Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations**

This study examines the role of using social media in improving EFL vocabulary knowledge. The findings have confirmed that social media is a good and effective tool in the field of teaching and learning foreign languages.

### **Recommendations for Teachers**

- Allowing time in class for speaking activities , so that students have the chance to practise English and acquire more words .

- Using from time to time different social media websites to save the contact with students.

For example, by communicating through Facebook, Tweeter , Email and share different ideas in English .Also , If students and teachers are deeply invested in one another's interests ,it supports a strong teaching and learning relationship as well.

- Giving different exercises to students and ask them to do it and discuss it with each other via social media, because that may make students more comfortable and far from anxiety.

- Advising learners to communicate in English all the time in order to improve their proficiency in English vocabulary.

- Advising students to chat with natives via social media websites.

- Encouraging learners to read more inside and outside class because extensive reading in particular helps learners to be open-minded and get enough vocabulary knowledge .

- Asking students to use social media websites for the sake of learning new vocabulary.

### **Recommendations for Students**

- Students should be motivated to use social media for the sake of learning purposes.

- Discussing with colleges via social media about their lessons and classroom activities .

- using English to communicate inside and outside the classroom.

- Chatting with native speakers in English language in order to gain much vocabulary.



## GENERAL CONCLUSION

One of the issues that face EFL students, especially university learners, is the subject of vocabulary improvement and that's why many researchers investigate the possible solutions that may help in facilitating vocabulary learning. After many studies, scholars found that pleasant and motivating atmosphere could play a great role in enhancing learning vocabulary process. Moreover, one of the techniques that creates funny and attractive situation is using social media. The present study had been undertaken to investigate the importance of creating the pleasant situation for obtaining satisfactory results. It also aimed at investigating the impact of using social media in improving vocabulary, that is to say, it tried to study how social media can affect on learners' vocabulary storage improvement. For this aim, we set two hypotheses as follows: first, social media would be an aid for students to improve their vocabulary storage. Therefore, social media would contribute in improving learners' vocabulary. The second hypothesis stated that students who learn vocabulary through social media would be more inclined to improve their vocabulary knowledge than those who do not use it.

After analyzing the provided data concerning the use of social media by EFL students for improving vocabulary storage, we can realize that this research confirms our two hypotheses that using social media can improve EFL students' vocabulary knowledge. In general, the obtained results asserted that social media is really helpful and effective in improving vocabulary. Accordingly, we recommended that social media should be integrated in the learners and teachers relationship .Because communication in English between the two, outside classroom doors , can help them to learn new words and improve their lexical knowledge. It is recommended also that teachers and learners have to be conscious about the importance of using social media for learning and for vocabulary improvement aim.

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## Appendix One

### STUDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

**Dear student,**

We would be very grateful if you accept to fill in the following questionnaire. It is a part of our research work that deals with the impact of using social media on improving learners' vocabulary of the third year students of English language. Your answers will be of great help for the research. Please read carefully the questions then put a tick (✓) in the box just in the front of each statement.

Thank you in advance for your collaboration

“Ms. Bouhami Widad”

#### **Section One: General Information**

**1. Specify your gender:**

a. Female ☐                      b. Male ☐

**2. Why have you chosen English to study?**

a. To get a job ☐    b. To travel ☐    c. I Love it ☐

**3. How long have you been studying English?**

.....

**4. How do you consider your level in English?**

a. Very good ☐                      b. Good ☐

c. Average ☐                      d. Poor ☐

## Section Two: An Overview on Learning Vocabulary

5. How would you rate your vocabulary knowledge level?

a. Excellent ☐ b. poor ☐ c. good ☐ d. fair ☐

6. Do you learn new English vocabulary in your daily life?

a. Yes ☐ b. no ☐ c. sometimes ☐

7. When you learn new vocabulary, how often do you use the following strategies ?

Options	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	If Necessary	Never
Translation					
Definitions					
Synonyms/ Antonyms					
facebook					
Skype					
Youtube					
Wikipedia					

8. To what extent do you give importance to vocabulary in learning English Language?

a. Very much ☐ b. Much ☐ c. Little ☐ d. Not at all ☐

9. Do you have difficulties with vocabulary improvement?

a. Yes ☐ b. no ☐

Justify your answer

.....

### Section Three : social media as a Learning strategy :

10. Do you use social media in your daily life?

Yes

No

11. If yes, what websites do you use the most?

.....  
.....

12. Do you think using social media can be useful for :

a. Learning grammar ☐

b. Learning vocabulary ☐

c. Learning language skills (speaking, writing....) ☐

d. All of them ☐

e. Others.....

13. Do you think that the use of social media will ameliorate students' vocabulary?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

Justify your answer :

.....

14. Do you think that students who use social media learn more vocabulary than those who do not?

a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐ c. Sometimes ☐ d. I don't know ☐

15. Do you communicate with your teachers outside classroom by using social media?

a. Always ☐ b. Sometimes ☐ c. Never ☐

16. Your comments or suggestions To improve students' vocabulary:

.....

.....

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION**



## **APPENDIX TWO**

### **TEACHER'S INTERVIEW**

Dear teachers,

This interview is a part of our research work. Your completion of this interview will be a great help to bring fruition to the present research work . The main purpose of this interview is to identify the role and the impact of social media on improving students' vocabulary. We would be grateful if you could answer these questions to help us in our research for the Master's degree in Language Sciences.

Thank you very much in advance for collaboration

“Ms. Widad Bouhami”

#### **Section One: General Information**

1. How many years have you been teaching English as a foreign language?

.....

2. How many years have you been teaching English at university level?

.....

3. What degree do you have?

.....

#### **Section Two: An Overview on Teaching Vocabulary**

4. Do you present new words in every lesson? If yes, for what purpose?

.....  
.....

5. Do students have difficulties with vocabulary improvement ? why?

.....

6. How do you help your students to overcome vocabulary difficulties?

.....

.....

7. Do you follow a specific strategy or technique to teach vocabulary correctly? If "Yes", which one and why?

.....

.....

.....

### **Section Three: social media as a Teaching strategy**

8. What is your general opinion about the social media?

.....

.....

9. Do you consider social media as a teaching-learning strategy? Justify please.

.....

.....

10. Do you use the social media? If yes , what websites do you use the most?

.....

.....

11. Do you use the social media to communicate with your students? If yes, what websites do you use the most?

.....

.....

12. Do you use the social media as a tool when teaching English (outside class)? Justify.

.....

.....

.....

13. Do you think that the social media can be an additional teaching resource?

14. Do you consider social media as an aide for students to ameliorate their vocabulary knowledge ? ( Please justify your answer)

.....

.....

**15.**In your opinion , do students who learn vocabulary through social media will be more inclined to improve their vocabulary knowledge than those who don't? Justify please

.....

.....

**16.** We would greatly appreciate any further suggestions to develop students' vocabulary.

.....

.....

.....

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION**

## Appendix Three

### ملخـص

من خلال هذا البحث حاولنا التعرف على تأثير استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لتحسين المفردات لدى طلبة السنة الثانية (LMD) بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية في المركز الجامعي عبد الحفيظ بوالصوف -ميلة-. و وضعنا كفرضية للبحث أن وسائل الإعلام و الاتصال سيكون مساعدا للطلاب لإثراء مفرداتهم اللغوية ، وأولئك الذين يحسنون مفرداتهم من خلال وسائل الإعلام و الاتصال يكونون أكثر قابلية لتحسين رصيد مفرداتهم اللغوية من أولئك الذين لا يستخدمونه . يتكون هذا العمل من فصل تمهيدي يحتوي على معلومات عامة عن مفردات اللغة . في الفصل الثاني، ناقشنا الجوانب الرئيسية المتعلقة بوسائل الإعلام و الاتصال وعلاقتها بتعلم وتعليم مفردات اللغة . وأخيرا لتحقيق هذا الهدف، اعتمدنا على ثلاث وسائل لبحث : " استبيان موجه لطلبة اللغة الإنجليزية و مقابلة مع أساتذة اللغة الانجليزية أيضا ،بالإضافة إلى إجراء سبر آراء موجه لمختلف الطلبة من مختلف الأقسام . أولا، قمنا بإجراء المقابلة بهدف جمع بيانات حول التقنيات التي يستخدمها الأساتذة في تعليم كلمات جديدة في دروسهم ، و معرفة آرائهم حول استخدام وسائل الإعلام و الاتصال كوسيلة لتحسين مفردات طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية. ثانيا، قمنا بإجراء استبيان موجه لستة عشر طالبا من أجل معرفة آرائهم تجاه وسائل الإعلام و الاتصال كوسيلة تعليمية. أما سبر الآراء فهو مقدم في شكل شريط فيديو، والذي يحتوي على آراء الطلاب حول ما إذا كانت وسائل الإعلام و الاتصال أداة مفيدة لتحسين المفردات اللغوية لديهم . بشكل عام ، وصفت هذه الدراسة عملية استخدام وسائل الإعلام و الاتصال و إمكانية الطلبة الاستفادة منها . وأظهرت النتائج أن استخدام وسائل الإعلام و الاتصال فعال جدا في تعلم وتعليم المفردات . وفقا لذلك، فمن المستحسن أن يكون طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية على اتصال مع وسائل الاتصال و الإعلام من أجل تعلم كلمات جديدة و تطوير مفرداتهم اللغوية . وينبغي كذلك أن تكون وسيلة من وسائل التدريس .