

NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

**INVESTIGATING VOCABULARY TEACHING AND LEARNING
THROUGH STIMULATED RECALL METHOD: A CASE STUDY**

MASTER THESIS

BESTOON HARUTI

NICOSIA

FEBRUARY 2021

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SUPERVISOR: Dr. AIDA ARIANNEJAD

**NICOSIA
FEBRUARY 2021**

Approval of the Thesis

We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by Bestoon Haruti titled
**“Investigating Vocabulary Teaching and Learning Through
Stimulated-Recall Method: A Case Study”** and that in our
combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the
degree of Master of Educational Sciences.

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Declaration

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with the academic rules and ethical guidelines of the Institute of Graduate Studies, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all materials and results that are not original to this study.

Name and surname / **Bestoon Haruti**

Signature:

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Abstract

Investigating Vocabulary Teaching and Learning Through Stimulated-Recall Method: A Case Study

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This study was designed to investigate the perception of the EFL Kurdish and English teachers of the effects of reading comprehension classes and tasks on improving vocabulary knowledge in the Iraqi Kurdish context. This study also aimed to identify the most commonly used vocabulary teaching strategies and vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) that the EFL teachers and Kurdish students use in the reading comprehension classes to teach and learn vocabulary knowledge in the Kurdish context. The main method of this study was the stimulated recall method and an open-ended interview. Three reading comprehension classes were video recorded. Then, thirty-six students of the three recorded classes and five international teachers participated in the stimulated recall sessions by using their recorded classes. The participants also took a part in an open-ended interview to discuss more about vocabulary teaching and learning. The data were analyzed using thematic analyses.

. The results of this study revealed that students and teachers believed that reading is mostly about teaching and learning vocabulary knowledge, and it should be an integral part of language teaching. Moreover, students and teachers demonstrated that the exercises and activities that they were doing after reading texts were beneficial for student's vocabulary development. The data of stimulated recall sessions and interviews emerged that there was a huge difference between student's proficiency level in the classrooms which made an obstacle for students and teacher to teach and learn vocabulary. The most commonly used vocabulary teaching strategies among teachers were determination strategy of guessing the meaning from context, compensation strategy of using synonyms, memory strategy of placing new words into a context and using mechanical techniques, and more other strategies. Moreover, the most commonly used vocabulary learning strategies among students were memory strategy of using new vocabulary items in context, determination strategy of guessing the meaning from the context and using a dictionary, memory strategy of grouping new words and more other strategies.

Keywords: Perceptions, English as a Foreign Language, Vocabulary Learning Strategies, Vocabulary Teaching Strategies, and Stimulated Recall Method.

Özet

Uyarılmış-Geri Çağırma Yöntemi ile Kelime Öğretimi ve Öğrenimini Araştırma (Bir vaka çalışması)

Haruti, Bestoon

Yüksek Lisans, İngilizce Öğretmenliği Anabilim Dalı

Danışman: Dr. Aida Ariannejad

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Bu çalışma, EFL Kürtçe ve İngilizce öğretmenlerinin, okuduğunu anlama dersleri ve görevlerinin Irak Kürtçesi bağlamında kelime bilgisini geliştirme üzerindeki etkilerine ilişkin algılarını araştırmak için tasarlanmıştır. Bu çalışma aynı zamanda EFL öğretmenlerinin ve Kürt öğrencilerin Kürtçe bağlamında kelime bilgisini öğretmek ve öğrenmek için okuduğunu anlama derslerinde kullandıkları en yaygın kullanılan kelime öğretme stratejilerini ve kelime öğrenme stratejilerini (VLS'ler) belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışmanın ana yöntemi, uyarılmış hatırlama yöntemi ve açık uçlu bir görüşmedir. Üç okuduğunu anlama sınıfı videoya kaydedildi. Ardından, kaydedilen üç sınıftaki otuz altı öğrenci ve beş uluslararası öğretmen, kayıtlı sınıflarını kullanarak uyarılmış hatırlama oturumlarına katıldı. Katılımcılar ayrıca kelime öğretimi ve öğrenimi hakkında daha fazla tartışmak için açık uçlu bir röportajda yer aldılar. Veriler tematik analizler kullanılarak analiz edildi.

. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, öğrenci ve öğretmenlerin okumanın çoğunlukla kelime bilgisini öğretmek ve öğrenmekle ilgili olduğuna ve dil öğretiminin ayrılmaz bir parçası olması gerektiğine inandıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca öğrenciler ve öğretmenler, metinleri okuduktan sonra yaptıkları alıştırmalar ve etkinliklerin öğrencilerin kelime dağarcığının gelişimine faydalı olduğunu gösterdiler. Uyarılmış hatırlama oturumları ve görüşmelerin verileri, öğrencilerin ve öğretmenin kelime öğretme ve öğrenme konusunda engel oluşturan sınıflardaki yeterlilik düzeyi arasında büyük bir fark olduğunu ortaya çıkardı. Öğretmenler arasında en yaygın kullanılan kelime öğretimi stratejileri, bağlamdan anlamı tahmin etme stratejisi, eş anlamlıları kullanma telafi stratejisi, yeni kelimeleri bir bağlama yerleştirme ve mekanik teknikleri kullanma hafıza stratejisi ve diğer stratejilerdi. Ayrıca, öğrenciler arasında en yaygın olarak kullanılan kelime öğrenme stratejileri, bağlam içinde yeni kelime öğelerini kullanma hafıza stratejisi, bağlamdan anlamı tahmin etme ve sözlük kullanma stratejisini belirleme stratejisi, yeni kelimeleri gruplama hafıza stratejisi ve diğer stratejilerdi.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Algılar, Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce, Kelime Öğrenme Stratejileri, Kelime Öğretme Stratejileri ve Uyarılmış Hatırlama Yöntemi.

Table of Contents

Approval of the Thesis	3
Declaration	4
Acknowledgments	5
Abstract	6
Öz	7
List of Appendices	12
List of Tables	13
List of Abbreviations	14
CHAPTER I	15
Introduction	15
Background of the Study	15
Statement of the Problem	18
Aim of the Study	19
The Significance of the Study	20
Limitations of the Study	20
Definition of key Terms	20
CHAPTER II	22
Literature Review	22
Introduction	22
The Importance of Vocabulary in Learning English as a Foreign Language.....	22
Aspects Involved in Knowing Words	24
Teaching Vocabulary	25

Contextualized and Decontextualized Vocabulary Teaching.....	26
Using L1 and L2 in Teaching English Vocabulary	28
Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs)	29
O'Malley's (1985) Taxonomy	30
Rubin's (1987) Taxonomy.....	30
Oxford's (1990) Taxonomy	31
Stern's (1992) Taxonomy	33
Schmitt's (1997) Taxonomy	33
Nation's (2001) Taxonomy.....	34
The Importance of Reading Comprehension.....	34
Intensive Reading	35
Extensive Reading	36
Related Studies	38
Studies on The Relationship Between Vocabulary and Reading Skills.....	38
Studies on Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions of Vocabulary Teaching.....	39
SRM in Vocabulary Teaching and Perception Studies	41
CHAPTER III	44
Methodology	44
Introduction	44
Research Design	44
Setting and Participants	44
Data Collection Method: Stimulated Recall Method	47

	10
Data Collection Instruments:	48
Stimulated Recall Sessions	48
Interviews.....	49
Data Collection Procedures	50
Trustworthiness	51
Data Analysis Procedures.....	52
Ethical Consideration	53
CHAPTER IV.....	54
Findings and Discussion	54
Introduction	54
Students Perception about Learning and Teaching Vocabulary Through Stimulated Recall Sessions	54
Students Perception about Learning and Teaching Vocabulary Through Interviews	58
Teachers’ perception about learning and teaching vocabulary through stimulated recall sessions	67
Teachers perception about learning and teaching vocabulary through interviews.	70
The Most Commonly Used Vocabulary Teaching Strategies that the EFL Teachers Use it.....	78
The Most Commonly Used Vocabulary Learning Strategies that the EFL Iraqi Kurdish Students Use it.....	86

CHAPTER V	95
Conclusion and Recommendations.....	95
Introduction	95
Summary of The Main Findings	95
Implications for Practice	100
Recommendations for Further Research	101
References	103
Appendices.....	114

List of Appendices

APPENDIX A	The Course Discriptions	114
APPENDIX B	The Permission Letter.....	116
APPENDIX C	Students' Interview Questions	117
APPENDIX D	Teachers' Interview Questions	119
APPENDIX E	Transcription of Teachers and Students' Interview	120
APPENDIX F	Table of Codifications.....	141
APPENDIX G	The Ethical Aproval Letter.....	148
APPENDIX H	The Links of Stimulated Recording Videos	149
APPENDIX I	Turnitin Similarity Report	150

List of Tables

Table 1. Oxford (1990) taxonomy of L2 vocabulary learning strategies.....	32
Table 2. Demographic Information of the teachers	46
Table 3. The most commonly used vocabulary teaching strategies.....	79
Table 4. The most commonly used vocabulary learning strategies among Kurdish students	87

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

ESL: English as a Second Language

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

VLS: Vocabulary Learning Strategy

SR: Stimulated Recall

SRM: Stimulated Recall Method

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Background of the Study

Vocabulary plays a significant role in learning a second language. It is widely recognized as a multifaceted aspect of language knowledge, although many researchers have proposed different definitions of vocabulary (Laufer & Goldstein, 2004; Lewis, 1993; Nandy, 1994; Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2000). Lewis (1993, p.89) describes vocabulary as lexical elements, while he refers to lexis as “the core or heart of language”. Schmitt (2000, p. 2) defines a lexical unit as “an item that functions as a single meaning unit, regardless of the number of words it contains”. Nandy (1994) and Nation (2001) mention vocabulary as a key linguistic component of the writing process. For instance, Nandy (1994) describes vocabulary as the words an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learner knows and is capable to use. It is important to mention that vocabulary does not only emphasize “words,” but also “word families,” which comprise the base word, all of its inflections (adding affixes to the root form of a word to change its grammatical function), plus its common derivatives (affixes to the root form of a word to change its class) (Schmitt, 2000).

The vocabulary of EFL learners is considered a substantial matter since learners need a wide range of vocabulary to convey what they aim to express in their communications and to be competent in different contexts. Moreover, they would simply be able to understand more contexts. In other words, it is impossible to communicate and to improve learners’ English language if they have limited knowledge of vocabulary (Meara, 1995). Therefore, the more vocabulary items students know, the more successful they are in communicating ideas and opinions. Vocabulary learning is not only about recognizing the meaning of words, it is also about how learners should acquire vocabulary learning strategies (VLS). If they do not, they might not be able to use language successfully and they may come up with difficulties in understanding and communication (Rechard & Renanday, 2002). Therefore, vocabulary is an important consideration when selecting written and spoken texts for the EFL classroom (Meara, 1995).

Closely related to the learning vocabulary, teaching vocabulary is considered as an essential element in EFL classes. Teaching vocabulary has always been recommended as a part of EFL language teaching because students often suffer from lack of EFL vocabulary knowledge or competency. They are unaware of the meaning of basic vocabulary items in a particular passage or they do not have sufficient words to express their opinions (Thombury, 2004). It is, therefore, important for teachers to consider ESL and EFL learners' need for exposure to different contexts where the newly taught practiced vocabulary items are used frequently (Choudhury, 2010). EFL teachers also play a significant role in helping students become familiar with new vocabulary items because apart from teaching the meaning and pronunciation of the new words, teachers can introduce different vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) to their students and make the learning process easier for them (Alqahtani, 2015).

EFL students and teachers' perceptions regarding vocabulary learning and teaching should be taken into consideration as they might have a significant effect on teaching and learning processes. Students' perceptions can shape their attitudes towards learning, their learning accomplishments, and their motivation (Richards & Lockhart, 2007). On the other hand, teachers' perceptions of teaching and learning vocabulary may affect their implementation, progression their teaching strategies or teaching materials. Scholars such as Oxford (1990), Schmitt (1999) and Nation (2001) all mention that what teachers do in the classroom reflects their insights and perceptions, which can further shape their classroom practices, the selections of materials, teaching methods, and classroom interactions (Bacelos, 2003).

Vocabulary also has an impact on the four language skills. Rouhani and Purgharib (2013) states that in learning a foreign language it is the vocabulary that links the four language skills, namely writing, reading, listening, and speaking. Different researchers have investigated the significance of vocabulary to the four language skills (Nation, 2011; Richards & Renandya, 2002). For example, Nation (2011) demonstrates that if learners have sufficient vocabulary knowledge, they might be able to speak, write, listen, and read, and that is why in both EFL and ESL, learning vocabulary knowledge plays a key role in learners' language competency. Conversely, Richards and Renandya (2002) believe that language skills have a great effect on the level of vocabulary development.

There are studies in the field that have investigated the effectiveness and relationship between reading skill and vocabulary improvement. They show that reading can be used as a basic source from which to develop the vocabulary knowledge of EFL learners (Al-Homoud & Schimitt, 2009; Brown, 2010; Golkar & Yamini, 2007; Zhang & Annual, 2008). It is believed that learning and teaching vocabulary should be integrated with reading skill as a valuable strategy for the students in the class (Harmer, 2007). However, there are questions that need to be answered regarding the perceptions of EFL students and the teachers about the relationship between these skills, about teaching and learning vocabulary in reading classes and the possible effects reading classes might have on the vocabulary competency of EFL learners.

Researchers in the field often use interviews or questionnaires to investigate the perceptions of teachers and students regarding different issues in language teaching (Gass & Mackey, 2000). However, it is believed that using specific methods such as the Stimulated Recall Method (SRM) can help researchers gain in-depth insight into the different issues raised in the field of English language teaching. Thus, using this method for investigating EFL teachers and students' perceptions would be suitable (Henderson & Tallman, 2006). This method is mostly employed to clarify and explore learners' strategies and their thought processes by reflecting on their point of view after doing a particular activity (Gass & Mackey, 2000). Stimulated recall method can provide broad knowledge of learners' interpretations of the observed actions and the activities they do. It is considered a valuable resource for researchers who want to gain insight into EFL classroom activities (Nunan, 1992).

The SRM has been used to understand the perceptions of the learners or participants in the field of EFL. For example, some researchers investigated how teachers reflect on their teaching methods by using SRM (Jiang, 2012; Balhouq, 2018; Mirzaie, Hemmati, & Kiasi, 2018). Moreover, SRM has been used to study teachers' perceptions of language teaching to make language learning more active (Powell, 2005). This method also has been used to investigate EFL students' perceptions of learning vocabulary (Balhouq, 2018). It is therefore evident that SRM is a good way to study the perceptions EFL teachers and students have of the vocabulary learning and teaching process in reading classes.

Statement of the Problem

Learning vocabulary is of such high importance that some scholars refer it to as the most central phenomenon that the language learner encounters during the process of language learning (Swan & Walter, 1984). It is an inevitable fact that vocabulary plays a vital role in foreign language teaching and learning. Vocabulary knowledge or level is one of the factors determining one's proficiency in a second language (SL) and foreign language (FL). Moreover, vocabulary knowledge is involved and contributes to acquiring all language skills including speaking, listening, reading and writing. This suggests that learning and teaching vocabulary require considerable attention from teachers and learners.

To the best knowledge of the researcher, in most of the English language departments in universities from Kurdish context they do not have a specific course in the curriculum that they design for teaching and learning vocabulary and vocabulary is usually being taught by using reading and comprehension courses. In the last ten years, the educational syllabus of the universities from Kurdistan has been kept changing within these years because beside public universities many private universities appeared. Therefore, the new private universities are trying to increase their quality of the curriculum that they design for the classes.

In learning and teaching second and foreign language, it is essential to investigate the perceptions of teachers and students in order to understand how the two groups become involved in different teaching and learning activities (Richards & Lockhart, 2007). In the Kurdish context, reading lessons are considered to be an important source for progressing students' vocabulary knowledge and in most of the time it seems that the reading lessons are mostly about teaching and learning vocabulary. For developing vocabulary knowledge, integration of vocabulary teaching in reading comprehension classes is believed to be an effective teaching technique (Harmer, 2007). Although some studies have addressed vocabulary learning and teaching through reading, for example (Balhouq, 2018; Altalhab, 2016), this has not been focus of study among the Kurdish community. Moreover, there are studies that identified VLSs that used by Kurdish students, such as (Askar, 2016; Kader, 2016; Omer, 2015), but to be more specific, no studies, to date, have investigated the perceptions of students and teachers about teaching and learning vocabulary through reading comprehension classes. Moreover, although, SRM has

been discussed to be an important method to gain a better understanding of a special event from the participants themselves, there are limited number of ELT studies that investigated the perceptions of students and teachers regarding the VLS in teaching and learning English lexical items in reading classes.

Teaching and learning vocabulary through reading was chosen as the focus of this study for various reasons. Firstly, vocabulary is an important component in learning a new language and enriching vocabulary knowledge helps develop language skills. Secondly, learning vocabulary through reading seems to be a helpful strategy especially for EFL learners like the participants in this study where practising English is likely to be limited, and also for students majoring in English as they are exposed to a large number of English texts in their studies. Reading appears to be an important source to developing their vocabulary.

Aim of the Study

The main aims of this study is to investigate the perceptions of a number of Iraqi Kurdish students and their EFL teachers of improving English vocabulary through reading comprehension activities. The present study seeks to find the most common VLS used by the students as well as vocabulary teaching strategies employed by the teachers in this context. This study is directed by the following research questions:

- 1 What are the EFL Iraqi Kurdish students' perceptions of the effects of reading comprehension classes on improving their English vocabulary knowledge?
- 2 What are the EFL teachers' perceptions of the effects of reading comprehension classes on improving the vocabulary knowledge of their students in the Iraqi Kurdish context?
- 3 What are the most commonly used vocabulary teaching strategies that the EFL teachers use in the reading comprehension classes to teach vocabulary items in the Kurdish context?

- 4 What are the most commonly used vocabulary learning strategies that the EFL Iraqi Kurdish students use in the reading comprehension classes to learn vocabulary items?

The Significance of the Study

The findings will help EFL teachers understand the students' perceptions of learning vocabulary and the VLS they use to better learn the vocabulary items in their reading classes. Furthermore, the outcome can also contribute to the EFL teachers' knowledge in using more effective vocabulary teaching strategies to assist students to enrich their vocabulary knowledge in the classrooms.

Finally, Using SRM as a data gathering method would provide valuable information regarding the cognitive process of learning and teaching by engaging participants in recalling what they did in the classroom and the reasons behind it. This type of research is believed to enrich ELT body of research.

Limitations of the Study

Considering temporal and practical issues, a number of limitations have been imposed on the current study. This study is limited to investigating the perceptions of a limited number of Kurdish students and teachers at Lebanese French University in the south part of Iraq and. Moreover, the participated were only students of first and second-year students at Lebanese French University and the third and fourth-year students did not take a part in the study. Methodologically speaking, this study uses Stimulated recall method to gather the data. There is no doubt that there are other data gathering methods and tools such as questionnaires and diary journals which can be used in future studies in the field.

Definition of key Terms

Vocabulary teaching

In the context of this study, vocabulary teaching means teaching new vocabulary items in the EFL academic context to enrich students' vocabulary

knowledge and to enable them to use different vocabulary learning strategies (Hu & Nation, 2000).

Vocabulary learning

In this study, vocabulary learning relates to the process of learning vocabulary and it is believed to be a critical element of EFL learning because the more lexical words learners are familiar with, the more they will be able to make their messages understandable and to master the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing (Nation, 2001).

Vocabulary knowledge

In the context of this study, vocabulary knowledge refers to a familiarity with words or phrases in terms of meaning, spelling, function and association with other words (Doró 2008).

Foreign language

In this study, foreign language means “a language which is not the native language of large numbers of people in a particular country or region” (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 331).

Vocabulary learning strategy

In the current study, vocabulary learning strategies refer to special techniques and ways that help the learners learn more new vocabulary items. Language learners use VLSs to find out the meaning of a new vocabulary, to remember the knowledge of newly-learned vocabularies, and to increase their information about vocabulary items (Schmitt, 1997).

Stimulated recall method

The stimulated recall method is a research method employed to gather qualitative data related to the thinking process by participating in an event or performing an activity. In order to recall these thinking processes, a stimulus is employed, like a video recording of particular activity or event. It is thought that such stimuli aid participants relive an original condition or activity with authenticity and vividness.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter offers a review of the available body of research, starting with a consideration of the significance of vocabulary knowledge in EFL. This is followed by a discussion of the aspects involved in knowing words. After that, teaching and learning vocabulary is explained in detail. This discussion touches on decontextualized and contextualized vocabulary teaching, using L1 and L2 in teaching vocabulary knowledge, and the vital role of textbooks in the EFL classroom. The importance of reading for improving English vocabulary is subsequently examined. This includes clarification of the types of reading and the relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension. The chapter ends with a review of the available research on teaching and learning vocabulary through reading comprehension and the significance of stimulated recall methodology in the field of educational research.

The Importance of Vocabulary in Learning English as a Foreign Language

Vocabulary knowledge is considered to be an important element of learning EFL. Written and spoken communication would be impossible if there is lack of vocabulary knowledge. Unfortunately, up to the 1980s, researchers in the field of language teaching focused more on grammar rather than vocabulary knowledge (Nation, 2001). Scholars have started emphasizing that the focus of the research studies is shifted to learning vocabulary knowledge (Laufer, 2009; Nation, 2001; Read, 2000; Schmitt, 2008). The field of teaching and learning language has started to assign more importance to vocabulary knowledge in comparison with the other four language skills (Allothman, 2013). Zimmerman (1997), for instance, states that “vocabulary is central to language and of critical importance to the typical language learner” (p. 5). Gass and Selinker (2001) posit that “there are numerous reasons for believing that lexis is important in learning second language. The lexicon maybe is the most important language component for learners” (p. 372).

Vocabulary learning knowledge is regularly presented as a critical tool for the learners of a second language, because in a second language incomplete vocabulary does not encourage communication activity. Schmitt (2000) states that “lexical knowledge is central to communicative competence and the acquisition of a second language” (p. 55). Simon and Tavernirits (2011) showed that vocabulary is the most essential aspect for communication when compared to other aspects of learning English, such as grammar. In the meantime, Nation (2001) further describes the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language use as complementary and knowledge of vocabulary enables language users to develop their language abilities. Some researchers state that learning vocabulary knowledge is crucial for success in second language use and for the formulation of written texts and the spoken form (Gu, 2003; Maximo 2000; Marion, 2008; Nation, 1999, 2011; Read, 2000).

Learning vocabulary is essential for successful second language use and plays an important role in the formation of complete spoken and written texts. Some scholars, such as Richards (1980) and Krashen (1989) as cited in Maximo (2000) informs that there are various causes for drawing attention to vocabulary competency in the EFL context. Learning an extraordinary number of vocabulary items is vital to master a language successfully.

Learning vocabulary, as one of the knowledge areas in language, plays a great role for learners in learning a language (Cameron, 2001). Vocabulary has been acknowledged as L2 learners’ greatest single source of problems. This remark may possibly reflect that the open-endedness of a vocabulary system is perceived to be a cause of difficulty by learners. Another possible reason is that, unlike phonology and syntax, does not depend on specific rules for improvement and knowledge. In addition to that, it is not clear what vocabulary items a person would need and what rules must be applied (Alqahtani, 2005). Oxford (1990, p. 219) also defines vocabulary as “by far the most sizeable and unmanageable component in the learning of any language, whether a foreign or one’s mother tongue, because of tens of thousands of different meanings”. Applied linguists and language teachers recognize the importance of vocabulary, and they have introduced different techniques and methods to improve learners’ knowledge of vocabulary (Alqahtani, 2005).

Aspects Involved in Knowing Words

Vocabulary is considered to be “a multidimensional and complex construct” (Read, 2000 cited in Tseng & Schmitt, 2008, p. 357). Also, Nassaji (2006, p.389) mentions that vocabulary knowledge consists of two dimensions: “breadth” and “depth”. The depth of someone’s vocabulary knowledge indicates the extent to which a learner knows the particular words in his or her vocabulary. However, the breadth of someone’s vocabulary knowledge means the number of words learners know. Pigada and Schmitt (2006) demonstrate that most of the studies in the language field, specifically on the topic of vocabulary, emphasize a student’s understanding of the meaning of a word. They consider this an indicator that the learner is learning words. However, some researchers point out that besides the meaning, vocabulary knowledge involves other aspects. Carter (1998) informs us that knowing a word includes features such as the ability to use it productively, to recall it for use, knowing its written and the spoken context, and knowing how to use words pragmatically and syntactically. Carter mentions another aspect of vocabulary knowledge, i.e. knowing other words related to a specific word and distinguishing the different meanings of the word.

In second language learning, learning to use vocabulary productively and receptively requires different strategies (Carter, 1998). For productive use, learning vocabulary relies on strategies that activate the lexical store so that words can be used appropriately. However, for receptive use, learning L2 vocabulary depends on strategies that allow the learners to understand words precisely and to keep them in memory. This framework has been defined by Pellicer-Sanchez and Schmitt (2010, p. 38) as “the best specification of word knowledge to date”. They divide word knowledge into “productive knowledge” and “receptive knowledge”. According to Nation (2001), productive vocabulary use produces the meaning of a word by involving speaking and writing. However, receptive vocabulary use is the process of learning vocabulary through reading and listening, as well as recalling the meaning. Nation (2001) gives four reasons why the receptive knowledge of vocabulary is more accessible than productive knowledge:

1. “Motivation”. Learners of a second language may not be encouraged to learn the productive knowledge of words, such as words related to socio-cultural background, such as slang words.
2. “Practice”. Generally, in language acquisition, receptive knowledge is practised more than productive knowledge.
3. “Amount of knowledge”. Receptive knowledge requires the learners to be familiar with certain features of the vocabulary items. However, productive knowledge involves learning more about the written and spoken output structures.
4. “Accessibility”. In the translation area, learners translate vocabulary from L1 to L2 using receptive knowledge, but translating from L2 to L1 or from English back to the mother tongue uses the productive knowledge. Therefore, receptive knowledge of vocabulary seems to be easier to acquire.

Teaching Vocabulary

As learning vocabulary is important, teaching vocabulary is a fundamental component of learning a new language. The teacher should be careful in dealing with vocabulary, and as Nation (2001) mentions, the teacher’s teaching plan should be designed by concentrating on “learning conditions of noticing, retrieval and generative use” (p. 109). Though all the words in a given language cannot be taught and all the aspects of word knowledge cannot be taken into account, teachers usually focus on teaching the meaning and form of a new word in SL or FL teaching classrooms (Thornbury, 2001). Moreover, Nation (2001) mentions that the role of teachers in the vocabulary teaching knowledge is significant because a teacher can help students to build knowledge of phrases and words. A teacher can also help students recall and use vocabulary items in different contexts or using words academically.

Although there are different techniques for teaching English vocabulary successfully, the aim of teaching vocabulary must always draw the attention of the learners to retrieving and using words productively. Learners can note words by highlighting, flashing text or colouring the word. Retrieval can also be supported

through the use of delay, or by supplying increasing clues. Generative use can be promoted by presenting vocabulary in different contexts and in a different form, i.e. pictorial, spoken and written (Nation, 2001).

In the vocabulary teaching area, whether to introduce meaning or form (pronunciation and orthography) first is a common dilemma for teachers. Thornbury (2002) argues that the gap between the presentation of the word meaning and the form cannot be assumed for the learners when they make a mental link between meaning and the form in the process of presenting new words. In this regard Nation (2001) states that some issues are still controversial in teaching English vocabulary and remain unsolved and they are whether the written form or the spoken form should be presented first and whether words should be presented in context or isolation. Nation further discusses the controversy over teaching a core vocabulary of 2000 high-frequency words as early as possible to SL or FL learners. Most researchers agree that learners can become familiar at least with 3000-word families as a basic vocabulary, and 500-word families are required for more specific situations (Nation, 2001).

Contextualized and Decontextualized Vocabulary Teaching

Nation (2001) mentions that some researchers think that if vocabulary teaching is linked to a specific context, the learning process will not be beneficial to the learners. This teaching technique is called the “decontextualizing technique”. It is defined by Oxford and Crookall (1990) as a technique that “removes the word as completely as possible from any communicative context that might help the learner remember and that might provide some notion as to how the word is actually used as a part of the language” (p.9). Nation (2001) offers two criticisms of the technique: the first is that it is not beneficial for remembering words, and the second is that it offers no help for employing words in different context.

Regardless of the proposed criticisms, the technique has some advantages. As Nation (2001) illustrates, the first advantage of this method relates to efficiency in terms of effort and time. The second advantage is that it allows learners to intentionally concentrate on the characteristics of the new word that may not be clear from the context or by using a dictionary. In addition, it allows learners to regulate

repetition. However, Nation (2005) still sees teaching vocabulary intentionally as “one of the least efficient ways of developing learners” (p. 1).

Teaching can be effective if the focus is on transferring a small amount of knowledge, specifically when teaching vocabulary. However, as Nation (2005) states, if the provided information is complex, learners may understand it incorrectly. He recommends several principles for teaching vocabulary, for instance avoiding complicated explanations, using written and oral techniques when introducing a word by writing the word on the board and clarifying the same word orally, and concentrating on the words that are familiar to the learners. In addition, Nation (2001) states that learning vocabulary from a context includes learning vocabulary from films and listening to stories, learning from the radio and television, learning from extensive reading, and learning from taking part in the context.

It is quite important to consider learning vocabulary through reading if there is emphasis on contextualized vocabulary teaching. A number of studies have been done in this field (Altalhab, 2014, Alqahtani, 2015, Asyiah 2017). In sociocultural theory, the importance of context is considered vital to learning a new language. Halliday (1993) asserts that in learning vocabulary knowledge the context involves the words surrounding a specific vocabulary item. L2 learners can then benefit from those words to understand the meaning of the new lexical item. In Krashean’s input hypothesis (1989), it is mentioned that reading texts provide context for L2 learning. This suggests that teaching L2 vocabulary through context is considered to be a possible method for improving vocabulary, but it is unlike teaching vocabulary without texts.

Many studies have tried to compare contextualized and decontextualized vocabulary teaching: For instance, a study by Qian’s (1996) found that decontextualized vocabulary teaching produced better retention in comparison to contextualized vocabulary teaching. The consequence of this study differs from Krashean’s input hypothesis (1989) which states that vocabulary learning occurs subconsciously in a second language by means of comprehensible input, specifically through reading, when there is a focus on the messages rather than isolated words (Laufer, 2009). However, a case study by Pigada and Schmitt (2006) showed that language learning can occur consciously through comprehensible input (reading).

Laufer (2003) in turn found that word-focused tasks were more effective in comparison with the reading tasks used to teach vocabulary to EFL or ESL learners. In conclusion, both contextualised and decontextualized vocabulary teaching methods affect SL or FL learners' vocabulary knowledge and competency. There should be a balance between the two methods when teaching vocabulary knowledge to FL learners (Nation, 2001).

Using L1 and L2 in Teaching English Vocabulary

There has been much debate about the use of the mother tongue as compared to only the second language when teaching vocabulary. Nation (2003) demonstrated that “whenever a teacher feels that a meaning-based L2 task might be beyond the capabilities of the learners, a small amount of L1 discussion can help overcome some of the obstacles”. Employing L1 can therefore be an effective method for both FL students and teacher. Furthermore, Ramachandran and Rahim (2004) asserted that even when using the communicative approach, employing only the target language in the process of FL teaching may only suit learners at the intermediate or advanced levels.

Nation (2003), furthermore, suggests that the use of L2 should be increased when learners do not have ample opportunity to use L2 outside of class. One way to control this type of situation is using L2 for classroom management, for instance, when explaining activities, controlling behaviour, and giving instructions to the students. These recommendations seem to benefit learners who are at the lower levels of proficiency. By repeating these instructions in every class, learners will become more familiar with the words used.

In the Iraqi context, Galali and Cinkara (2017) investigated learners' attitude towards the use of Kurdish as a L1 in English classes at the Salahaddin University in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. The researchers explored the attitudes of both the students and the teachers towards the use of L1 in their English classes at the end of the first semester of the 2016–2017 academic year. The result revealed that Kurdish EFL learners had a positive attitude towards using their L1 to facilitate English

language learning. According to current theories and literature, it is clear that L1 has a facilitating and necessary role in teaching a foreign language.

Using L1 is more appropriate for students at the beginner level rather than students at the intermediate and advanced levels. As it is mentioned before, students had positive attitudes towards using L1 in teaching the English language. However, using the L2 must still be the focus in the classrooms and the L1 should only be used when there is a special need.

Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs)

The goal of most of EFL/ESL language learners is not only recognizing the meaning of new words and understanding it, but also having the capacity to employ the newly learned words in their oral and written activities. Nation (1990) argues that FL or SL learners should be exposed to different kinds of techniques and strategies to maintain, retrieve and record new vocabulary items. This step can be done by making learners familiar with different vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs).

Most VLS research notes that it is necessary for FL/SL learners to use different kinds of VLS in order to better activate their vocabulary knowledge in the second language. Cohen (1998), for example, describes the strategies for learning a language as “those processes which are consciously selected by learners and which may result in action taken to enhance the learning or use of a second or foreign language, through the storage, retention, recall, and application of information about that language” (p. 4). Another specialist in the field of VLS is Schmitt (2000), who states that the process of learning vocabulary in FL or SL requires following a wide range of VLSs. He emphasizes that “good language learners do many things such as used a variety of strategies, structure, review, and practice target word and so on” (p.133). Furthermore, Decarrico (2001) highlights the crucial role learning incidental vocabulary items. This learning is facilitated by employing VLSs since they help learners to develop their vocabulary knowledge independently. In this section, three main taxonomies for VLSs that have been developed by O’Malley’s (1985), Rubin’s (1987), Oxford (1990), Stern’s (1992), Schmitt (1997) and Nation (2001) are discussed in details.

O'Malley's (1985) Taxonomy

O'Malley's Taxonomy et al (1985) divide LLS into three main subcategories, namely: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies and socio-affective strategies. Firstly, meta-cognitive strategies refer to a term used in information- processing theory to indicate an "executive" function, that is, strategies which involve planning for learning, thinking about learning process as it is taking place, for learning, thinking about learning process as it is taking place, monitoring of one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed. Among the main metacognitive strategies, it is possible to include advance organizers, directed attention, selective attention, self-management, functional planning, self-monitoring, delayed production, self-evaluation. Secondly, cognitive strategies are more limited to specific learning tasks and they involve more direct manipulation of the learning material itself. Among the most important cognitive strategies are repetition, resourcing, translation, grouping, note taking, deduction, recombination, imagery, auditory representation, key word, contextualization, elaboration, transfer, inference. Thirdly, socio-affective strategies have to do with social mediating activities and interacting with others. The main socio-affective strategies are cooperation and question for clarification.

Rubin's (1987) Taxonomy

According to Rubin, there are three types of LLS used by learners that contribute directly or indirectly to language learning, namely language strategies, communication strategies, and social strategies. Firstly, Language strategies, are those which have direct contribution to the development of the language system constructed by the learner. They consist of two types: cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies refer to the steps or operations used in learning that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials. Rubin identify six main cognitive strategies, namely: strategies, cognitive strategies and socio-affective strategies. clarification/ verification, guessing/ inductive inference, deductive reasoning, practice memorization and monitoring. Metacognitive strategies are those used to manage, regulate, or self-directed language-learning. They involve various process such as planning, prioritizing, setting goals, and self-management. Secondly, Communicative strategies are less directly related to language learning since their

focus is on the process of participating in a conversation and getting meaning across or clarifying the speaker's message. Thirdly, Social strategies refer to the activities learner engage in which afford them opportunities to be exposed to and practice their knowledge.

Oxford's (1990) Taxonomy

Oxford (1990) was the first to present a comprehensive system of VLSs with her taxonomy in which she divides strategies into two categories (see table 1): direct strategies and indirect strategies. She gives considerable evidence to indicate that using a VLS increases the proficiency of a second language learner. Direct strategies include memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies. Oxford defines memory strategies as those employed to recall new information and retrieve it when necessary. These strategies enable SL learners to relate new information. It entails four sets, namely creating mental linkages, applying images and sounds, reviewing well, and employing action. For example, semantic mapping or placing new words into a context can help FL or SL learners to recall new information. The second category is cognitive strategies, which is defined as those tactics that "help learners make and strengthen the association between new and already known information" (Oxford, 1990, p. 167), such as repeating, highlighting, and taking notes. It subcategorizes into four groups, namely practising, receiving and sending messages, analysing and reasoning, and creating structures for input and output. The last category is compensation strategies, and these concentrate on language information in detail. Oxford notes that learners use compensation strategies to confront a temporary breakdown either in writing or speaking by using for example linguistic clues or coining words. These strategies subdivide into two groups, overcoming limitations in speaking and writing and guessing intelligently.

Along with that, indirect strategies, comprise metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. The first category is metacognitive strategies. This strategy enables the SL or FL learners to control, evaluate, and make a plan for their vocabulary learning, such as planning for a language task and organizing. This strategy enables the SL or FL learners to control, evaluate, and make a plan for their vocabulary learning, such as planning for a language task and

organizing. As Oxford (1990) mentions, this strategy helps learners select suitable sources for the given tasks. These strategies are divided into three groups, namely centering your learning, arranging and planning your learning, and evaluating your learning. The second category is affective strategies, such as using a checklist or discussing your feelings with someone else. This strategy centres on diagnosing learners' negative emotions, such as a fears of public speaking in their first or second language, or attempts to control these types of feelings.

Table 1

Oxford (1990) Taxonomy of L2 Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Main groups	Strategy groups	Subgroups
Direct strategy	Memory strategies	Creating mental linkages, applying images and sounds, reviewing well, employing action
	Cognitive strategies	Practising, receiving and sending messages, analysing and reasoning, creating structures for input and output
	Compensation strategies	Guessing intelligently, overcoming limitations in speaking and writing
Indirect strategy	Metacognitive strategies	Centering your learning, arranging and planning your learning, evaluating your learning
	Affective strategies	Lowering your anxiety, encouraging yourself, taking your emotional temperature
	Social strategies	Asking questions, cooperating with others, empathizing with others

These strategies subdivide into three groups, lowering your anxiety, encouraging yourself, and taking your emotional temperature. The last category is social strategies, and it can be used to ask for corrections, cooperate with others, and

developing cultural understanding. It subdivides into three groups, namely asking questions, cooperating with others, and empathizing with others.

Stern's (1992) Taxonomy

According to Stern (1992: 262- 266), there are five main LLS, namely: management and planning strategies, cognitive strategies, communicative experiential strategies, interpersonal strategies and affective strategies. Firstly, Management and planning strategies are related with the learner's intention to direct his own learning. Secondly, cognitive strategies are steps or operations used in learning that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials. Thirdly, communicative experiential strategies may include circumlocution, gesturing, paraphrase, or asking for repetition and explanation that are used by learner to keep a conversation going and to avoid interrupting the flow of communication. Forth, Interpersonal strategies refer to strategies used by learners to monitor their own development and evaluate their own performance. Learners should contact with naïve speakers to become acquainted with the target language. Fifth, Affective strategies refer to strategies used by learners to cater their own feeling when dealing with the complexity of language learning.

Schmitt's (1997) Taxonomy

Schmitt (1997) presents a detailed taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies that can assist in vocabulary learning. Schmitt's strategies are presented into two groups: discovery and consolidation. In the first group students determine the meaning when they encounter new vocabularies for the first time by for example guessing the meaning from the context or learning and practising new words by means of a group study. The second strategy in Schmitt's taxonomy is consolidation strategies. This refers to recalling the words once their meaning has been explained. This type of strategy is divided into four groups, namely cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, memory strategies and social strategies. Examples include using the keyword method, keeping vocabulary notebook, or employing grouping and imagery. Other ways to help learners enrich their vocabulary knowledge is for

example integrating vocabulary teaching with one of the main language skills, specifically reading comprehension.

Nation's (2001) Taxonomy

Nation's taxonomy (2001) includes three aspects, namely aspects of vocabulary learning, sources of vocabulary knowledge, and learning processes. This taxonomy is categorized into three general strategies along with their sub-categories. They include strategies for planning vocabulary learning, strategies for finding information about words (sources), and strategies for establishing knowledge (processes). The first type of strategy, aspects of vocabulary learning, relates to "deciding on where to focus attention, how to focus the attention, and how often to give attention to the item". It concentrates on planning repetition, selecting strategies, and deciding which aspects of word knowledge should be emphasized. The second type of strategy deals with studying word parts (affixes and stems), employing context, consulting a reference source in L1 or L2 (for instance, utilizing dictionaries), and using the correspondence in other languages. The third group of strategies is remembering words from L2 and making them accessible for use. They include strategies such as noticing, retrieving, as well as generating words.

The Importance of Reading Comprehension

In the academic context, reading skill is one of the most fundamental language skills and a central aspect of active learning (Solak & Altay, 2014). In the process of learning a foreign language, reading is the most substantial skill for receiving information and broadening academic knowledge (McDonough & Shaw, 2003; Talebi, 2013 & Azeroual, 2013). Similarly, being able to read and comprehend academic texts is believed to be a crucial skill that EFL or ESL students are required to develop (Levine et al., 2000). Reading comprehension refers to the extent to which a reader comprehends a text (Ahmadi et al., 2013; Naidu et al., 2013). As Ahmadi and Ismail (2012) point out, reading comprehension is emphasized when teaching a foreign language.

Developing reading skills not only involves receiving information for comprehension purposes, but also the development of linguistic competence (Nassaji, 2011; Chen, 2012; Sidek, 2012). For instance, it includes improving language skills such as writing and speaking. Furthermore, Alderson (2005), emphasized the relationship between language skills and vocabulary development. So, reading is also a source of improving vocabulary knowledge (Patesan et al., 2014).

The knowledge of vocabulary meanings and the ability to use the knowledge efficiently is considered a main aspect of reading comprehension (Ali & Mohd. Ayub, 2012; Bee Eng & Abdullah, 2003). Moghadam, Zainal and Ghaderpour (2012) acknowledge that when readers do not know too many vocabularies related to a certain context, the efficiency and effectiveness of text processing are impeded. This causes difficulties with the readers' comprehension of the text.

Since word recognition and lexical access often prevent comprehension, vocabulary instruction may help improve students' reading comprehension skills (Curtis & Longo, 2001). Second language learners are typically conscious of their limitations with their vocabulary knowledge, which would hinder their ability to perform reading comprehension tasks effectively (Read, 2004). Past studies on vocabulary in both first language (L1) and second language (L2) have shown that knowledge of vocabulary is one of the best predictors of reading ability and the capability to achieve new details from texts (Nation, 2001; Qian, 2002; Read, 2000; Tannenbaum, Torgesen & Wagner, 2006).

Intensive Reading

Many authors divide reading into different types (Keene & Zimmermann, 2013). Intensive reading deals with the process of reading short texts to extract specific knowledge. Grellet (2010) refers to this as "an accuracy activity" (p. 4), reading in-depth. Nuttalla (2005) states that the aim of intensive reading is "to arrive at an understanding, not only of what the text means but of how the meaning is produced" (p. 38). This needs talented readers. Nuttall (2005) indicates that this kind of reading is significant for the student's improvement in reading skills. Intensive

reading requires a teacher's guidance and monitoring of the students' reading process (Yazar, 2013).

According to Harmer (2002), the teacher's role should be performed flexibly with this type of reading. Here, the teacher is an observer, a curriculum organizer, a prompter, and a feedback organizer. The teacher as an observer should determine the learners' development in reading, whether they are doing the activity collectively or individually. As a curriculum organizer, the teacher should inform the students of the main aim of the reading, of how long they have to do it, and instructions related to how to retrieve the knowledge from the text. The teacher can encourage the students to figure out language features in the texts while they read, and then explain afterwards.

Extensive Reading

Scholars have proposed different definitions of the term "extensive reading". Grab and Stoller (2002) illustrate that extensive reading involves "large quantities of materials that are within learners' linguistic competence" (p. 21). Yamashita (2013, p. 248) describes extensive reading as "an approach to reading pedagogy that encourages students to engage in a large amount of reading". Extensive reading is not only concerned with the fluency of readers, but also with learning new vocabulary and concepts that enable learners to expand their understanding of familiar words (Yamashita, 2013). Nuttall (2005) identifies two main reasons why extensive reading is important. Firstly, extensive reading is considered as the easiest way to develop reading skill Secondly, it is considered to be an educational tool. Besides, it is also a source of enjoyment. Extensive reading can peak students' interest in reading, and they can learn about their favorite topics while improving their reading skills. Yamashita (2013) emphasizes the positive impacts of extensive reading on learners' attitudes in the EFL context. He found that learners had a positive attitude towards extensive reading and it inspired them to increase their knowledge.

The reading instruction in EFL classrooms requires more than answering the questions from the texts done by the students (Sander, 2016). Wray et al (2000) believe that context is another essential thing in teaching reading in the classroom. Some experts have suggested some roles that should be accommodated by both teachers and students. Ruphley, et al. (2009) suggest the teacher build teacher–student interactions to impart new information to students in the classroom. In this teacher-student interaction, teacher guidance of the students learning will facilitate the students in reading activities. Inviting the students to ask in the classroom then the teachers give a further explanation in order to help the students understand the text can become one of the classroom interactions. Teachers’ guidance is essential since it enables students to decode text and comprehend the texts given. Ruphley, et al. (2009) further argue that comprehension is the goal of reading instruction. Once the students are able to comprehend the texts, the students will be able to express their idea of their reading. Guthrie, et al. (1996) suggest the teachers encourage students to initiate learning by constructing their own questions from their own observation in their real world. In addition, reading instruction should accommodate students’ autonomy. It can be done by supporting the students to choose topics, books, texts, or peers by themselves. Sander (2016) suggests the teacher involve the students in the meaning-making process of reading. It is supported by Ko (2013) who states that some other experts also believe that reading instruction should teach students basic language skills to be able to communicate. Then, the teachers also need to develop students’ critical consciousness, so they can formulate questions rather than passively accept the information they read. In the ideal reading instruction, teachers tend to assign students by involving more than one text, sentence, and word level (Wray, 2000). By doing this, the students will be able to make connections between these levels. Another remarkable feature of the reading instruction is that the teachers make the purposes and processes of classroom reading explicitly for their students.

Guthrie, et al. (1996) state that in the reading instruction, the students need to initiate learning by constructing their own questions from their real-world. In addition, the students need to create opportunities for them to express their thought. That kind of self-expression can be done through writing or group discussion. Wray, et al. (2000) suggest the students make active connections between levels of knowledge. Garcia

and Godina (2004) believe that students' active participation in the reading instruction will be crucial. The students should actively take part in communicating their thought both in written and oral form. The ideal literacy instruction proposed above will be used to formulate the questionnaire for this study.

Related Studies

Studies on The Relationship Between Vocabulary and Reading Skills

Alyousef (2005) states that reading can be considered an interactive process between a text and a reader that leads to fluent reading and automaticity. Horst (2005) notes that reading plays a key role in expanding word knowledge and accordingly written texts are richer in lexis in contrast to the spoken forms. Nagy (1988) explains that it is essential for a reader to know many different vocabulary items for reading comprehension because a reader cannot understand a text if most of the words are not recognized.

The role of reading in vocabulary improvement has been investigated in many studies. For instance, Al-Nujaidi (2004) studied the role of reading in vocabulary improvement among FL students at a Saudi university. The participants of this study were divided into two groups: an extensive reading group and a control group. The findings revealed that the extensive reading group recognized 40 words from the academic word section in the test, 233 words in the 2000-word section, and 283 words in the 3000-word section. Meanwhile, the control group recognized 6 words, 15 words, and 48 words separately. This led to the conclusion that extensive reading significantly improves the vocabulary knowledge of EFL learners.

In another study, Golkar and Yamini (2007) investigated the relationship between learning vocabulary, students' proficiency and their reading comprehension ability. The participants were 76 undergraduate Iranian students. The result demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between improving learners' vocabulary knowledge and their reading comprehension ability. Similarly, Zhang and Anual (2008) studied the effects of reading comprehension on learning vocabulary among ESL learners. Thirty-seven students from a secondary school in Singapore

participated in this investigation. The results revealed that the students' vocabulary knowledge at the 2000 and 3000-word levels correlated positively with their reading comprehension skills. In another study, Brown (2010) investigated whether the vocabulary knowledge of learners and their reading comprehension mutually influence each other. The participants of this study were 50 first-year students from social sciences at a university in Southern Africa. The findings revealed that teaching and learning vocabulary can be integrated with reading skill and students can benefit from this integration. Another study was conducted by Al-Nujaidi (2004) to examine the role of reading in vocabulary improvement among EFL students at a Saudi university. The findings revealed there is a crucial link between reading texts and the improvement of the vocabulary knowledge of EFL learners. Also Altalhab, (2016) presents similar findings and says that reading skills is one of the most important factors of students' vocabulary knowledge. The studies reviewed in this section emphasize the importance of reading comprehension in teaching and learning vocabulary. The next section visits the research on the teachers' and learners' perception of vocabulary teaching.

Studies on Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions of Vocabulary Teaching

In the field of educational, perceptions and beliefs are considered conceptual information that leads intellectual action (Natael, 2006). Borg (2003) defines perceptions as a preposition that might be intentionally or unintentionally filled with emotive commitments. Many studies have examined EFL/ESL students and teachers' perceptions of teaching vocabulary. For example, Ilmi and Fitriati (2020) conducted a case study to investigate teachers' perceptions, practices, and plans for teaching vocabulary in an EFL context. The results showed that teachers had positive perceptions of teaching vocabulary. Moreover, they explained that vocabulary has a significant role in improving both productive (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening and reading) skills. In their vocabulary teaching plans, they integrated vocabulary materials with different activities and a list of vocabularies. Teachers employed direct VLS when teaching vocabulary. They argued that direct VLSs helped learners remember vocabulary knowledge easily. Their findings showed that the teachers had positive perceptions, plans, and practices regarding teaching

vocabulary. This finding is in contrast with the finding of a study by Cahyono and Widiati (2008), where the researchers found that vocabulary teaching and learning seems to be neglected during English teaching in the Indonesian context.

The perception of teachers is considered valuable since such perceptions may directly affect the process of teaching. Studying teachers' perceptions also reveals their ideas about the educational system in which they take the part and their roles. (Richard & Lockart, 1996). Lu (2017) conducted a study on the perceptions of ESL teachers and practices related to their vocabulary instruction. Twenty-five ESL teachers completed a survey on teachers' perceptions of teaching vocabulary. Classroom observation and a focused group discussion with the teachers were used to gather further data. The results revealed that, in general, participants had a positive perception of teaching vocabulary that they supported the implicit teaching of vocabulary items.

Alsadat and Hassankiadeh (2013) reported that perceptions are closely correlated to the strategies employed in the classroom. Asyiah (2017) conducted a study to investigate how teachers and students perceive vocabulary teaching and learning, and what VLSs students use for learning vocabulary items. According to the results, teachers and students had positive attitudes toward teaching and learning vocabulary. Students commonly used metacognitive and determination strategies. The VLS preferred by teacher was a full-contextual strategy. Additionally, the study explained that there is a significant relationship between students' vocabulary competency and their VLS. Similarly, Nagy, Herman and Anderson (1985) acknowledge that learning new words is more effective when it takes place through written texts or reading texts.

In another study, Zimmerman (1997) investigated whether interactive vocabulary instruction through reading skill is influential. The findings showed students' perception of how words should be taught. Interactive vocabulary instruction followed by moderate amounts of self-selected and course-related reading was shown lead to improvement in vocabulary knowledge. This finding is similar to the results of a study on teaching vocabulary within a context carried out by Dole, Sloan and Trathen (1995). The participants in this study had the perception that presenting vocabulary in context is vitally important and helpful because it enables

students to grow their vocabulary and to learn vocabulary through a text that gives students a chance to become familiar with the use of words in the relevant context. In a study on vocabulary enrichment through reading, Brown (2010) investigated whether the vocabulary knowledge of learners and their reading comprehension mutually influenced each other. The findings revealed that teaching and learning vocabulary can be integrated with reading skills and that students benefit from this integration. This result is similar to a study by Thompson (2002), who investigated which aspects of learners' vocabulary knowledge changed as a result of using reading as a resource. The result revealed there was a substantial difference in vocabulary gain in terms of vocabulary meaning, antonyms and synonyms. Research on vocabulary teaching and teachers' perceptions has also highlighted that some teachers prefer explicit and some implicit vocabulary items, while some others prefer to teach VLSs to their learners (Nation, 2001).

SRM in Vocabulary Teaching and Perception Studies

The stimulated recall method enables the researcher to enter into a real-life context (Fox-Turnbull, 2009). The use of this method to better understand language learning is gaining more prominence when learner thinking is employed to analyse a particular circumstance. In SRM, a participant is offered a chance to revisit activities that they did while completing a task. They are asked to reflect on what they were thinking or doing at the time of the original event (Gass & Mackey, 2000).

Gass and Mackey (2000) illustrated that there are three reasons to use SRM: 1) it can be helpful for explaining specific and individual events and identifying the types of information a learner uses when making judgments or linguistic choices or when struggling to find a solution to particular communicative problems, 2) it can be helpful to introduce well-organized information in particular ways, and 3) it can be employed to help participant to recall when and how an action or event happened or if a specific cognitive process, such as decision making, retrieval, or search is being used. Many studies use SRM as a way to investigate the perceptions of students and teachers of vocabulary teaching. For instance, a study was conducted by Mirzaie, Hemmati, and Kiasi, (2018) to investigate the perceptions and practices EFL teachers have regarding vocabulary teaching, particularly in Iranian private language schools.

The researchers used a qualitative research design, and four competent teachers were chosen to investigate their perceptions of vocabulary teaching from different perspectives. Data gathering tools such as interviews, classroom observation, and stimulated recall interviews were used to gain a comprehensible picture of the participants' perceptions and their practices when teaching vocabulary. Stimulated recall interviews are used as an essential method in this study to get the perceptions of the teachers. The results reveal the perceptions and knowledge the EFL teachers have of vocabulary instruction. The participants employed decontextualized strategies more than contextualized strategies in practice. This indicates the participants' tendency towards traditional approach in vocabulary instruction.

In Altalhab's (2014) study, SRM was a vital method to gauge the perceptions teachers and students have of vocabulary teaching. The aim was investigating the perceptions students and teachers have of teaching and learning vocabulary through reading skills at Saudi universities. Besides the perceptions of the students and teachers, this study also aimed to look at two other key issues. The first was to study the vocabulary teaching techniques EFL teachers use at Saudi universities, the second was to explore the most effective VLSs by the learners while reading. The results indicated that the teachers were "textbook-centralised" and that there is a lack of autonomy among the teachers with respect to how they teach vocabulary knowledge and the selected techniques used with the textbooks. The teachers used different vocabulary teaching techniques, but the main techniques were defining new words in English and Arabic, and employing synonyms. Moreover, the students were shown to employ a range of VLSs and used those strategies that they considered "easy" and "fast" to follow. The students acknowledged the benefits of employing several VLSs and the autonomy of using the strategies. Students and teachers of this study considered reading a beneficial strategy for vocabulary instruction. The findings revealed that learning vocabulary is a social practice affected by different factors, like VLSs, the textbooks, teaching techniques, learners' level of competence in English, beliefs, attitudes, culture values and learners' interests.

In another study, Balhouq (2018) investigated the relative advantages of different VLSs in the Libyan learning context. The stimulated recall method was used as the main method to explore the perceptions of Libyan learners and teachers of the English language with a special emphasis on vocabulary learning. To do so,

they used the stimulated recall method (SRM), questionnaire, interview, and the diaries of students and teachers. Both questionnaires and interviews with teachers showed that the EFL participated teachers were aware of a number of VLSs. Also, the interaction between teachers, students and contexts were clarified in the diaries of students and teachers. The findings also revealed 11 significant recommendations for learning and teaching vocabulary. Certain VLSs were suggested for use in similar contexts, particularly in Libyan universities. The recommendations were mainly concerned with strategic awareness-raising, the use of linguistic and other clues, strategy training, and teachers' emphasis on using VLSs inside and outside classrooms. The study also recommended that EFL or Libyan teachers and students should make a decision about which VLS they should employ in their classrooms and how much period of time they should spend using them. It was also argued that students should be trained by their teachers to use VLSs in the classroom, in groups and individually. Besides teachers, curriculum designers and writers should take part in selecting VLSs. The teachers' interview exposed that VLSs are significant in strengthening the learners' learning of varied elements like vocabulary classes and reading comprehension classes.

Zhang (2008) investigated the vocabulary instruction knowledge of Chinese teachers by using interviews, classroom observations, and SRM. This shed light on their beliefs about vocabulary instruction, their understanding of learning vocabulary, the relationship between their practices of vocabulary teaching, their knowledge of teaching vocabulary and the basis of the teachers' knowledge about teaching vocabulary. The results showed that Chinese EFL teachers had proper content knowledge about vocabulary teaching. The teachers' instructional practices were consistent with their beliefs about vocabulary instruction. The findings also revealed that instructional practices and formal EFL education are two main sources of knowledge for Chinese teachers in vocabulary instruction.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter explains the research methodology used for the current study. The discussion starts by outlining the research approach and design. Next, issues related to the setting and participants of the research are discussed in-detail. Data collection methods and instruments are presented in the next phase. Finally, data collection procedures and the steps taken for analyzing the data are discussed.

Research Design

In order to investigate the perceptions of a number of Iraqi Kurdish students and their EFL teachers towards improving English vocabulary through reading comprehension, this study follows a qualitative approach. Qualitative research methods aim to analyse and collect non-numerical data to gain in-depth insights into people's experiences or perceptions. They can be employed to generate new thoughts or concepts for research or to collect opinions and beliefs on a problem (Richards, 2003). One of the methods used in qualitative research design is Stimulated Recall Method (SRM). According to Fox-Turnbull (2009), SRM presents a comprehensible picture of the real-life context in teaching and learning classrooms and thus have been widely used in various language teaching studies. The data can be gathered after events and activities. This method provides a thorough comprehensive picture of the reflections, perceptions, and thoughts of the participants. Further information regarding SRM will be discussed later in this chapter under 'data collection method' title.

Setting and Participants

The study was conducted in the English Language Department (ELD) of the College of Education and Languages, Lebanese French University in Erbil, Kurdistan, in Northern Iraq during the spring semester of 2019–2020. Five English language

teachers and 76 Kurdish students participated in the study. The teachers are from different nationalities with different experience background in teaching reading comprehension, vocabulary and other language skills in the Lebanese French University. Detailed information about their experience in teaching the English language and, in teaching reading or comprehension classes, and their qualifications are presented in Table 2. The second group of participants were Kurdish students from first and second year in English language department in Lebanese French University. There were 34 males and 42 females between 18 and 25 years of age, when researcher recorded the videos of the classes seventy-six undergraduate students were in the classes. However, after the researcher asked for the volunteer participants and those who were interested to participate in stimulated recall sessions. Thirty-six students voluntarily participated as group discussions in the stimulated recall sessions.

The students' first language was Kurdish. The first year students who participated in the study took comprehension course (ENG102COM) and the second year students took a reading course (ENG202RSK). These two courses, as it was mentioned in their course descriptions (See appendix A), are designed to teach both academic reading skills and strategies as well as academic vocabulary items and the vocabulary learning strategies.

It is worth noting that there is no separate course offered by the university to teach academic vocabulary. Kurdish students study these courses three hours a week, and their main aim is to encourage students to read a wide range of texts, both in class and at home, so that they become familiar with texts in academic genres and build up a broader vocabulary command and become familiar with the use of various lexical structures. According to the course outlines the two courses are designed to enable students to deal with a number of vocabulary items and grammatical structures in a variety of text types. Reading classes can include a range of reading texts as course books and reading skills books at the first- and second-year level of the university.

Table 2

Demographic Information of the Teachers

Teachers	Qualifications	Teaching experience	Years of teaching experience in reading comprehension
1. Teacher (A)	BA, M.A, M.Phil., PhD in ESL.	17	8
2. Teacher (B)	BA cum laude (English/German Teacher), M.A, M.Phil., PhD, English as a second language, MA in Education, Internship at Moscow State Linguistic University, Department of English Phonetics, Education Administration, Ph.D. in Linguistics.	18	5
3. Teacher (C)	B.A in English Literature. MA in English Literature. B.Ed.in English Education. M.Phil.in English Literature. M.Ed. Education. M.Phil. Education. PhD in Education. MA in Sociology.	16	6
4. Teacher (D)	BA in ELT, master degree in ELT, Ph.D. in linguistics.	8	5
5. Teacher (E)	BA in TESL, MA in Linguistics and Language Teaching	10	4

Data Collection Method: Stimulated Recall Method

SRM provides significant advantages for collecting data accurately in the language learning area. The participants can expose their thoughts, decision making, and insights by depending on this method. (Calderhead, 1981; Clark & Peterson, 1976; Fox-turnbull, 2009; Gass & Mackey, 2000; Lyle, 2003; Nuthall, 1999; Parker, 1985; Sime, 2006; Stough, 2001). This method is considered to be a valuable data collection tool. It involves different techniques to make participants recall what they did in the classroom and their decision-making (Sime, 2006). By employing this method, more detailed information can be gathered.

According to Gass and Mackey, (2000), there are different types of SRM. The first one is a consecutive recall. In this type of SRM, the researcher will immediately do an interview with the participants to discuss their learning process and to recall their decision making and what they have done in the classrooms. It is worth mentioning that in this study, the researcher followed the consecutive recall approach since the interviews were conducted immediately after the class time. The second type is delayed recall. In this type, after participants participated in several tasks and activities, the researcher will give a list of question about their class and the lesson that they had. After the straight questions, they will be asked about particular difficulties they may have had or how they overcome with that. Therefore, participants will be asked to take questions to home and bring it back the answers the next day. The third and last type of SRM is a nonrecent recall. In this type, participants will be divided into two groups. Also, they will have email accounts in order to send messages to the researcher and speculating on the ways that they are learning a particular lesson during their semester. The second type has been used by in this study.

Moreover, researchers who use SRM have to carefully structure the research design to keep away from difficulties and problems. Gass and Mackey, (2000) presented some conditions that need to be met during the employment of SRM. The first one includes collecting data as soon as possible after recording classes as the time lapse may affect the participant's memory and they may forget the event, thinking process and the decision making that they had. Therefore, they may comment and reflect on what the researcher wants them to comment and reflect on. The second

condition is that the stimulus must be strong enough to activate the structure of the memory. For instance, the participants can watch a video if the process of recall is directly after the event in a case when there is oral interaction during the stimulated recall. If it is delayed, participants can watch a video and read a transcript of the recorded video. Ericsson and Simon (1987) propose an even shorter time-delay. They argue that if there is no gap (or only a very brief one) between the event and the recollection the information is still available in short-term memory for access. The third condition is that participants should be appropriate and trained to go through the procedures of the method. The fourth and last condition is required to be met during recall procedures.

Data Collection Instruments:

Stimulated Recall Sessions

The stimulated recall method allows participants to view themselves in action as a means to help them recall their thinking process and thought about events as they involved and it helps them to recall what they did in class (Dempsey, 2010; Lyle, 2003). Over the past 20 years, video-stimulated recall has been increasingly employed as a research tool in education, medicine and psychotherapy (Clarke, 2002). The SRM consists of videotaping participants in action or during their normal teaching and learning process, then playing video records in the stimulated recall sessions to help participants and remind them about their thinking process and the reason behind it and they can comment on that (Gass & Mackey, 2000).

In the current study, three reading and comprehension classes were video recorded. The recordings consist of eight hours of teaching. The participates and activities of all the students and their teachers were all video recorded by the researcher. After that stimulated recall sessions were held. A totally 36 undergraduate students voluntarily participated in the recall sessions. Ten students from Group A, eleven from Group B, and fifteen from Group C participated in the sessions. Each group discussions lasted for 40 minutes. In these sessions, the volunteer participants watched the selection of extracts from the recordings of the classes to help them recall and comment on their participation, the tasks, and their activities in the class. In the

recall sessions, the student participants were also asked to talk about the most commonly used vocabulary learning strategies that they used in the recorded reading comprehension classes

In a separate group, the five teachers joined the recall sessions. Each session lasted for 30 minutes. The researcher began the recall sessions by showing each teacher the extracts from the recording classes and asking them to recall their teaching, to explain what they did and the reason behind the teaching strategies they applied, specifically, their vocabulary teaching strategies.

Interviews

The second instrument used in this study was interview. After finishing stimulated recall sessions, the researcher conducted interviews with the two groups of volunteer students and the teachers. Students' interviews contained open-ended follow-up questions regarding the employment of VLS based on Oxford's strategy taxonomy (Oxford, 1990) (See Appendix C). The interview questions of students were totally thirteen questions and consisted of four sections. The first section was related to the experience and belief of students about learning vocabulary and in this section, most of the questions were about the importance of vocabulary learning. The second section was about the perspectives of the students of the teaching vocabulary techniques. This section was about the methods that are used in the students' context for teaching vocabulary knowledge. The next section, was allocated to the attitudes of the students towards learning vocabulary through reading and what they think about the effects of reading comprehension classes on the improvement of their vocabulary knowledge. The last section involved questions regarding vocabulary learning strategies of the students and the strategies they prefer the most while learning vocabulary items.

Similar to the students' interview, the questions of teacher's interview contained open-ended questions regarding the employment of VLS based on Oxford's strategy taxonomy (Oxford, 1990). The questions in the teachers' interview were consisted of seventeen questions and divided into four sections (See Appendix D). The first section was related to the experience and beliefs 'of the teachers about teaching vocabulary. The next section involves questions regarding the techniques and

vocabulary teaching strategies. This section provided some questions about the techniques that teachers mostly used to teach vocabulary knowledge and elicits information regarding the most preferred vocabulary teaching strategies of the students. In the next sections, questions are raised regarding ways to deal with unknown words in the reading texts. The last section was about the attitudes of teachers towards teaching vocabulary through reading. It is worth nothing that the interview questions of both students and teachers were adapted from Altalhab (2014).

Data Collection Procedures

After obtaining permission from the head of the English Language Department at Lebanese French University to conduct this study (see Appendix B), the researcher started data collection in two stages. Before starting data collection, the researcher explained the aim of the study and the research procedures to the teachers and students in the classes. The students' questions were answered in the classes. The researcher also explained that the video recording from the classes and audiotape from the stimulated recall sessions would be only used for the study and the data would be kept confidential. The information and explanations was provided to the participants orally in the classes before starting the process. After video recording of three classrooms, stimulated recall sessions were conducted with teachers and students of the three recorded classes. The stimulated recall sessions were divided into two parts. The first part was with students, and the second part was with teachers. Before starting the stimulated recall sessions, each participant received simple directions about the procedures. For example, in the stimulated recall sessions, the researcher gives a general idea about SRM method and how they have to participate. Then, when it comes to watch video recording of the classes, the researcher asked them what went on while learning and teaching vocabulary through their comprehension classes. A digital video camera was placed at the back of the class to record the interactions between the students and the teachers during the lessons.

After the video recording of the classes finished, stimulated recall sessions started with students and teachers. Therefore, three stimulated recall sessions were done with students and teachers in three classes. Thirty-six students as a group discussion randomly were selected to participate in the stimulated recall sessions. Ten

students from Group A, eleven from Group B, and fifteen from Group C participated in the sessions. In the stimulated recall sessions, the researcher showed participants the selection of the extracts from video recording to help participants recall and explain what was going on their classes regarding teaching and learning vocabulary.

The recall sessions were followed by interview sessions with the students and the teachers individually. In these interviews, the researcher asked participants a list of open-ended follow-up questions to gather more information about teaching and learning of vocabularies among teachers and students in reading classes and also to identify the most commonly vocabulary teaching and learning strategies that students and teachers used in their reading classes.

Trustworthiness

In the SRM, attention needs to be paid to the amount of interpretation the researcher may add to the data on the contrary to the refined content of memory that is shared by the participants in the recall sessions. Considering the issue, the researcher focused merely on the transcribed data and answers provided by the participants to questions. Moreover, Gass and Mackey, (2000) and Lyle (2003) emphasized that the researcher must minimise the time delay between the event and the recall. A short time delay was between events and recall sessions for the quality of data obtained by this method. Therefore, to increase the trustworthiness of the results, the researcher used consecutive recall method through conducting the recall sessions of both teachers and students immediately after each recorded lessons. Using consecutive recall session minimizes the time delay between the event and the recall and reduces the effects of psychological aspects of information processing among the participants such as forgetting (Gass & Mackey, 2000). Moreover, Ericsson and Simon (1987) suggest an even shorter time-delay. They discuss that if there is not any gap or only a very short one between the event and the recollection the information is still available in short-term memory for access.

Moreover, controlling the playback during recall sessions was given to the participants to comment on their actions and decisions they made. Paskins et al. (2017), discussed that they priority of the playback can be given to the researcher, but also participants can get an opportunity to interrupt the playback of the video and provide

their comments. Therefore, the videos were played back by both the researcher and the participants, but the main priority was given to the researcher. In other words, the researcher was able to interrupt the video play back in accordance with his own research questions. The tape was replayed and stopped or interrupted when it prompted the participants to remember something he/she had been thinking about during stimulated recall sessions. In the meantime, participants had a chance to stop the video whenever they want to comment on something that happened in the classes according to the instructions given by the researcher.

Data Analysis Procedures

A systematic process was employed to analyse the data qualitatively. During the first stage, the videos of classrooms were carefully watched by the researcher to identify vocabulary teaching and learning strategies used by the EFL teachers and EFL Kurdish students. During the second stage, the recall sessions with the Kurdish students and EFL teachers were analysed (see Appendix E). Thematic analysis was used to describe and organise data in rich detail to present it clearly (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis followed a deductive approach where the researcher starts by developing a codebook with the initial set of codes. This set could be based on the research questions or an existing research framework or theory. In the current study, the main model is Oxford's strategy taxonomy (Oxford, 1990).

Steps were followed to analyse the SRIs and interviews thematically. The first step was to transcribe all the interviews and reading them to become familiar with the data. The second step was generating initial codes and the related key words using the taxonomy. The researcher, next, looked for the important emerging themes in the transcript. The identified themes were later revised and finally identified and categorized (see appendix F). The identified themes were presented and discussed in the results section.

Ethical Consideration

To start the process of data collection, the researcher sent the structure of data collection method, tools, and the questions of the stimulated recall sessions to the Ethics Review Board of Near East University. The structure of data collection method and the questions of the stimulated recall sessions were assumed applicable and it was accepted by the committee of Near East University (see Appendix G). Before starting the first steps of data collection in reading and comprehension classes, the researcher first obtained permission from the head of English language department in College of Education and Languages from Lebanese French University (see appendix B). The head of the English language department was informed about the structure of the study and the main aims of the recordings were briefly clarified before data collection.

The participants of the study that were students and teacher were also informed verbally about the purpose of the study and recordings. Before the study was carried out, the participants were asked verbally for the permission of recording their classes and their voices in stimulated recall videos and sessions. The researcher assumed the participants that the recording data would be kept strictly confidential and the data recorded would be only used for the sake of the study. One of the main objects of reading and comprehension classes was to improve student's vocabulary knowledge and making them familiar with lexical terms. So, before recording the classes each participated teachers provided the course description of reading and comprehension classes (See appendix A). In the process of writing phase of the study, APA guidelines for publication were used to mention all the sources cited. After the final version of the study was approved, the researcher put it on the Turnitin plagiarism Checking Program (see appendix I).

CHAPTER IV

Findings and Discussion

Introduction

This chapter includes answers to the research questions. The findings related to each research question is followed by extracts selected from the recall sessions and interviews which later ends with discussions on the findings.

Students Perception about Learning and Teaching Vocabulary Through Stimulated Recall Sessions

In the stimulated recall sessions (SRIS), students explained their perceptions about teaching and learning vocabulary through reading comprehension classes. A number of results emerged from their responses. The findings are presented below, with excerpts from SRI to illustrate the theme.

Students explained the importance of vocabulary in learning English language by commenting on tasks and exercises that they were doing it in the reading classes. They reported that they learn vocabulary from the texts, tasks and exercises that they are doing it in reading classes and vocabulary is one of the important aspect in language learning that can shape their language development.

Student 2: “we as students learn vocabulary in reading classes and this is very important.

Student 5: “yeah vocabulary is one of the important aspect that we have to pay attention to it in English language.”

Student 3: “Vocabulary development can affect language development so I think it is important.”

Students also clarified how the process of learning vocabulary is going on in reading comprehension classes and they acknowledged that in the reading comprehension classes it is mostly about learning vocabulary and they get benefit from it. Moreover, they commented on the texts that they studied in their classes and they explained when they had a text in reading classes every time, they would encounter too many unfamiliar words. Furthermore, students commented on their

recorded activities and they said after understanding the text and reading it repeatedly by the students in the class their teachers will most of the time ask them to do exercises and tasks that are coming after each text. They mentioned the names of those tasks and activities that they were doing from their recording classes, such as matching keywords with their definitions, guessing the meaning from the contexts, providing synonyms of the new words. Students also demonstrated that they learn vocabulary from the aforementioned tasks and exercises that their teachers ask them to do in the class and they reported that most of these exercises and tasks are all about vocabulary knowledge and this is vitally important for their vocabulary progression. Moreover, Students also reacted with one of the activities that they did in their classroom to learn new words which were using flashcards. Moreover, they provided more information about this activity by saying that their teachers always divided students from the class into several groups when they do this activity. Most of the students reacted with this activity and they liked because as they mentioned in this activity all the students must participate and it is just like a competition between groups and it has its own advantages on the student's memory and they thought it helped them to remember words for a long period of time.

Student4: “Yeah, I think reading classes are about learning new words. we are getting benefit from that. It is useful”

Student 1: “As we can see here, yeah in every time when we have a text our teacher will ask us to read it several times. We encounter too many unfamiliar words.”

Student 7: “As we can see here, we are doing exercises and tasks that are mostly about exercises and our teachers will most of the time ask us to do it in our classrooms. For example, in here we are doing matching keywords with their definitions, guessing the meaning from the contexts, providing synonyms of the new words.

Student 9: “Those tasks help us to develop our vocabulary information and as you can see in here we were doing it in groups.”

Student 6: “Yeah, in here our teacher divided us into several groups and we were using flashcards. Most of my classmates like this activity because in this activity we all have to participate and it is just like a competition.

Student 1: “Yeah, yeah, I think one more reason for having too much love for this activity is it affects our memory. I mean it let us to remember those words that we learn it from this activity.”

Another major result from the SRI data was related to difficulties and challenges. One of the difficulties Kurdish students in all the groups clearly communicated is that the learners in the class are at various different levels. For example, when students recalled one of the tasks that was about matching keywords with the definitions, and they commented on the way that they participated.

Participants furthermore stated that when they did this particular exercise in the class, all the students could not participate because for some of the students it was difficult and for some of them it was easy. They reported that, for the weak students their teacher tried to explain individually by bringing more than one example. They reported that their classes include Kurdish students at an elementary level up to students at an advanced level. When the EFL teacher has to explain a word or idea in the text to the lower levels, the class would become disinterested and more proficient students would regard the class as a waste of time. On the other hand, when the teacher explains a particular word or text to the higher level students, the lower level students are not able to follow. They commented on their teacher, saying that the teacher is trying to create a balance, but that the situation is challenging for both students and teachers. Participants provided commented on another exercises from their recording classes. In one of the exercises, students had to deduce meaning from the text, and the participants reported that only more proficient students were able to do it.

Student 6: “In here, if we look at this exercise, it was matching keywords with their definition. All the students could not participate. Look at these students, their level is lower than others. One of the challenges that we encounter as a student in this class is the level of the students. All the students are not at the same level.”

Student3: “yeah, in this exercise our teacher tried to use more than one way to explain the meaning of the words.”

Student2: “We are all challenging from having a variety of levels. As we can see in the activities of the recorded class, all the students cannot participate

because it is difficult for some of us and if they participate, they will not do it properly.”

Student10: “Honestly, we have a problem which is having differences in levels of students in the class. This is something that we don’t like it and it is really uncomfortable and challenging for us.”

Student 2: “One of the challenges that I face is having a variety of levels in the class. So it is a bit difficult for both teacher and students because sometimes some students cannot understand some of the text correctly and when the teacher explains for them it becomes bored for others.”

Student 4: “On the contrary, when the teacher tries to have a match with those who their level is good, it will be complicated for others.”

Student 7: “We have different levels like Elementary-level unstill advanced-level. So it is a bit complicated. If we look at this exercise, it is quite clear that some of the students could able to participate, and some of them did not able to do it.”

Another finding from SRI of students which was about the textbook and their interests. Students reported that some of the students liked the topics of text that they read from the textbook, but some others did not have the same idea. For example, one of the students said some of the students were disinterested in the topic of the text that they read from the class, and it was generally about the effects of advertisement. Another student explained that if their teacher asked about their interest in terms of topics, positivity affected their attention and they would like it more.

Student2: “Yeah, we love the topics of the texts that we read it from our classes.”

Student 4: “Yeah yeah, but I don’t think all the students like it. If we look at the reading part here we will understand it.”

Student 6: “I think some of the students like it and some of them do not.”

Student 1: “I think If our teacher asked students about the selection of the topics for reading we got more influenced by that.”

Student 3: “yeah That it true. I think it is vitally important for teachers to ask us about our interest to the topics that we read it.”

Students Perception about Learning and Teaching Vocabulary Through Interviews

In general, the participants shared common perceptions of the effect of reading comprehension classes and tasks on improving their English vocabulary knowledge. A number of results and a number of recommendations emerged from their responses. These findings are discussed below, with excerpts from the interviews to illustrate the theme.

The results revealed that the most commonly reported issue in the interviews was the awareness of the students of the importance of learning vocabulary as part of the process of learning the English language. They cited different reasons for their views. Students believed that having a well-developed vocabulary is an indication of their English language competence. Students also stated that vocabulary is related to four language skills, namely listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Furthermore, the participants highlighted the vital role of the vocabulary knowledge in a successful communication. They believed that the wider learners’ vocabulary is, the more they would be able to communicate professionally in English. Some sample segments have been mentioned below.

Student4: “Vocabulary has a potential role generally in learning languages and particularly in learning English language.”

Student 1: “In my opinion, yeah learning vocabulary is very important for students who is trying to learn English language because in order to be competent in English language you have to have a well-developed vocabulary knowledge.”

Student 7: “I think, yeah learning vocabulary for a learner of English language is very essential because it relates to all skills of language like speaking, writing, reading, and listening as well. Once you develop your vocabulary competency, you will be able to speak, write, read and listen.”

Student 6: “The more vocabulary knowledge we have as a student, the more we will be able to communicate and our message will be understood and clear.”

The results also showed that the participants found reading as a good technique to improve their English vocabulary knowledge. The participants felt that reading is one of the most effective ways of improving vocabulary knowledge. Out of 36 participants, 24 asserted during the interviews that they learn some parts of vocabulary knowledge like parts of speech, synonyms and grammar, better by repeatedly seeing it in different reading contexts or while doing exercises and tasks that are coming after reading texts from reading. As it is shown in the following sentences, participants mentioned that reading is a useful technique to enrich their vocabulary and that it is more fruitful than learning without a text. Furthermore, they explained that they can remember words more easily when it is linked to a text.

Student 4: “I think practicing with the new words in the reading or while reading it makes you improve your English vocabulary. Moreover, emmm I think learning new vocabulary through reading is one of the productive ways because, besides the meaning, we will learn too many things like synonyms parts of speech.”

Student 5: “Of course, it is useful. Let’s say one of the most effective ways to build and increase your vocabulary knowledge, especially in colleges, is by reading texts.”

Student 1: “I think it is one of the effective ways for a student to improve his, her level of vocabulary and at the same time reading skill.”

Student 8: “I think yeah there is a number of ways to develop and enrich your vocabulary. One of them is by reading, and this is happening in the class. We are learning new words while reading a text and while doing a particular activity in the reading lessons. So that is why it sounds really great; meanwhile, it is effective.”

Another major finding was about levels of student’s competency. Most of the students reported that although they get benefit from the reading class in developing their vocabulary knowledge but there is a factor that affected this development which is having diversity of competency levels of student. They again mentioned this difficulty and they reported that if student were divided into different groups

according to their levels, in that time they would get more benefit from reading texts regarding vocabulary information.

Another major finding that emerged from the participating students concerned their needs and interest in textbooks and texts. Kurdish students reported that their teachers did not look at students' needs when selecting texts for reading and comprehension classes for the purpose of teaching vocabulary knowledge. They did not find the texts interesting. For example, during the SRIs 20 out of 34 Kurdish students revealed that the topics and exercises from the prescribed textbook used during the reading and comprehension classes are not suited to their interests and it did not directly motivate them to practice, understand, and learn new words. They also reported that they did not like the texts that their teacher selected to study during reading classes. Some of the Kurdish students were satisfied with their reading and comprehension classes, but not with the topics of the reading texts. For example, 15 Kurdish students reported that the texts and exercises in the textbooks for reading and comprehension classes are only suitable for highly proficient students.

Student 5: “To be honest, yeah the information that has been presented by the teacher about vocabularies were not sufficient for me. I feel that I need extra information about vocabulary.”

Student 6: “Our opinion and desires were not taken into consideration when our teacher chose reading text yeah I think this is essential for us to read the text that we liked.”

Student 10: “Our teacher did not ask us if we liked the topic or the texts that we were reading it or not. I think it also affected to the students' participations and the exercises that we did in the class.”

Student 6: “I think topics of reading are fine, but if the teacher selected the topics by considering our ideas and desire that would be more effective.”

Student 4: “Yeah well, I think the information that is going to be provided will only contribute to strong students, and other students will not be helpful.”

Student 3: “Actually, I did not like the exercise and texts which have been selected by the teacher because they are beyond our levels and they serve high-level students more than us.”

Student 14: “In my opinion one of the main problems is that we have is the textbook. It is not suitable to the students need and their levels of competency.”

Student 7: “I think our opinion should also be taken in to account when it came to the selection of the text yeah, this is very important for us because most of the topics and exercise from our textbook in the reading and comprehension class are not motivating us and they are uninterested for most of the students.”

The participating Kurdish students offered some recommendations to make the teaching of vocabulary knowledge during reading and comprehension classes more effective. The first recommendation is related to the level of competence. Kurdish students suggested that if all the students in a class have a similar level of competence in English and if the tasks, topics, and exercises in textbooks match the level of competence of the students, both the students and the teacher will reach the outcome of improving vocabulary knowledge. It will also motivate students to go through exercises.

The second recommendation is related to the textbook and the topics in their prescribed book. More than 19 Kurdish students mentioned that as since the focus of reading and comprehension classes is teaching and learning vocabulary, it is important to pay attention to the types of texts or textbooks used. Furthermore, participants suggested that if teachers ask students about their interests in terms of topics and exercises from the textbook, students will participate more and learn vocabulary knowledge. Also, students illustrated that once teachers know what their students like, it will be easy to grab the attention of the students and to inspire them to learn and remember lexical items from texts that they prefer more.

The third recommendation of Kurdish students related to use of vocabulary teaching strategies. Some participants explained that their teacher tries to make the class fun by using different teaching strategies. They preferred not just reading the

texts, listening to the words in the class and memorizing it. They mentioned that it is not practical to just memorize words without using any vocabulary teaching strategy. They suggested some vocabulary teaching strategies such as the use of mechanical techniques like flashcards, playing a game called Charades, guessing the meaning from the text, creating groups in the class and having a competition, or explaining the meaning of a word by means of sentences and examples. These strategies can make meaning of vocabulary items clear and can simplify the process of learning to understanding the word and remembering it. It brings fun to the class and students will learn the meaning of the vocabulary items effortlessly.

Student 11: “For making vocabulary teaching to be effective in reading and comprehension classes, I recommend to pay attention to the textbook and topics of the prescribed book.”

Student 9: “My suggestion is when teachers make sure what is the students’ interest in terms of textbooks, texts, and topics in reading class students will nicely get involve to the class and teaching and learning vocabulary process.”

Student 4: “My suggestion is to concentrate to the interests of students. Because in the reading classes most of the focus are on the learning vocabulary items from reading texts. So, yeah once teachers ask students about their interest in terms of texts or topics it will be more easy for both students and teacher to learn and teach vocabulary knowledge in the reading classes.”

Student 1: “In my recommendation because most of the focus in the reading class are about vocabulary knowledge so it is also important to focus on the students’ idea and their interest. As a student If I have an interest in a particular text of course I will try to learn more vocabulary items that are in that text (SIC).”

Student 4: “When it comes to teach vocabulary in the reading classes, our teacher brings fun through using some kind of strategies like grouping students in the class and make a competition. Or a game which we call it in

our class Charades. I think it could be impressive if it uses to make vocabulary teaching successful in reading and comprehension classes.”

Student 1: “I recommend to pay attention to the strategies that the teacher use it to teach vocabulary in the class. (SIC)”

Student 8: “In our class, one of the strategies is overused by our teacher which is using words in the sentences, are super effective. So, yeah, I recommend to pay attention to the using strategies by teachers. As other students mentioned one of the strategies our teacher used is Charades or using flashcards. If the size of class is small, it will be super suitable (SIC).”

In pursuit of answering the first research question, the results of the stimulated recall sessions and interviews revealed the perceptions of Iraqi Kurdish EFL students of the effects of reading comprehension classes and tasks on improving their English vocabulary knowledge.

One of the findings is related to students’ awareness of the importance of learning words. The participated students in SRI and interviews agreed that learning words is a significant part of learning English and they gave different reasons. One of the reasons they provided was that language is made up of vocabulary items, and because of this, a good vocabulary is the foundation of English proficiency. Another reason the participants gave is that vocabulary is related to other skills such as productive skills (writing and speaking) or receptive skills (reading and listening). This result corresponds with Alderson (2005), who argues the connection between vocabulary and language skills. Kurdish students emphasized the vital role of vocabulary in communication in English. In the same vein, Schmitt (2010) illustrates that learners need a wide range of vocabulary in order to communicate successfully, and states that learners’ vocabulary range depends on the aims of learning. Kurdish students believed that the more vocabulary items they know, the more they will be able to communicate, explain, and make the message clear for the listener. The Kurdish students are therefore aware of the importance of learning vocabulary. Simon and Taverniers (2011) reached the same conclusion, showing that students believed vocabulary is the most important aspect for communication when compared to other aspects of learning English, such as grammar.

Another finding that emerged from Both SRIs and interviews of students is they consider reading and comprehension classes as one of the best ways of improving vocabulary knowledge. All the Kurdish students participated in this study perceived learning vocabulary through reading to be a valuable strategy for increasing students' vocabulary. Most of the Kurdish students shared this view. During the SRIs, students explained how they learn vocabulary knowledge from reading classes by mentioning to their activities that they were doing it in the class. In the SRIs, they reported that in the reading comprehension classes once they finished reading a text their teacher would ask them to do exercises and tasks that are coming after each text. Moreover, they named that exercises and tasks which were matching keywords with their definitions, guessing the meaning from the contexts, providing synonyms of the new words. Also, they mentioned to an activity that they were doing it in the class which is using flashcards. They reported that when they participated in this activity it helped them to remember necessary words and it was useful for the whole class because the whole class were divided into several groups and all of the students were asked to participate.

In the interview parts, most of the Kurdish students reported that reading and comprehension classes are mostly about teaching and learning vocabulary knowledge and that it has a positive effect on language learning in general. Also, Kurdish students reported that reading can be used as an effective source of vocabulary and stated that reading skill correlates with vocabulary knowledge because as they mentioned when they learn a word it will have multiple meanings, and simply learning words without a text do not provide students with the support they needed to comprehend the words meaning as they were used in the selections. Therefore, students asserted that they will learn the meanings of new words as these were actually used in the selections. This finding is matched to the results of a study about teaching vocabulary within the context carried out by Dole, Sloan and Trathen, (1995). According to the learners' perceptions presenting vocabulary in context is vitally important and helpful for them because it will enable students to progress their vocabulary and learning vocabulary through a text provide students a chance to be familiar with the usage of words in the context. Thus students learned the meanings of new words as these were actually employed in the context. Furthermore, Altalhab, (2016) presents similar findings and says that reading skills is one of the

most important factors of students' vocabulary knowledge. Al-Nujaidi (2004) explains that reading plays a key role in vocabulary improvement. Also, Nagy, Herman and Anderson (1985) acknowledge that learning new words is more effective when it takes place through written texts or reading texts. Reading texts in the English language is also considered to be a useful strategy for EFL learners in particular since their interaction with native speakers can be limited. Nation (2001) mentions that, "the use of reading and other input sources may be the only practical options for out of class language development for some learners" (p. 155). Participants also mentioned that reading texts show learners how to use words correctly from the context. This helps learners remember. They also mentioned that seeing vocabulary items in the written format can also help learners to learn the spelling of the words. The perceptions of Kurdish students of the role of reading in improving vocabulary knowledge corresponds with researchers' views (e.g. Henriksen 1999; Schmitt & Carter, 2000; Schmitt, 2010) on the accumulative nature of vocabulary learning.

The participants mentioned difficulties and challenges with regard to reading comprehension classes and tasks. The students' differing levels of competence was one of the challenges that significantly affected students' vocabulary learning. When Kurdish students recalled their learning during reading classes from SRIs, they felt that when they were doing a particular exercise in class, not all the students could participate because the exercise was too difficult or complex for some and easy and simple for others. Some of the Kurdish students highlighted the role of students' level of competency in their motivation to continue reading and learn vocabulary. When a learner encounters a text and the level of the text does not match the learner's level, they lose their motivation to keep reading the text. Moreover, In the interview part, twenty-five of the 34 Kurdish students reported that the range of levels in the class affected the progressions of students towards better understanding and, ultimately, greater independence with respect to learning vocabulary. This indicates that determining students' level of competence is vital before introducing any activity. The learners' level of competence is an important factor to consider when deciding which strategies are most appropriate for students. Moreover, it is important to identify the learners' level of competence to decide which textbook or text would be suitable for them if there is a reading class. This finding is in line with

that of Altalhab (2016), who discusses vocabulary learning as a social practice that is affected by a range of elements, like teaching techniques, VLSs, the textbook, and the learners' level of competence in English. There is a lack of research on this issue and it should be investigated further.

Another challenge from the perspective of the Kurdish students related to students' need for interesting texts and topics in textbooks used from reading and comprehension class. The textbook plays a vital role in the process of language learning, specifically when learning occurs mainly in the classroom context. Several researchers (e.g. Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; Tomlinson, 2008) mention that textbooks determine the teaching and learning techniques used in the classroom. Furthermore, textbooks have a role in learners' learning (Richards, 2001; Litz, 2005). One of the main problems with the textbooks is that learners may not be interested in the topics and exercises included in the text book (Lee, 1997). Most of the Kurdish students felt that the EFL teachers did not consider their interests when selecting texts. This negatively affected their participation in the class. In the interview part twenty out of the 34 participating Kurdish students felt that the textbooks lacked interesting and motivating exercises that could encourage students to practise and use their thinking skills. They felt the content was unrelated to their interests because they reflected different cultural contexts. This finding agrees with the findings of Al-Sowat (2012), who evaluated the English textbook used in the first intermediate year and discovered that the textbook had some limitations such as not being appropriate for the students' competence level and not including interactive activities to help learners use the language actively.

In the SRIs, some of the Kurdish students stated that their textbooks were beyond their proficiency level. They felt that their textbooks were most suitable for highly proficient students. It was difficult for them to understand the stories, tasks, and exercises from the prescribed textbook during the reading and comprehension class. Al-Sowat (2012) had similar findings on the textbooks used in Saudi intermediate schools. The textbooks were too difficult for the learners' level of competence. Among other things the vocabulary load was too high.

Teachers' perception about learning and teaching vocabulary through stimulated recall sessions

In the stimulated recall sessions (SRI), teachers explained their perceptions about teaching and learning vocabulary through reading comprehension classes. A number of results emerged from their responses. The findings are presented below, with excerpts from SRI to illustrate the theme.

One of the major findings revealed how teaching and learning vocabulary was going on in the reading comprehension classes. Teachers reported that reading is mostly about vocabulary and most of the exercises that they had after reading a text were about vocabulary knowledge and making students familiar with the unknown words. Moreover, Teachers mentioned the name of the exercises and activities that they did in the recorded class such as, guessing the meaning of the word from the context, matching, matching the key words their definition, using flashcards, identifying parts of speech of the words, and providing examples to the new words. Teachers mentioned that when students read texts, there are lots of activities and exercises that are coming after each text and doing exercises are vitally important and helpful for students. Moreover, they acknowledged that they asked their students to do it together in the class not outside the class because as they reported in this way they could help them to understand words correctly. Most of the time, teachers emphasized that they ask students to participate in the exercises and come to the whiteboard and write down the answer because as they said it makes them remember what was the word and the spelling of the words. For example, in one of the exercises which were about matching words with the definitions, students were standing up and going to the whiteboard to write down the right answer. Teachers also revealed that each one of these exercises provided different information to the students about vocabulary knowledge and it helps them to expand and clarify words and it is meaning.

Teacher 5: “Yeah, I think reading is mostly we can say it is about words and it is meaning. In this class, as you can see that it is a reading class. In here, after finished reading the text that we supposed to do that, we moved to the tasks and exercises that are coming after each text. so through these exercises students will develop their vocabulary knowledge by practicing and participating in these exercise and activities in the class. For example,

as we can see here we had guessing the meaning of the word from the context, matching, matching the key words their definition, identifying parts of speech of the words, and providing examples to the new words and when we finished we also did an interesting activity which is using flashcards in a game.”

Teacher 3: “well, most of the students get useful from the exercises that we are doing it in the classes after reading texts, such as matching the key words their definition, guessing the meaning of the word from the context providing examples to the new words, and using flashcard. So having theses exercise will help students to gain different information about vocabulary.”

Teacher 4: “Of course, in here we have an exercise which were about matching words with the definitions. I asked students to do this or let’s say all the exercise in the classrooms, because I think students in this way get a help to comprehend more the idea that we would discuss more. In this exercise, when I asked students to write down the right answer in the whiteboard because I personally think that it has an effect on their memory, and it is vitally important for the remembering words.”

Another major finding that revealed from SRIs of the teachers was about repeating teaching vocabulary in different activities. For example, one of the exercises was about providing definitions of new words. In these exercises when students finished their participation their teacher started to repeat teaching them the same words but in another way which was by using flashcards. Teachers reported that using this exercise was very useful because it made sure that students understood the target words and it brought a sense of entertainment to the classes which are also necessary for the students understanding. Teachers also revealed another reason behind using flashcards which were having different competency levels of students. Furthermore, teachers revealed that when they do this activity it helps lower-level students to understand the meaning of the words and this is another chance for them to get the idea of the target words. Teachers demonstrated the reason behind using various kind of activities in the class and they exposed that it was all because of having mixed levels of competency of students. All the teachers shared this difficulty by commenting on recorded videos and the participation of the

students and how some of the students could participate in some of the exercises and some of them could not because of their levels. One of the teachers commented on one of the activities that they were doing with students and it was using flashcards. She explained that when she explained the meaning of the words in the previous exercise she felt that some of the lower-level students did not understand the idea. Therefore, she repeated to teach the same words but in another way which was using flashcards.

Teacher 2: “Well, in here as we can see we used flashcards as a game. Before doing that, we did an exercise that I asked them to provide definitions of new words. Then when we finish doing that, I used the same words but in the flashcards. the main purpose for doing this repetition was making sure if students understood the target words or not. Another reason was for helping lower-level students. In these class we have different students from different level of competency. This is like a challenge for me.”

Teacher 3: “As you can see we had different kind of exercises and the main purpose for doing that is making bringing the clarity of words to students and providing a comprehensible picture about the unknown words. So, yeah because students do not have the same English proficiency level that is why I used different exercises.”

Teacher 3: “well, in this exercise we can clearly see that some of the student’s competency level is different from the others. Some of them could participate in the exercise of matching the keywords to the definition which was one of the important exercises and some of them could not participate. So I felt in these exercise some of the lower-students could not understand the target words. Therefore, I used flashcards to make it more easy and making the meaning of the words more understandable.”

Teachers perception about learning and teaching vocabulary through interviews

The participating EFL teachers explained their perception of the importance of vocabulary in teaching English. They indicated that it is impossible for the students to communicate, read, write, and listen without a good vocabulary. Moreover, teachers believed without vocabulary knowledge, students will struggle to develop their English.

Teacher 1: “Well, it is one of the most important areas, because how can you speak if you don’t have enough words. so, yeah”

Teacher 3: “It very clear that vocabulary plays an essential part, and without vocabulary, it is impossible to construct a sentence, and it is going to be impossible to communicate.”

The teachers believed that reading is mostly about teaching vocabulary knowledge and they explained that teaching vocabulary should be integrated into reading skill, because in this way students will be more familiar with the contextual meaning. Furthermore, the EFL teacher felt that students will know more about a word if it is taught through reading skills. They will pick up synonyms, antonyms, spelling and how it is used with the different tenses. One EFL teacher said that reading is mostly about vocabulary knowledge and the more words the students know and learn, the less problematic the text will be. Moreover, she stated that vocabulary could not be taught without reading, speaking, writing, or listening. Therefore, it is always an integral part of language learning. However, one thing she highlighted that was different from other teachers, was that having fun in the class while teaching vocabulary knowledge and clarifying words are two crucial concepts. She asserted that she always tries to make sure that the students understand words fully. Most of the EFL teachers reported that reading is one part of teaching vocabulary, but that is not enough. They mentioned that the Kurdish students of Lebanese French University wanted to just focus on one source for developing their vocabulary, and they therefore tend to be unsuccessful. Generally, students should read other sources beyond their textbooks, because when they graduate they may

become involved with different contexts and situations and then they need a different vocabulary.

Teacher 5: “It cannot be separated because students must be aware of learning what context or particular text they use in order to learn a contextual meaning. you know they have to be well aware of which context they are using vocabulary. The isolator of vocabulary learning will give you some meaning, but we will not able to use those things in a context. I believe it should be an integrated one.”

Teacher 3: “Reading can be recognised as one of the best ways for learning vocabulary because by reading a text, so students can get more knowledge about the unknown words and besides the meaning, they will get extra information from the text.”

Teacher 4: “I think reading is mostly about teaching vocabulary it is not only about an integral part it is a substantial part of any reading course because they more vocabularies you know the easier it is to understand the text.”

Teacher 2: “Well, I think teaching, in general, it should be fun. Moreover, when it comes to vocabulary, it is not an exception. So, I try to keep it fun and exciting to the students, and another important thing certainly is clarity. I want to make sure if they understand every detail that I want them to learn because that is my approach from teaching in general. So, clarity is something significant I want to make sure if they understand words in all the possible connotation.”

Teacher 1: “There are lots of chance of reading other sources. But I feel students in this university they do not think to develop their vocabulary knowledge by using other resources. They just concentrate on the one particular text from the course, which is the examination emmm However, still, they have a chance to make progression in their vocabulary. Students should read different types of texts in order to have the ability to understand and learn a variety of vocabulary and in order to be excellent in their filed.”

Difficulties and challenges with respect to reading comprehension classes and tasks to teach vocabulary knowledge from the perspective of the teachers. Similar to what the student shared, teachers also mentioned the issue of the wide range of student levels in the classrooms. EFL teachers were conscious of the differences between students' levels in the class and they reported that there are students from elementary up to the advanced level. The participating teachers said that this massive variation made it a challenge to teach vocabulary knowledge in the reading class. When EFL teachers recalled their teaching sessions they stated that this diversity of students in one class did not match their expectations. They also felt that this practice was not comparable to best practice at other universities. Most of the EFL teachers gave examples to show that when they teach vocabulary knowledge in the reading and comprehension class, they have difficulties with students, because some of the students have an excellent ability to understand the prescribed textbook in the class. However, for other students, it is problematic and difficult. The teachers commented that the prescribed course book for the reading is only suitable to more advanced students. They viewed the fact that they have to use the same textbook for both advanced and beginner learners a great challenge.

Teacher 5: “The level of the students that we have in this lesson is not matching the expectation of the teachers and standards of the universities if we compare to other universities. When I teach, I can find difficulties with students. For example, some of the students cannot understand the prescribed textbook and others have an excellent ability to understand. Moreover, some exercise is challenging for some of the students to handle it /SIC/.”

Teacher 4: “Yeah, I think the textbook that I have chosen for this course is excellent for the strong students. However, this is for the weaker one is complicated. To make up for this, I use many videos, again to help students to understand what we are discussing to sort of watch their interest in the topic that we were discussing. However, yes, that real problem is the students are not streamed into levels yeah two major challenges we have are the size of the group and diversity in terms of levels. We have to keep in

mind that we have elementary level up to advanced English speakers sitting in one classroom using one textbook and that we can call a challenge /SIC/.”

Teacher 2: “In order to be honest, as a teacher, I’m not happy with the student’s levels in the reading class. If we come to the prescribed textbook, we will discover it is not matching all the student’s ability because all the students do not have the same level and this is a challenge for me, and I think for students as well. If we watch the participation of the students when they are doing exercises yeah it quite obvious it difficult for some of the students, and it is excellent for some of them /SIC/.”

The EFL teachers did not feel that the students are interested in the topics in the textbook used during reading comprehension classes. This is a point also raised by the student participants. The participating EFL teachers acknowledged that they find it difficult to keep the interest of the students. Yet they admitted that they do not pay attention to the students’ interests. For example, one of the teachers reported that he selects topics without asking about students’ interests. Most of the EFL teachers emphasized the importance of using additional texts and that the texts should be related to the current reality. Nevertheless, they do not consider the interests of the students while choosing the texts. They indirectly revealed that there is no negotiation between EFL teachers and Kurdish students about choosing a text or a topic in the prescribed book for reading and comprehension classes.

Teacher 5: “In the prescribed textbook yeah I have chosen by myself, those stories which are useful and matching students’ knowledge.”

Teacher 4: “Yes, of course. This reading from my latest, I have chosen a book that was compiled by American broadcast corporation. I just wanted the texts to be exciting and to be contemporary. I do not particularly appreciate using old textbooks with the text that do not reflect reality nowadays. So, I want the text to connect reality nowadays. It is also important for the student to learn something new from the text.”

Teacher 3: “It is important yeah to use new texts in the class because language is developing and students need to know new things. So I do not use old texts.”

Teacher 1: “Most of the time when I give them homework I will give them the texts that are related to nowadays reality and I choose by myself.”

Like the participating Kurdish students, the EFL teachers provided recommendations for making the teaching of vocabulary knowledge during reading and comprehension classes more effective.

The first recommendation was related to the coursebook for reading and comprehension classes. The participating EFL teachers suggested that teaching vocabulary knowledge should not be associated with the coursebook only, but that other sources beyond the textbook should be part of this process. They explained that reading is a significant skill in the English language, and students must develop reading habits to improve their vocabulary knowledge.

The second recommendation of the EFL teachers related to motivation and using a current textbook. Most of the EFL teacher suggested that vocabulary learning can be improved by motivating students, creating fun and teaching new words from updated textbooks. Teachers explained that motivation is vital for students in the class and the teacher can increase students’ motivation by teaching new words from updated textbooks. When texts are current, students will be motivated to read, study, and learn new vocabulary.

Another suggestion from the teachers was that revision should be included. They gave examples from their class to show that when students learn new vocabulary items and they only hear it a few times, they forget and when the teacher uses the word again they act as if it is the first time they hear it. Teachers also indicated that they cannot say which vocabulary items each student would need and which are less important because when students graduate from the university they may get involved in different circumstances and environments. Therefore, they have to get a good background of vocabulary knowledge. It is therefore necessary to frequently revise the words that students have learned.

Teacher 2: “I think teaching vocabulary should not be only linked to the coursebook... do you know why because it should be beyond the textbook. The student should have a reading habit and its essential skill in the English language. I always suggest my student go for knowledge and it is not a

limiter in one particular thing. Without using other sources, the target process of learning can be futile. Moreover, it also is in the hands of the teacher.”

Teacher 3: “So, yeah words are always or should always be taught and learnt in the context. Furthermore, it can be a context of a book, video, conversation whatever it is. So contextual approach I think that it is essential to teach vocabulary. Also, it should be fun; those should be words that people using it know because the English language is developing, and some of the textbooks are updating.”

Teacher 4: “With learning vocabulary, it is very important to revise the vocabulary. So, I usually introduce new vocabulary, and we work to listen and understand it very well the words, but the next day when you come back to the same vocabulary student sometimes look at your face as they have heard for the first time that word, and they start to use it in a wrong way. So, you need to explain how to use it and provide more examples. So it is concept revision, people tend to forget things.”

Teacher 1: “Well, there is nothing ideal. So I think some of the words are very important for them to know. Others are less important, yeah, but again when it comes to vocabulary teaching, it is difficult to decide and say what is important and what is not, because when students graduate from university for example they may involve in a different situation.”

One of the major findings revealed how teaching and learning vocabulary was going on in the reading comprehension classes. The participated teachers clearly explained that reading is mostly about vocabulary and most of the exercises that they had after reading a text were about vocabulary knowledge and making students familiar with the unknown words. Moreover, Teachers mentioned the name of the exercises and activities that they did in the recorded class such as, guessing the meaning of the word from the context, matching the key word to the definition, using flashcards, identifying parts of speech of the words, and providing examples to the new words. Teachers stated that when students read texts, there are lots of activities and exercises that are coming after each text and doing these exercises are essential

and helpful for students. Furthermore, the EFL teachers saw reading as a great strategy for improving and presenting new vocabulary for students because students see the contextual meaning and learn how to use vocabulary correctly in a given context. In addition, the students pick up other information surrounding vocabulary, such as tense, spelling, synonyms and antonyms, and it can affect students' recall. If vocabulary is taught in a non-contextualised or isolated manner, students may not be able to use a particular word in the context and they may easily forget it. Increasing the opportunities for such encounters develop students' vocabulary knowledge, which in turn improves their ability to read more complicated texts. Also, Initiative (2002) illustrates that the most important thing that a teacher can do for progressing students' vocabulary knowledge is to get them to read more. According to Grabe (2000), the integration of reading skills supports vocabulary learning and progression and ESL/EFL learners can benefit from reading skills to develop their vocabulary knowledge.

In a study on vocabulary enrichment through reading, Brown (2010) investigated whether the vocabulary knowledge of learners and their reading comprehension mutually influenced each other. The findings revealed that the teaching and learning vocabulary can be integrated with reading skills and students benefit from this integration. Another study was conducted by Al-Nujaidi (2004) to examine the role of reading in vocabulary improvement among EFL students at a Saudi university. The findings revealed there is a crucial link between reading texts and the improvement of the vocabulary knowledge of EFL learners. The EFL teachers participating in this study discussed reading skills as an avenue for students to improve their vocabulary knowledge, because reading texts from a prescribed book and doing an exercise after each text during reading and comprehension classes enable Kurdish students to assimilate vocabulary knowledge that includes things like synonyms, antonyms, word formation, etc. In the teachers' perceptions, reading skill is very effective for vocabulary improvements and, most importantly, it is effective for vocabulary recognition as students learn through reading texts. Stahl (2003) examined the relationship between reading skill and overall language proficiency. The results showed a vital difference between the students concerning vocabulary meaning, recognition, synonyms and antonyms. In another study, Thompson (2002) conducted a study to find out which aspects of learners' vocabulary knowledge

change as a result of using reading as a resource. The result revealed there was a substantial difference regarding vocabulary gain in terms of vocabulary meaning, antonyms and synonyms. There are other studies that reinforce the fact that reading results in language proficiency in general, and vocabulary improvement specifically (Anderson., 1999; Paran, 2003; Shen, 2008; Wang, & Fenglin, 2004; Li, & Ying, 1998).

Another finding about which the participating students and EFL teachers agree, is that there is a problem surrounding the students' level of competence in the classrooms. EFL teachers highlighted the differences in students' levels of competence in the class and they reported that a class can include students from elementary up to the advanced level, and this massive variation made it a challenge for teachers to teach vocabulary knowledge in a reading and comprehension class. When EFL teachers recalled their teaching sessions they illustrated the diversity in terms of students' levels and said that this did not match their expectations. It also does not meet university standards or compare to best practice at other universities. Most of the EFL teachers provided examples from their classes and said that when they teach vocabulary knowledge in the reading and comprehension class, they find it difficult because some of the students have a high level of competence and they get through exercises and tasks more easily than other students who are less competent. EFL teachers commented that the prescribed course book for the reading class is only suitable for highly proficient students. Most of the teachers therefore said that it is a big challenge for teachers and students to have students at different levels sitting in one class and using the same textbook. In a study by Altalhab (2016), the findings showed that vocabulary learning is a social practice that is affected by a range of elements, like teaching techniques, VLSs, the textbook, and most importantly, learners' level of competence in English. There are not many studies that look at this specific issue and it needs further investigation to find out if the diversity of levels among EFL students is a challenge or not.

Another finding is that EFL teacher do not consider students' interest when selecting texts or topics in the textbook for reading comprehension classes. EFL teachers rely mainly on prescribed textbooks and when they recalled their teaching sessions, they emphasized the use of texts from the textbooks. Most of the EFL

teachers emphasized the importance of using additional texts and the texts that are current. Nevertheless, they do not consider students' interests and their needs very much. For example, one of the teachers reported that he selects topics from the prescribed textbook without asking what students are interested in. As the teaching approach used in the classes is textbook-centred as discussed earlier, teachers highlighted that there is no negotiation between the EFL teachers and the Kurdish students with respect to choosing texts and topics. Understanding students' perceptions of textbooks is an important aspect in learning and teaching, some researchers see it as the first step that needs to be taken into consideration among students at the beginning of a class (Derryberry & Wininger, 2008; Durwin & Sherman, 2008). Derryberry and Wininger (2008) also Durwin and Sherman (2008) explored the link between students' preference for a certain textbook and their learning. Their findings are consistent with one of the findings of a study by Bhatti et al. (2017), who explored EFL students' perception of English textbooks. The findings revealed that students felt negatively about the majority of the texts, and that the grammar and vocabulary contained in the texts did not meet the needs of the students. The majority of students showed that the textbook material failed to help them improve the four language skills and that no exercises and activities were included in the textbook. Not many studies have explored this specific issue and it needs further investigation.

The Most Commonly Used Vocabulary Teaching Strategies that the EFL

Teachers Use it

In answer to the above the third research question, the findings from interviews indicated that the EFL teachers used various vocabulary teaching strategies to focus on English words and vocabulary knowledge which are necessary for the Kurdish student to know it. EFL teachers mentioned that when they taught vocabulary knowledge they most of the time they used vocabulary teaching strategies to clarify the meaning of the new words so that the Kurdish students understand them (see table 3). The first strategy, the determination strategy, is based on Schmitt's taxonomy (1997).

Table 3

The Most Commonly Used Vocabulary Teaching Strategies.

No.	The main strategies	The sub-strategies
1.	Determination strategy	Guessing the meaning from the context
2.	Compensation strategy	Using synonyms
3.	Memory strategy	Placing new words into a context
4.	Memory strategy	Using mechanical techniques
5.	Cognitive strategy	Repeating
6.	Compensation strategy	Using mime and gestures

The first most commonly used strategy for the EFL teachers was the determination strategy where students guess the meaning from the context. All EFL teachers from their interviews reported that when they used this strategy, students understand the meaning of the unknown words easily. When teaching vocabulary is through reading classes, it is an effective strategy. The textbook offers exercises about guessing the meaning.

Three teachers believed that when they use determination strategy, it makes the meaning of the new words clearer because the vocabulary teaching is part of reading skills teaching, making it an effective strategy. Two teachers out of five reported that asking the students to guess the meaning from the context as a determination strategy is easy because they already do exercises that ask students to guess the meaning of the new vocabularies from context. EFL teachers said that when they use this strategy, Kurdish students interact with it more than other vocabulary teaching strategies.

Teacher2: “When I teach vocabulary, I use using guessing the meaning from the context as a strategy too much because we teach vocabulary items in reading classes and we have too many texts in this class. When I use this strategy student interact with it more and in my opinion, the usage of this strategy makes the meaning clear for the students and it becomes more understandable.”

Teacher4: “Guessing the meaning from the context is a crucial strategy for teaching vocabulary and I use it in my reading and comprehension classes. I ask students to guess the meaning of the new words from the texts when they ask the meaning of a new word. because students will encounter new words through texts so it is a useful strategy to learn new vocabulary items.”

Teacher1: “One of the most useful strategies that I use is guessing the meaning from the contexts. The reason behind utilizing this strategy is making students go back to the contexts and check the meaning through it. Furthermore, in the prescribed textbook we have an exercise that requires students to guess the meaning from the context”.

The first most commonly used strategy for the EFL teachers is the determination strategy – guessing the meaning from the context. This strategy is based on Schmitt’s taxonomy (1997). All the teachers reported that they use this strategy and they explained the benefit of using it. In the same vein, Oxford (1990) declares the significance of the “guessing the meaning from the context” strategy by saying that this strategy supports learners so that they learn to understand and produce the target language. Thornbury (2002) claims that guessing the meaning from context is probably one of the most beneficial strategies that can be applied both inside and outside the classroom. It can also be taught and employed relatively easily. Furthermore, according to Nation (1990), using guessing the meaning from the context is one of the most effective strategies that help students to understand and learn vocabulary as it allows students “to be able to make a well-informed guess at the meaning of an unknown word in context” (p. 130). According to the Stenberg (as cited in McKeown & Curtis, 1987), this technique is “the most effective or even a relatively effective way of teaching vocabulary” (p. 89).

There were other strategies, consequently using synonyms, placing new words into a context, using mechanical techniques, repeating, using meme and gestures which were also commonly used by the teachers as it is shown in Table4. 1. All strategies appear in the Oxford taxonomy (1991). The second most commonly used strategy among EFL teachers is the compensation strategy, “using synonyms”. It is also based on the Oxford taxonomy (1991). Four out of five EFL teachers emphasized the importance of using synonyms in teaching vocabulary knowledge.

They reported that using synonyms as a strategy allows learners to learn a number of lexical items similar to each other in aspects like meaning, form as well as usage. EFL teachers revealed that they use synonyms as a teaching strategy in different ways. One technique is that when Kurdish students ask for the meaning of the new words they encountered in the reading texts from the class, the teacher gives them synonyms of the target word to make the meaning clear. Another technique is to give students exercises after the reading texts to ask them to give synonyms of the words in the texts. They shared that this exercise is vitally important and productive for students' vocabulary knowledge because it enriches their vocabulary.

Teacher3: "One of the strategies that I use it in teaching vocabulary from reading comprehension classes is using synonyms. Actually, this strategy is very practical because most of the time when there is a difficult word in the reading texts I give them a similar vocabulary or a synonym to make it clear."

Teacher2: "Synonyms is another strategy that I use it in my classes for teaching vocabulary. When I give a similar word or a synonym of unknown words students more understand and I think it enriches number of vocabularies related to each other in all aspects like meaning, form, and usage."

Teacher5: I use this strategy in my teaching and it is essential. I use this strategy too much because we have too much texts in reading comprehension classes and whenever a student asks about meaning of a word I give them a synonym."

Teacher1: "I personally use synonyms for teaching vocabulary in the reading and comprehension classes. Furthermore, in prescribed textbook after a student finishes reading texts there are lots of exercises that they must answer them. Among them, there are exercises that ask students to give synonyms of the unknown words which related to texts of the book. So, I let them to do those exercises and they are effective."

Oxford (1990) describes compensation strategies as useful strategies that enable learners to practice the new language for either comprehension or production, despite limitations in knowledge. Moreover, the use of compensation strategies

enables learners to make up for an inadequate repertoire of grammar, and most importantly, vocabulary knowledge. Furthermore, Alqahtani (2015) emphasizes the significance of using synonyms to teach vocabulary for expanding students' vocabulary knowledge. This strategy has similarly been identified by Nation and Gu (2007) for use by teachers as an effective teaching strategy for teaching new vocabulary items through reading.

The third most commonly used strategy among EFL teachers is the memory strategy of “placing new words into a context” based on the Oxford taxonomy (1991). Most teachers interviewed (4 out of 5) reported that they use this strategy for teaching vocabulary in reading and comprehension classes. Since the majority of EFL teachers said they use new words in a sentence, it seems that they generally counted this strategy as a useful and practical strategy to enrich the vocabulary knowledge of Kurdish students. Teachers point out that the advantage of using a memory strategy is effective retention. This can lead to the retention of vocabulary information in the long run. Moreover, EFL teachers reported that this strategy provides students with more than just the meaning of a word. Student learn how to use words in context.

Teacher2: “In my opinion, showing students the new vocabulary it in a sentence is very practical and useful.”

Teacher3: “For teaching new words, I usually give example for students that includes new word because it helps students to understand the meaning and how to use it in a sentence.”

Teacher5: “Another teaching strategy that I use to teach students unknown vocabularies is using vocabularies in sentences.”

Teacher4: “I put new vocabularies in sentences to convey its meaning and I think it is an effective strategy for teaching vocabulary to learners because it makes the meaning clear and students understand faster. Using this strategy in teaching is very practical because it can lead to keeping information about vocabulary for a long-term period and this is one of the targets of most of the teacher for their students.”

The EFL teachers participated in the current study pointed out that using new words in a sentence seems to be a convenient and practical strategy to enhance the vocabulary knowledge of Kurdish students. Alqahtani (2015) discovered that using vocabulary in a sentence was one of the teaching strategies teachers use to improve Saudi students' vocabulary in reading classes. The finding of our study revealed that one of the advantages of using a memory strategy is that it has great benefits for students' retention and can help them retain vocabulary information in the long run. The participating teachers also made it clear that a memory strategy proves to be a helpful strategy. There are a number of studies in which EFL educators and theoreticians supported the use of memory strategies in EFL classes (Nation, 2004; Oxford, 1990; Sagarra & Alba, 2006). Nemati (2009), for instance argued that teaching instruction should aim to improve retention without increasing study time, since students forget much of what they learn and practice. Employing memory strategies is a good means by which students benefit from learning because it has an effect on keeping information in the long run.

The fourth most commonly used strategy among EFL teachers is the memory strategy of "using mechanical techniques" based on the Oxford taxonomy (1991). Three EFL teachers out of five acknowledged that they used mechanical techniques like flashcards for vocabulary instruction. They reported that they were very effective and productive for Kurdish students and they use it more than other strategies. One of the teachers mentioned that she used a game named charades to have a competition among students. In this game, the class is divided into three or four groups and each group has a speaker that tells the group the meaning of a word that they studied in the textbook by acting or using body language to help the group guess the vocabulary item that is written on the flashcard. Two other EFL teachers mentioned that this strategy brings fun to the class and allows all the students to participate. Even students with a lower extent of competence can help his/her group to win the game.

The fifth most commonly used strategy among EFL teachers is the cognitive strategy of "repeating" based on the Oxford taxonomy (1991). Two EFL teachers out of five reported that they use this strategy. The participants demonstrated that this strategy is vitally important because when students learn new words daily and they do not use and practice it repeatedly, they tend to forget. They explained that they

use this strategy in different ways. When they practice words with mechanical techniques or flashcards they go back to it repeatedly. Another technique mentioned during interviews to make sure that the students still remember vocabulary items from the previous classes is that they keep repeating and asking students about meaning, spelling, form, part of speech, or the pronunciation of a word.

Teacher1: “In the textbook there are too many exercise after each text we read. So, in order to do it successfully I divide students into several groups and use mechanical techniques flashcards. The main aim of using this strategy is to bring entertainment to the class and in the meantime to effect students’ memory, because when students act to make their groups win and guess the vocabulary that are written in the flashcards and acting by their classmates.”

Teacher3: “I think using flashcards has it is own influence on teaching and learning vocabulary and it is a good technique for teachers to use it because when I use this strategy all the students want to participate even the low level students participate. So it is effective and very practical.”

Teacher2: “Among all the strategies that I mentioned I also use flashcards as a strategy for teaching vocabulary. In the textbook we lot of exercises about vocabulary knowledge and when students finish doing one of the excretes for making sure if the understand the meaning of the words I use flashcards. Students interact with this strategy too much and it suits the number of the students that we have in the classrooms.”

Teacher4: “Sometimes for me as a teacher, after teaching vocabulary through flashcards I may repeat using those words that has been used from flashcards or going back to it over and over. I think this technique is very important because if students do not practice words that they learn daily they will forget it and this is not good.”

Naeimi and Ghassemiazghandi (2013) indicate that using mechanical techniques as direct teaching strategies is effective and helpful for the vocabulary improvement of Iranian EFL learners at the pre-intermediate level. The findings of this study on the use of mechanical techniques in teaching vocabulary knowledge match the findings of the study by Huyen and Nga (2003), who conducted action

research in their own classrooms. They found that using mechanical techniques as a game have benefits and is effective for learning vocabulary. Using some of these strategies in a game format creates a comfortable and fun environment in the classrooms, which helps students recall and learn new vocabulary more easily. Games can peak students' interest in previously learned and new words. This encourages students to actively participate in the learning activities in the classroom.

The sixth and least commonly used strategy is the compensation strategy or “using memes and gestures”, based on the Oxford taxonomy (1991). One EFL teacher out of five reported sometimes using memes and gestures for beginner or weak students. He said that he used all techniques available to facilitate learning for beginner or weak students. This participant designed exercises and tasks that would make the textbook more understandable. This teacher illustrated that when an ESL student is a complete beginner, he would use different ways of helping the student understand topics and the meaning of the words. Moreover, as this teacher is not able to speak Kurdish to students, uses memes and gestures is a perfect option and is become indispensable. In other words, beginner or weak students become more engaged and are more likely to retain what they are being taught in the classroom.

Teacher3: “Among all the strategies that I referred there is one more that I usually use it is using meme and gestures. In my classes I have low level-students so sometimes making them understand a particular word is a challenge. One of the option can be using meme and gestures and when I teach them a word by using this strategy they are quite comfortable with it. Translating the meaning of a particular word to Kurdish language is not a good option, besides I as a teacher do not know first language of students which is Kurdish language. when I use this strategy in my vocabulary instruction it makes low-level students be engaged to the class.”

The results showed that the last and least commonly used strategy for teaching vocabulary to the Kurdish students is a compensation strategy such as using meme and gestures. Smotrova and Lantolf (2013) propose that teachers can naturally employ gestures to teach the meaning of new vocabularies, and these form an important component of comprehensible input for learners. One EFL teacher illustrated that Kurdish students become more engage when he uses gestures to

explain the meaning of a new word. This is one of the advantages of this strategy. Another advantage is that this strategy helps students to recall the meaning of the vocabulary items effectively. Several studies have shown that using gestures lead to better word recall than using other visual supports, such as pictures, particularly when learners actively repeat both word and gesture (Mayer et al., 2015; Tellier, 2008). These results recommend that gestures could be a beneficial support for vocabulary teaching in the classroom, and some studies have found this to be the case in children's classrooms (Khanukaeva, 2014; Porter, 2016). This finding matches the findings of a study conducted by Clark and Trofimovich (2016) that revealed that gestures help students remember words better.

Beside the aforementioned vocabulary teaching strategies that the teachers used in the current study to teach vocabulary, there are other important strategies which were not mentioned in the current study and it was discussed in other studies and were vitally important to teach vocabulary knowledge. For instance, semantic mapping, defining new words, highlighting important vocabulary, using antonym of a new word, translation, using physical response, using hyponym, word component collocation, (Alqahtani, 2015: Dilek, & Yürük, 2013: Oljira, D. 2017).

The Most Commonly Used Vocabulary Learning Strategies that the EFL Iraqi Kurdish Students Use it

Concerning the fourth research question, the findings of this study show that Kurdish students use various VLS to learn new lexical items and to facilitate the vocabulary learning process. The results revealed seven VLS commonly used by the Kurdish students in reading comprehension classes to learn vocabulary items (see Table 4). The first strategy is the determination strategy, based on the Schmitt's taxonomy (1997), and the rest of the strategies are based on the Oxford taxonomy (1991).

The first strategy Kurdish students use is the memory strategy (using new words in a context). Twenty-five out of 36 Kurdish students reported that they use the technique of placing new words into a context as a memory strategy for learning vocabulary. Most of the Kurdish students emphasised the importance of this strategy and illustrated that this strategy helps them to understand the

meaning of the new vocabulary items. During the stimulated recall sessions, the Kurdish students said they often put the new words into a sentence to discover and remember their meaning.

Student 3: “When I learn a new word, I like to start using it in many other sentences.”

Students 8: “One of the strategies that I employ it for myself to remember new words is using in the new words in several sentences.”

Student 5: “I think to remember new words and discover the meaning of it using words in the sentences is an effective strategy(SIC).”

Table 4

The Most Commonly Used Vocabulary Learning Strategies Among Kurdish Students

No.	The main strategies	The sub-strategies
1.	Memory strategy	Using new words in a context
2.	Determination strategy	Guessing the meaning from the context
3.	Determination strategy	Using a dictionary
4.	Memory strategy	Grouping new words
5.	Cognitive strategy	Repeating the words with their meanings.
6.	Cognitive strategy	Taking notes
7.	Memory strategy	Using physical response or sensation

Memory strategies are traditionally known as Mnemonics. It helps learners learn the new words by linking new words to background knowledge (Schmitt, 2000). These results corresponded to the finding of a study conducted by Balhouq (2018), who investigated vocabulary the learning strategies of Libyan undergraduate students. The findings showed that the memory strategy was one the most commonly used VLSs among Libyan students. The students said that they used this strategy

because it had an effect on their retention and helped them remember new words. Furthermore, Zarrin and Khan (2014) examined the use of VLSs among undergraduate students at Aligarh Muslim University. The findings revealed that the memory strategy was the most commonly used strategy among students.

The second most commonly used strategy among the Kurdish students is the determination strategy of guessing the meaning from the context. Twenty students out of 36 reported that they employed this strategy for learning new lexical words because they encounter new words in texts during reading and comprehension classes and using this strategy is helpful. The students highlighted the role of the determination strategy as an important VLS. In some situations, it helps them to comprehend the meaning of new words. For example, during exams they are not allowed to use a dictionary, so guessing the meaning from the contexts as a determination strategy is a helpful and beneficial VLS.

Student 12: “One of the most important strategies that I use to learn new words in the reading and comprehension classes is guessing the meaning from the context because in these classes we as students encounter too many texts. So, employing this strategy will be helpful(SIC).”

Student 10: “For me I most of the time use guessing the meaning from the context because it helps me to understand the meaning of the new words easily.”

Student 8: “Most of the time when there is a text I will guess the meaning from it.”

Student 2: “I attempt to understand the meaning of the vocabularies through the context. Definitely, I want to understand the text or context because for example, in tests I would not be able to employ a dictionary, so, therefore, I think guessing the meaning from context is a useful and benefits strategy(SIC).”

According to the results, the Kurdish students considered the determination strategy to be the second most commonly used strategy for learning new lexical words in reading and comprehension classes. Regarding the employment of the determination strategy, Nation (2001) stated that students attempt to understand the

words next to the unfamiliar vocabularies to discover any types of clues to guess the meaning. Nattinger (1988) discussed that guessing vocabulary meaning from the context as a VLS is the most frequent way that students determine the meaning of new vocabularies. The students also provided another reason for using this strategy, namely that in the exam when they encounter new words in a text, their only option is to guess the meaning from the contexts. The result of the present study corresponds with the findings of a study by Shiwu (2005), who investigated the most frequently used VLS among EFL learners in Taiwan. The study revealed that the determination strategy of guessing the meaning from the context was among the most frequently used strategies for learning new vocabularies. In another research study, Suppasetserree and Saitakham (2008) have shown the most frequently used VLS of Asian EFL learners. In this study, the determination strategy of guessing the meaning from the context was one of the most frequently used strategies among Asian EFL learners and one of the most beneficial strategies for vocabulary learning. In the same vein, Vo and Jaturapitakkul (2016) in a study revealed that guessing the meaning from the context was one of the five most frequently used strategies in the determination strategy category employed by the participants to discover or learn new lexical items. This finding is similar to the results conducted in Alqarni's (2018) study, which investigated VLS used by Saudi students. One of the VLS was the determination strategy of guessing the meaning from the context to learn new vocabularies.

The third most commonly used strategy among Kurdish student is the determination strategy of using a dictionary. Eighteen Kurdish students out of 36 argued that they used the determination strategy of using a dictionary as VLS to check the meaning of the new vocabularies in reading and comprehension classes. The main reason given for using a dictionary during the stimulated recall session was that it is fast and easy to employ and therefore appears to save time. Kurdish students during interviews associated using the dictionary with difficult new vocabulary. They explained that they use a dictionary if they fail to guess the meaning from the context, particularly if they feel the words are not related to their field. They also mentioned that they use a dictionary to check the pronunciation of a specific word.

Student 8: "I can confirm that I understand the right meaning of the vocabularies sometimes when I use my dictionary. There are many a range

of meanings for the word according to their use within the text, so by using the dictionary it helps me to get the right meaning”.

Student 3: “Of course when I fail to guess the meaning from the text I directly go back to the dictionary.

Student 9: “One of the strategies that are easy and fast is using a dictionary.”

Student 5: “Among all the strategies that I mentioned there is an important strategy that needs to be discussed which is a dictionary. I think one of the reasons for using a dictionary is for time-consuming. Sometimes, I need to know the meaning of a particular word quickly so I will use a dictionary.”

In this study, the determination strategy of using a dictionary was the third most commonly used VLS by the students in reading and comprehension classes. Students revealed in the interviews that they employ the dictionary as a VLS to understand and discover the meaning of words. Takač (2008) states that “learners often use a dictionary to discover a word's meaning or check their assumptions” (p. 62). Balhouq (2018) conducted a study on vocabulary learning strategies of English majors in Libyan higher education. The results showed that using a dictionary as a determination strategy category is one of the most commonly used strategies among students. This result is compatible with a study by done by Ghalebi, Sadighi and Bagheri, (2020). They found determination and memory strategies as the most frequently used strategies among undergraduate students. The frequency of use of these VLSs show that the students wanted to use VLS that are effortless and simple, with less need for mental activities and processing. In summary, dictionaries are helpful for increasing the vocabulary knowledge of learners while reading (Hulstijn, 1992; Lenders, 2008; Watanabe, 1992). In contrast, the overuse of dictionaries by non-native readers sometimes distracts them from the text, and they may be deceptive because it is not always possible to check for direct equivalent words in different languages (Cohen, 1990). Using dictionaries excessively has some shortcomings in terms of vocabulary learning. It may not be conducive to see the dictionary as a final resource for learning the meaning of a word. It is a good option to employ the dictionary to look for the vocabularies that are not comprehensible from the context and that are vitally significant to the sense of a text (Cohen, 1990).

The fourth most commonly used strategy among Kurdish students is the memory strategy of grouping. Fourteen students out of 36 said that when they studied new words from reading and comprehension classes, they would employ memory strategy of grouping to remember new lexical items. Participants raised that when they encountered new words from the textbook, or when their teachers used a word while teaching, they would sort words into a group. They believed that employing this strategy had an effect on their understanding and when they would look at the words later, grouping served as a good technique for recalling. The fifth most commonly used strategy among Kurdish students is the cognitive strategy of repeating words with its meaning. Twelve Kurdish students out of 36 argued that they used the cognitive strategy of repeating words with the meaning for vocabulary learning in reading and comprehension classes. They reported that they repeated writing words with the meaning for retention.

Student 9: “When I encounter new words in the textbook one of the strategies that I use is grouping new words.”

Student 11: “For myself, I use sometimes grouping new words to remember.”

Student 2: “I use grouping new words as a strategy and it has an effect on my recollection.”

Student 5: “Among all the strategies that I mentioned I use another strategy which is repetition. I always repeat new words either in writing it with their meanings or using it in conversations.”

The fourth most commonly used strategy for learning vocabulary among Kurdish students is the memory strategy of grouping. This finding is in the line to the findings achieved in a study by Wong (2014), who investigated the VLS of 20 Chinese ESL learners in Australia. The results revealed that memory strategies of grouping words are among the less frequently used strategies by Chinese learners.

The fifth most commonly used strategy for vocabulary learning among Kurdish students is the cognitive strategy of repeating words with its meaning. Kurdish students argued that they employed this strategy as a useful strategy for learning new words and for recalling. This result is consistent with the findings

obtained in a study carried out by Alqarni's study (2018), which revealed ten most commonly used strategies among Saudi students. Repeating new words with its meaning as a cognitive strategy was one of the strategies proposed in the study. Moreover, this result is also matched the findings of two studies, one carried out by Bristi (2015). This researcher stated that the cognitive strategy was one of the most frequently used strategies among Bangladeshi students. The other was study by Elzubher (2016), who asserted that Sudanese students employed verbal repetition predominantly as a cognitive skill. This result is also in line with Yeh and Wang (2004). However, this result contradicts the findings of a study carried out by Baskin et al. (2017), which exposed cognitive strategy as the least commonly used strategy for vocabulary learning among Turkish students.

The sixth most commonly used strategy among Kurdish students is the cognitive strategy of taking notes. Ten students out of 36 discussed in their interviews that they employed this strategy. They argued that note-taking was an effective strategy for remembering vital information related to lexical items. In other words, they mentioned that when their teachers explained the meaning of a word, the parts of speech, or any other information that related to a particular word, they would take notes.

Student 5: "I think when teachers explain certain words in the class I will write as a note. Therefore, when I go back to it I will recall easily."

Student 6: "Sometimes when our teacher explains a particular word so she will provide some information about that word which will be significant for us too. So, in this case, taking notes is necessary."

Student 8: "Among all these strategies there is one more strategy that I use it which taking notes."

Student 1: "When my teacher mentioned an important word I will write down as a note for the sake of recalling."

The cognitive strategy of taking notes is the sixth most commonly used strategy among Kurdish students. The participants used this strategy to remember the information that their teachers provided in their explanation of a particular word. O'Malley and Chamot (1995) in a study showed that this cognitive strategy is among

the most commonly used vocabulary learning strategies by second language learners. This finding is consistent with the findings of a study by Suppasetserree and Saitakham (2008), which indicated that both English and non-English major students in Thailand employed different VLSs to learn lexical items, such as guessing strategies, dictionary strategies, and note-taking strategies. In the same vein, a study conducted by Rabadi (2016) to investigate the different VLS employed by undergraduate Jordanian students at Jordanian universities revealed that cognitive strategies of note-taking were among the VLSs used by Jordanian undergraduate students.

The last and least commonly used strategy among the participants is the memory strategy of using imagery and physical responses or sensations. Four students out of 36 reported that they used this strategy to explain the meaning of a new vocabulary to their classmates or their teachers.

Student 2: “When I want to explain the meaning of a word, I use physical actions.”

Student 8: “When I use physical action it makes the other person who listens to me understand what I'm trying to say or explain.”

Student10: “When I explain the meaning of a word to my classmates and teachers, I use physical action.”

Using this type of memory strategy is recorded as the least commonly used strategy among Kurdish students. In the same vein, Tek's (2006) investigation on VLS by Turkish students revealed that using the memory strategy of a physical response or sensation was not preferred by Turkish students. It was due to the fact that based on the finding the Turkish students found the strategy ridiculous and not suitable for their age. This result is consistent with the findings of a study carried out by Alsadik (2014). One of the aims was to investigate the most frequently used strategy among students from River University in Iraq. The results revealed that using physical action while learning a word was among the least preferred strategies among students for learning lexical items. Similarly, Hamzah, Kafipor and Abdulla (2009) investigated the use of VLSs among Iranian undergraduate students. Again, the results proved that using physical action was among the least preferred strategies. On the contrary, Ellis (as cited in Marzban & Amoli, 2012) pointed out that utilising

various memory strategies such as physical responses or visual action could improve learners' retention of the new vocabularies. Therefore, using different types of memory strategies could clearly contribute to the vocabulary size of the learners.

Beside the aforementioned VLS that were used by students to learn vocabulary knowledge, there are other important VLS which were not mentioned in the current study and it was discussed in other studies and were vitally important to learn vocabulary knowledge. For instance, repeat the word aloud many times, ask classmates for meaning, study the spelling of the word, Write the words many times, Connecting the words to their synonyms or antonyms, analyses affixes (such as prefixes and suffixes) and roots, analyses the part of speech, Image word's meaning (Askar, 2014; Alsadik, 2014; Balhouq, 2018).

CHAPTER V

Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter offers an overview of the study. First, the aim and structure of the study is revisited. This is followed by the main findings. Lastly, the chapter explains the implications of the findings and offers recommendations for further research studies.

Summary of The Main Findings

The main aim of this study was to investigate the perceptions of a number of Iraqi Kurdish students and their EFL teachers of improving English vocabulary through reading comprehension. The study also sought to find the most commonly used VLS among the students and the most common vocabulary teaching strategies employed by the teachers in the context. To answer the research questions, the researcher employed the stimulated recall method (SRM) and interviews to collect the data. Three classes formed part of the stimulated recall video, while 36 undergraduate Kurdish students participated in group discussions and five international teachers participated in the stimulated recall sessions (SRSs). Directly, after each stimulated recall sessions, the researcher asked participants a list of the questions to gain more information about how learning and teaching vocabulary was going on in their classes. Moreover, another purpose for doing interviews was to identify the most commonly used vocabulary teaching and learning strategies by the teachers and students.

Several key findings emerged from both stimulated recall sessions and interviews with the Kurdish students. One of the major findings revealed that Kurdish students were aware of the importance of learning vocabulary and they believed that having a well-developed vocabulary is an indication of their English competence. The Kurdish students also stated that vocabulary knowledge is connected to the four language skills, namely listening, reading, writing, as well as speaking. Furthermore, the participants highlighted the vital role of the vocabulary

knowledge for successful communication. They believe that the wider a person's vocabulary knowledge is, the more they would be able to communicate professionally in English.

Another finding that emerged from Both SRIs and interviews of students is they consider reading and comprehension classes as one of the best ways of improving vocabulary knowledge. All the Kurdish students participated in this study perceived learning vocabulary through reading to be a valuable strategy for increasing students' vocabulary. Most of the Kurdish students shared this view. During the SRIs, students explained how they learn vocabulary knowledge from reading classes by mentioning to their activities that they were doing it in the class. In the SRIs, they reported that in the reading comprehension classes once they finished reading a text their teacher would ask them to do exercises and tasks that are coming after each text. Moreover, they named that exercises and tasks which were matching keywords with their definitions, guessing the meaning from the contexts, providing synonyms of the new words. Also, they mentioned to an activity that they were doing it in the class which is using flashcards. They reported that when they participated in this activity it helped them to remember necessary words and it was useful for the whole class because the whole class were divided into several groups and all of the students were asked to participate.

The next finding is related to the difficulties and challenges that Kurdish students encounter in the process of learning vocabulary during reading and comprehension classes. In both SRIs and interviews, Kurdish students clearly communicated that the learners in the class are at varying levels. For example, when Kurdish students recalled their reading classes, they stated that the differing levels is one of the major challenges that they have in the class. Another challenge that Kurdish students pointed out was their interest in the chosen textbooks and texts. Kurdish students reported that their teachers do not consider students' needs when selecting texts for reading and comprehension classes for the purpose of teaching vocabulary knowledge. They do not find the texts interesting. Kurdish students revealed that the topics and exercises from the prescribed textbook used during the reading and comprehension classes are not suited to their interests and that it does not motivate them to practice, understand, and learn new words.

The participating Kurdish students offered some recommendations to make the teaching of vocabulary knowledge during reading and comprehension classes more effective. The first recommendation is related to the level of competence. Kurdish students suggested that if all the students in a class have a similar level of competence in English and if the tasks, topics, and exercises in textbooks match the level of competence of the students, both the students and the teacher will reach the goal of improving vocabulary knowledge. It will also motivate students to go through exercises and actively do them. The second recommendation is related to the textbook and the topics in their prescribed book. Kurdish students mentioned that since the focus of reading and comprehension classes is teaching and learning vocabulary, it is essential to focus on the types of texts or textbooks used. Furthermore, participants suggested that if teachers ask students about their interests in terms of topics and exercises from the textbook, it might motivate students to participate more and learn vocabulary knowledge. Also, the students illustrated that once teachers know what their students like, it will be easy to grab the attention of the students and to inspire them to learn and remember lexical items from texts that they prefer more. The third recommendation from the Kurdish students was the different vocabulary teaching strategies teachers used. The participating Kurdish students explained that their teacher tries to make the class fun by using different strategies. They preferred not just reading the texts, listening to the words in the class and memorizing it. They mentioned that it is not practical to just memorize words without any additional vocabulary teaching strategy. They suggested strategies such as the use of mechanical techniques like flashcards, playing charades, guessing the meaning from the text, creating groups in the class and having a competition, or explaining the meaning of a word by means of sentences and examples.

Like with the students, several key findings emerged from the stimulated recall sessions of the teachers. One of the major findings revealed how teaching and learning vocabulary was going on in the reading comprehension classes. Teachers clearly explained that reading is mostly about vocabulary and most of the exercises that they had after reading a text were about vocabulary knowledge and making students familiar with the unknown words. Moreover, Teachers mentioned the name of the exercises and activities that they did in the recorded class such as, guessing the meaning of the word from the context, matching the key word to the definition, using

flashcards, identifying parts of speech of the words, and providing examples to the new words. Teachers stated that when students read texts, there are lots of activities and exercises that are coming after each text and doing these exercises are essential and helpful for students. Furthermore, the EFL teachers saw reading as a great strategy for improving and presenting new vocabulary for students because students see the contextual meaning and learn how to use vocabulary correctly in a given context.

Similar to the students' difficulty, EFL teachers reported that there is a problem surrounding the students' level of competence in the classrooms. In both SRIs and interviews teachers highlighted the differences in students' levels of competence in the class and they reported that a class can include students from elementary up to the advanced level, and this massive variation made it a challenge for teachers to teach vocabulary knowledge in a reading and comprehension class. When EFL teachers recalled their teaching sessions they illustrated the diversity in terms of students' levels and said that this did not match their expectations. It also does not meet university standards or compare to best practice at other universities.

Another major finding is that EFL teachers do not consider students' interest when selecting texts or topics in the textbook for reading comprehension classes. EFL teachers rely mainly on prescribed textbooks and when they recalled their teaching sessions, they emphasized the use of texts from the textbooks. Most of the EFL teachers emphasized the importance of using additional texts and texts that are current. Nevertheless, they do not consider students' interests and their needs very much. Even though the students do not like the texts and the textbooks and the teachers are aware of this, they do not make any effort to change the texts. One of the main factors that might drive teachers to refrain from changing the textbook is the variation in student levels in the classes. EFL teachers mentioned that they have problems with the different levels of the students in the reading and comprehension classes.

Like the participating Kurdish students, the EFL teachers provided recommendations for making the teaching of vocabulary knowledge during reading and comprehension classes more effective. The first recommendation was related to the coursebook for reading and comprehension classes. The participating EFL

teachers suggested that the teaching of vocabulary knowledge should not be associated with the coursebook only, but that other sources beyond the textbook should be part of this process. They explained that reading is a significant skill in the English language, and students must develop reading habits to improve their vocabulary knowledge. The second recommendation of the EFL teachers was related to motivation and using a current textbook. Most of the EFL teachers suggested that vocabulary learning can be improved by motivating students, creating fun and teaching new words from updated textbooks. Teachers explained that motivation is vital for students in the class and when texts are current, students will be motivated to read, study, and learn new vocabulary items. Another suggestion from the teachers was that revision should be included. They gave examples from their class to show that when students learn new vocabulary items and they only hear it a few times, they forget, and when the teacher then uses the word again, they act as if it is the first time they hear it. Teachers also indicated that they cannot say which vocabulary items each student would need in their lives and which are less important.

During the stimulated recall sessions and interviews, EFL teachers identified several vocabulary teaching strategies that they use for teaching English vocabulary in reading and comprehension classes. The most commonly used strategies were determination strategy of guessing the meaning from context, compensation strategy of using synonyms, memory strategy placing new words into a context and using mechanical techniques, and cognitive strategies of repeating. Furthermore, compensation strategy of using memes and gestures were found to be the least commonly used strategy among teachers for teaching vocabulary. In the meantime, Kurdish students identified the most commonly used strategy for learning vocabulary in the stimulated recall sessions and they were memory strategy of using new vocabulary items in context, determination strategy of guessing the meaning from the context and using a dictionary, memory strategy of grouping new words, and cognitive strategy of repeating the words with their meanings, and taking notes. Memory strategy of using physical response or sensation was found to be the least commonly used strategy for learning vocabulary among Kurdish students.

Implications for Practice

In this study, three implications for education are highlighted. The finding that the vocabulary content in the prescribed texts frequently do not match the needs of the students and that teachers fail to choose the appropriate texts or to make adaptations, implies the need for negotiated syllabus. For example, a teacher can discuss with their students at the beginning of the semester what topics and texts that would prefer to read in their reading and comprehension classes. Macalister and Nation (2019) point out that in the field of curriculum design, lacks, wants, and necessities are important considerations. Thus, it is suggested that teachers negotiate with their students to uncover lacks, wants, and necessities. They should listen to students' suggestions and take into account the perceptions of the students while choosing a textbook and texts.

The second implication for education is related to the finding that the proficiency levels of the students in reading and comprehension classes varied greatly. Kurdish students and EFL teachers emphasized this diversity in terms of the level of competency of students in the classes. This hinders students from achieving the required vocabulary knowledge. According to Macalister and Nation (2019), there should be a situational analysis to check the environment, the level of the students and the knowledge level of the teachers. Thus, when there is an attempt to improve the quality of a class, the level of the students is one of the fundamental factors. This study suggests a proficiency tests at the beginning of the semester at the English Language Department to enable the authority of the department to divide students based on their levels. In this way their needs can be met more appropriately.

The third implication for education is related to the VLSs that students mentioned in the stimulated recall sessions. Although, students reported some VLSs that they used in the reading and comprehension classes to learn vocabulary knowledge. In the meantime, there were some VLSs that they did not talk about it and in other research studies they were found to be useful for students to learn vocabulary knowledge, such as repeat the word aloud many times, ask classmates for meaning, study the spelling of the word, Write the words many times, linking the words to their synonyms or antonyms, analyses affixes (such as prefixes and suffixes) and roots, analyses the part of speech, Image word's meaning (Askar, 2014:

Alsadik, 2014; Balhouq, 2018). In the stimulated recall sessions, like students' teachers also reported some vocabulary teaching strategies that they were used in the reading and comprehension classes to teach vocabulary knowledge. Besides the vocabulary teaching strategies that the teachers used in the current study to teach vocabulary, there are other important strategies which were not mentioned in the current study and it was discussed in other studies which were vitally important to teach vocabulary knowledge. For instance, semantic mapping, defining new words, highlighting important vocabulary, using antonym of a new word, translation, using physical response, using hyponym, word component collocation, (Alqahtani, 2015: Dilek, &Yürük, 2013: Oljira, D. 2017). Therefore, it is essential to draw the attention of students and teachers to use different vocabulary learning and teaching strategies in the classes for making the process of teaching and learning vocabulary useful and successful.

Recommendations for Further Research

The findings of this study have shown that there are many areas of learning and teaching vocabulary in the Kurdish context that should be further investigated.

1. One of the main finding of the current study was the proficiency levels of the students in reading and comprehension classes varied greatly. Students and teachers emphasized this diversity in terms of the level of competency of students in the classes. Further research should be done to get better understanding about how the diversity of proficiency levels can have a great effect on the student's vocabulary development.
2. Since one of the main aims of this study was to investigate the perceptions of the students and teachers of improving English vocabulary through reading comprehension, future studies can explore students and teachers' perception of teaching and learning vocabulary using other language skills like listening, writing, and speaking.
3. Since the present study was only limited to the first- and second-year English majors at one university from the Kurdistan region in Iraq, future studies should be conducted with participants of other universities in the Kurdistan region. Furthermore,

the participants of this current study were Kurdish undergraduate students and international teachers. Therefore, future studies should include Kurdish teachers from other private and government universities from the Kurdistan region to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of perceptions of teaching and learning vocabulary through reading.

4. In the current study, the main method for collecting data was SRM. It consisted of stimulated recall videos and stimulated recall sessions. This method has not been employed in many studies in the Kurdish context. Other studies can be conducted by drawing attention to the using of SRM or using it with other tools like questionnaires and interviews to investigate teaching and learning vocabulary and other areas of English language and language learning. Moreover, since the current study employed only SRM, it seems feasible for future studies to use an additional method or research tools such as dairies, using vocabulary tests before starting the process, think-aloud protocols, or a questionnaire.

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Appendices

Appendix A Course Descriptions

Course Name	Comprehension
Course Code	ENG102COM
Time(in hours) per week	Theory: 3 hours
Office Hours	From Saturday to Wednesday (8.00am-8.00pm)
Keywords	Vocabulary, sentence structure, discourse marker, reading, composition, vocabulary
<p>Course Overview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This course will focus on the reading strategies to help students to overcome any obstacles while reading. ➤ Students shall be taught comprehension skills such as previewing, scanning and skimming. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding paragraphs includes; identifying the topic of a paragraph, main ideas and key points. ➤ Making inferences that include facts vs. inferences, and making inferences from fiction, facts and opinion, tone and point of view. ➤ Recognizing patterns: sequence pattern, comparison and contrast pattern, cause and effect pattern. 	
<p>Course Objective:</p> <p>Students should be encouraged to read a wide range of texts both in class and at home so that they build up a broad vocabulary and become familiar with the uses of various structures. This would enable them to deal with a range of lexical items and grammatical structures in a variety of text types. Classroom reading can include a range of reading texts from course books and reading skills books at this level, as well as articles available on the internet and current articles from newspapers and magazines on topic of interest. As part of the homework assignments, a weekly reading scheme could be started. Students could be asked to come up with verbal and written reviews of the texts they have read. These could include graded readers, unabridged short stories or novels, non-fiction, newspaper or magazine articles. Encourage students to follow up on their hobbies and interests by reading magazines about sports, cars, fashion, etc. in English.</p>	

Course Name	Reading skills
Course Code	ENG202RSK
Department/College	English/Education and Language
Time(in hours) per week	Theory: 3 hours per week Practice: 0
Office Hours	Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 8 a.m. – 2.30 p.m.
Keywords	Scanning reading, skimming reading, vocabulary knowledge, comprehension, multiple choices.

Course Overview:

Communication is vital in today's society. It is not enough to merely be able to speak and understand spoken English. In nowadays world, writing English is often a necessary skill in many job industries and fields. In order to develop practical writing skills, one must understand the basics of English grammar and sentence structure. Learning essential vocabulary and continually expanding knowledge is one of the best ways to succeed, both in personal and professional lives.

The course aims at developing competencies such as getting general and specific information from the text, getting the main ideas and detailed information from the text, deducing the meaning of words, phrases and sentences based on the context, and explaining relations between parts of the text through grammatical cohesive devices, and developing the skills of inferencing, analyzing, synthesizing, and speed reading, the course also aims at expanding the vocabulary mastery up to 5500 words and relevant grammatical structures used. The use of simplified texts should be brought to minimum. While individual performances are noted, pair and group work should be encouraged. Assessment of success is based on portfolios and mid-term as well as final examinations

Course Objective:

- To introduce students to basic reading strategies
- To assist students to develop literal comprehension skills.
- To assist students to develop critical comprehension skills.
- To assist students to develop university-level vocabulary.
- To assist students to develop increased reading efficiency.

1.	Course Name	Reading Skills
2.	Course Code	ENG202RSK
3.	Department/College	Department of English/College of Education
4.	Time(in hours) per week	Theory: 2
5.	Office Hours	Saturday to Wednesday, 8AM-9AM
6.	Keywords	Reading Skills, Reading Strategies, Comprehension, Vocabulary, Skimming
7.	Course Overview: The course is designed to familiarize second-year students with effective reading strategies, and to enhance their comprehension/reading skills and vocabulary.	
8.	Course Objective: The objective of the course is to improve students' reading skills through regular practice and use of effective reading strategies. Also, making student familiar with a range of vocabulary knowledge through text and textbook.	

Appendix B
The Permission Letter

رئاسة الجامعة اللبنانية الفرنسية
كلية التربية واللغات
قسم اللغة الانكليزية



سهروكايه تي زانكوى لوبناني فهرنسي
كوليژ پهروهده وزمان
بهشى زمانى ئينگليزى

Lebanese French University – College of Education & Languages – Department of English.

To Whom It May Concern



Dear Sir (Professor),

We would like to let your honour know that **Mr. BESTOON SALEH ALI HASSAN** is an MA. Student in your university visited my department in Lebanese French University and used a “Stimulated Recall Method” in three classes of English Department and they are (one comprehension class and two reading classes). Just to let your honour know that.

Best Regards,

Yours Sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Misbah Mahmood Al-Sulaimaan,

Head of English Department,

College of Education and Languages,

Lebanese French University (LFU),

Erbil, Kurdistan Region, Iraq.

Phone and Viber No. +9647501881854

Email: misbah.alsulaimaan20@gmail.com

Appendix C

Students' interview questions

Experience and beliefs about learning vocabulary

1. Tell me a little about your experience in learning English as a second language.
2. What do you hope to learn when you go to your reading comprehension class?
3. what is important for you?
4. Is learning English vocabulary important for you?

Perspectives on vocabulary teaching techniques

4. What do you think about the methods used in your university in teaching vocabulary? Why?
(prompt: Are there any specific method of teaching you prefer? Why?)

Attitudes towards learning vocabulary through reading

5. Where do you mostly meet new English words?
(prompt: Do you mostly encounter them in reading courses or more in texts out of class?)
6. What types of topics do you prefer to read? Why is that?
7. What do you think about learning vocabulary through reading? Why?
8. What could make teaching vocabulary in reading courses more effective? Do you have any suggestions?

Vocabulary learning strategies

9. When you encounter new words, how do you get their meaning or information about their meaning?
10. What do you do when you meet a new word in a text?
 - A. Grouping words
 - B. Placing new words into a context
 - C. Using keyword
 - D. Representing sounds in memory
 - E. Semantic mapping
 - F. Formally practicing with sounds and writing systems
 - G. Recombining
 - H. Using imagery
 - I. Using physical response or sensation
 - J. Using mechanical techniques
 - K. Repeating new vocabulary
 - L. Translating from first language to the second language
 - M. Transferring from first language to the second language
 - N. Taking notes
 - O. Highlighting
 - P. Summarizing
 - Q. Using mime or gestures

R. Analysing expressions

S. Or maybe you do something else? Can you give me an example of that?

11. Which strategies are more useful for you and competent? Why?
12. What type of information do you seek when you look for a new word? Meaning in English, meaning in your mother language? Part of speech, pronunciation, spelling, synonyms and antonyms, or something else?
13. Are there anything else you want to tell me about learning vocabulary?

Appendix D

Teachers' interview questions

Experience and beliefs about teaching vocabulary

1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. What would you say in your approach to teaching vocabulary?
3. How important do you think is teaching vocabulary in EFL?

Techniques in teaching vocabulary

4. Is vocabulary learning a separate or an integrated part of your lessons?
5. What are the techniques you know, but you avoid using them? Why?
6. Which of the techniques do you feel that students interact with more?
7. What do you do when a student asks you about the meaning of a new word?
8. What type of information do you provide students about new words?
9. Do you use texts out of the reading textbook? If so, what type of these texts?
10. Do you test the students' knowledge of vocabulary? How?

Teaching vocabulary learning strategies

11. Do you teach students how to deal with unknown words in a text? If so, what are the strategies that you teach them? Which one you think is more useful? Why?

Attitudes towards learning vocabulary through reading

12. What do you think about learning vocabulary through reading? Why?
13. What do you think about the reading textbooks that are used in terms of meeting the students' needs in learning vocabulary and their suitability for students' English level?
14. What could make teaching vocabulary in reading courses more effective? Do you have any suggestions?
15. Does the existing course sufficient for the students to improve their vocabulary?
16. Are students required to do reading activities outside the class?
17. Are there anything else you want to tell me about teaching vocabulary?

Appendix E

Transcription of teachers and students interview from Stimulated Recall Sessions

Group discussions of students

Researcher: Good afternoon dear students.

I hope you are doing great. I think the main aim of this meeting is clear. So in order to save time I want to start directly. But first of all I want to give you some tips. If you do not understand the questions you can ask me to repeat.

So, are you ready?

Alright.....

Experience and beliefs about learning vocabulary

Researcher: Tell me a little about your experience in learning English as a second language.

S5: The first thing that I did when I was a beginner of English language was changing my environment totally to the English. E.g. changing the language of my phone, TV shows radio. The second step was reading short stories and using dictionaries in order to understand the meaning of vocabularies. Moreover, watching movies and listening to songs was another step.

Researcher: What do you hope to learn when you go to your reading comprehension class?

S1: Of course, one of my hopes is learning new words and learning new strategies for dealing with the new words and also how to remember new words, but it all depends on both teacher students. It really interesting when we learn something new.

S2: learning new vocabulary is one of my hopes in this lesson.

Researcher: What is important for you?

S4: one of the things that we really as a student want to learn is not only being familiar with new vocabulary, but it is also important for us to know how to use it for example in the sentences.

S8: for me, of course vocabulary is important.

S7: I agree with him. Most of the students wants to learn vocabulary in order to be able to speak English fluently.

S9: For me also vocabulary is important.

Researcher: Is learning English vocabulary important for you?

S 4: "Vocabulary has a potential role generally in learning languages and particularly in learning English language."

S1: In my opinion, learning vocabulary is very important for students who is trying to learn English language because in order to be competent in English language you have to have a well-developed vocabulary knowledge.

S7: I think..... learning vocabulary for a learner of English language is very essential because it relates to all skills of language like speaking, writing, reading, and listening as well. Once you develop your vocabulary competency, you will be able to speak, write, read and listen.

S7: There is no doubt that vocabulary plays an important role in English language and there is more than one reason behind that, for example, a student cannot speak and express his/her ideas well without having sufficient vocabulary.

S6: The more vocabulary knowledge we have as a student, the more we will be able to communicate and our message will be understood and clear.

S1: Yeas. Of course, it is always crucial for us because, without vocabulary, we cannot express our ideas, and we cannot say anything, and we will get stuck during communications or conversations.

S2: I cannot entirely agree with him. Because, for example, as a student, I know many vocabularies, but I cannot make sentences. When I watch movies and read short stories, I understand what is going on, but when I learn new vocabulary, I can't use it in daily speaking. This important for me to use new vocabulary in daily communications.

Perspectives on vocabulary teaching techniques

Researcher: What do you think about the methods used in your university in teaching vocabulary? Why?

(prompt: Are there any specific method of teaching you prefer? Why?)

S1: Actually: in this university and in many other universities from Kurdistan region they are using books it is good but one thing that I would not say I like it which is using classic books and old books which seems to be bored for most of the students. For example, the words which are used in our book in this lesson are very old, and it is not used nowadays so in this way we do not like it.

S11: I agree with him. We do not have too many activities in the class. Also, we are not communicating too much with the teacher. In my opinion, this is not the right way of teaching a new language.

S2: the new method of teaching is not used at all in our class.

Attitudes towards learning vocabulary through reading

Researcher: Where do you mostly meet new English words?

(prompt: Do you mostly encounter them in reading courses or more in texts out of class?)

S5: I usually meet a new word while reading short stories or in watching movies.

What about in the class?

In the class, yes, sometimes from the teacher. Of course, from the teacher, I mean from the textbook.

S3: I get new vocabulary from the books from the news and social media; there are some great websites. So

Researcher: What types of topics do you prefer to read? Why is that?

S1: Many times I like historical topics

S2: I like novels and fancy books,

S6: For me, scientific topics because it is exciting nowadays and because of the technology it takes to learn new about life.

Researcher: What do you think about learning vocabulary through reading? Why?

S: I think it is effective.

S4: I think practicing with the new words in the reading or while reading it makes you improve your English. Moreover, I think learning new vocabulary through reading is one of the effective ways because, besides the meaning, we will learn too many things like synonyms parts of speech.

S5: Of course, it is useful. One of the most effective ways to build and increase your vocabulary knowledge, especially in colleges, is by reading texts.

S1: I think it is one of the effective ways for a student to improve his, her level of vocabulary and at the same time reading skill.

S8: I think there is a number of ways to develop and enrich your vocabulary. One of them is by reading, and this is happening in the class. We are learning new words while reading a text and while doing a particular activity in the reading lessons. So that is why it sounds really great; meanwhile, it is effective.

S4: I think learning vocabulary through a text is much more productive than without having a text.

S9: When I learn vocabulary through a text, I can remember words and it is effective.

S10: We have too many sources for learning English vocabulary. One of them is reading. I think it is practical, do you know why? Because in my opinion, we have to learn vocabularies through a text instead of learning individually. So, if we learn through a text, we can remember and learn it correctly.

S15: When we read a text, of course, we will meet new words. In this case, we have to understand the meaning, and we will see how it is used. So I think it is one of the effective ways to learn English vocabulary.

Researcher: What could make teaching vocabulary in reading courses more effective? Do you have any suggestions?

S3: Of course, it is useful. One of the most effective ways to build and increase your vocabulary knowledge, especially in colleges, is by reading texts.

S10: it can be, but not one hundred percentages. Because I do not think that is a good idea to learn a new language, especially in the class. It all depends on the students.

S11: "For making vocabulary teaching to be effective in reading and comprehension classes, I recommend to pay attention to the textbook and topics of the prescribed book."

S9: “My suggestion is when teachers make sure what is the students’ interest in terms of textbooks, texts, and topics in reading class students will nicely get involve to the class and teaching and learning vocabulary process.”

S4: “My suggestion is to concentrate to the interests of students. Because in the reading classes most of the focus are on the learning vocabulary items from reading texts. So once teachers ask students about their interest in terms of texts or topics it will be more easy for both students and teacher to learn and teach vocabulary knowledge in the reading classes.”

S1: “In my recommendation.....because most of the focus in the reading class are about vocabulary knowledge so it is also important to focus on the students’ idea and their interest. As a student If I have an interest in a particular text of course I will try to learn more vocabulary items that are in that text.”

S4: “When it comes to teach vocabulary in the reading classes, our teacher brings fun through using some kind of strategies like grouping students in the class and make a competition. Or a game which we call it in our class Charades. I think it could be impressive if it uses to make vocabulary teaching successful in reading and comprehension classes.”

S8: “In my recommendation I recommend teaching vocabulary can be effective when a teacher uses strategies like guessing the word from contexts or explaining words from the sentences.”

S6: “I recommend to pay attention to the strategies that the teacher use it to teach vocabulary in the class.”

S8: “In our class one of the strategies is overused by our teacher which is using words in the sentences, are super effective. So, I recommend to pay attention to the using strategies by teachers. As other students mentioned one of the strategies our teacher used is Charades or using flashcards. If the size of class is small, it will be super suitable.”

Vocabulary learning strategies

Researcher: When you encounter new words, how do you get their meaning or information about their meaning?

S1: first of all, when I encounter new vocabulary, I write down on my notebook after that I will check by my dictionary.

1. What do you do when you meet a new word in a text?
 1. Grouping words
 2. Placing new words into a context
 3. Using keyword
 4. Representing sounds in memory
 5. Semantic mapping
 6. Formally practicing with sounds and writing systems
 7. Recombining
 8. Using imagery
 9. Using physical response or sensation
 10. Using mechanical techniques.
 11. Repeating new vocabulary
 12. Translating from first language to the second language English to English
 13. Transferring from first language to the second language sometimes I use it.
 14. Taking notes
 15. Highlighting
 16. Summarizing
 17. Using mime or gestures
 18. Analysing expressions
 - 19.** Using synonyms
 20. Or maybe you do something else? Can you give me an example of that?
 1. Using new words into a context

Student 1: In my opinion, one of the essential strategies for learning vocabulary is using new words in the sentences because they let us understand the meaning of the new words effortlessly.

Student 3: “When I learn a new word, I like to start using it in many other sentences.”

Students 8: “One of the strategies that I employ it for myself to remember new words is using in the new words in several sentences.”

Student 5: “I think to remember new words and discover the meaning of it using words in the sentences is an effective strategy.”

2. Guessing the meaning from the context

S 2: Guessing the meaning from the context is one of the important strategies. We use this strategy, first of all in order to find out the meaning of the new words. Secondly, to know how a word is used in a particular text. So, I try to understand the meaning of the word through the text.

S3: I agree with her too.

S4: I also use it.

Student 12: “One of the most important strategies that I use to learn new words in the reading and comprehension classes is guessing the meaning from the context because in these classes we as students encounter too many texts. So, employing this strategy will be helpful”

Student 10: “For me I most of the time use guessing the meaning from the context because it helps me to understand the meaning of the new words easily.”

Student 8: “Most of the time when there is a text I will guess the meaning from it.”

Student 2: “I attempt to understand the meaning of the vocabularies through the text. Definitely, I try to understand the context because for example, in exams I would not be able to employ a dictionary, so, therefore, I think guessing the meaning from context is a useful and benefits strategy”

3. Analysing expressions

S1: I sometimes analyse expressions. It is useful for me.

S5: I also use it.

4. Using dictionary

S4: I think most of the students use a dictionary for learning the meaning of new words because it is fast and sometimes we as students from university meet new words out of our field so in this situation I use a dictionary.

S1: I most of the time use dictionary to check the pronunciation of the unfamiliar word. I think this strategy is effective and helpful.

Student 8: “I can confirm that I understood the right meaning of the words sometimes when I use my dictionary. There are many different meanings for the word according to their use within the text, so by using the dictionary it helps me to get the right meaning”.

Student 3: “Of course when I fail to guess the meaning from the text I directly go back to the dictionary.

Student 9: “One of the strategies that are easy and fast is using a dictionary.”

Student 5: “Among all the strategies that I mentioned there is an important strategy that needs to be discussed which is a dictionary. I think one of the reasons for using a dictionary is for time-consuming. Sometimes, I need to know the meaning of a particular word quickly so I will use a dictionary.”

5. Highlighting

S5: I think this strategy remind us about the important words that we use it or learn it in our daily activity.

S4: I most of time use it when our teacher mention to an important word or information that would be important for exams.

6. Grouping new words

S6: Among all the strategies that I mentioned I use another strategy which is repetition. I always repeat new words either in writing it with their meanings or using it in conversations.

S4: I think there is an effective strategy that I use and most of the students use it while encountering new words which are repeating new words with it is meaning.

Student 9: “When I encounter new words in the textbook one of the strategies that I use is grouping new words.”

Student 11: “For myself, I use sometimes grouping new words to remember.”

Student 2: “I use grouping new words as a strategy and it has an effect on my recollection.”

Student 5: “Among all the strategies that I mentioned I use another strategy which is repetition. I always repeat new words either in writing it with their meanings or using it in conversations.”

7. Repeating the words with it is meaning.

S2: among all the strategies that I mentioned I use another strategy which is repetition. I always repeat new words either in writing it with their meanings or using it in conversations.

S3: I think there is an effective strategy that I use and most of the students use it while encountering new words which are repeating new words with it is meaning.

Student 5: “I think when teachers explain certain words in the class I will write as a note. Therefore, when I go back to it I will recall easily.”

Student 6: “Sometimes when our teacher explains a particular word so she will provide some information about that word which will be significant for us too. So, in this case, taking notes is necessary.”

Student 8: “Among all these strategies there is one more strategy that I use it which taking notes.”

Student 1: “When my teacher mentioned an important word I will write down as a note for the sake of recalling.”

8. Taking notes

S1: Sometimes when our teacher explains a particular word so she will provide some information about that word which will be significant for us too. So, in this case, taking notes is necessary.

S2: this strategy is use it a lot.

S3: when I use this strategy help me to recall word later.

S4: yeah it is effective.

S5: most of the students use this strategy to remember the words that we learn from the classes and it is effective.

9. Using imagery

S5: I use this strategy a lot.

S6: it affects my memory. When I see a picture I will connect to a word in order to remember. Sometimes I draw it by myself.

S7: it is effective.

S8: this strategy is very simple and I think it is mostly used by low-level of learners.

10. Using physical response or sensation

S1: when I want to explain the meaning of a word I use physical actions.

S3: I use physical action specially when the meaning is so hard.

S5: I agree with here.

S:4 yeah that is true.

Student 2: “When I want to explain the meaning of a word, I use physical actions.”

Student 8: “When I use physical action it makes the other person who listens to me understand what I'm trying to say or explain.”

Student10: “When I explain the meaning of a word to my classmates and teachers, I use physical action.”

Researcher: What type of information do you seek when you look for a new word? Meaning in English, meaning in your mother language? Part of speech, pronunciation, spelling, synonyms and antonyms, or something else?

S: synonyms and antonyms, then meaning English are essential. After that, pronunciation. Finally, parts of speech.

Researcher: Are there anything else you want to tell me about learning vocabulary?

Vocabulary is the hurt of the language. The essential things in order to know vocabulary is just practicing. If you do not practice English is just like if you do not use you are going to lose it.

S: Without vocabulary, we cannot speak.

Researcher: Right now I want you to comment on your class and the activities that you have done. So, ready?

Students: Yeah

Researcher: Ok. Great.

Researcher: How do see the exercises that you have done in reading classes and most of them were about vocabularies?

S3: I think they are effective.

S8: yeah, I definitely agree with her. This exercise is just like a review for us to check if we learn words form the texts that we read or not.

S1: it is very beneficial for us because I think it gives teacher a space to focus on a particular part of teaching vocabulary knowledge.

Researcher: What about you?

S3: of course they are important because they are coming after the text. So they have to be useful.

S4: for me yeah it is effective as we can see. Students get engaged with the exercise because it gives us space to think about meaning of a new word and how it is used.

S7: most of the exercises are about vocabularies and that is why students like it.

S1: yeah that is true. She is right.

Researcher: What are the difficulties that you see in this class?

S1: In the comprehension lesson, we learn new words. One of the challenges that we encounter as a student in this lesson is the level of the students. All the students are not at the same level.

S6: “One of the challenges that we encounter as a student in this class is the level of the students. All the students are not at the same level.”

S2: “We are all challenging from having a variety of levels. As we can see in the activities of the recorded class, all the students cannot participate because it is difficult for some of us and if they participate, they will not do it properly.”

S10: “Honestly, we have a problem which is having differences in levels of students in the class. This is something that we don’t like it and it is really uncomfortable and challenging for us.”

S2: “One of the challenges that I face is having a variety of levels in the class. So it is a bit difficult for both teacher and students because sometimes some students cannot understand some of the text correctly and when the teacher explains for them it becomes bored for others.”

S4: “On the contrary, when the teacher tries to have a match with those who their level is good, it will be complicated for others.”

S3: “Well, to be honest, our teacher, as we mentioned she is a hard worker, and she is doing her best to make a balance between both side, but still it is a challenge for both the teacher and student.”

S7: “We have different levels like Elementary-level unstill advanced-level. So it is a bit complicated.”

S3: “The levels of the students are different, and this is really problematic for students and teachers as well.”

S1: “As we can see here, this exercise is about guessing the meaning of the text. In these exercises, only strong students could do it. Other students were not able to do it.”

S11: We are all suffering from having a variety of levels.

Researcher: what is the second difficulty:

S5: “To be honest, the information that has been presented by the teacher about vocabularies were not sufficient for me. I feel that I need extra information about vocabulary.”

S4: “I think our teacher is not aware of our needs. Besides that, I do not like reading topics or texts that we have in our book.”

S6: “Our opinion and desires were not taking into consideration when our teacher chose reading texts. I think this is essential for us to read the text that we liked.”

S10: “Our teacher did not ask us if we liked the topic or the texts that we were reading it or not. I think It also affected to the students’ participations and the exercises that we did in the class.”

S6: “I think topics of reading are fine, but if the teacher selected the topics by considering our ideas and desire that would be more effective.”

S4: “Yeah..... I think the information that is going to be provided will only contribute to strong students, and other students will not be helpful.”

Researcher: Do you like your teacher give you an example of the unknown words as we can see in the video?

S1: Of course, we do, we will get familiar with it.

S2: It is good.

S4: Yeah, I think it is useful. Imagination is good. We could not understand one of the questions which were about grammar, because we are not interested in grammar.

Researcher: Thanks for your participation.

Teacher: You are most welcome.

Teacher’s interview

Researcher: good afternoon dear teacher. I hope you are doing well. In our meeting we are going to discuss lots of point about your reading class and I will ask you several question after that we will together watch you recorded class and give our comments.

Researcher: If you to want me repeat the question you are free to ask. If you do not have any question we can start?

Teacher: Of course, no. we can start.

Researcher: Thanks. Ok

Experience and beliefs about teaching vocabulary

Researcher: How long have you been teaching English?

Teacher: I have been teaching English for over twenty years all in all.

Researcher: What would you say in your approach to teaching vocabulary?

Teacher: Well, I think teaching, in general, it should be fun. Moreover, when it comes to vocabulary, it is not an exception. So, I try to keep it fun and interesting to the students, and another important thing certainly is clarity. I want to make sure if they understand every detail that I want them to learn because that is my approach from teaching in general. I always tell them, as long as you are in the classroom, ask me as many questions as you can because I love questions. So clarity is something very important I want to make sure if they understand words in all the possible connotation those words can have.

Researcher: How important do you think is teaching vocabulary in EFL?

Teacher: Well, it is one of the most important areas, because how can you speak if you don't have enough words.

Techniques in teaching vocabulary

Researcher: Is vocabulary learning a separate or an integrated part of your lessons?

Teacher: Of course, you cannot teach vocabulary without teaching other areas like speaking, listening, writing, and reading. So it is always an integral part of any course you teach.

Researcher: What are the techniques you know, but you avoid using them? Why?

Teacher: I avoid Using dictionary in the class. When students check words in the dictionary, they just want to know in that time without practicing. One thing I have

seen students use it is mispronouncing words. If you communicate mistakes, students might remember that. This is something I won't do. If there is a possibility to make a mistake, yes, I have to mention it, but I do not emphasize it that much or repeats that area many times. When I teach vocabulary, I use using guessing the meaning from the context as a strategy too much because we teach vocabulary items in reading classes and we have too many texts in this class. When I use this strategy student interact with it more and in my opinion, the usage of this strategy makes the meaning clear for the students and it becomes more understandable. The next strategy that I use it in teaching vocabulary from reading comprehension classes is using synonyms. Actually, this strategy is very practical because most of the time when there is a difficult word in the reading texts I give them a similar vocabulary or a synonym to make it clear. in my opinion, showing students the new vocabulary it in a sentence is very practical and useful. In the textbook there are too many exercise after each text we read. So, in order to do it successfully I divide students into several groups and use mechanical techniques flashcards. The main aim of using this strategy is to bring entertainment to the class and in the meantime to effect students' memory, because when students act to make their groups win and guess the vocabulary that are written in the flashcards and acting by their classmates."

Researcher: Which of the techniques do you feel that students interact with more?

Teacher: Well, I love playing with them. In here, students love playing. Well, students from all of the world love playing, but here it is definitely they get very comparative, and that helps me to engage the weakest students, those students who otherwise do not participate if there is a game a competition all want to participate and they all want to do their best. It is embarrassing if they do not do well and the team loses a point they try to do their best because of other team members. It is not only entertainment it is also steam spirit when other students or other team members cheat on them they want to do their best because if they do not the team will lose a point and that is important. Here it is also important because people have a strong community feeling you know community sense. So where there is a team, then they are more likely to make their best for themselves.

Researcher: What do you do when a student asks you about the meaning of a new word?

Teacher: Well, I either provide a definition, or I provide examples. With my Russian students, the definition works better. Here examples work better than the definition I notice that. Well, sometimes it could be a picture or an object so just showing them the word in action. Yeah, that is another approach.

Researcher: What type of information do you provide students about new words?

Teacher: It depends on many factors, it depends on the level of students, and it depends on the purpose of the class I am teaching writing as well. So if it is writing class, of course, I have to mention whether this word can be used in writing or not because there are lots of informal words that we usually do not recommend them in writing. And in the reading class, of course, it is important to provide meaning, parts of speech and spelling as well.

9. Do you use texts out of the reading textbook? If so, what type of these texts?

Yes, of course. This reading from my latest, I have chosen a book that was compiled by American broadcast corporation. So it was publication and transcription of their materials. I just wanted the texts to be interesting and to be contemporary. I do not like using old textbooks with the text that do not reflect reality nowadays. So I want the text to connect reality nowadays. It is also important for the student to learn something new from the text.

Researcher: Do you test the students' knowledge of vocabulary? How?

Teacher: I will do, of course. Fill in spaces that would be the easiest way to check, and this is something that we always do in the exams. So they must understand the format. Well, multiple choices all these types of exercise that are done in the class will be repeated by in different ways.

Teaching vocabulary learning strategies

Reacher: Do you teach students how to deal with unknown words in a text? If so, what are the strategies that you teach them? Which one you think is more useful? Why?

Teacher: Yes, I do. Getting the meaning from the context is certainly something that we pay a lot of attention to it. Reading the sentences and if you do not get the meaning from the sentences, maybe look at the context that might help to understand the meaning of a word. Related words, another thing that they should always keep in mind. When they do not understand the word, look at it closely and see if they recognize any elements of the word. And then it easier to get the meaning. And of course, suffixes and prefixes that are used to in word formation and then meaning are also important.

Attitudes towards learning vocabulary through reading

Researcher: What do you think about learning vocabulary through reading? Why?

Teacher: I think reading is mostly about teaching vocabulary it not about only an integral part it is a substantial part of any reading course because they more words you know the easier it is to understand the text reading techniques are fine, but reading techniques will not work if you do not know enough words. At least most of the words, if you only know three words in the text there no reading techniques that will help to understand that text. It is imposable.

Researcher: What do you think about the reading textbooks that are used in terms of meeting the students' needs in learning vocabulary and their suitability for students' English level?

Teacher: Well, I think the textbook that I have chosen for this course is fine for the strong students. But for the weaker one is complicated. To make up for this, I use many videos, again to help students to understand what we're discussing to sort of watch their interest in the topic that we were discussing. However, yes, that real problem is groups here are large, and the students are not streamed into levels. Two major challenges we have the size of the group and diversity in terms of levels. We have to

keep in mind that we have elementary level up to advanced English speakers sitting in one classroom using one textbook and that we can call a challenge.

Researcher: What could make teaching vocabulary in reading courses more effective? Do you have any suggestions?

Teacher: Well, it always helps if you put words in context. Students need to learn words from the context, and they can use them from the context, not just learning just words without context. Without text, I do not think it is an appropriate approach if they learn words from a dictionary that is not working. So words are always or should always be taught and learnt in the context. Furthermore, it can be a context of a book, video, conversation whatever it is. So contextual approach I think that it is important to teach vocabulary. Also, it should be fun; those should be words that people using it know because the English language is developing, and some of the textbooks are updating. I was looking to some of the textbooks that people still use in the universities, and I was surprised that some words that I could not understand it then I looked them up and in this dictionary and I have discovered that is not matching students from the university.

Researcher: Does the existing course sufficient for the students to improve their vocabulary?

Teacher: Well, there is nothing ideal. So I think some of the words are very important for them to know. Others are less important, but again when it comes to vocabulary, it is difficult to say what is important and what is not, because people get in a different situation.

Researcher: Are students required to do reading activities outside the class?

Teacher: Well, I have asked my students to do reading outside the class whenever we have the reading part we do inside the class. Well, I have asked them a couple of times the strong students will do well, and the weakest students will do nothing they just jumped because the weaker student is, the more difficult is for him or for her to do the assignment. So in order to them to do it, they need to have very tangible those and the result should be tangible even if those are the words that I could check that is fine, but if that is the content of the text, they could get that in Kurdish.

Researcher: Are there anything else you want to tell me about teaching vocabulary?

Teacher: With learning vocabulary, it is very important to revise the vocabulary. So, I usually introduce new vocabulary, and we work to listen and understand it very well the words, but the next day when you come back to the same vocabulary student sometimes look at your face as they have heard for the first time that word, and they start to use it in a wrong way. So you need to explain how to use it and provide more examples. So it is concept revision, people tend to forget things, I sometimes give a test in the first semester, and they do well, or in the final exam they do well, but in the second semester I use the same word that did well in the second semester, and they don't remember it anymore. So it is a concept revision process, then it sleeps out of your memory.

Video recording

Researcher: You have just used videos, is there any link between the video and the text?

Teacher: Yes, well, see they read the text in the previous class, so I was not sure about how much they remember the context of the text because we only have the class once a week. So I just wanted to refresh their mind. I showed two short one-minute videos and asked them to match the content of those videos to the content of the text that we have in the reading. First of all, it is again going back to their interest in the subject that we discussed in the class. It also develops their lesson skill and also revising the materials that we discussed.

Researcher: Over here you give them time to do some activities, you do not give them as homework, so do you think it is essential to do it in the class or outside the class?

Teacher: Well, as I said in this particular case, which was guessing the meaning. The problem might be that many students will not do it properly, and some will just forget the material by the next class. It also about the structure of the class. It was supposed to be in the middle of the class. That was the only way to do this exercise.

Researcher: You asked students to guess the meaning and do not use a dictionary, why? Because the was supposed to get the meaning from the context not from the dictionary. This is the easiest thing to look up the meaning in the dictionary. The purpose of this exercise was for them to learn how to guess the meaning from the context. So, they read the sentence, and then they try to understand what the word means.

We have also matching exercise.

Yes, they love matching.

Researcher: You overcome the pronunciation, and also you asked them to repeat after you, do you think their pronunciation is improving in this way?

Teacher: Well, they do not do it at home so generally make them speak it is a challenge, especially when it comes to weak students they just being shy or lazy whatever reason is. Many girls shy and I have to stand next to them to speak in order to pronounce the word. I also teach pronunciation lesson, and even in my pronunciation lesson, I struggle with them. Sometimes, it is difficult for me to make students repeat after me, they do it all together, but when it comes to individual work, they just freeze.

Researcher: Over here, you gave them some example from the words that are matching some of the students give examples from the reality of the class, what do you think about it?

Teacher: Of course, it has an impact on the memory of the students and makes them remember. I was pleased about providing examples from the class. Well, that will help them to remember, and it also has a sort of educational effect. One thing, when I teach students whom to behave in the class other thing is students by themselves say that.

Researcher: There is another that I have noticed a student misunderstood the word enthusiastic what are you doing in this kind situation?

Teacher: Well, just providing examples that is what I meant when I said teaching vocabulary should always be in context because if you just know the word does not necessarily mean that you have been appropriately used. So, providing examples of correct usage that is important.

Teacher: We have a game which is charades. It is a European game. People do it at the parties.

Researcher: You emphasize the composition of the word; they were not having enough knowledge about it. I have noticed that. Do you think they still need to recall them the composition of the words?

Teacher: Well, those of them who know that they know those of them who do not know that it also remembers the word is noun or adjective will be a problem for them. This is also the issues of different levels of students within the same classrooms because if I decide to explain the difference between adjective and noun or noun and verbs, it will take me another class. Moreover, those students who know that have been taught that. So I cannot spend time by explaining the things that have been taught earlier, even those are basic things.

Researcher: Is it necessary to understand all the words?

Teacher: Well, when you read a text, the purpose is to understand the message and some of the words I used, and as functionally loaded as others there are words like keywords you have to know the meaning in order to understand the text appropriately. Others, I used as I mentioned mostly adjective you describe something like good looking that is understood. If you do not understand a couple of words in this list of the synonyms it is ok you can still get the message. So, there should be a priority. You have to understand the keywords the words that essential to get the meaning of the text, and when it comes to other words, it is not necessary to understand all of them.

Researcher: One of the students, his level is not high.

Teacher: Undercover, using physical sensation is working with the students of low-levels. It usually works with the little kids and those who are not very mature. They understand a thing in function, that is why in asked them to come to the board and do things because when they do things manually, they remember better than just watch it. It much easier for me to do it by myself but I ask them to come and do it because I want them to employ other sense as well not just intellectually but also physically sometimes it helps.

Researcher: What about if the size of the class is much less than you have, what are the strategy that you may use it in the class?

Teacher: Well, with the smaller classes it is easier to teach them it will be more discussion there will be more competitions not necessarily group competition here I use group competition, but when I was in Russia, I would typically use individual composition. We had a winner who did best. With younger learners, we do a lot of physical activities. For example, when I teach action verbs, I ask them to stand up and sit down or to fly whatever the verb I was teaching even in my grammar classes when I was teaching them the differences between state and action verbs I asked them to show me how they think like now show me how you go. So this kind of things, they understand between action and state verbs by doing things. There is something else, the level of the students that we have in this lesson is not matching the expectation of the teachers and standards of the universities if we compare to other universities. When I teach, I can find difficulties with students. For example, some of the students cannot understand the prescribed textbook and others have an excellent ability to understand. Moreover, some exercise is challenging for some of the students to handle it /SIC/.”

Researcher: Thanks for your time

Teacher: You are welcome.

Appendix F
Table of Codifications

The First Table

Code	Description	Number of participants	Examples from transcriptions
Awareness of learning vocabulary	Kurdish students were aware about the importance of vocabulary and emphasized the importance of learning vocabulary in English language.	25	<p>S1: "In my opinion, learning vocabulary is very important for students who is trying to learn English language because in order to be competent in English language you have to have a well-developed vocabulary knowledge."</p> <p>S7: "I think the learning vocabulary for a learner of English language is very essential because it relates to all skills of language like speaking, writing, reading, and listening as well. Once you develop your vocabulary competency, you will be able to speak, write, read and listen."</p>
Perception of using reading to improve vocabulary knowledge	Kurdish students believed that reading is one of the most effective ways of improving vocabulary knowledge	24	<p>S4: "I think practicing with the new words in the reading or while reading it makes you improve your English vocabulary. Moreover, I think learning new vocabulary through reading is one of the productive ways because, besides the meaning, we will learn too many things like synonyms parts of speech."</p> <p>S1: "I think it is one of the effective ways for a student to improve his, her level of vocabulary and at the same time reading skill."</p>
Having different levels	Kurdish student stated that students in the class are at various different levels	22	<p>S6: "One of the challenges that we encounter as a student in this class is the level of the students. All the students are not at the same level."</p> <p>S2: "We are all challenging from having a variety of levels. As we can see in the activities of the recorded class, all the students cannot participate because it is difficult for some of us and if they participate, they will not do it properly."</p>

Students' need and interest	Kurdish students reported that their teachers did not look at students' needs while selecting topics and texts for the purpose of teaching vocabulary knowledge in reading and comprehension classes.	20	<p>S4: "I think our teacher is not aware of our needs. Besides that, I do not like reading topics or texts that we have in our book."</p> <p>S6: "Our opinion and desires were not taking into consideration when our teacher chose reading texts. I think this is essential for us to read the text that we liked."</p> <p>S10: "Our teacher did not ask us if we liked the topic or the texts that we were reading it or not. I think It also affected to the students' participations and the exercises that we did in the class."</p> <p>S6: "I think topics of reading are fine, but if the teacher selected the topics by considering our ideas and desire that would be more effective."</p>
Recommendations for making teaching vocabulary knowledge more effective	Kurdish student revealed several recommendations for making teaching vocabulary knowledge more effective in reading and comprehension classes	16	<p>S4: "When it comes to teach vocabulary in the reading classes, our teacher brings fun through using some kind of strategies like grouping students in the class and make a competition. Or a game which we call it in our class Charades. I think it could be impressive if it uses to make vocabulary teaching successful in reading and comprehension classes."</p> <p>S8: "In my recommendation I recommend teaching vocabulary can be effective when a teacher uses strategies like guessing the word from contexts or explaining words from the sentences."</p>

The Second Table

Code	Description	No. of participants	Examples from transcriptions
The importance of vocabulary	Vocabulary is an important factor that is impossible for the students to read, write, communicate, and listen without having vocabulary knowledge.	5	<p>Teacher 1: “Well, it is one of the most important areas, because how can you speak if you don’t have enough words. so, yeah”</p> <p>Teacher 3: “It very clear that vocabulary plays an essential part, and without vocabulary, it is impossible to construct a sentence, and it is going to be impossible to communicate.”</p>
Reading is mostly about teaching vocabulary knowledge	Vocabulary instruction should be integrated into reading skill, because in this way students will be more familiar with the contextual meaning.	4	<p>Teacher 3: “Reading can be recognised as one of the best ways for learning vocabulary because by reading a text, so students can get more knowledge about the unknown words and besides the meaning, they will get extra information from the text.”</p> <p>Teacher 4: “I think reading is mostly about teaching vocabulary it is not only about an integral part it is a substantial part of any reading course because they more words you know the easier it is to understand the text.”</p>
There are students from elementary up to the advanced level.	This massive variation of competency levels made a challenge in teach vocabulary knowledge from the reading and comprehension class	4	<p>Teacher 5: “The level of the students that we have in this lesson is not matching the expectation of the teachers and standards of the universities if we compare to other universities. When I teach, I can find difficulties with students. For example, some of the students cannot understand the prescribed textbook and others have an excellent ability to understand. Moreover, some exercise is challenging for some of the students to handle it”</p> <p>Teacher 4: “Yeah, I think the textbook that I have chosen for this course is excellent for the strong students. However, this is for the weaker one is complicated. To make up for this, I use many videos, again to help students to understand what we are discussing to sort of watch their interest in the topic that we were discussing. However, yes, that real problem is the students are not streamed into levels.....yeah two major challenges we have are the size of the group and diversity in terms of levels. We have to keep in mind that we have elementary level up to advanced English speakers sitting in one classroom using one textbook and that we can call a challenge”</p>

<p>The selection of topics is done without asking about students' interests</p>	<p>EFL teachers did not mention the students' interests with respect to selecting reading texts.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Teacher 5: "In the prescribed textbook..... yeah I have chosen by myself, those stories which are useful and matching students' knowledge."</p> <p>Teacher 1: "Most of the time when I give them homework I will give them the texts that are related to nowadays reality and I choose by myself."</p>
<p>Recommendations for making teaching vocabulary knowledge more effective</p>	<p>EFL teachers provided recommendations for making the teaching of vocabulary knowledge during reading and comprehension classes more effective.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Teacher 2: "I think teaching vocabulary should not be only linked to the coursebook... do you know why because it should be beyond the textbook. The student should have a reading habit and its essential skill in the English language. I always suggest my student go for knowledge and it is not a limiter in one particular thing. Without using other sources, the target process of learning can be futile. Moreover, it also is in the hands of the teacher."</p> <p>Teacher 3: "So..... words are always or should always be taught and learnt in the context. Furthermore, it can be a context of a book, video, conversation whatever it is. So contextual approach I think that it is essential to teach vocabulary. Also, it should be fun; those should be words that people using it know because the English language is developing, and some of the textbooks are updating."</p>

The Third Table

Code	Description	No of participants	Examples from transcriptions
Guessing the meaning from the context	when they used this strategy, students understand the meaning of the unknown words easily	5	<p>Teacher4: “Guessing the meaning from the context is a crucial strategy for teaching vocabulary and I use it in my reading and comprehension classes. I ask students to guess the meaning of the new words from the texts when they ask the meaning of a new word. because students will encounter new words through texts so it is a useful strategy to learn new vocabulary items.”</p> <p>Teacher1: “One of the most useful strategies that I use is guessing the meaning from the contexts. The reason behind utilizing this strategy is making students go back to the contexts and check the meaning through it. Furthermore, in the prescribed textbook we have an exercise that requires students to guess the meaning from the context”.</p>
Using synonyms	Teacher used synonyms as a strategy allows students to learn a number of vocabulary items related to each other in aspects like meaning, form and usage. EFL teachers revealed that they use synonyms as a teaching strategy in different ways	4	<p>Teacher2: “Synonyms is another strategy that I use it in my classes for teaching vocabulary. When I give a similar word or a synonym of unknown words students more understand and I think it enriches number of vocabularies related to each other in all aspects like meaning, form, and usage.”</p> <p>Teacher5: I use this strategy in my teaching and it is very important. I use this strategy too much because we have too much texts in reading comprehension classes and whenever a student asks about meaning of a word I give them a synonym.”</p>
Placing new words into a context	EFL teachers reported that this strategy provides students with more than just the meaning of a word. Student learn how to use words in context	4	<p>Teacher3: “For teaching new words, I usually give example for students that includes new word because it helps students to understand the meaning and how to use it in a sentence.”</p> <p>Teacher5: “Another teaching strategy that I use to teach students unknown vocabularies is using vocabularies in sentences.”</p>
Using mechanical techniques	EFL teachers acknowledged that they used mechanical techniques like flashcards for vocabulary instruction.	3	<p>Teacher3: “I think using flashcards has it is own influence on teaching and learning vocabulary and it is a good technique for teachers to use it because when I use this strategy all the students want to participate even the low level students participate. So it is effective and very practical.”</p>

Repeating	The participants demonstrated that this strategy is vitally important because when students learn new words daily and they do not use and practice it repeatedly, they tend to forget.	2	Teacher4: “Sometimes for me as a teacher, after teaching vocabulary through flashcards I may repeat using those words that has been used from flashcards or going back to it over and over. I think this technique is very important because if students do not practice words that they learn daily they will forget it and this is not good.”
Using meme and gestures	The participant said that he used this technique to facilitate vocabulary learning for beginner or weak students.	1	Teacher3: “Among all the strategies that I referred there is one more that I usually use it is using meme and gestures. In my classes I have low level-students so sometimes making them understand a particular word is a challenge. One of the option can be using meme and gestures and when I teach them a word by using this strategy they are quite comfortable with it.

The Fourth Table

Code	Description	Number of participants	Examples from transcriptions
Using new words in a context	Kurdish students emphasised the importance of this strategy and illustrated that this strategy helps them to understand the meaning of the new vocabulary items	25	Student 3: "When I learn a new word, I like to start using it in many other sentences." Students 8: "One of the strategies that I employ it for myself to remember new words is using in the new words in several sentences."
Guessing the meaning from the context	Students employed this strategy for learning new lexical words because they encounter new words in texts during reading and comprehension classes and using this strategy is helpful.	20	Student 10: "For me I most of the time use guessing the meaning from the context because it helps me to understand the meaning of the new words easily." Student 8: "Most of the time when there is a text I will guess the meaning from it." Student 2: "I attempt to understand the meaning of the vocabularies through the text. Definitely, I try to understand the context because for example, in exams I would not be able to employ a dictionary, so, therefore, I think guessing the meaning from context is a useful and benefits strategy(SIC)."
Using a dictionary	The main reason given for using a dictionary during the stimulated recall session was that it is fast and easy to employ and therefore appears to save time	18	Student 3: "Of course when I fail to guess the meaning from the text I directly go back to the dictionary." Student 9: "One of the strategies that are easy and fast is using a dictionary."
Grouping new words	Participants raised that when they encountered new words from the textbook, or when their teachers used a word while teaching, they would sort words into a group.	14	Student 11: "For myself, I use sometimes grouping new words to remember." Student 2: "I use grouping new words as a strategy and it has an effect on my recollection."
Repeating the words with their meanings.	students reported that they repeated writing words with the meaning for retention.	12	Student 5: "Among all the strategies that I mentioned I use another strategy which is repetition. I always repeat new words either in writing it with their meanings or using it in conversations."
Taking notes	Students argued that note-taking was an effective strategy for remembering vital information related to lexical items.	10	Student 5: "I think when teachers explain certain words in the class I will write as a note. Therefore, when I go back to it I will recall easily." Student 6: "Sometimes when our teacher explains a particular word so she will provide some information about that word which will be significant for us too. So, in this case, taking notes is necessary."
Using physical response or sensation	Students used this strategy to explain the meaning of a new word to their classmates or their teachers	4	Student 8: "When I use physical action it makes the other person who listens to me understand what I'm trying to say or explain." Student10: "When I explain the meaning of a word to my classmates and teachers, I use physical action."

Appendix G

The Ethical Approval Form



YAKIN DOĐU ÜNİVERSİTESİ

BİLİMSEL ARAŐTIRMALAR ETİK KURULU

24.04.2020

Dear Bestoon Saleh Ali Haruty

Your application titled “**Investigating Vocabulary Teaching and Learning Through Stimulated-Recall Method (A Case Study)**” with the application number YDÜ/EB/2020/472 has been evaluated by the Scientific Research Ethics Committee and granted approval. You can start your research on the condition that you will abide by the information provided in your application form.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Direnç Kanol

Rapporteur of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee

Direnç Kanol

Note:If you need to provide an official letter to an institution with the signature of the Head of NEU Scientific Research Ethics Committee, please apply to the secretariat of the ethics committee by showing this document.

Appendix H
The Links of Stimulated Recording Videos

1. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1d2apyXRBRGdGznX3h9vnphgySnUgWoc-/view?usp=sharing>
2. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1k1PjsCq6h_auBJedrsqXTwL7xRUE7WrH/view?usp=sharing
3. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZWPAObuePIjlygBhwn3qUA6_wKl387o/view?usp=sharing
4. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZPpDhVbov0NGyHfYGO1m7vpew-pcYd4v/view?usp=sharing>
5. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZwoPcAHJiqAZNKYIvpIrDgPFMF2aUsk_/view?usp=sharing
6. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BXINL52AmG_ASVLMxjqKsqUilBCbxhfM/view?usp=sharing
7. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tqvoX9Q5clTCbpb-g0uUBbTWnORSYhcQ/view?usp=sharing>

Appendix I

Turnitin Similarity Report

11 %	9 %	5 %	%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	docs.neu.edu.tr Internet Source	1 %
2	etheses.dur.ac.uk Internet Source	1 %
3	files.eric.ed.gov Internet Source	1 %
4	Hanoi University Publication	1 %
5	clock.uclan.ac.uk Internet Source	<1 %
