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Submitted by:

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Using vocabulary notebooks to foster English as a foreign language learners' vocabulary acquisition.

The Case of First-Year Students at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra.

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Declaration

I, MANSEUR Oumaima, hereby declare that the work I am going to present is my own, and has not been already accepted in substance for any degree.

This work was carried out and completed at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra.

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Dedication

To the memory of my grandfathers "**BOUBIDI Mohamed El-Madani**" and "**Manseur Saïd**"

To My beloved parents "**BOUBIDI Malika**" and "**MANSEUR Houd**"

To my second mother **Saïda**

To my sisters **Asma** and **Aroua** and my brother **Oussama**

To my grandmothers and all my aunts and uncles,

I dedicate this humble work and I sincerely say to all of them "**thank you very much**"

Acknowledgements

Abstract

The present study aims at exploring the effectiveness of keeping a notebook on fostering students' vocabulary acquisition. Students' perspectives dictate that lessons are only learned to pass exams despite students' desires to develop their vocabulary acquisition among other aspects. The lack of using notebooks as a technique to enrich vocabulary inspired us to hypothesize that notebook keeping may indeed be an effective strategy that can positively affect EFL learners' vocabulary abilities as well as breaking some barriers that hinder the amelioration of students' vocabulary level. A qualitative study was carried out utilizing an online questionnaire administered to first-year students of English at the Field of English at Biskra's University. Later, the obtained results were analyzed and interpreted to present the research findings; they confirmed that using notebooks serve students' language fluency, accuracy and expressing oneself when talking. Then, some recommendations are suggested in order to raise teachers' awareness about the benefits of encouraging their students to keep a notebook while learning as a means of bettering of vocabulary acquisition, for example, teachers ought to devote more sessions to teach vocabulary and to foster note-taking to learn vocabulary.

Keywords: *vocabulary acquisition, notebook keeping, first-year students, UMK.*

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FLL: Foreign Language Learning

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

LMD: License Master Doctorate

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Learning a foreign language is one of the interestingly important habits one can form. To be a successful learner, it is commendable to have a rich package of vocabulary. Struggling with finding the right words when speaking is quite common among English as a foreign language (EFL) classes; for that, many techniques can be assigned in order to enrich students' vocabulary. This study was carried out to investigate one of them, which is using a notebook while learning a new language. Furthermore, this work seeks to show to what extent the use of this technique helps in acquiring new vocabulary.

Statement of the Problem

Due to the fact that the Algerian educational community immensely suffers when it comes to learning English, vocabulary should be given importance among other English learning features since it is included in managing the four skills. Noticeably and for many reasons, EFL learners shortly communicate because they lack the appropriate vocabulary.

Vocabulary is essential in learning any language; having any struggle with that is a problem. Overcoming this problem could not be achieved unless several effective techniques can be utilized. Each learner chooses the most suitable one according to his/her needs. Using notebooks is what this study suggests as a remedy to improve vocabulary acquisition for its accessibility compared to other techniques.

Significance of the Study

Regarding the problems EFL Learners face in developing their communication, the current study is carried out to delve into the importance of acquiring vocabulary as a tool to gain better qualification learners need in order to upgrade their competencies. Also, this study is meant to give credit to notebooks as a credible technique that proves its usefulness in enhancing EFL learners' lexicon proficiency.

Aims of the Study

This work seeks to show how notebooks can be used to foster EFL learners' acquisition of vocabulary.

The focus of this study would be on:

1- The importance of learning vocabulary to communicate better in English.
2- The usefulness of keeping notebooks with learners while studying as a tool to improve EFL learners' overall lexis acquirement.

Research Questions

The current study relies on the following questions:

1- Why is vocabulary considered an essential feature in learning English?
2- What are the benefits of the use of notebooks in EFL classes?
3- To what degree does using notebooks help to foster EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition?

Hypothesis

As a reply to the previous questions, we hypothesize that among several practices, using notebooks may be one of the techniques that EFL learners use to help them acquire vocabulary.

Methodology

The research methods

In the present study, two variables are interrelated. The independent variable is notebooks, and the dependent one is EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition ability. Our study will be descriptive research that calls for a qualitative method.

Research instrument

According to the nature of this study, the instrument that is to be used to accomplish this work will be a questionnaire for students. This questionnaire seems to be necessary for collecting data.

Population

The population chosen to work on through this research is first-year students of English at Biskra's University.

Sample of the Study

To follow up on this work, we have decided to choose respondents among students from the same section. The sample of this study will include 35 out of the population of approximately 417 students of the first year.

Delimitation of the Study

Several delimitations hinder this study, and they are as follows:

- Because the data collection is restricted to only one group among the whole population, the results cannot be generalized within that population.

- The limited duration of the study affects the study noticeably.

- The present study depends mostly on the qualitative methodology of data collection and is, therefore, restrictive. However, more of the quantitative methods of data collection should be undertaken to provide a broader perspective.

Structure of the Dissertation

The current work is deliberately divided into two connected parts: One is theoretical, the other is practical.

The theoretical part is made up of two chapters. Chapter one is solely devoted to the vocabulary, in which we focused on its definition, importance, and teaching it.

Chapter two tackles vocabulary notebooks, within which we discuss its description, usage, and different advantages.

The practical part has only one chapter that is designed for the analysis of the data collected through the questionnaire. This chapter aims to answer the research questions by confirming or disconfirming the research hypothesis. Then, it concludes with the interpretation of the results of this research.

CHAPTER ONE: Vocabulary

Introduction

Vocabulary is a significant component in foreign language learning (FLL), although it is sometimes seen as a tiresome and a difficult task to teach. Language students tend to be asked to master the language structure first, and then begin to fill their lexicon banks. Traditionally, vocabulary development was seen as an additional activity; however, it is now considered a significant element in language proficiency as it forms the basis of students' ability to read, write, listen and speak. Even though there is not a limit of word count that determines whether second-language speakers use the language effectively, it is easy to say that those who have a rich vocabulary tend to express their thoughts quite articulately and in a native-like manner rather than those who only master the structure part of the language. This chapter will tackle the following main components: Definitions of vocabulary, its importance and development, its kinds and acquisition, its learning and teaching processes, and its difficulties.

Definitions of Vocabulary

Due to the importance of vocabulary in the process of learning and teaching a second language, it is crucial to know what it is, its development, its significance, and its acquisition process.

Briefly, a word is defined as a sound or sound combination, or its writing or printing representation that symbolizes and communicates a meaning. To master a word implies not

only learning its meaning but learning its register, association, collocation, grammatical

behavior, written form, spoken form, and frequency as well (He, 2010, p. 11).

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (2003) defines vocabulary as follows:

> The word vocabulary is primarily associated with the number of words
> that a person knows; one has either a large or a small vocabulary. But the
> word has many shades of meaning and is nicely representative of the
> nuanced and multi-hued nature of so much of the English lexicon.
> Vocabulary may indeed refer to the collection of words known by an
> individual or by a large group of people. It may also signify the body of
> specialized terms in a field of study or activity ("the vocabulary of
> science"). It may designate a physical object, such as a book, in which a
> collection of (usually alphabetized) words is defined or explained. And it
> may name things other than words, such as "a list or collection of terms
> or codes available for use," "a set or list of nonverbal symbols" (such as
> marine alphabet flag signals), and "a set of expressive forms used in an
> art" (as in "the vocabulary of dance").

Kinds of Vocabulary

Some scientists divide vocabulary into two main sorts: active and passive vocabulary.

Harmer (1991) made a clear difference between these two types of vocabulary. The first

type of vocabulary refers to what the students have been taught and what they are expected

to be able to use. Meanwhile, the second one refers to the words which the students will recognize the moment they meet them, but which they will probably not be able to pronounce. Haycraft, quoted by Hatch and Brown (1995), indicated two kinds of vocabulary, namely receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary (Alqahtani, 2015, p. 25).

Receptive Vocabulary

Receptive vocabulary is a set of words that students recognize and understand when they are used in context, but which they are unable to produce. It is vocabulary that students recognize when reading a text but do not use when speaking and writing (Webb, 2009, pp. 33–52). For example, a child can follow several instructions given in a language which she or he is used to even if she or he does not speak or write this language.

Productive Vocabulary

Productive vocabulary is the words that the students understand and are able to pronounce correctly and use constructively in speaking and writing. It involves what is required for receptive vocabulary plus the ability to speak or write at the appropriate time. Thus, productive vocabulary can be addressed as an active process, because the students can produce the words to express their thoughts to others (Webb, 2005, pp. 360-376).

Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary development is a process of acquiring new words to be used in daily life, and more importantly, the basis for learning any language. Vocabulary development is

geared towards helping students learn the meaning of new words and concepts in different contexts and across all fields of academic content. Teaching students to enhance their vocabulary means offering direct instructions on essential words from a text and teaching students strategies to help them grasp word meaning. It is crucial for both oral and written vocabulary development to increase as students get older in order to enable them to comprehend more complex texts (Loftus & Coyne, 2013, pp. 4-19).

The importance of Vocabulary

As stated by Alqahtani (2015), the vital role of vocabulary has long been established in second language acquisition/learning. Schmitt (2000, p. 55) said that "Lexical knowledge is central to communicative competence and the acquisition of a second language." (pp. 21-34)

According to Huckin (1995), the prominent importance of vocabulary manifests itself in the successful students who possess a great deal of vocabulary, which leads them to communicate better. Research has shown that second language readers rely heavily on vocabulary knowledge, and the lack of that knowledge is the main and the most significant obstacle for L2 readers to overcome. (Alqahtani, 2015, p. 22)

Wilkins (1972) said that ". . . while without grammar, very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (pp. 111–112).

Vocabulary Acquisition

Most developmental psycholinguistics has concentrated on what occurs in the first five years of life, perhaps because the most significant difficulties are faced during that time. One result is that there has been little research on vocabulary acquisition in late childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Quantitatively, individuals usually learn a significant number of words during late high school years. Many different sources make it possible to acquire several words either incidentally or through instruction: school activities, reading books, the Internet, cinema, television, radio, and interaction with peers. Qualitatively, the vocabulary becomes more noticed (Berman, 2007): it uses longer, more formal, and less frequent words, which often have a highly specialized meaning. In addition, increased use is made of derivational morphology: more words are formed with the help of affixes and compounding (e.g., *un-grateful-ness*). Students, then, start shifting from using slang to using a more sophisticated lexicon. In parallel with these changes in vocabulary use, other aspects of language also develop considerably: critical thinking and use of analogies. This evolution continues well into adulthood, at least with educated individuals (as stated in Gobet, 2015, p. 13).

Vocabulary acquisition is a necessary part of the communication of meaning (Wilkins, 1972) and of mastering a language (Schmitt, Instructed Second-language Vocabulary Learning, 2008).

Furthermore, as stated by Mediha and Enisa (2014), communication cannot happen without having enough vocabulary. Therefore, there is a need to empower students with strategies that allow them to extend their word knowledge. Training students to use

vocabulary strategies can help them to make decisions about their use and can also help them become more autonomous by having them decide on the strategies to be used (Pérez & Alvira, 2017, p. 104).

Vocabulary Learning

To learn any language, students should pay more attention to learning vocabulary as much as they do to learning grammar.

Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Studies of the vocabulary-learning strategies used by second or foreign language students have shown that they differ in the range of strategies they use and in the effectiveness with which they apply (Moir & Nation, 2002, p. 15). There are three main strategies:

Planning

Students should know what their vocabulary goals are and choose what vocabulary to focus on in terms of their selected goals. What is more, students should also have a specific and clear plan to decide which vocabulary to focus on and where to find it. While learning vocabulary, choosing certain aspects of a word (usually meaning but for listening and writing, the form of a word is also necessary to pay attention to) to focus on and using different strategies can make the learning process more efficient (He, 2010, p. 15).

Sources

To deal with new vocabulary when it occurs and to learn new and unfamiliar vocabulary, students have to be able to obtain information about the words. Analyzing a word's parts is a useful strategy because being familiar with the stems and affixes can provide useful for seeing relations between connected words, checking guesses from context, reinforcing links between form and meaning, and in some cases deducing the meaning of a word. Meanwhile, a careful analysis of reference sources properly and the use of parallels can also be helpful in vocabulary acquisition (He, 2010, p. 15).

Processes

The establishment of vocabulary knowledge is a process. It includes methods of remembering and making vocabulary available for use. Noticing is a commonly used way of recording vocabulary, and it can be a constructive first step towards more complex processing of words. The act of retrieving strengthens the connection between the trigger and the retrieved knowledge; it is superior to noticing. Generating is the production of the word. It is the further step of the learning process (He, 2010, p. 16).

The Goals of Vocabulary Learning

Every language aspect has goals; thus, vocabulary learning goals should include:

- The learning of useful vocabulary which relates to the students' language learning goals such as learning English for academic study, for social uses, or for specific purposes such, as reading newspapers or watching TV;

- Retaining the learned information so that the vocabulary knowledge remains available after the course ends, and

- Making the vocabulary available for meaning-focused receptive and productive use (Moir & Nation, 2002, p. 16).

Approaches to Vocabulary Learning

According to Moir and Nation (2002), there are three main steps that students can take to learn vocabulary:

Selection of words

Most students focus on words written in their textbooks when they are asked to select difficult words, for they want to achieve better academically. Few students select words because of specific personal interest, although they believe the words chosen to be of limited use to them personally. (p. 22)

Aspects of words knowledge

Most students are more interested in meaning than any other word knowledge, and many of the students believe that a first language (L1) translation of words is enough to help them use words effectively. Several of them lack interest in more profound word knowledge, stating that aspects of word knowledge such as, collocations and word family are learned only to meet course requirements. (pp. 22-23)

Learning and memorizing words

When learning new words, most students rely on memorization more than other learning strategies, although they are aware of other effective ones. Their goal is usually embedded in their desire to pass a weekly test, for example, instead of a long-term enrichment of their vocabulary set. (pp. 23-24)

Revision of words

Only a few students succeed in revising newly learned words after a test. Most of them expect teachers to allocate time to help them revise and develop their vocabulary. (p. 24)

Self-evaluation and monitoring

Several students commented that the words were not useful or relevant to their own lives. Others complained that they could not use the words even though they had the most control over the selection of these words. (pp. 25-26)

Teaching Vocabulary

Teaching vocabulary is a crucial aspect of learning a language as languages are based on words (Alqahtani, 2015, p. 24).

Vocabulary learning has always focused on a word's definition. It is now known that acquiring new words involves much more. Each word has many aspects that help students comprehend it. To teach vocabulary, teachers should bear in mind the following:

What to Teach

McCarten (2007) said that teachers' choice of texts might affect which words they will include in their materials and which meanings of those words they will teach. Most students in English courses prioritize learning to speak, so they expect teachers to base the syllabus on the speaking skill. Many students also have to write in English, especially for examinations, so again it makes sense to look at texts students will have to write. Therefore, what can we learn from any text about vocabulary? Essentially it can tell us about:

- **Frequency:** is about which words are common and which ones are uncommon or rare.

- **Differences in speaking and writing:** is about which vocabulary is spoken more often and which is composed more often.

- **Contexts of use:** is about the cases in which people use particular vocabulary.

- **Collocation:** is about what word is used with which word.

- **Grammatical patterns:** is about how words and grammar are merged to form certain patterns.

- **Strategic use of vocabulary:** is about which words and expressions are used to order and manage discourse. (p. 3)

Techniques Used in Teaching Vocabulary

According to Uzun (2013), more than fifty sub-strategies are comprising the proposed taxonomies, such as 'analyzing parts of speech,' 'guessing meaning from context,' 'asking

classmates for meaning,' 'interacting with native speakers,' 'imaging word form,' 'using keyword method,' 'verbal repetition,' 'keeping a vocabulary notebook,' and 'expanding rehearsal.' (p. 1)

Teachers can use several techniques to teach vocabulary. Teachers can combine more than one method, instead of employing one single technique. Takač and Singleton (2008) stated that techniques used by teachers are determined by some factors such as, the content, time availability, and its value for the students. (p. 19)

The following are some techniques to teach vocabulary, as stated by Brewster, Ellis, and Girard (1992), as mentioned in (Alqahtani, 2015):

- **Using Objects**

This technique includes the use of audio-visual aids and demonstration. They help students to remember vocabulary better, as humans' memory for objects and pictures is highly reliable, and visual strategies can act as signs to remember words. (p. 26)

- **Drawing**

Teachers can either draw objects on the blackboard or on flashcards. If the cards are made of plastic, they can be reused multiple times in different contexts. They can help young students to understand and absorb the key points, which they have learned in the classroom. (p. 27)

- **Using Illustrations and Pictures**

Pictures stimulate students' prior knowledge and link it to the new information, and help them learn new words in the process. There are plenty of words which can be incorporated using pictures or illustrations. They can be reliable means of clarifying the context of unclear words. The photo list includes posters, flashcards, wall charts, magazine pictures, board drawings, photographs, and stick figures. Photos for the teaching of vocabulary come from many sources.

They are collections of vibrant pictures intended for classrooms apart from those created by the teacher or students. Pictures extracted from magazines and newspapers are also beneficial. In addition, vocabulary books and course books nowadays contain a large number of attractive pictures illustrating the meaning of the essential words. The instructor can use the school's learning materials. They may also make their own visual aids, or use magazine images. (p. 27)

- **Contrast**

Many words are easily explained to students by comparing them with their opposite, such as, the word "right" in comparison to the word "wrong." Nevertheless, some words are not. Contrasting the terms whose opposite is gradable, is almost difficult. When the term "white" is contrasted with the word "black," there is the word "gray'' in between. Moreover, the word "contrast" means displaying a difference, like the pictures illustrating how much weight someone gained by comparing the images of "before" and "after." (p. 27)

- **Enumeration**

An enumeration is a set of objects that represents a complete, organized list of all of the items in that collection. It helps when words can be challenging to explain visually. Teachers may say "clothes" and explain the word by mentioning or describing different items such as, trousers, skirts, or shirts. (p. 28)

- **Mime, Expressions, and Gestures**

Mime and gesture, as suggested by Klippel (2004), are helpful if they stress the importance of gestures and facial expressions on communication. In general, they can be used not only to indicate the meaning of a word found in reading text but also in speaking exercises as they focus mostly on communication. Many words can be explained through mime, expressions, and gestures. For example, adjectives: "angry," "tired," can be mimed. (p.28)

- **Guessing from Context**

To stimulate guessing in a written or spoken text, four elements should be available: the reader, the text, unknown words, and clues in the text, including some knowledge about guessing. If one of them is missing, it may affect the student's ability to guess. Furthermore, this technique encourages students to take risks and guess the meanings of words they do not know as much as possible. Walters (2004) stated that it would help them build up their self-esteem so that they can deduce the meanings of words when they are on their own. There are many hints, which students can use to establish meanings for themselves such

as, illustrations, the similarity of spelling or sound in the mother tongue, and general knowledge. (p.29)

- **Eliciting**

This technique is more motivating and enjoyable by actually providing a list of words for students to extract the meaning of the words. (p.29)

- **Translation**

Although translation does not create motivation for the students to think about word meaning (Cameron, 2001), in some situations, a translation could be useful for teachers. For instance, when dealing with accidental vocabulary (Thornbury, 2002), checking students' comprehension, and pointing out similarities or differences between first and second language, when these are likely to cause errors (Takač, 2008). This technique can save some time because several words always need to be translated. (p. 29)

Difficulties in Vocabulary

As stated by Rohmatillah (2014, p. 79), identifying the difficulties students face when learning a language is one of the first steps to teach vocabulary effectively. The following factors that affect learning or teaching vocabulary are what Thornbury (2004, p. 27) suggested:

- **Utterance (Pronunciation)**

It is more difficult for students to learn words they cannot pronounce. For example, "Otorhinolaryngology" and "Logorrhea" are hard to pronounce.

- **Spelling**

Errors of pronunciation are most likely the cause of misspelling and can contribute to a word's difficulty. Most English words do not follow specific spelling rules; therefore, words that contain silent letters are surely problematic: handsome, Wednesday, foreign, climb, listen, hour, etc.

- **Length and complexity**

Long words tend to be challenging to spell or pronounce. That, in return, affects their learnability. (e.g., antidisestablishmentarianism.)

- **Grammar**

Grammar, such as adding prefixes and suffixes to a particular word, is problematic when learning new words, for it adds to its word-complexity. For example, when "de" is added to "finite," it becomes "definite," so the suffix changed the word's meaning, and pronunciation.

- **Meaning**

Students confuse words that are close in meaning. For example, "make" and "do" are sometimes used interchangeably, but the difference between them is as follows: you make pizza and make an appointment, but you do the chores and do a questionnaire.

- **Word range, connotation, and idioms**

Words that have a wide range of meanings are more likely to be used in comparison with synonyms that have a narrower range. For example, the verb "put" has a broader range than the verbs "impose," "place," or "position," etc. A word's connotation in the English language is important. For instance, "propaganda" has a negative connotation compared to "publicity." On the other hand, the adjective "eccentric" does not have a negative connotation in English. Still, it might mean "deviant" in other languages, which is a negative interpretation of the word. Finally, idioms like "cry over spilled milk" will generally be harder to understand than words whose meaning is clear, like "complain."

Conclusion

Vocabulary, as mentioned previously, is a fundamental element in speaking, reading, listening, or writing a language. Therefore, when learning any foreign language, students nowadays would tend to focus more on learning vocabulary than other language elements. In order for them to do that, students try to rely on themselves or others by checking their dictionaries, by asking teachers and peers, or other techniques which students use all the time, even if they are unaware of these strategies in some cases. In fact, students need to realize that there is more to vocabulary learning than just to learn new words. It needs certain calculated steps and reformed techniques and approaches. Not only does learning vocabulary need immaculate methods, teaching it also needs to be thoroughly well considered. Teachers would need to bear in mind what exactly to teach and what techniques (like notebookd) they should use to aid their students to overcome certain difficulties.

CHAPTER TWO: Notebook

Introduction

Language is a substantial aspect of our lives. It is quite challenging to master a language, especially if one is an EFL student. While learning, it is crucial to write down all necessary information for a later revision session; therefore, students rely on the usage of notebooks to take their notes and write what they observe while attending their lectures. In the previous chapter, we tackled vocabulary, its types, acquisition, teaching and learning, its importance, and the difficulties that might face students when learning it. This chapter will be about note-taking, its methods in general, and its significance. In addition, it will tackle vocabulary notebooks in particular, including how to keep a notebook, the importance and role of its usage, and the difficulties of keeping it.

Note-taking

Students, freshmen more seniors, tend to think that taking notes is essential when attending their lectures/lessons, especially if teachers do not provide handouts. Piolat, Olive and Kellogg (2005, p. 291) defined note-taking as follows:

> "Note-taking occurs in frequent and various everyday life situations.
> To make purchases, to plan future events and activities, to study for
> examinations, to prepare a technical talk, to design a model in an
> industry, and to record the minutes of work meetings are a few
> examples. Furthermore, the reasons why individuals take notes are
> highly variable. Despite the diversity of contexts and intentions, all

note-taking entails recording information collected from one or several sources."

Note-taking is considered an activity tool students employ, which influences the relationship between the learning task and the learning outcomes (Weener, 1974, p. 3).

Methods of Note-taking

Staff (2018) mentioned that to effectively study, write a paper, or do a simple task like, revising vocabulary, taking concise, precise, clear, and understandable notes is an essential skill that students should have. The following list contains five primary methods to take notes:

The Cornell method

Walter Pauk created this technique in the 1940s at Cornell University, hence the naming. In a notebook, a student adds a small left-hand margin to the page. He takes notes in the bigger section, leaving a gap between each point. After class, the student reviews the jotted notes, adding a keyword in the left-hand margin for every significant bit of information. When revising, the student can cover his notes and use the cue word as a memory trigger. The aim is to be able to recall all the information that relates to the keyword. These keywords will also make it easier to identify and remember the concepts and ideas that you need for the task in hand.

My Cornell Notes

Cue Words, Key ideas	Your notes. Write all your notes here.

Summary of what you just learned.
This part is written last.

Figure 1: Cornell Method of Note-taking by (Staff, 2018)

The outlining method

The noting starts from general to specific by listing the main points closest to the left side of your page, like headers. The indentations show the relationship between the related points under it. This method may be either deductive (regular outline) or inductive (reverse outline where minor points start building to a major point). It allows you to see relevant points and their importance easily. However, it can be challenging to organize the notes in such order in a fast-paced lecture.

.

Figure 2: Outline Method of Note-taking by (Staff, 2018)

Outline

Shakespeare
- Playwright
  - 39 plays
  - Comedies
    - As You Like It
    - Much Ado About Nothing
  - Histories
    - English
      - King John
    - Roman
      - Julius Caesar
      - Antony and Cleopatra
  - Tragedies
    - Romeo and Juliet
    - Hamlet
- English
  - Born 1564 Strafford-upon-Avon

The mapping method

In a notebook, a student uses arrows to connect related ideas to a central main point. He can also use numbers and color-coding to develop an efficient mapping system. It creates a visual image of lectures and can help to recall information better.

Mapping Method

Shakespeare

3 Types of Plays

Comedy	History	Tragedy
- As You Like It	- Richard III	- Hamlet
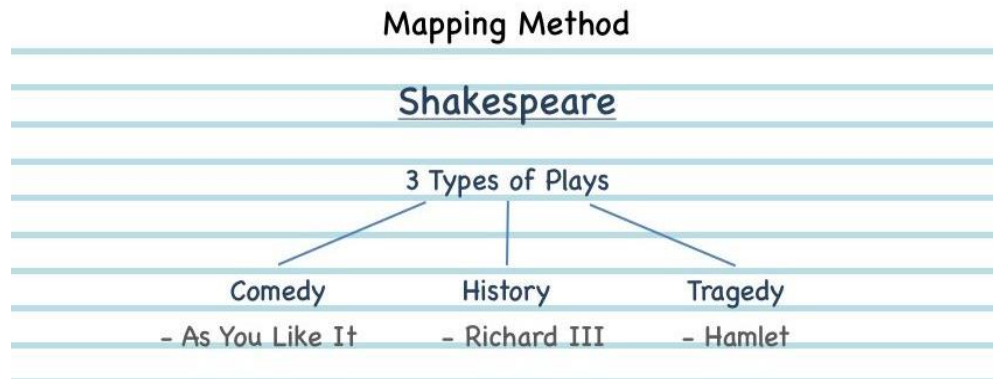
Figure 3: Mapping Method of Note-taking by (Staff, 2018)

The box and bullet method

Each idea is written in a drawn box. Under every one, there are supporting points that are written next to bullet points. This method draws the attention and focuses on the main ideas of the lectures.

Figure 4: Box and Bullet Method of Note-taking by (Staff, 2018)

My Notes

Title:
Author:

Central Idea 1:

-
-
-

Central Idea 2:

-
-
-
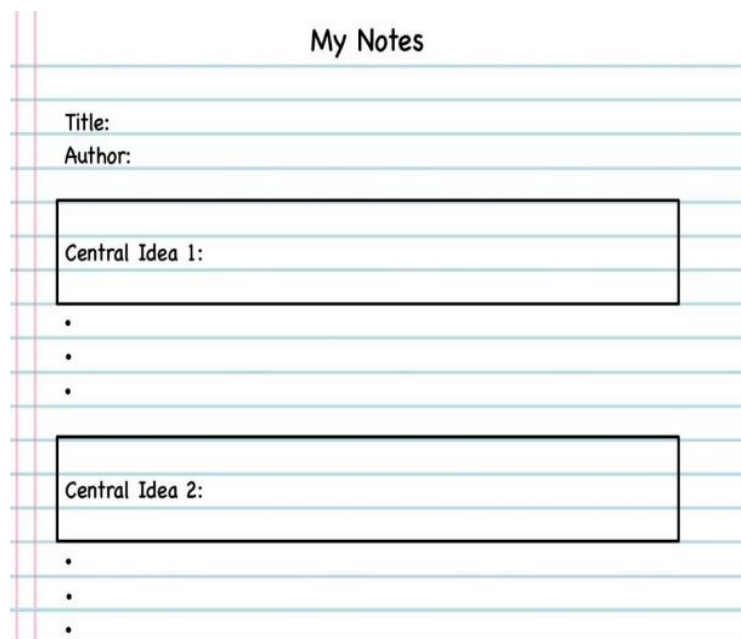
Note-taking Skills

Suritsky and Hughes (1991) proposed that note-taking includes four broad skills: listening, cognitive processing, writing the notes, and reviewing noted information. However, we will mention only listening skills and writing notes skills, for they serve the purpose of this study better. (p. 7-9)

Listening

Perhaps the difference between the concept of listening and the concept of the processing could be made visible by equating listening with paying attention. Unless the student is focusing his attention on what the instructor is saying at that moment, it is unlikely that meaningful processing and note-taking will occur. Even though it is challenging to maintain a decent amount of attention while attending a lecture, students who succeed in doing so get good results when taking notes.

Note-taking

Efficient note-taking leads to achieving reliable information. The efficiency of notes is defined by the conceptual points recorded and the number of words written. The literature is mixed on the efficacy of note-taking. At the very least, active note-taking appears to promote immediate recall of lecture information (Suritsky & Hughes, 1991).

Importance of Note-taking

The process of taking notes increases students' attention to a lecture and helps them to encode ideas understandably. The encoding process allows students to note associations, inferences, and personal grasping of the lecture (DiVesta & Gray, 1972). Kiewra (1985)

reviewed experimental research comparing the accomplishment of students who took notes with that of students who only listened to lectures but did not take notes. An analysis of 56 studies comparing note-taking and listening provided the following pattern: 33 studies showed that students who took notes had better achievement than those who only listened. Twenty-one revealed no difference between taking notes and listening, and two indicated that listening worked better than note-taking. These results seem to point out that the process of note-taking, more often than not, contributes to students' performance based on lecture content (as stated in Williams & Eggert, 2002, p. 181).

Vocabulary and Notebooks

Definitions of Vocabulary Notebook

As cited in (Alhatmi, 2019, p. 45), vocabulary notebook is defined as follows:

> "What is a 'Vocabulary Notebook'? Fowle (2002: 380) explains that a 'vocabulary notebook' is "a notebook kept by each learner specifically to record new and useful lexical items." Similarly, Dennison (2014: 55) notes that "a lexical notebook refers to any form of a personal dictionary used to record new or useful vocabulary and additional word information beyond a word's meaning." She further explains that "lexical notebooks can record word meanings, parts of speech, word forms, collocations, synonyms, antonyms, context sentences, semantics, and pronunciation (Dennison, ibid.: 56).

> Vocabulary notebooks are frequently advocated as a way for students to take control of their vocabulary learning (Fowle, 2002) with the added benefit of improvements in vocabulary learning (Schmitt and Schmitt, 1995; Laufer and Nation, 1999)."

Uzun (2013) stated that keeping a vocabulary notebook triggers a complex mental process to register words because, in a notebook, students jot down unfamiliar words while also writing their manner of usage and meaning, such as synonyms, antonyms, collocations, etc. (p. 2)

According to Schmitt (1995), keeping a vocabulary notebook, which is considered a personal dictionary, enables students to have a repeated extensive revision of vocabulary. It mainly contains different kinds of word knowledge for each jotted word. (p. 5)

How to Keep a Vocabulary Notebook

Schmitt and Schmitt (1995) suggested eleven principles from memory and language researches underlying how to keep vocabulary notebooks effectively. (pp. 134-137)

- Prior knowledge helps students remember new words.

- A practical word organization helps students better learn words.

- Teachers had better avoid teaching similar new words at the same time.

- Paired words (native and English words) might be used to learn many words in a short time.

- Knowing a word is more than understanding its meaning. It involves knowing its spelling, derivatives, pronunciation, morph syntax, collocations, and connotation.

- If a more profound mental process is used while learning a word, a student is more likely to remember it in the future.

- The manner a word is recalled shows the likelihood that a student will remember it again, for instance, by listing words on one side of a page and definitions on the other.

- Students must be aware of their own learning process to learn effectively.

- Words should be recycled to be learned.

- Expanding rehearsal is one of the effective recycling methods, like revising the newly acquired vocabulary soon after the first learning session.

- The learning process may differ because students have different individual learning styles. Notebooks allow for the flexibility of choosing one learning strategy over another.

Aside from the principles mentioned above, students use some vocabulary strategies while keeping vocabulary notebooks. To exemplify, students use some determination strategies to discover the meaning of unknown words like guessing meaning from the context. Moreover, students add some information regarding the synonyms and antonyms of unfamiliar words, which is an example of memory strategies.

The Role of Vocabulary Notebooks

Although there has been very little research about the role that notebooks play in teaching/learning vocabulary, teachers sometimes encourage their students to keep vocabulary notebooks for two main reasons—the primary purpose of keeping a notebook

while learning is to acquire vocabulary. The note-taking of vocabulary and the revisions

students do after lectures seem to lead to better vocabulary retention. The secondary aim is

to foster students' autonomy (Schmitt & Schmitt, 1995). It is often suggested that students

should choose the words for their notebooks independently. Unfortunately, the reasoning

behind letting all students select their own words remains unclear. According to Schmitt

and Schmitt, allowing students to choose the words they want to study matches the

suggestion that teachers should not be too prescriptive when teaching vocabulary. Other

authors argue that students should choose semi-familiar words to help receptive vocabulary

to become productive vocabulary.

Importance of Vocabulary Notebooks

Students who keep personal vocabulary notebooks often use retrieval strategies.

They cover up part of the entry to retrieve the word during study/review (Schmitt &

Schmitt, 1995). Using vocabulary notebooks in an organized manner can easily foster

students' independence. Even though materials such as a dictionary, textbook, teacher, or

peers could be used to evaluate new word meanings, the student should be able to

eventually grasp and develop word meanings on his own via the use of different vocabulary

learning strategies (D'Onofrio, 2009, p. 14).

As mentioned in (Zengin-Ünal, 2015), the benefits of using vocabulary notebooks lie in

the following:

- Teachers have an opportunity to check students' progress in vocabulary learning

  (Fowle, 2002).

- Vocabulary notebook activities help students improve their ability to implement new words in sentences in their daily or academic lives, in addition to relating these words with their antonyms or synonyms.

- Keeping vocabulary notebooks encourages autonomous learning as students become more aware of their learning process (Schmitt & Schmitt, 1995).

- Students have a chance to organize their vocabulary notebooks according to their preferences and remove some newly learned words; thus, they will be able to personalize their learning efficiently (Fowle, 2002). Eventually, they will be able to evaluate their learning progress. (p. 14)

Challenges of Keeping a Notebook

The findings of McCrostie's (2007) research show that students tend to dismiss certain parts of speech when acquiring vocabulary items. He describes a few pitfalls that EFL students encounter when they use notebooks to learn vocabulary:

- Vocabulary notebooks do not seem to help the students learn enough valuable and high frequency words.

- Another possible downfall is the heavy reliance on school/university textbooks for words. Most students studying EFL receive most of the language exposure in the classroom. Therefore, it is only expected that students drew words primarily from textbooks and handouts. However, an overwhelming majority of the words (82%) came from textbooks or handouts, and 48 students found 90% or more of their words in textbooks or handouts. Many textbooks may not be particularly effective

at selecting vocabulary, which raises teachers' concerns (Ljung, 1990; Carroll and Mordaunt). One researcher who examined textbooks designed for high school found that 204 of the 1,000 most frequent words in textbooks did match the 1,000 most frequent words in Birmingham Corpus (Ljung). Part of the reason for this contradiction is that textbook vocabulary tended to focus on concrete objects and acts and neglected vocabulary related to more abstract and mental processes.

- Additionally, to rely on textbooks, students chose, on average, a further 6.5% of words from other written sources. Choosing so many words from a limited variety of written sources is a concern because fluent listening and speaking require fewer and different words than reading and writing (Schmitt, 2000, p. 156). Thus, some teachers may want to spend class time explaining to students some of the skills and strategies that would enable them to become aware of their individualistic learning strategies and help them record vocabulary effectively from spoken texts. (p. 251)

Kinds of Notebooks

Other than the "traditional paper notebook" mentioned in this research, there is another main type of notebooks: digital ones.

Digital notebooks

Digital note-taking allows the user to make voice recordings in addition to written notes; it has shown effectiveness in science classrooms with students, who have or do not have learning difficulties, for (Horney, et al., 2009). It supports different learning needs and lessens the massive capacity of the students' cognition (Belson, 2013, p. 15).

The Relation between Vocabulary and Notebooks

Before concluding this chapter, we would like to highlight the relation and the effect of employing a notebook and when acquiring vocabulary in EFL classes. It is recommended, for further reading, to refer to some studies done by prominent researchers such as the writers of the following academic articles:

- Gallagher (2016) conducted a study that thoroughly discusses some reasons why vocabulary notebooks are necessary, how to notice and record vocabulary, how to organize your notebooks, and finally, how best to use them for revision – how to remember and reuse the vocabulary you learn.

- McCrostie (2007) undertook a study on 124 Japanese first-year students of English to determine the sources from which students select their vocabulary, the types of selected words, and the reason for this selection.

- Bozkurt (2007) conducted research on 60 Turkish university students of English. This research looks at the effectiveness of one particular vocabulary learning strategy, that of keeping a vocabulary notebook. In addition, the researcher adapted Schmitt and Schmitt's (1995) 4-week schedule of implementing vocabulary notebooks.

Conclusion

As seen above, note-taking seems to be a hinged part of the language learning process, especially in EFL classes. Learning a foreign language requires several techniques; one of them is writing any information that the students find necessary when attending a lecture/lesson. Note-taking and learning vocabulary go hand in hand especially in higher education courses, for the crucial part keeping a notebook plays in acquiring vocabulary. Using elaborate techniques to take notes not only helps students enhance their learning skills but also helps them retain new words. Hence, using a vocabulary notebook (a paper-backed or digital one) can assist in fostering vocabulary acquisition by helping students with their recalling of the noted information (vocabulary).

CHAPTER THREE: The Field Work

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the practical part of this study, which is conducted to know if students acquire vocabulary through using notebooks. Following the nature of this work, a questionnaire is administered for first-year students at the Field of English at Biskra's University in order to collect data. As a first step, the research design and methodology are introduced followed by research variables. After that, we will move to the population of the research. Secondly, the questionnaire's results will be described, analyzed and interpreted. Finally, they will be presented alongside the research findings, which are about the effect of keeping a notebook on EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition.

Design and Methodology

Many methods can be used for one single subject; however, to select one appropriate method over another, we should base our choice on its adequacy to the subject on the one hand. On the other hand, we have hypothesized that keeping a notebook would better enhance vocabulary acquisition. That is why we consider the descriptive method as the most suitable one.

Research Variables

This study tackles two research variables: The first variable is the independent variable, which is Notebook keeping. The second one is the dependent variable, which is vocabulary acquisition. The objective, through this study, is to represent the relationship between the two variables. In other words, we attempt to prove that keeping a notebook has a positive effect on learners' vocabulary acquisition.

Population

First-year students of English at the University of Biskra represent the whole population. We will deal with thirty-five (35) students chosen randomly out of the total population, which is about 417 students. The reason behind choosing first-year students is that they are more eager and diligent when it comes to bettering their language, especially vocabulary. Therefore, they will be more representative in conducting this study.

Description of the questionnaire

Generally, the questionnaire is the most widely used tool for obtaining more evidence and information on the research work in a short time. The questionnaire contains either multiple choices where the participants have to tick the best answer or fill blank answer spaces or justify their choices.

Students' questionnaire

The students' questionnaire is composed of twenty-three (23) questions and it consists of three (03) sections. The first section deals with students' "personal attitudes toward English." The second one deals with vocabulary, in other words, the problems that students face and the different activities that teachers might assign to overcome those problems. The third section is about the notebook. It contains questions about the classroom atmosphere and the types of activities that are used in the classroom to teach speaking skill. Furthermore, it provides general idea about the advantages of notebook keeping according to students' experiences and thoughts.

The administration of the questionnaire

As mentioned before, thirty-five (35) students were selected randomly for this study since it would be challenging to work with the whole population. The students were given some explanations and instructions before they complete the online questionnaire and it took the students 15-20 minutes to complete the questionnaire (according to them).

The Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

Part One: Personal Attitude toward English

Q1. For how long have you been studying English?

Answers	1 year	4 years	5 years	7 years	8 years	9 years	10 years	14 years	A long time
Numbers	10	02	02	03	11	03	02	01	01
Percentages	28.57%	5.71%	5.71%	8.57%	31.42%	8.57%	5.71%	2.85%	2.85%

Table 1: For how long have you been studying English?

Despite the variety of answers, we can see that most students (11) stated that they have been studying English for 8 years; some indicated that they have been since middle school. Ten students (28.57%) considered that their first year at university is the year they studied English properly, whereas three students said that they have been studying English for 9 years. A portion of 8.57% of them said that they have been studying English for 7 years. Few students said that they have been studying English for four, five, or ten years (5.71% each), while only two students stated that they have been studying English for either 14 years or for a longer time, with a total sum of 5.7%.

Q2. Rank the following language features from more important (1) to less important (4).

Options	Grammar	Phonetics	Vocabulary	Orthography
Numbers	14	06	13	02
Percentage s	40%	17.14%	37.14%	5.71%

Table 2: Rank the following language features from more important (1) to less important (4)

According to what is shown in table 2, the majority of the informants said that grammar and vocabulary should be given more importance. A percentage of 17.14% said that phonetics should be given more importance whereas only two students claimed that orthography is the skill to be given more importance. These results prove that all what the students want to be capable of is to learn the structure of the language and the words needed to form that structure.

Part Two: Vocabulary

Q3. How do you evaluate your vocabulary intake?

Options	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
Numbers	03	18	12	02
Percentages	8.57%	51.42%	34.28%	5.71%

Table 3: How do you evaluate your vocabulary intake?

It is noticed through table 3 above that most of the asked students (51.42%) have a good level of vocabulary intake, while 34.28% have an average one. Three students claimed that they have an excellent vocabulary intake. Only two students (5.71%) admitted they have a poor vocabulary intake. The obtained results show that the majority of students' vocabulary intake is good, which means that they are relatively confident in their level.

Q4. When learning vocabulary, do you mostly:

Options	Select the words you want to learn.	Ask the teacher to choose for you.	Both
Numbers	31	03	01
Percentages	88.57%	8.57%	2.85%

Table 4: When learning vocabulary, do you mostly

Table 4 shows that most students (88.57%) prefer to choose the words they want to learn, whereas a portion of 8.57% of them let the teacher decide for them. Only one person said that they choose both methods to learn words. These results can only mean that most students would prefer autonomy; they would like to acquire vocabulary based on their choices.

Q5. After learning new words, do you revise and use them daily?

Options	Yes	Sometimes	No
Numbers	12	21	02
Percentages	34.28%	60%	5.71%

Table 5: After learning new words, do you revise and use them daily?

Question 5 seeks to show whether students revise and use the learned words. The majority of informants (60%) sometimes revise and use the words they learned, whereas 34.28% of them confirmed that they always do. Only two students deny revising or using the words. Therefore, these results show that more than half students are diligently willing enough to revise the acquired vocabulary after the lessons end.

Q6. What are the most common barriers you may face when learning vocabulary?

Options	Unfamiliarity with words	Lack of confidence	Mother-tongue interference	Memory issues	All of them
Numbers	14	07	03	10	01
Percentages	40%	20%	8.57%	28.57%	2.85%

Table 6: What are the most common barriers you may face when learning vocabulary?

It is obvious that most of the students (14) are unfamiliar with words they are about to learn. Memory issues is the second chosen barrier (28.57%). Seven of the asked students (20%) revealed that they lack confidence when acquiring new words. Few students (3) found that first language interference affects their learning, whereas only one student chose all of the choices. These outcomes show that students are usually unfamiliar with words and might have difficulties remembering the already learned words. This assumes the necessity of keeping a notebook to jot down new words.

Q7. Do you find your teacher helpful to overcome the previous problems?

Options	Yes	No
Numbers	24	11
Percentages	68.57%	31.42%

Table 7: Do you find your teacher helpful to overcome the previous problems?

Generally, the teacher helps his/her students when they face difficulties or commit errors in the process of learning. A proportion of 66.67% of students find his/her teacher helpful to overcome the previously mentioned problems. This help has many aspects that the students mentioned when they were asked in **Q8.**

Q8. How teachers help overcome these barriers**:** According to students, teachers help by**:**

Methods	Students percentages

Correcting mistakes	14.51%
Motivating regardless of mistakes	11%
Using expressions to indicate the meaning of some words.	19.39%
Translating words into Arabic.	11.43%
Presenting word and spelling games.	7%
Referring to previous relevant lessons.	5.22%

Table 8: How teachers help overcome these barriers

Eleven students (31.42%) do not find his/her teacher helpful.

Q9. What activities does you teacher assign to help you practice learning vocabulary better?

Options	Language games	Open discussions	Presentations	Writing in a notebook	Other
Numbers	07	14	09	05	0
Percentages	20%	40%	25.71%	14.28%	00%

Table 9: What activities does you teacher assign to help you practice learning vocabulary better?

The results presented in Table 9 show that the mostly assigned activity is "open discussions" which was the choice of 40% of the respondents. It may be because it gives students more freedom to choose what to talk about based on their own vocabulary. Nine students (25.71%) picked "presentation" as the most assigned task to students to help them prepare. "Language games" came thirdly with a percentage of 20%. "Keeping a notebook" received the lowest proportion of 14.28%. These results mean that students are more comfortable speaking than they are writing.

Q10. Which of the previous activities do you prefer more?

Options	Language games	Open discussions	Presentations	Writing in a notebook
Numbers	10	13	07	05
Percentages	28.57%	37.14%	20%	14.28%

Table 10: Which of the previous activities do you prefer more?

Table 10 demonstrates which of the previous techniques is the most preferable. The highest percentage goes to "open discussions" with 37.14%. It is preferable because most students prefer to be free to choose which topics to discuss based on their vocabulary competence. Ten students (28.57%) prefer "Language games", while only 20% of them prefer "presentations". Once again, "Keeping a notebook" has the lowest portion of 14.28%. These results show that only few students are aware of the possible benefits of keeping a notebook in acquiring new set of vocabulary.

Q11. Reasons for choosing each technique

Technique	Reason
Language Games	• It helps with overcoming shyness. • It is funny and beneficial at the same time. • It is easy. • It helps with memory.
Open Discussion	• I feel like I can use my vocabulary without being limited to a specific topic. • It helps with gaining new knowledge. • One can freely express himself.
Presentations	• It builds self-confidence. • It develops research skills. • It allows more time to prepare. • It helps with vocabulary. • I like to stand before people.

Keeping a notebook	• When I write, I remember better • It is easily accessible. • It is a good reference to go back to when in need.

Table 11: Reasons for choosing each technique

It seems to the reader that "Presentation" should be classified as the most preferable technique due to the large number of reasons given by students. Actually, the ones who chose presentation gave a set of reasons unlike those who chose Notebook Keeping, Open Discussion and Language Games who were brief in listing their reasons. Moreover, the most common reasons for choosing any of the previous techniques are enjoying the sessions, building confidence, sharpening memory and developing fluency and vocabulary.

Q12. What other activities do you use to enhance your vocabulary acquisition?

Options	Watching movies/ TV series	Listening to Music	Listening to Podcasts/Radios	Talking to native speakers	Reading	All of them
Numbers	13	13	00	04	02	03
Percentages	37.14%	37.14%	00%	11.42%	5.71%	8.57%

Table 12: What other activities do you use to enhance your vocabulary acquisition?

As shown in Table 12, the number of students that chose "Watching movies/TV series" and "Listening to Music" is equal, (37.14%) for each. Four students (11.42%) talk to English native speakers, while three of them (8.57%) chose all of the activities aforementioned. Only two students suggested reading as their preferred activity to acquire vocabulary. No students chose solely "Listening to Podcasts/Radios". The obtained results indicate that most students prefer either watching or listening to authentic English materials to give them a sense of immersion in the target language.

Q13. Do you think that they are effective in the process of learning vocabulary?

Options	Yes	No
Numbers	34	01
Percentages	97.14%	2.85%

Table 13: Do you think that they are effective in the process of learning vocabulary?

Based on the percentages shown in Table 13, 97.14% of the students agree that the previously mentioned activities are effective in the process of learning vocabulary. Only one student disagree with the statement.

Part Three: Notebooks

Q14. When attending a lesson, how often do you take notes?

Options	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely
Numbers	10	09	13	03
Percentages	28.57%	25.71%	37.14%	8.57%

Table 14: When attending a lesson, how often do you take notes?

Question 14 seeks to help readers know how students take notes. The majority (37.14%) sometimes take notes when attending any lessons, whereas a portion of 28.57% of them ensure that they always take notes. Nine students (25.71%) said that they usually do, while only three claimed that they rarely write anything during class. These outcomes can mean that some students do not deem every information an important one.

Q15. Do you keep a notebook with you when learning vocabulary?

Options	Yes	No
Numbers	31	04
Percentages	88.57%	11.42%

Table 15: Do you keep a notebook with you when learning vocabulary?

As shown in Table 15, most of the students (88.57%) confirmed keeping a notebook with them when they learn vocabulary, while four of them denied that. The results indicate that these thirty-one students keep a notebook to write any new word they might forget.

Q16. If yes, how often?

Options	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely
Numbers	07	15	08	01
Percentages	22.58%	48.38%	25.80%	3.22%

Table 16: If yes, how often?

Table 16 demonstrates how often students who have a notebook actually use it to learn vocabulary. Out of the thirty-one students, it shows that approximately half of them (48.38%) usually use the notebook to learn vocabulary, whereas only eight students (25.80%) sometimes do. Seven students (22.58%) confirmed that they always keep the notebook with them to learn vocabulary, while only one of them said that they rarely use it. These results show that the majority of students have a vocabulary notebook but do not always use it.

Q17. Which type of notebooks do you use?

Options	Paper notebooks	Digital notebooks	Both
Numbers	19	11	01
Percentages	61.29%	35.48%	8.57%

Table 17: Which type of notebooks do you use?

Table 17 shows that nineteen of the asked students (61.29%) use "paper notebooks" to learn vocabulary, while eleven students (35.48%) prefer to use digital notebook such as applications on their phones. One student, however, liked to use them both in case one of them is unavailable for use. These results show that most students prefer to be old-fashioned when it comes to learning vocabulary by using paper notebooks, for it is more comfortable.

Q18. Reasons of effectiveness:

Type of notebooks	Reason of effectiveness
Paper notebooks	• I remember better when I write • I prefer to write with my hand. • It takes more effort to write which is more effective. • It is more comfortable. • It has my personal handwriting. • It does not have a battery I need to charge.
Digital notebooks	• It is easily accessible because I do not usually forget my phone. • Everyone is always on his/her phone, so it is easier write new words.
Both	• In case I forget my notebook, I can use my phone to write the words.

Table 18: Reasons of effectiveness

Students who chose "Digital Notebooks" gave few reasons, such as it being easily accessed. By looking at the other reasons, it is obvious that the majority of the students are

biased towards "Paper Notebooks." Furthermore, the most common reasons are: it is personal to each individual, it is comfortable and it helps to remember words easier.

Q19. How much does your attention in class help in learning/acquiring vocabulary?

Options	Very much	To a certain degree	Not much
Numbers	09	22	04
Percentages	25.71%	62.85%	11.42%

Table 19: How much does your attention in class help in learning/acquiring vocabulary?

In Table 19, twenty-two students (62.85%) find that paying attention during lessons somehow helps them acquire vocabulary. A portion of 25.71% of students find it very helpful, whereas 11.42% do not find it helpful very much. The results indicate that most students actively learn vocabulary by paying attentions during sessions.

Q20. Is having a notebook helpful in remembering new words?

Options	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Not helpful
Numbers	24	06	01
Percentages	77.41%	19.35%	2.85%

Table 20: Is having a notebook helpful in remembering new words?

As indicated in Table 20 above, 77.41% of students find keeping a notebook very helpful in remembering new vocabulary. Six students (19.35%) stated that is somewhat helpful, while only one students said it is not helpful at all. These results confirm the previous reasons given by students about keeping a notebook in helping with memorizing new acquired words.

Q21. To what degree do you think keeping a notebook affects your language fluency?

Options	Very much	To some extent	Not much
Numbers	17	15	03
Percentages	48.57%	42.85%	8.57%

Table 21: To what degree do you think keeping a notebook affects your language fluency?

As the readers can see in Table 21, the two highest percentages about the effectiveness of keeping a notebook on language fluency are 48.57% for "very much" and 42.85% for "to some extent." Only three students thought it unhelpful for language fluency. The results indicate that the majority of students think that notebooks have a positive effect on language fluency.

Q22. In your opinion, can language accuracy be developed through notebook keeping?

Options	Yes	Maybe	No
Numbers	10	21	04
Percentages	28.57%	60%	11.42%

Table 22: In your opinion, can language accuracy be developed through notebook keeping?

According to the previously shown Table 22, twenty-one students (60%) stated that notebook keeping could maybe develop language accuracy. Ten students (28.57%) confirmed that, in their opinion, language accuracy could indeed be developed through notebook keeping, whereas four of them denied the statement. The obtained results show that most of the students agree with the possibility that keeping a notebook could help enhance language accuracy.

Q23. Do you think that keeping a notebook while you are learning vocabulary helps you

express yourself better?

Options	Definitely	Somehow	Not at all
Numbers	16	18	1
Percentages	45.71%	51.42%	2.85%

Table 23: Do you think that keeping a notebook while you are learning vocabulary helps you express yourself better?

As expected, more than half of the students (51.42%) agreed that keeping a notebook

somehow helps them express themselves better in English, while a proportion of 45.71%

of them confirmed that it indeed helps them. Only one students stated otherwise.

Discussion

Knowingly, the impact of notebook keeping on vocabulary acquisition cannot be measured in perfect circumstances, which is indeed the case in most of the Algerian universities. To measure the degree to which keeping a notebook affects vocabulary acquisition, it is recommended to study its effect on the features of vocabulary such as, fluency, accuracy and motivation. The majority of first-year students believe that this year is the first year that they are committed to learning English despite having studied it before in middle and high schools. Most students give more importance to grammar than to vocabulary although vocabulary comes second by a 3% difference. It indicates that they are aware of the significance that understanding the language's structure and having a rich set of vocabulary help to ease learning the language. Furthermore, many students consider their level in vocabulary intake good whereas only 8% consider themselves excellent, which means that there is room for improvement (probably by implementing keeping notebooks more often.) The majority of students ask their teachers to choose the words that they need to learn, then only sometimes would they revise or use them day-to-day, and this shows some reluctance on their part to seek to actively practice learned words.

Moreover, students agree that the common barriers they face while learning vocabulary are: the unfamiliarity with the words and having memory issues, whereas an average proportion of 20% of the asked students say that they lack confidence in their ability in acquiring these words. In addition, 70% of the students confirm that their teachers play a positive role in helping them overcome these hindrances by either correcting them, encouraging them, playing spelling games, implying the meanings of the words, or

translating them into their mother-tongue as a last resort. Teachers often use several diverse activities to teach vocabulary. According to students, the most used activity is open discussions, and then comes presentation by 15% difference and then language games by 20% difference, while only six of them use vocabulary notebooks. Students agree that their two favorite vocabulary-learning activities are "open discussion" and "language games," for the opportunity it gives them to use their own vocabulary, whether it is rich or not, and the ability to express themselves freely and without embarrassments. As stated by students, they also like to watch movies/TV series and listen to music equally in order to enhance their vocabulary acquisition because they agree on their effectiveness in the learning process.

During a lesson, teachers encourage their students to keep a copybook with them to write any necessary information even though just 28% of them actually take notes, while 37% of the students only sometimes do. Additionally, thirty-one students keep a notebook specifically for vocabulary acquisition although 22% of them actually always use it, while 48% sometimes write the new acquired words in it. In fact, 61% of these students prefer using a paper notebook to a digital one due to the already mentioned reasons such as, a paper notebook has the student's personal handwriting, it is more effective because writing by hand takes more effort, it is easier to use because it does not need to recharge, etc. Although twenty-two students believe that their attention during class somewhat helps them acquire vocabulary, 77% of them think that keeping a notebook is very helpful when it comes to remembering the newly learned words whereas only six students think that it is somewhat helpful. The majority of these students believe that keeping a notebook very much affects the English language's fluency, but it relatively affects language's accuracy.

Furthermore, more than half the students agree that keeping a notebook while learning vocabulary help them somehow to express themselves better, whereas only one student thinks that it is definitely not helpful. In conclusion, although few teachers implement using a notebook to learn/acquire vocabulary, most students are aware of its importance in the process of bettering the level of their vocabulary and enhancing their self-expression in the target language.

Conclusion

The collected results from the questionnaire show that all of the students agree on the fact that students of English encounter some issues that hinder them from enhancing their level in English as a whole and in vocabulary proficiency in particular. Moreover, the analysis of the students' questionnaire reveal that they praise using "keeping a notebook" as a practical technique in vocabulary acquisition and strongly believe in its effectiveness in enhancing students' abilities in expressing themselves by reducing students' fear of making mistakes and boosting their self-confidence. It increases students' participation and promotes language usage among passive students. Furthermore, it gives opportunity to the students to use the target language freely and appropriately. To sum up, keeping a notebook aids students to not only learn new words but also encourages them to use known words and newly acquired ones.

Pedagogical Recommendations

Fostering the students' vocabulary acquisition can be considered a fundamental aspect in foreign language teaching and learning. Enriching vocabulary is an essential step in the journey of learning any language, especially a foreign one. EFL Students ought to pay more attention to their vocabulary intake alongside other language aspects. Therefore, the obtained results from the conducted research led us to recommend the following:

- More sessions should be devoted to learning vocabulary.
- Teachers need to often implement notebooks during vocabulary-based sessions.
- Students should try to truly use the notebooks, and not just have them in their personal school materials.
- Teachers ought to accomplish their role as learning mediators and feedback providers.
- Teachers need also to assess whether the students ingested the learned words by providing certain activities where students can use them.
- The topics chosen in open discussions should be selected based on the appropriate usage of vocabulary in the target language, for words serve different purposes in different contexts.
- More consideration and time should be given to using the newly learned vocabulary, as practice implants the words in students' minds.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The ability to communicate fluently in a foreign language has a significant contribution to the success of the students' learning process. To achieve the desired outcome, many methods have been introduced to improve the quality of teaching and learning. First-year students of English at Biskra University suffer from several problems related to their lack of the foreign language's knowledge about vocabulary and how to acquire it. We hypothesized that applying the technique of notebook keeping in vocabulary-based sessions would give better results in enhancing those vocabulary acquisition abilities.

In order to confirm or reject the hypothesis, this research was conducted. Following a scientific methodology, we divided the work into two main parts, theoretical and practical. We gathered the appropriate information related to our topic from several books, online websites, articles, and the research questionnaire.

After analyzing the questionnaire, it is revealed that keeping a notebook can relatively help students to enhance their vocabulary acquisition. This result was deduced from the various obtained sub-results that are:

- Students are aware of the importance of vocabulary among other language features.
- Even though teachers do not often use them, students are open to the idea of implementing notebooks in learning vocabulary specifically.
- Teachers' reluctance to encourage students to use notebooks more resulted in students being more passive.
- Most students agreed that having a notebook helps with memory issues, especially with new words.
- Keeping a notebook helps students learn more words, which consequently boosts their confidence to better express themselves and participate more often in classroom activities such as, open discussions or presentations.

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Appendices

Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

Through this questionnaire, the research we are conducting aims at demonstrating the effectiveness of using notebooks in fostering/enhancing EFL first-year students' vocabulary acquisition.

Be sure that this questionnaire is anonymous and confidential; thus, your identity is most certainly protected.

Please answer the questions as necessary to express your opinion. Your answers will be of great help to this work, and your efforts and cooperation are much appreciated. Thank you.

To contact the researcher (MANSEUR Oumaima), use the following e-mail:

oumaima_mns@yahoo.com

Part One: _Personal Attitude towards English_

1. **For how long have you been studying English?**

   …………………………………………………………………………………

2. **Rank the following language features from more important (1) to less important (4).**

A- Grammar ☐

B- Phonetics ☐

C- Vocabulary ☐

D- Orthography ☐

Part Two: _Vocabulary_

3. **How do you evaluate your Vocabulary intake?**

A- Excellent ☐

B- Good ☐

C- Average ☐

D- Poor ☐

4. **When learning Vocabulary, do you mostly:**

A- Select the words you want to learn ☐

B- Ask the teacher to choose for you ☐

C- Other:

   ………………………………………………………………………….

5. **After learning new words, do you revise them and use them in your daily life?**

A- Yes ☐

B- Sometimes ☐

C- No ☐

6. What are the most common barriers you may face when learning Vocabulary?

A- Unfamiliarity with the words ☐

B- Lack of confidence ☐

C- Mother-tongue interference ☐

D- Memory issues ☐

E- Other :

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7. Do you find your teacher helpful to overcome the previous problems?

A- Yes ☐

B- No ☐

8. Pease precise how.

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9. What activities does your teacher mostly assign to help you practice learning vocabulary better?

A- Language games. ☐

B- Open discussions. ☐

C- Presentations. ☐

D- Keeping a notebook. ☐

E- Other:

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10. Which of the previous techniques do you prefer more?

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11. Please, state the reason for your choice.

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12. What other activities do you use to enhance your vocabulary acquisition?

A- Watching Movies/TV series ☐

B- Listening to Music ☐

C- Listening to Podcasts/Radio ☐

D- Talking to native speakers ☐

E- Other :

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13. Do you think that they are effective in the process of learning vocabulary?

A- Yes ☐

B- No ☐

Part Three: *Notebooks*

14. When attending a lesson, how often do you take notes?

A- Always ☐

B- Usually ☐

C- Sometimes ☐

D- Rarely ☐

15. Do you keep a notebook with you when learning Vocabulary?

A- Yes ☐

B- No ☐

16. If yes, how often?

A- Always ☐

B- Usually ☐

C- Sometimes ☐

D- Rarely ☐

17. Which type of notebooks do you use?

A- Paper notebooks (like copybooks) ☐

B- Paper notebooks (like copybooks) ☐

C- Both of Them ☐

18. Kindly explain which type you find more effective

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19. How much does your attention in class help in learning/acquiring Vocabulary?

A- Very much ☐

B- To a certain degree ☐

C- Not much ☐

20. Is having a notebook helpful in remembering new words?

A- Very much ☐

B- Somewhat ☐

C- Not much ☐

21. To what degree do you think keeping a notebook affects your language fluency?

A- Very much ☐

B- To some extent ☐

C- Not much ☐

22. In your opinion, can language accuracy be developed through notebook keeping?

A- Yes ☐

B- Maybe ☐

C- No ☐

23. Do you think that keeping a notebook while you are learning vocabulary helps you express yourself better?

A- Definitely ☐

B- Somehow ☐

C- Not at all ☐

24. Please, write down any further suggestions that could help with Vocabulary richness:

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف فائدة احتفاظ طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية بدفتر ملاحظات في تعزيز اكتسابهم للحصيلة المعجمية. من منظور الطلاب، لا تُدرَس الدروس إلا لاجتياز الامتحانات رغم رغبتهم في تطوير اكتساب مفردات جديدة ضمن جوانب أخرى للغة. إنّ عدم استعمال دفاتر الملاحظات كتقنية لإثراء الحصيلة المعجمية ألهمنا إلى الاستقصاء وافتراض أن الاحتفاظ بدفتر ملاحظات قد يكون بالفعل استراتيجية ناجحة، يمكن أن تؤثر إيجابياً على قدرات متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، بالإضافة إلى كسر بعض الحواجز التي تعيق تحسين اكتساب الحصيلة المعجمية. ولقد أُجريت دراسة نوعية باستخدام استبيان الكتروني تم تقديمه لطلاب السّنة الأولى تخصص لغة إنجليزية في جامعة بسكرة. فيما بعد، تم تحليل وتفسير النتائج المُتحصل عليها لتقديم الخلاصة النهائية التي أكّدت أن استخدام دفاتر الملاحظات يخدم الطلاقة والدقة اللغوية والقدرة على التعبير عن الذات لدى الطلاب عند التحدث. ثم تم اقتراح بعض التوصيات من أجل زيادة وعي الأساتذة بفوائد تشجيع طلابهم على الاحتفاظ بدفتر ملاحظات أثناء التعلم كوسيلة لتحسين اكتسابهم للحصيلة المعجمية. على سبيل المثال، يتعين على الأساتذة تكريس المزيد من الحصص لتدريس المفردات وتعزيز تدوين الملاحظات لتعلم مفردات جديدة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اكتساب الحصيلة المعجمية، دفتر الملاحظات، طلاب السنة الأولى، جامعة محمد خيضر-بسكرة.