

NAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, HANOI
UNIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
FACULTY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

GRADUATION PAPER

**FRESHMEN'S LEARNER AUTONOMY IN VOCABULARY
LEARNING AT FELTE – ULIS - VNU**

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YEAR OF ENROLMENT: QH2009.F.1.E7

Ha Noi, May 2013

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TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC NGOẠI NGỮ
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Hà Nội, Năm 2013

Acceptance page

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Acknowledgements

It is my pleasure to thank those who made this thesis possible.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere thank the great supervision by Ms. Pham Ngoc Khanh Ly who has always provided a helpful direction, assistance and support for my thesis. I owe my debt to her for all the help from the very beginning to the present.

I also be thankful to all my research subjects – English teaching freshmen at FELTE – ULIS – VNU for their time and enthusiastic cooperation. This thesis would not have been possible without their participation.

Last but not least, I owe my greatest gratitude to my beloved family and friends for their emotional support and active encouragement. Without them, this paper may not be completed.

I would like to offer my regards and blessings to all of those who supported me during the completion of the study.

Abstract

Learner autonomy is considered a determining factor of success in their own study, yet there is a limited number of papers on the issue in the context of Vietnam tertiary education. With the aim of contributing more insights to this domain, this paper explores 48 freshmen's learner autonomy in vocabulary learning at University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University. To be specific, their perceptions of learner autonomy and their vocabulary learning strategies are closely examined. Descriptive statistics and content analysis methods were adopted to analyze the collected data. The findings reveal that freshmen highly value the role of vocabulary learning and learner autonomy although learning vocabulary is not an interest to most of them. Furthermore, the paper finds out that the most frequently used strategies to discover word-meaning, consolidate and widen vocabulary items are to keep a vocabulary notebook, use bilingual dictionaries and listen to music respectively. Hence, it is strongly recommended that teachers create more appealing vocabulary teaching activities basing on students' interest. Moreover, they are suggested to give and check freshmen's assignments as well as share their own vocabulary learning strategies to students.

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List of abbreviations

FELTE	Faculty of English Language Teacher Education.
ULIS	University of Languages and International Studies.
VNU	Vietnam National University.
DMV	Strategies to Discover the Meaning of New Vocabulary Items
RKV	Strategies to Retain the Knowledge of Newly-learned Vocabulary Items
EKV	Strategies to Expand the Knowledge of Vocabulary Items

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This first chapter presents the statement of the problem and the rationale for the study together with its general objectives, significance and scope. More importantly, the research objectives are pointed out with two research questions which identify the direction for this paper. Finally, the research's organisation comes at the end of the chapter.

1.1. Statement of the problem and rationale for the study

Recently, changes in the role of learners and teachers have been made, in which the former is no longer passive recipients of knowledge but active participants in the learning process (Yaneer, 2003). Teachers, similarly, are facilitators in the process of information receiving rather than knowledge givers as traditionally.

English as a foreign language teaching is also strongly influenced by some changes, especially when the communicative approach replaced the audio-lingual and grammar translation methods. Students have become the center of the teaching and learning process. In details, this transition from traditional teacher-centred to more learner-centred approach is viewed as “an offspring of communicative language learning” by Nunan (1988). He believes that learners who are able to play the kind of active role in their own learning could be said to be autonomous. Regarding autonomous learning, Holect (1981) introduced the term “learner autonomy”, which then drew the attention of many scholars. The importance of learner autonomy has been specified in many aspects of language learning including vocabulary. It is necessary to emphasize the increasing need of communication in English that makes learning vocabulary a vital component.

In fact, the subject of vocabulary and autonomy has been studied worldwide. Intensive discussions have been made about factors of autonomy in general and aspects of vocabulary and vocabulary learning in particular. A great number of studies were conducted, for example, Nation (1990), McCarthy (1990) and Schmitt (1997). Nevertheless, in Vietnam, the traditional method of teaching or teacher – centered method is still an obstacle to new methods in general. Particularly, learner autonomy can be fostered better when students are centers of the learning process. Moreover, several studies in the field have been carried out at ULIS in relation to vocabulary teaching and studying techniques rather than the autonomy. Furthermore, those studies mainly aimed at high school students rather than freshmen who do need to improve their vocabulary given their entry level based on grammar examinations.

In an attempt to contribute to the existing literature, the researcher has decided to conduct a study on English teaching freshmen’s learner autonomy in vocabulary learning at University of Languages and International Studies.

1.2. Research aims and research questions

The researcher aims to examine students’ perceptions of learning vocabulary autonomously and their common strategies to become an autonomous learners.

In order to achieve the above objectives, this paper would seek the answers to the following questions:

1. What are students’ perceptions of autonomy in vocabulary learning?
2. What are students’ common strategies to learn vocabulary autonomously?

1.3. Significance of the study

Conducting the research “Autonomy in learning vocabulary of freshmen at FELTE_ULIS_VNU”, the researcher hopes to show a big picture of vocabulary

learning among first-year teacher students of English, particularly focusing on learner autonomy in this process. The paper first is expected to enrich the research block of the faculty on the field of teaching methodology. Consequently, students, teachers and researchers who are interested in the field could look for some information in this study. Secondly, it could help to raise learners' awareness of the importance of autonomous learning, especially in learning vocabulary. Moreover, students, through this study, could be provided with a large range of vocabulary learning strategies, so they can improve their vocabulary proficiency. Last but not least, teachers of English may find findings and discussions useful for their teaching practices. Thus, make necessary changes to enhance vocabulary acquisition in their classes.

1.4. Scope

As articulated in the research title, “*Freshmen’s learner autonomy in vocabulary learning at FELTE – ULIS – VNU*”, the paper firstly focuses on “learner autonomy in vocabulary learning”. To be more specific, it investigates the current situation of students’ autonomy in their vocabulary learning. Their perceptions of learner autonomy and their learning strategies are studied and analyzed.

Secondly, the subjects of the study were limited to first-year mainstream students whose major is English teaching at Faculty of English Language Teacher Education ULIS, VNU.

1.5. Organization

In the rest of this study, the following chapters are included:

Chapter 2: Literature Review – provides the background of the study, including definitions of key concepts and analysis of the literature that sheds light on this research.

Chapter 3: Methodology – sets out the research design, introduces the participants, instruments as well as methods to collect and analyze the data.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion – presents, analyzes and discusses the findings from the data regarding the three research questions.

Chapter 5: Conclusion – summaries all the issues discussed in the paper, notes some limitations of the study and suggests pedagogical implications and potential avenues for further studies.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The previous chapter has provided the rationale for the need to answer the two research questions in the clearly defined scope. This second chapter clarifies the theories as a base for the research with a brief summary of the previous related studies shown at the end.

1.1. Learner Autonomy

1.1.1. Definition

“No matter what the teacher does or what the course presents, ultimately it is the learner who does the learning” (Nation, 1998). This emphasizes the vital role of learners in their learning. More specifically, it is the ability to take responsibility for learning, what is named learner autonomy or autonomous learning.

Autonomy is a Greek word which means authority free. Oxford Dictionary the eighth version defines autonomy as “independence” and “the ability to act and make decisions without being controlled by anyone else”. The concept of autonomy in education .

According to Holec (1981), a learner is considered autonomous when he has the ability to be responsible for his own learning. In particular, the capacity includes setting objectives, choosing methods, controlling the learning process and evaluating what has been done. This view is shared by Knowles (1975) who defined autonomous learning as a process of individuals with or without help to formulate goals, select learning strategies and assess results. Besides these aspects, learner autonomy also requires critical reflection (Little, 1991). Moreover, he states that the capacity will be shown not only in the way students learn but also the way

they transfer what has been learned in wider contexts. Similarly, Freire (1997) considers autonomy as the ability to reconstruct the knowledge taught.

It is also necessary to emphasize that learning autonomously does not mean studying alone. In contrast, learner autonomy can be fostered thanks to teachers' guide or group work. In fact, the total freedom of teachers' control might mislead students. Besides, although working with other learners can make learners become more dependent, it is inevitably interdependence. According to Harmer (1998), this characteristic will result in cooperation which is useful not only in study but also later work.

1.1.2. Characteristics of autonomous learners

Autonomous learners can be characterized diversely by different scholars. According to Dickinson (1993), there are four major elements of an autonomous learner: linking background knowledge and new-taught knowledge, formulating learning objectives, implementing appropriate learning strategies and monitoring the effectiveness of their use of strategies and then making necessary changes.

Besides, according to Wenden (1998), autonomous learners are those who have insights into their learning styles and strategies and are pro-active. They are also realistically humble-fully aware of their strengths and weaknesses as well as actively participate in a learning community (Beatriz, 2010).

Moreover, Scharle and Szabo (2000) believes that, in order to be autonomous, the learner should be capable to define his aims; understand his role as a learner responsible for the process of search and acquisition of his own knowledge; select ways to search for his knowledge developing abilities and skills to work independently in contexts that are different from the academic one; detect his difficulties and look for solutions, while exercising greater control over his own learning and self-evaluate, not only at the end, but during the learning process.

1.1.3. *Teacher's role in enhancing learner autonomy*

No matter what kind of teaching methods, teachers play a vital role in educating students and helping them to self-educate. In traditional method of teaching, teachers are suppliers of knowledge who students can ask for information. In contrast, when learners take more responsibility for establishing their learning objectives and strategies on their own, Crabbe (1993) believes that they turn to their teacher for guidance and feedback on the way they choose to proceed. Consequently, teachers do not control the whole learning procedure like a commander, but take many other roles like directors or advisors.

According to Camilleri (1997), there are a number of characteristics that a teacher of autonomous learners need to develop:

- Being aware of his/her own personal influence on the learning process.
- Understanding pedagogy.
- Being skilled in management
- Creating a relaxed learning atmosphere

However, he emphasizes the role change of teacher from an imparter of information to a manager, a resource person and a counsellor.

- The teacher as manager: The teacher is a manager of activities who can be able to map out likely paths for students. It has been recommended that the teacher negotiate with learners course content and methodology.

- The teacher as a resource person: The teacher optimizes learning conditions by offering learners help in being aware of a wide range of alternative learning strategies and learning styles.

- The teacher as a counsellor: The teacher is able to accompany individual learning processes, respond to learning problems. Gremmo and Riley (1995) believe that teachers can take the role of counselling by assisting learners to establish set of values, ideas and techniques or suggesting materials for students to self-study.

1.2. Vocabulary learning

1.2.1. Definition

According to Hornby 1984 (cited in Mayuree 2007), vocabulary is viewed as the total number of words which make up a language and a range of words known to or used by a person. In his definition, there are two different ways of division. These ways can be similarly looked at Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary Eighth Edition, vocabulary is 1) all the words that a person knows or uses 2) all the words in a particular language. In general, vocabulary is defined as the knowledge of words and word meaning.

As can be easily seen, “word” is commonly used to define vocabulary. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish these two terms. Word is “an uninteruptible unit of structure consisting of one or more morphemes which are minimal meaningful units of languages” (Jackson & Amvela, 2007, p.59).Moreover, word is viewed as “a unit formed of sounds and letters that have a meaning” (Sheeler & Markley, 2000). In contrast, vocabulary is a collection of words or a set of lexemes which includes single words, compound words and idioms. Besides, vocabulary is the study of the meanings of words and how words are used.

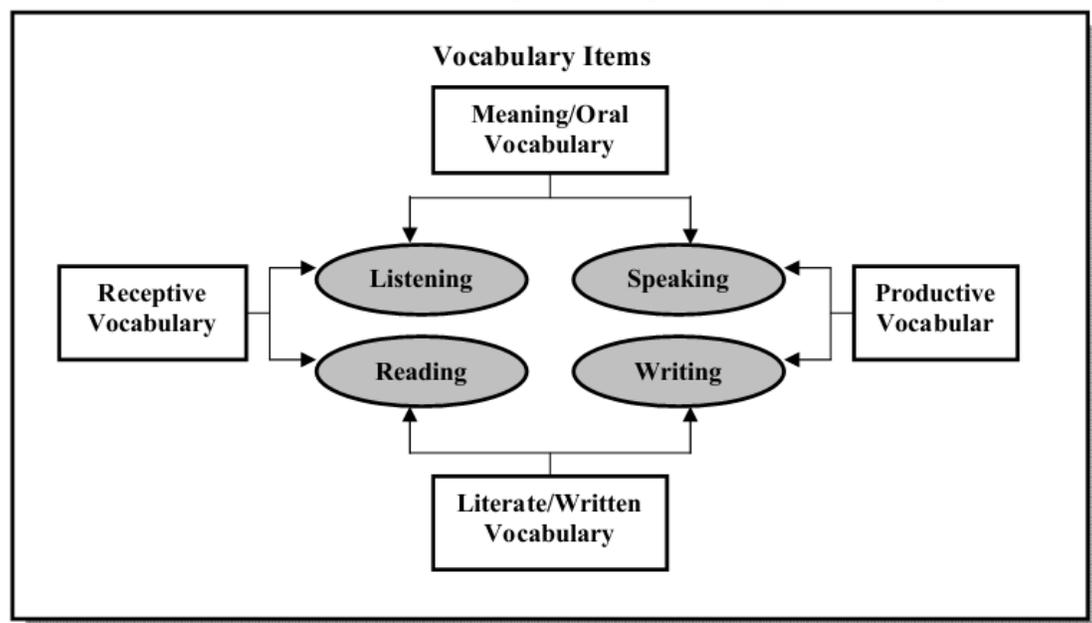
1.2.2. Significance of vocabulary in language learning

Learning a language requires a lot of skills and knowledge, in which vocabulary knowledge plays a vital role. It is evident that language learning does not mean vocabulary meaning only, but McCarthy (1990) believes that “no matter

how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of second language are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in a second language just cannot happen in any meaningful way.” This view is shared by a number of scholars, for example, Nandy (1994) thinks that the more words language learners can use, the more easily and confidently they can express themselves. It can be seen that vocabulary knowledge can help learners to achieve both inside and outside their classroom. As a result, vocabulary plays a dominant role in learning a language.

1.2.3. Vocabulary in relationship with four skills

Pkalski and Templeton (2004) produced a diagram of the relationship between vocabulary and four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.



(Adapted from Pkalski and Templeton, 2004)

Figure 1.1. Vocabulary and the four language skills

- Meaning/Oral vocabulary is words learners hear and words they speak. With vocabulary knowledge, students can catch what they are listening and their speaking is understandable.
- Literate/Written vocabulary is words that learners read and write. When students read, they need a number of vocabulary items to understand texts.

Similarly, when they write, they need vocabulary to express their ideas in their writing texts.

➤ Receptive vocabulary refers words that help learners understand what they hear in speech and what they read. The more words learners know, the better they understand conversations they are participating in and comprehending texts.

➤ Productive vocabulary refers words that learners use to express their thoughts and ideas in both speaking and writing.

1.2.4. Vocabulary learning goals

Possible objectives of vocabulary teaching and learning have been proposed by different scholars. According to Catalan (2003) cited in Mayruee, the vocabulary learning goals include 1) finding out the meaning of unknown words; 2) retaining them in long-term memory and 3) using them in oral or written mode. Similarly, Intaraprasert (2004) agrees that learning vocabulary is to discover the meanings of new words and retain the knowledge of newly-learned words. Furthermore, he emphasizes the importance of expanding the knowledge of English vocabulary.

1.2.5. Vocabulary learning approaches

In general, learners learn vocabulary in two different ways: direct and indirect (Nation, 1990). Direct vocabulary learning means language learners learn vocabulary consciously or explicitly. This method is highly recommended for important and frequently-used vocabulary. According to Nation (1990), learning single words explicitly is appropriate for beginners of second language learning. In contrast, indirect vocabulary learning is emphasised to language learners. This method is concerned with the unconscious learning process when learners hear or see the words, for example by watching films, listening to music, reading stories or magazines extensively, without the aim of learning them. Therefore, the richer the language learners are exposed to, the more words they could learn implicitly.

1.2.6. Vocabulary learning strategies

Learning strategies are considered techniques employed by students in order to accomplish a learning goal. According to Oxford (1990), learning strategies are “tools for active, self-directed involvementappropriate language learning strategies result in improved proficiency and greater self-confidence”. In short, language learning strategies are set of actions and tactics to facilitate their studying.

It appears that researchers have made use of different systems to classify vocabulary learning strategies. Some researchers may have their own classification based on other research works conducted by other researchers or on their own research works; or even from their own experience as language teachers or language learners. For example, Schmitt (1997) developed a taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies including strategies for the discovery of a new word’s meaning and strategies for consolidating a word once it has been encountered. He categorized these two big groups in five different strategies, namely determination strategies, social strategies, cognitive strategies, memory strategies and metacognitive strategies. Meanwhile, Pemberton (2003) divide vocabulary learning strategies into two main categories: strategies for learning vocabulary (memorisation, using words and recycling words) and strategies for reducing “forgetting problems”.

This study will adopt Intaraprasert’s classification for its comprehensive coverage. In details, Intaraprasert (2004, pp.55-56) classified vocabulary learning strategies into three main categories - Strategies to Discover the Meaning of New Vocabulary Items (DMV), Strategies to Retain the Knowledge of Newly-learned Vocabulary Items (RKV), Strategies to Expand the Knowledge of Vocabulary Items (EKV). His classification is different from Schmitt (1997) and Pemberton (2003) due to the fact that strategies to expand the knowledge of

vocabulary items are included. The researcher highly appreciates this way because extending vocabulary knowledge is very important to language learners.

Vocabulary Learning Strategy Classification by Intaraprasert (2004)

Category 1: Strategies to Discover the Meaning of New Vocabulary Items (DMV)

- Use a bilingual dictionary
- Use a monolingual dictionary
- Guess the meaning from the context
- Ask one's classmate or friend
- Ask one's teacher
- Ask someone other than one's teacher, classmate or friend
- Look at the word roots, prefixes or suffixes

Category 2: Strategies to Retain the Knowledge of Newly-learned Vocabulary Items (RKV)

- Keep a vocabulary notebook
 - Group words based on the synonymity or antonymity
 - Associate new words with the already-learned ones
 - Use new words in writing
 - Use new words to converse with peers
-
- Keep words as the computer background
 - Keep word cards or word charts in one's bedroom

- Keep words as rhymes or songs
- Use pictures

Category 3: Strategies to Expand the Knowledge of Vocabulary Items (EKV)

- Listen to a radio programme in English especially the one for language learning
- Watch a television programme in English especially the one for language learning
- Surf the Internet especially the websites for language learning
- Read different types of different English printed materials, e.g. leaflets, brochures, textbooks or newspapers
- Play games in English, e.g. crossword, or hangman
- Practise translating from mother tongue into English and vice versa
- Watch an English-speaking film with mother tongue scripts
- Listen to English songs
- Do extra vocabulary exercises from different sources, e.g. book, newspapers or the Internet

1.3. Learner autonomy in vocabulary learning

Vocabulary learning is very important in learning languages. However, not all vocabulary can be taught in class, which forces learners to spend time study vocabulary autonomously. According to Tuan (2011), learner autonomy can be considered as a relief to students in vocabulary learning due to its advantages. In

fact, he believes that learner autonomy can bring out more effective vocabulary learning because learners can choose their most suitable strategies to follow. Thornbury (2002) also claims that language learners have their own ways of learning vocabulary; consequently, vocabulary acquisition is much of an individual process.

1.4. Review of related studies

Vocabulary and learner autonomy have been the subject of a large number of studies.

In terms of the role of learner autonomy, Nation (1998) states that it is the learners who do the learning but not their teachers or coursebooks. In his article, he suggested three elements to build autonomy, namely attitude, awareness and capacity. Attitude means that learners themselves find it necessary to take control and responsibility for learning. Whereas they are believed to have awareness if they are able to be conscious of what approaches to take and give reflection on their effects. In order to become autonomous, learners are capable of possessing necessary skills and knowledge. Little (1990) also emphasizes the vital charge of autonomy in language learning. Different aspects of autonomous learners were comprehensively discussed by Dickinson (1993), Wenden (1998) and Beatriz (2010). Scharle and Szabo (2000) also mention several factors of autonomous learners such as aim setting, problem solving and self-evaluation. Although learners are the ones who are responsible for their own learning, the role of teachers is not minor. Camilleri (1997) reveals the change in role of the teacher from an imparter of information to a manager, a resource person and a counsellor. Likewise, Nation (2001) suggests that teachers are to boost students' awareness of learner autonomy and strengthen motivation to them.

With regards to vocabulary learning, different aspects of vocabulary have been investigated by numerous researchers. For instance, George (1999) looks at a variety of elements of knowing a word. Besides, vocabulary learning strategies are

a welcome attention by scholars such as Schmitt (1997), Pemberton (2003) and Intaraprasert (2004).

In Vietnam, the traditional method of teaching and learning – teacher-centered method has been reformed towards learner-centered method. At the university level, credit-based curriculum can be seen as a sign of increasing learner autonomy. Concerning with students' graduation paper at the researcher's current university, there have been a large body of studies on vocabulary learning strategies and vocabulary teaching techniques. For example, Ngo (2009) conducted a thesis of freshmen's vocabulary level and vocabulary learning. With the same population, Tran (2010) investigates into ways to develop students' autonomy in vocabulary learning.

Indubitably, those studies have been useful sources for the knowledge of the domain. Nevertheless, the concept of learner autonomy seems need more investigating. The notion is shown in several aspects such as “Developing autonomous habits with extensive listening” by [Matthew \(2004\)](#), “Developing Learner Autonomy in EFL Writing Classrooms via Peer Feedback” by Kulsirisawad (2012). Moreover, there is a limited number of studies on learner autonomy and vocabulary learning, especially for freshmen to whom the concept is considered unfamiliar.

All things considered, the researcher carried out this study in order to get an in-deep look into the current situation of freshmen's learner autonomy in vocabulary learning. It is hoped to be an useful source for educators and teachers to figure out ways to improve learners' autonomy effectively.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The second chapter has presented a brief overview of theories which serves as a foundation for the whole paper. In this chapter, the applied methodology in order to answer the two research questions will be specified together with the participants, the instruments, the data collection and analysis procedure.

3.1. Selection of subjects

The researcher recruited first-year English Language Teaching (ELT) mainstream students at FELTE, ULIS, VNU to take part in the survey. The faculty has 22 classes of 25 students on average, equivalent to 550 students in total, among which there are 8 ELT classes from E1 (fast-track class) to E8 (mainstream class). The number of participants is about 50 freshmen coming from two ELT classes. This number occupies one fourth of the whole English language teaching freshmen, which is large enough to correctly represent the population. Furthermore, this is an internal study, so the proportion seems to be reasonable.

Cluster sampling is chosen to be the sampling method in this study. According to Henry (1990), cluster sampling is a sampling technique in which the population is divided into different subgroups called the clusters such that the members within each cluster are dissimilar in terms of their attributes, but different clusters are similar to each other. This characteristic matches the situation of classes at FELTE. In fact, it was difficult to select a random sample of individuals due to the large number of students. Therefore, the researchers selected the classes for teaching instead of randomly selecting individuals. To decide which classes to participate in the study, the researchers write names of different classes on different pieces of paper and then pick two of seven pieces.

3.2. Participants

Description of chosen classes (QH2012.F1.E3, QH2012.F1.E6)

First year mainstream English teaching students' current English proficiency is assumed at Level A2 of Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). They have finished their first term in which their English proficiency were developed with two parallel courses: English for Social Purpose 1 and English for Academic Purpose 1. All students have learned to organize and take responsibility for their own progress through assignments and assessments in- and out-of-class.

Table 3.1. Demographic background of participants

Demographic background		Number of participants (48)
Gender	Male	3
	Female	45
Time of learning English (Years)	5 years	0
	6-9 years	40
	Over 10 years	8

For interviews, the researcher asked five students for being interviewees. All the names given to respondents are pseudonyms in order to maintain respondents confidentiality while presenting rich and detailed data.

Table 3.2. Description of interviewees

Participant	Time of learning English	English latest scores	
		Social themes	Acedamic themes
Anh	13 years	9.3	8.5
Binh	8 years	8.7	7.9
Chi	8 years	7.4	6.9
Duong	10 years	8.6	8.5
Yen	8 years	7.4	7.1

3.3. Data collection instruments

The researcher used questionnaires and interviews as data collection instruments due to their appropriateness to the study's objectives.

Oppenheim (1992) believes that questionnaires are rather convenient to use because they can be given to a large group at the same time. Therefore, they also can help scholars save time of data collection. Another positive point of questionnaires is cost-effective. In short, researchers can use this instrument to save time and manage budget for their study.

For this research, questionnaires were designed to collect data of learners' perception of autonomous learning and their frequently used techniques to learn vocabulary autonomously. In the survey, there are three main parts. Part 1 is about participants' information, part 2 is about their perception of autonomous learning, part 3 is about their learning vocabulary strategies. They include both close-ended questions and open-ended questions. Answers of open-ended questions help to explain clearly for ones of close-ended questions. to facilitate the comprehension of the collected information and data analysis.

Along with the survey questionnaire, interviews are exploited as another data collection instrument. The interviews were conducted after the collection of questionnaire with the aim of getting further information directly from participants. Moreover, the reliability of collected data has been scrutinized by making comparison between what participants have answered in questionnaires and how they answered face-to-face. Besides, it is widely admitted that the interviews give chances for participants to speak out their own opinions about the matter which might be harder to express in questionnaires (Oppenheim, 1992).

Out of three types of interview, namely structured, semi-structured and unstructured, semi-structured interviews have been applied for this research thanks to their flexibility. The interviews were conducted in Vietnamese so as to create a pleasant atmosphere for participants as well as to maximize the information

gathered. Each interview included three parts: part 1 was to get personal information of interviewees; part 2 was to gather their perception of autonomy in learning vocabulary and its importance. Lastly, the final part was about their learning strategies, their assessment on the effectiveness as well as their difficulty and solutions during their autonomous learning process.

3.4. *Procedures of data collection*

Step 1: Preparing for questionnaire administration

Before launching the final draft of the survey questionnaires, the monitors of four chosen groups were contacted to ask for co-operation in advance and informed about the purpose of the study and the specific time of delivering the survey.

Step 2: Administering the questionnaire

The researcher will carry out the survey in break times. Before asking the students to do the survey questionnaire, the purposes of the study was briefly explained so that participants can provide precisely informative responses. The research ethics is assured as confidentiality is highly guaranteed during the procedure. Vietnamese instructions and explanations are also presented to eliminate ambiguity and help respondents avoid any misunderstandings.

Step 3: Interviewing

After collecting questionnaire papers, the researcher conducted the interviews. The researcher asked for participants' permission of recording the interviewing. The research also took notes during the talk.

3.5. *Procedures of data analysis*

Data from survey questionnaires

First, the researcher examined and classified the collected questionnaire papers to find out the appropriate answers. 52 questionnaires had been distributed and 48 questionnaires were returned. Out of these papers, there are 45 appropriate answers. The data collected from the questionnaires was quantitative data, so the descriptive statistics method was the most suitable for the researcher to provide recapitulation on the issue. To analyze the questionnaires, the descriptive statistics method of mean and standard deviation were used. Thereafter, the data were demonstrated in bar charts and pie charts for better illustration of the differences (if any) among variables in the same category. Comments on the data were made basing on the knowledge of Literature review. Qualitative data – students' answers to open-ended questions were summarized and quoted when necessary for illustration.

Data from interviews

The data collected from the interviews were analysed according to the method of content analysis based on notes and audio recording transcripts. Data sharing similar ideas were grouped in categories corresponding with each research question. According to Steve (2001), content analysis is a systematic technique to compress many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding. It is often used to analyzed essays, answers to interview questions and verbal printed media.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

With the aim of answering two research questions, this chapter both presents the outcome from the questionnaire and the interview and generates some discussion. The collected data from the questionnaire is illustrated with pie charts, bar charts and tables. Discussion is based on the result from both of two research data collection instruments.

4.1. Freshmen's perceptions of autonomy in vocabulary learning

4.1.1 The importance of learning English vocabulary

Students' judgement of the importance of vocabulary learning is one of the researcher's primary concerns. The result collected from the questionnaire is presented in figure 1 and the reason for their assessment was explained by interviewees.

As can be seen in the pie chart, none of the students viewed vocabulary learning as unimportant. In contrast, 83,3 % (40 out of 48 students) believed that it is important to learn vocabulary. Basing on the statistics, it can be said that the role of vocabulary learning is highly valued by freshmen.

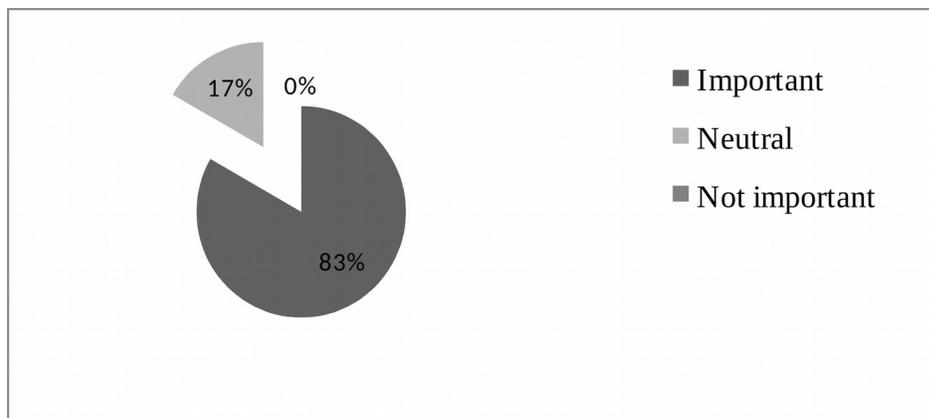


Chart 4.1. Freshmen's judgement of the importance of vocabulary learning

All of the interview respondents agreed that it was vital to learn vocabulary due to its benefits in language learning. In fact, they believed that their study at

school as well as their communication with foreigners could not be good with a poor body of vocabulary and vice versa. For instance, that they can use synonyms to express the same ideas in speaking and writing will be more appreciated by teachers than repetition. For reading and listening, the more words they know, the more accurately they can understand the texts and the audio. As a result, they can achieve high scores in their skills tests. Not only in studying but also in actual communication can vocabulary support learners. Yen even considered vocabulary as “a golden key” to express her ideas clearly and effortlessly to be understood. Furthermore, with a large knowledge of vocabulary, right choices of words in different contexts can be made, which helps to avoid ambiguity or misunderstanding.

Generally speaking, freshmen’s positive attitude to the role of vocabulary learning can be viewed as a convincing evidence for the fundamental change of focus from grammar as traditional approach. Moreover, it is considered a powerful motivation for students to pay serious attention to vocabulary learning.

4.1.2. The level of interest in learning English vocabulary

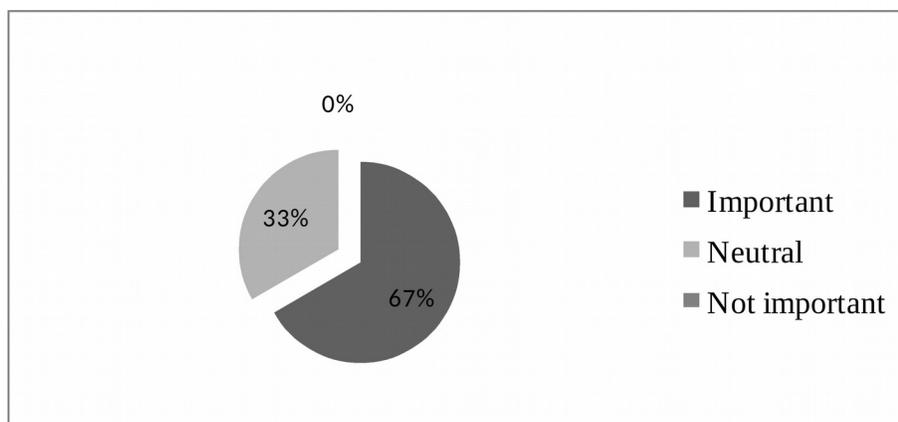


Chart 4.2. Freshmen's interest in vocabulary learning

In order to have a deeper insight into learners' attitude towards vocabulary learning, the level of freshmen's interest in the field is questioned. The data from the questionnaire is demonstrated in the second pie chart.

It is clearly shown in figure 2 that 29 out of 48 students admitted that they had no interest in learning vocabulary, 16 freshmen showed their neutral view and the other three reported that vocabulary learning was their great concern. The result, at first, seemed to contradict their assessment of the role of vocabulary learning. The researcher supposed that freshmen, who positively evaluated studying vocabulary would favour the activity. By the way of contrast, after interviewing five respondents, the researcher realized that the phenomenon could be understandable. Students were aware of the importance of vocabulary learning and the need to study new words as well; however, it was their laziness that discouraged them from studying vocabulary. Another explanation is that vocabulary learning seems "tiring and boring" to students (Duong).

A possible basis for their disinterest might be low individual motivation and lack of effective learning strategies. According to Wlodowski (1985), learning motivation can lead learners to prefer particular behaviours and persist in doing them. With regard to learning strategies, Oxford (1990) views them as certain actions which make learning less demanding and more pleasurable. Other reasons might come from students' obstacles in vocabulary learning which will be discussed later. Although vocabulary learning is not the interest of most students, it is rather hard to conclude their study will possibly suffer. However, it is believed that learning is supported and encouraged by the interest in subject matters (Dewey, 1913).

4.1.3. The importance of learner autonomy in vocabulary learning

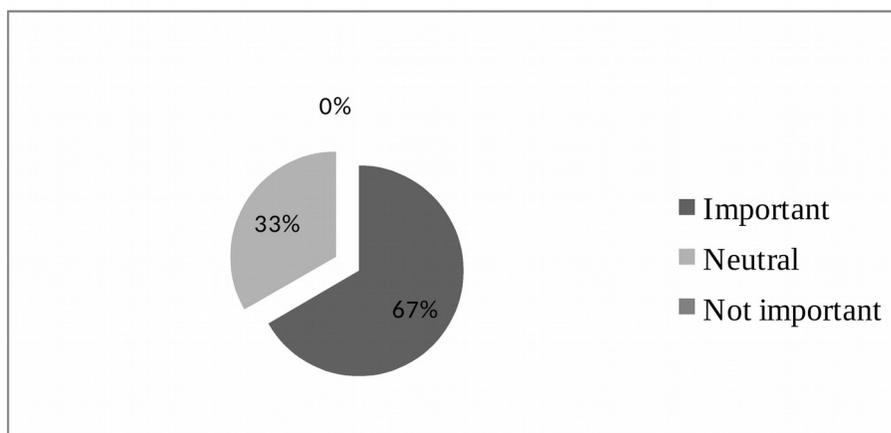


Chart 4.3. Freshmen's judgement of the importance of learner autonomy in vocabulary learning

With the aim of investigating into freshmen' learner autonomy in vocabulary learning, students' value of its importance needs to be taken into account. The collected data is illustrated in the third pie chart.

As can be seen from figure 3, no students believes that learner autonomy is unimportant and one third of freshmen had neutral view on autonomous vocabulary learning. The number was half of students regarding autonomous learning important, including all five interviewees. The reason for the statistic was comprehensively revealed in the interview. According to Anh and Duong , learner autonomy played an essential role in not only vocabulary learning but also all fields of study. Besides, Duong emphasized that the help from others was useful; however, it is learners who are principally responsible for their learning. Likewise, "a prerequisite factor" to have a wide vocabulary is learner autonomy (Yen).

Therefore, it can be concluded that learners are highly aware of the significance of vocabulary autonomous learning. Being an ULIS university student, learner autonomy is important in their study. Credit-based curriculum is applied to a

number of subjects. The consciousness of the characteristic is one of decisive factors influencing the way students learn.

4.1.4. Vocabulary learning habits

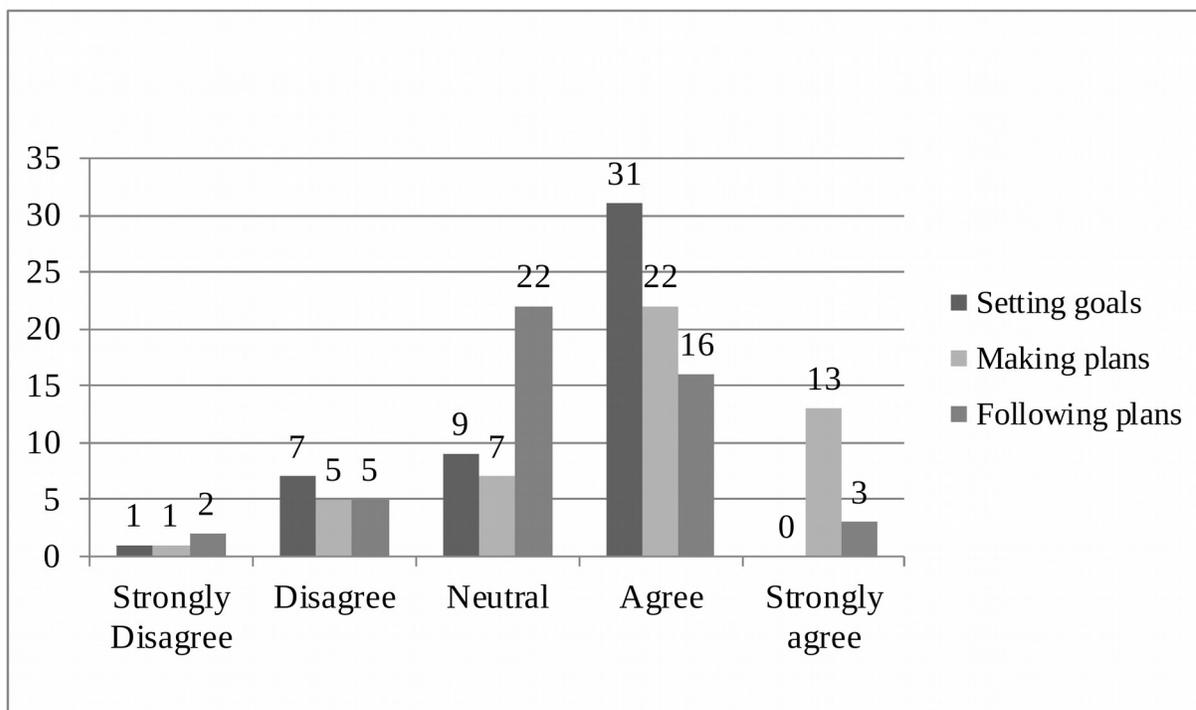


Chart 4.4. Students' autonomous vocabulary learning habits

(The numbers on the vertical axis and the number on the top of each bar present the number of students who chose that option)

As reviewed in the literature, autonomous learning requires learners to set goals for their study, make plans based on the goals as well as follow the plans. Due to the fact that participants reported to place a high value on learner autonomy, the degree of their autonomous learning habits needed informing.

The result of the first question was positive with the mean close to 4 (agree). In detail, while only one freshman does not set goals for his vocabulary mastery, approximately 65% (31 students) agreed that they do establish objectives for their vocabulary learning. Four out of five interview respondents reported that they did

set goals for their vocabulary learning. Learning several words per day was applied by Duong while Yen chose to work on themes in authentic texts. Setting up the aims for learning is important stage which helps students to focus more on their study. The reason might lie on the logic that when students know what they can gain, they will make effort to achieve them.

In contrast, for Chi, establishing goals for her vocabulary learning was a thing of the past. The interviewee explained that passing university entrance examination was an aim that forced pupils to learn hard. After entering the university, she had no pressure to study hard; consequently, there was no need for her to define and pursue goals – “After I entered the university, I’ve never done it because there is no pressure”. The given excuse can explain for freshmen’s laziness as one of their biggest troubles.

After setting learning objectives, learners need to make a study plan and adjust it appropriately to different situations. The questionnaire data shows that the student number of agreement in making plans vastly outnumbers the other choices. In fact, the number of agreeing respondents account for two thirds of participants, in which 13 freshmen regularly do the activities.

If goals and plans are important preparation for learning, the action needs taken by learners is to follow the aim-based plan. However, the activity was not frequently done by most respondents. In fact, only one in every three students follows their plans while nearly a half of participants (22 students) do not agree about that. Another popular case (19 students) was that students soon got out of their track. Binh reported that she learned harder after everytime she formulated a plan for her study. Nevertheless, she claimed to be on track just for a short time at the very beginning. In other words, soon after implementing the plan, she could not keep stucked to it. Two interviewed participants considered laziness the reason for their failure. Another one held that intense stress could possibly prevent her from

following the plan. As can be seen from the collected data from both the questionnaire and the interview, there seemed to exist a distance between the understanding of the role of vocabulary learning and the action of learning vocabulary.

4.2. Freshmen’s strategies to learn vocabulary autonomously

4.2.1. Strategies to Discovering the Meaning of New Vocabulary Items (DMV)

Table 4.1. Strategies to Discovering the Meaning of New Vocabulary Items (DMV)

Discovering the Meaning of New Vocabulary Items (DMV)	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Using a bilingual dictionary	1	2	9	23	13	3.94
Using a monolingual dictionary	5	3	22	15	3	3.17
Guessing the meaning from the context	0	2	13	30	3	3.71
Asking teachers and/or friends or others	0	6	18	20	4	3.46
Looking at the word roots, prefixes or suffixes to guess the meaning	3	6	10	25	4	3.44
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0

(The numbers in three tables present the number of students who chose that option)

1

2

3

4

5



Table 3 shows the frequency of using different strategies to discover the meaning of new words. As can be seen from the table, using English-English dictionaries and guessing the meaning of words from the context are two most regularly utilized methods by freshmen with the mean of 3.94 and 3.71 respectively. The statistic matches with the result from the interview. Three out of five interviewed respondents used bilingual dictionaries as their first choice, which was followed by guessing the meaning from the context.

Due to the benefits of using bilingual dictionaries, it became the most popular strategies employed by freshmen. Firstly, they explained that the dictionary could save time by providing word-meaning. Besides, it was believed that students could learn more of a word by using a dictionary (Yen). The reason was that knowing a word did not only mean knowing the meaning but having knowledge of pronunciation, meaning and collocation as well. Another respondent, Duong, reported that the habit of using English-English dictionaries began after she entered the university as a way to enhance her vocabulary. This is comprehensible because of the fact that students can not only find out the meaning of target words but also learn the way they are explained. Moreover, English-English dictionaries provide users a number of synonyms and antonyms, which can be effectively utilized in their speaking and writing. On the contrary, English-Vietnamese dictionaries were freshmen's least frequent choice. Duong said that it was seen as a thing of the past when the most attention was just word-meaning. As the consequence of the fact that English-English dictionaries' benefits greatly outnumber those of the other type, the result is not much of a surprise.

Guessing word-meaning from the context was considered the other two respondents' priority. They only turn to use dictionaries or ask for help if they

cannot figure out the meaning of words by surmising from surrounding ones. Although it sometimes leads to misunderstanding, this method is very advantageous, especially in reading comprehension tests if learners practise them frequently. The other way of guessing word-meaning is based on suffixes. With the mean of 3.44, the technique was a quite common one; however, it was not mentioned by any interviewees as their DMV strategy. At the similar mean was the method of asking others for help. The way did fit Binh that she could remember better if she was explained word-meaning by her teachers or classmates. This might be due to the fact that people often give examples to explain, so listeners could remember words better by recalling situations. Another reason is that this strategy is rather time-saving, students can get the answer directly.

4.2.2. Strategies to retain the knowledge of newly-learned vocabulary items (RKV)

Table 4.2. Strategies to retain the knowledge of newly-learned vocabulary items (RKV)

Retaining the Knowledge of Newly-learned Vocabulary Items (RKV)	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Keeping a vocabulary notebook	2	6	14	12	14	3.63
Associating new words with the synonyms or antonyms	1	12	24	10	1	2.96
Grouping new words with the already-learned ones in the same themes	0	8	24	15	1	3.19
Using new words in writing/speaking	2	8	16	15	7	3.35
Using flashcards	10	22	12	4	0	2.21
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0

In terms of strategies to consolidate vocabulary items, keeping a vocabulary notebook and using new words in writing and speaking are the most frequently utilized ones with the mean of 3.63 and 3.35, respectively. The result is consistent

with what students reflected in the interview. Three out of five freshmen considered using a vocabulary notebook one of the best ways to remember vocabulary items. They store new words in the notebook and look at them or read and write them over again until they feel they could remember. The result is comprehensible due to the fact that it is not too hard to prepare a vocabulary notebook. Another explanation might be that students can view it as their own pocket dictionary. If they do not have enough time to learn words right after they find them, they can learn it later by looking at word-meaning and examples in the notebook.

In order to memorize words, Chi tried to use them in her writing as well as speaking. It is evident that the topic of productive skills will decide which words learners can use. Similarly, writing diary in English was suggested by Binh, which forces students to use words to express their ideas. Perhaps, memory can be preserved by frequent practice. In this case, everytime a word is used in oral or written communication, its fundamental aspects such as meaning, use, pronunciation and spelling are reviewed.

Other methods to retain new words are grouping new words with the already-learned ones in the same themes and associating new words with the synonyms or antonyms. These strategies are employed relatively equally in terms of frequency by freshmen. For instance, there were 24 students who reported that they sometimes use synonyms or antonyms to memorize new words. The same number of students occasionally group words in themes to learn. Student Chi disclosed:

“Reading theme-categorized passages is the best way to learn vocabulary. Theme-oriented words appear more frequently; therefore, learners can catch many examples of ways to use the same words. The repetition of seeing words in those texts would help readers remember them better.”

With the mean of 2.21, using flashcards appeared to be the least chosen strategy. In fact, approximately half of participants seldom make use of flashcards and 10 students reported that they never use the tactic to learn vocabulary.

Moreover, no interviewee mentioned this technique in their vocabulary learning. A possible reason is that it takes time to make flashcards. As admitted by both interviewees and questionnaire respondents, their laziness might discourage them to prepare their own cards.

4.2.3. Strategies to expand the knowledge of vocabulary items (EKV)

Table 4.3. Strategies to expand the knowledge of vocabulary items (EKV)

Expanding the Knowledge of Vocabulary Items (EKV)	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Reading leaflets/brochures, magazines or newspapers	2	11	21	14	0	2.98
Using textbooks	0	5	15	22	4	3.4
Using vocabulary building books	2	11	21	12	2	3.02
Surfing the Internet especially the websites for learning English	0	5	19	20	4	3.48
Watching a television programme in English	0	7	17	19	5	3.46
Listening to a radio programme in English	0	13	12	20	3	3.27
Watching movies in English	0	4	15	20	9	3.71
Listening to English songs	0	0	3	18	27	4.5
Others (please specify).....	0	0	0	0	0	0

With regard to techniques to expand the knowledge of vocabulary items as demonstrated in table 5, english songs were chosen as the most popular source by freshmen with the mean of 4.5. It was also mentioned by all the five interviewees. For Anh and Duong, they listen to songs, then try to learn words which are interesting to them. In addition to the benefit of relaxation, Binh makes use of music as a source of pronunciation teaching. It can be said that the relationship

between entertaining and learning is close. For instance, students want to understand the meaning of the song, they learn new words in the song. Consequently, that way of learning still can keep learners amused.

Watching movies, surfing the Internet and watching television programmes in English are other common choices of freshmen. In fact, their means are somewhere in the vicinity of 3.5. As reported by Duong, authentic reading texts, which include a number of academic words and expressions, could be found easily on BBC or CNN. This is a positive sign because studying with authentic documents, learners' vocabulary becomes more practical. In contrast, printed materials such as books, brochures, magazines and newspapers are the less fashionable sources. "I have some vocabulary building books but I don't use them often. It's easy to get bored." – respondent Anh. This might be due to the outstanding convenience of the online media. The result shows that the Internet has become a main learning source in stead of traditional sources like books. It is due to the fact that the Internet, which is cheap and fast to use, supply learners almost of their needs.

4.3. Freshmen's obstacles in autonomous vocabulary learning

In vocabulary autonomous learning, freshmen face a number of difficulties. The questionnaire revealed that three most frequently encountered obstacles are idleness (37 students), short memory (30 students) and a huge number of words to learn (25 students).

A substantial proportion of freshmen (77%) admitted that their big trouble in vocabulary learning was laziness. The reason might be their lack of interest in learning vocabulary. As discussed before, students thought that the pressure for

them to learn was low because their teachers did not insist on them learning as greatly as highschool ones. Consequently freshmen become procrastinated habitually. A student reported in the questionnaire “I am a lazy student so I rarely learn vocabulary myself.” As can be seen, all freshmen rarely build up their own pressure or motivation for themselves to learn. It seems that they learn hard if it is a must for the exams or as required by teachers.

Another serious hindrance is learners’ short memory which consumed students much time to memorize words. A learner even confessed “Sometimes I forget words that I just have learned.” The difficulty might be due to the fact that the benefits of vocabulary learning strategies are not maximized. If freshmen apply the appropriate strategies seriously and permanently, their memory of words will be enhanced. Along with this, a large number of words to learn, in which, each word has a lot of aspects to study, is regarded as a big problem. Moreover, some words are considered complicated in both spelling and pronunciation to them. A possible explanation is that students cannot identify which words should be learned. In this case, they could spend more time on words listed in the academic word list. As the result, their workload can be reduced, which also might help to improve their ability to recall vocabulary.

Although learning synonyms and antonyms is helpful for students to choose different words in their writing and oral tests, a few students usually encounter the difficulty of selecting words. Chi said “There are a lot of words to express the same meaning and a word has different meanings. Consequently, I don’t know when to use which word.” The situation might reflect the fact that students’ learning is lack of context.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This chapter will summarize and evaluate the outcomes of the whole paper by summing up the major findings, and more importantly, putting forward some pedagogical implications for teacher to develop freshmen's learner autonomy in vocabulary learning. Finally, the limitations of the research will be pointed out, suggesting several potential directions for further research.

5.1. Summary

Students' perception

Based on the statistics from the questionnaire and the interview, it can be said that the role of vocabulary learning is highly valued by freshmen. In fact, they believed that success in study at school as well as their real life communication depends much on a large body of vocabulary. Similarly, students are highly aware of the significance of learner autonomy vocabulary learning. The awareness of the field is considered a powerful motivation for students to pay serious attention to vocabulary learning. However, learning vocabulary is not interest to most of them.

Two thirds establish objectives for their vocabulary learning. The number of respondents agreeing in making plans account for two thirds of participants, in which 13 freshmen regularly do the activities. However, the activity was not a frequent done one by most respondents. In fact, only one in every three students follows their plans while the rest soon got out of their track.

As can be seen from the collected data from both the questionnaire and the interview, there seemed to exist a distance between the understanding of the role of vocabulary learning and the action of learning vocabulary.

Vocabulary learning strategies

In order to discover word-meaning, using English-English dictionaries and guessing the meaning of words from the context are two most regularly utilized methods by freshmen. By employing a bilingual dictionary, learners can not only know the meaning but also get the knowledge of pronunciation, word family and collocation as well. The other less frequently used strategies are asking teachers/mates for help of guessing word-meaning from suffixes.

In terms of strategies to consolidate vocabulary items, keeping a vocabulary notebook and using new words in writing and speaking are the most frequently utilized ones. Vocabulary notebooks are considered a dictionary to its owner, in which they can easily check their vocabulary. By using new words in oral or written communication, its fundamental aspects such as meaning, use, pronunciation and spelling are reviewed. Grouping new words with the already-learned ones in the same themes and associating new words with the synonyms or antonyms are less common methods. Using flashcards appeared to be the least chosen technique, because freshmen are idle to make flashcards.

As regards the sources for vocabulary widening, english songs were chosen as the most popular one by freshmen. Watching movies, surfing the Internet and watching television programmes in English are their other common choices. In contrast, printed materials such as books, brochures, magazines and newspapers are the less fashionable sources. As can be seen, students prefer modern products, which supply them authentic and amusing documents, to conventional ones.

5.2. Pedagogical implications

Due to the fact that learner autonomy does not means that students study without teachers' help, serveral recommendations are made to teachers.

Vocabulary teaching activities

As mentioned in the finding and discussion, freshmen's interest in vocabulary is rather low. Therefore, it is making vocabulary learning more appealing that teachers should pay much attention to. In fact, teaching methods and materials can be utilized effectively if they are appropriate to learners' favour. According to the result of students' strategies of expanding the knowledge of vocabulary items, fun activities such as listening to music, watching movies and TV programmes are the most popular ones. In order to increase students' desire to learn vocabulary; for example, teachers can make use of their favourite songs. Thornbury (2002) believes that , students are able to remember the sound of new words along with the melody and retain their meaning due to the context of the song. The view is supported by Murphey (1992) who holds that music may help learners to overcome the problem of retaining vocabulary since it has the quality of "stick in one's head". Furthermore, song lyrics are believed to cover vast themes and topics, so the body of vocabulary students can be exposed to is immense.

Giving and checking assignments

As discussed before, despite the fact that freshmen highly appreciate its role, most of them are not interested in vocabulary learning. More seriously, a few students reported that as required by teachers, they learn vocabulary reluctantly. Duong shared about her glossary assignment:

"In fact, we sometimes copy words' meaning and paste them in the assignment but we don't understand them. It's not only me but also my friends who do it as a must. Of course, for hard-working students, it must be very useful."

Similar to the recommendation on teaching methods, students' favour should be made full used of. For instance, instead of asking them to find academic reading

texts and learn vocabulary appearing in the texts, teachers may allow freshmen to find words in songs, story or even films. More importantly, checking students' work enables teachers and learners themselves to know how much they have attained. Students' findings can be used as materials for teachers to design different types of vocabulary tasks.

Sharing learning strategies

Although learning strategies depend much on individual, sharing teachers' study tips is mentioned by a large number of students. Teachers can share both methods to discover word-meaning, remember words and sources of authentic materials, which they find effective. Besides, students' sharing should be noticed by teachers; therefore, teachers can recommend appropriate solutions to their problems.

5.3. Limitations

Despite the researcher's great efforts in conducting the research, there still exist some limitations in this study.

Regarding the number of participants, the researcher only collected data of 48 respondents, in which there were five interviewees due to the limited time. The result might be more valid if more teaching-major freshmen were involved in the investigation. Additionally, although the major aim of the study is to investigate students' perceptions and actions on learner autonomy in vocabulary learning, it is also mentioned in the literature review that teachers play an important role in guiding students to exploit the characteristic effectively. Therefore, if teachers were involved in the study, they could give their assessment on students' vocabulary mastery and suggest appropriate learning strategies.

The present study would be more informative if the researcher could have had a deeper look at students' presentation as autonomous learners. They are goal-setting, plan formulating and implimenting which need more investigation. The reason is that students' perceptions of learner autonomy are more accurately reflected by these habits.

Another big regret is that the researcher did not make full use of the interview. In fact, the respondents would have supplied more information if the researcher had split questions into smaller pieces. Based on rich findings; consequently, the explanation would have been more persuasive.

In a nutshell, the research was well aware of these limitations. It is hoped that the findings can serve as a reference to further studies conducted on the issue.

5.4. Recommendation

Vocabulary is a large field to do research on, therefore there will be thousands more researches done in this field. To take this research as a reference, future researchers might put the following recommendation under consideration.

As mentioned above, one of the short-comings of the current study is a modest number of respondents. Instead, with a larger population, more questionnaires fulfilled and more interviews taken may get more reliable results. Therefore, a considerable number of participants could bring about higher validity of the data and conclusion.

In addition, a possible direction for future studies is to investigate more deeply into motivation. The reason lies in the disinterest of students in vocabulary learning, which might result from the lack of motivation. If both personal and external motivation are looked into, not only students but also teachers can benefit a lot.

A different kind of research design is also suggested. Take case study is an example. A deeper look into a few participants may result in interesting data. The other researchers might spend long time to record the actual learning process rather than self-reported answers. When the issue is investigated in a new way, the result would be helpful in completing an overview of students' learner autonomy.

All things considered, the researcher hope that the present study may set the inspiration to future investigators and be a useful reference for later studies.

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APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

Part 1: Personal information

Name:..... Class:.....

Phone number:.....

Email:.....

Gender: Male/Female

Time of learning English:years

Part 2: Perception of learner autonomy in learning vocabulary

Circle one option for each question.

1. The importance of learning English vocabulary

- A. Not important B. Neutral C. Important

2. Your interest in vocabulary

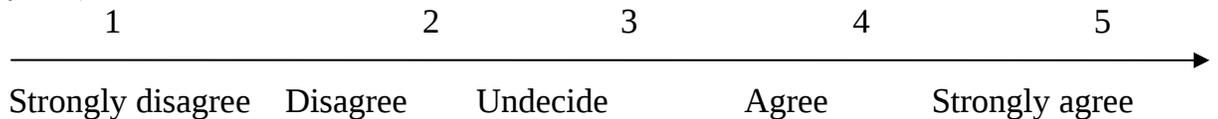
- A. Not interested B. Neutral C. Interested

3. The importance of learner autonomy in vocabulary learning

- A. Not important B. Neutral C. Important

4. What are your vocabulary learning habits?

Please put a tick (in the column of the number that reflects your vocabulary learning habits. If you have any further explanation, please write at the end of the form.)



My vocabulary learning habits	Degree of agreement				
	1	2	3	4	5
I set goals for my vocabulary mastery and adapt them when necessary.					
I make plans based on goals for my vocabulary learning and adapt them when necessary.					

I follow my vocabulary learning plans.						
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Part 3: Your strategies to learn vocabulary autonomously

Please put a tick (in the column of the number that reflects the frequency of your vocabulary learning strategies. If you have any further explanation, please write at the end of the form.)

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always

Strategies to Discovering the Meaning of New Vocabulary Items (DMV)

Discovering the Meaning of New Vocabulary Items (DMV)	1	2	3	4	5
Using a bilingual dictionary					
Using a monolingual dictionary					
Guessing the meaning from the context					
Asking teachers and/or friends or others					
Looking at the word roots, prefixes or suffixes to guess the meaning					
Others					

Strategies to retain the knowledge of newly-learned vocabulary items (RKV)

Retaining the Knowledge of Newly-learned Vocabulary Items (RKV)	1	2	3	4	5
Keeping a vocabulary notebook					
Associating new words with the synonyms or antonyms					
Grouping new words with the already-learned ones in the same					

themes					
Using new words in writing/speaking					
Using flashcards					
Others					

Strategies to expand the knowledge of vocabulary items (EKV)

Expanding the Knowledge of Vocabulary Items (EKV)	1	2	3	4	5
Reading leaflets/brochures, magazines or newspapers					
Using textbooks					
Using vocabulary building books					
Surfing the Internet especially the websites for learning English					
Watching a television programme in English					
Listening to a radio programme in English					
Watching movies in English					
Listening to English songs					
Others (please specify).....					

5. What are difficulties that you having in your vocabulary learning?

.....

.....

.....

.....

6. What is your suggestion for your teachers' vocabulary teaching activities to enhance your autonomous learning vocabulary?

.....
.....

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW

1. What is your judgement of the role of learner autonomy in learning vocabulary?
2. Do you set goals for your vocabulary learning? Do you make vocabulary learning plans and follow them?
3. What strategies do you use to learn vocabulary autonomously? How often do you use those strategies?
4. What difficulties do you have while you learn vocabulary autonomously?
5. What is your suggestion for your teachers' vocabulary teaching activities to enhance your autonomous learning vocabulary?

APPENDIX 4: TRANSCRIPTION OF INTERVIEW

The researcher translate two interviews to make examples for the interviewing.

Student Chi

1. Do you think that learning vocabulary is important?

Yes, I do.

2. Do you enjoy learning vocabulary?

No. Because I'm kind of hate rote-learning. In detail, saying and writing a word over again make me unpleased.

3. How do you assess your mastery in vocabulary?

It is limited. I think it is pre-intermediate.

4. Do you think learner autonomy is important in learning vocabulary?

It is very important for learners to learn on themselves.

5. Do you set the goal for your vocabulary learning?

When I was at high school, I set daily goal for learning vocabulary, for example several words per days, in order to pass university entrance exam. But after I entered the university, I've never done it because there is no pressure.

6. Even though you don't set goal for vocabulary learning, you still need to work with them, i.e, in reading skill. Do you check your vocabulary and how?

Yes, I do. I usually do online vocabulary test and I get two thirds right answers. But I'm not pleased with that, I'm still so lazy.

7. When you encounter a new word, what would you do to figure out its meaning?

I look for it on Tratu.vn. I look for pronunciation first then meaning. If the dictionary is not available, I try to read surrounding words, sentences and guess the meaning of target words. However, I prefer using dictionaries because it saves time.

8. How can you remember words?

Try to read words again and again. And try to use them in writing. I think it would be better to read theme-categorized passages, in which same words are used several times. Therefore, I can know how to use them and remember them better. Another way is vocabulary notebook. At high school, I was asked to keep a vocabulary notebook by my teacher.

9. Which sources of vocabulary do you often use?

For me, the internet is a good source, for example, BBC or CNN. I use these for both skills and vocabulary. For instance, after listening, I read transcript and learn new words. I also watch some TV programme, film or listen to music. However, these ways are for entertainment rather than study.

10. What difficulties do you often have when you learn vocabulary autonomously?

There are a lot of words to express the same meaning and a word has different meanings. Consequently, I don't know when to use which word.

11. What can you do to cope with the problem?

Try to note words in situation. Try to avoid from disturbance such as mobile phone.

12. Have you got any ideas for teachers to help freshmen improve their autonomous vocabulary learning?

I see that university teachers leave freedom for students to learn so students get lazier as a habit. It would be better if teachers were stricter. Autonomy is important, so are teachers. Teachers can give prizes for students if they finish assignments soon or with good results.

Student Duong

1. Do you think that learning vocabulary is important?

I think it is very important to learn vocabulary. For instance, in communication, we need words to express ideas. The more words we can use, the more persuasively we perform.

2. Do you enjoy learning vocabulary?

I must admit that I am not very interested in learning vocabulary. I know it is important to learn; however, learning vocabulary is very tiring and boring.

3. How do you assess your mastery in vocabulary?

At high school, I thought that my vocabulary was good as compared to other students. However, it turned to worse after I entered the university. Hanoiian students have good vocabulary while mine is just fair.

4. Do you think learner autonomy is important in learning vocabulary?

It is evident that learner autonomy is vital in not only learning vocabulary but also in other subjects. Although the help from friends and teachers is useful, they are not always available to help.

5. Do you set the goal for your vocabulary learning?

Yes, I do. However, setting the goal and complimenting it are different. For example, I set the goal of learning new words in a reading passage. I write all new words and phrases in a notebook. One week later, I cannot remember any words. I think the reason for that is my laziness.

6. Do you check your vocabulary by testing?

No, I don't. I just do english tests given by teachers.

7. When you encounter a new word, what would you do to figure out its meaning?

I usually try to guess the meaning of words in the context. But if I'm in class, I'll ask my classmates whose vocabulary is good. I seldom ask teachers for word-meaning. However, it is easy for me to forget words and their meanings if I ask for them because listening to the word only is not enough.

At high school, I often use English-Vietnamese dictionary but now I use English-English dictionary. University teachers always explain words in English so I want to learn the explanation. I bought an English-English dictionary and I was excited to use it daily. Now, I just use it when necessary.

8. How can you remember words?

At secondary school and high school, my teacher asked us to keep a vocabulary note. We had to say and write words again. However, at university, we are not pressed to do anything. Therefore, I just find out the meaning of words and the next time I see the words, I need to ask or look for their meanings again until I can remember it. I don't try to use ways to remember words.

9. Which sources of vocabulary do you often use?

I don't like books because they are boring. I have some funny stories in English. When I read them, I have no fun (laughing). One of my current teachers sometimes tell us funny stories, then asks us some questions which I even can't understand. Besides, I often listen to music in English in which I find interesting words and note them down.

10. What difficulties do you often have when you learn vocabulary autonomously?

There are lots of things to learn a word: pronunciation, collocation, part of speech.....

11. Have you got any ideas for teachers to help freshmen improve their autonomous vocabulary learning?

Freshmen have to do glossary of reading texts on social issues. We can widen our vocabulary by doing this assignment. In fact, we sometimes copy words' meaning and paste them in the assignment but we don't understand them. It's not only me but also my friends who do it as a must. Of course, for hard-working students, it must be very useful.

Teachers can mix learning and games. I mean that we play games but its content is sort of learning. Moreover, teachers can give us prizes but not a snack which makes us kids. Furthermore, about glossary assignment, I think it would be better if we can choose any kinds of text to work with. For instance, a song/a story is more interesting to read than a passage. Also, teachers can encourage us to learn by creating a pleasant atmosphere in class. If the teacher is humourous, students feel easy to work with; consequently, the learning becomes easier and more interesting.