L2 VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES: ANALYSING TEACHING MATERIALS AND LEARNERS' PERSPECTIVES

Gema Alcaraz Mármol*
Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha (España)
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7703-3829

Abstract: The present study analyses the vocabulary learning strategies used by a group of undergraduates studying EFL as part of their university Primary and Pre-Primary teacher training degree, and those strategies contained in the two EFL coursebooks used by those students. Coursebooks were analyzed according to seven types of vocabulary learning strategies: metacognition, inference, dictionary use, note taking, practicing, codifying and activation. Likewise, participants were asked to rank these seven strategies from the most used to the least used in their L2 vocabulary learning process. The results reveal that only four of the seven strategies, namely, codifying, practicing, activation, and inference are promoted by the coursebooks. They show a very similar line opting particularly for the development of practice and codifying. This contrasts with the EFL learners, who tend to adopt inference in the first place, followed by dictionary use and note taking, the last two being absent in the coursebooks. Therefore, in the light of these results, we can suggest that the way students monitor their vocabulary learning significantly differs from the strategies promoted by the teaching materials they use.

Keywords: coursebook, learning strategies, second language acquisition, vocabulary learning.

Estrategias de aprendizaje de vocabulario: análisis de libros de texto y perspectivas de los estudiantes

Resumen: El presente estudio analiza las estrategias de aprendizaje de vocabulario utilizadas por un grupo de estudiantes universitarios de inglés como lengua extranjera, del grado de Educación Primaria e Infantil, y las estrategias contenidas en los dos libros de texto que se siguen en el aula. Estos materiales se analizaron según siete tipos de estrategias de aprendizaje de vocabulario: metacognición, inferencia, uso del diccionario, toma de notas, práctica, codificación y activación.

---

*   Para correspondencia, por favor ponerse en contacto con: Gema Alcaraz (gema.alcaraz@uclm.es).

Asimismo, se pidió a los participantes que clasificaran estas siete estrategias de la más a la menos utilizada en su proceso de aprendizaje de vocabulario. Los resultados revelan que sólo cuatro de las siete estrategias, a saber, la codificación, la práctica, la activación y la inferencia, son promovidas por los libros de texto. Ambos materiales muestran un perfil muy similar optando especialmente por el desarrollo de la práctica y la codificación. Esto contrasta con los participantes de nuestro estudio, que suelen utilizar en primer lugar la inferencia, seguida del uso del diccionario y la toma de notas, estando las dos últimas ausentes en los libros de texto. Por lo tanto, a la luz de estos resultados, podemos sugerir que la forma en que los estudiantes monitorizan su aprendizaje de vocabulario difiere significativamente de las estrategias promovidas por los materiales didácticos que utilizan.

Palabras clave: *libro de texto, estrategias de aprendizaje, adquisición de segunda lengua, aprendizaje de vocabulario.*

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the relevant role of vocabulary in L2 acquisition is beyond doubt. However, some scholars warn that the learners' vocabulary size is far from the expected after several years of instruction. Nation (2001) affirms that at least 2000 words are necessary in order to have a basic conversation in the L2. This number increases up to 5000 if an advanced communicative competence is pursued, and to 10000 if communication is given in specialized contexts. Within the foreign language learning scope, the contact with the target language is basically limited to the classroom. Thus, vocabulary teaching becomes challenging for both students and teachers. López-Mezquita (2005) measured the vocabulary size of students in their last year of their secondary school education. Results revealed that the participants' vocabulary knowledge did not even reach 1000 English words. Likewise, more recent studies such as Nizonkiza and van Dyk (2015) or Mungkonwong and Wudthayagorn (2017) showed that the vocabulary size of undergraduates was barely around 3000 English words in half of their participants, which may become a hindrance for those students when trying to communicate in a L2 within the academic context.

The new version of the Common European Framework of Reference (2016) remarks the importance of training students in self-regulation and the role of strategies, which are given pride of place. In fact, several types of language learning strategies (hereafter LLS) can be found in the four descriptors that compose the volume, namely reception, production, interaction and mediation. The concept of self-regulation is closely related to language learning strategies. According to Gorgoz and Tican (2020), self-regulation encompasses control of emotions, flexibility, state of attention and meeting expectations. It involves a process which consists of transforming mental skills into academic ones (Zimmerman, 2001). In this sense, strategies play a key role in this process, and are particularly necessary in the self-regulated learning process of foreign language learners, particularly those concerning vocabulary learning.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Vocabulary learning strategies

Vocabulary learning strategies (hereafter VLS) are a specific dimension within the broad category of language learning strategies (LLS). Rubin (1975) was one of the first researchers who paid attention to language learning strategies. Since the publication of her study, the field of LLS has evolved and several definitions of this concept have been suggested. Oxford (1990: 8) considers LLS as "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations". Stern (1992) contends that language learners use these strategies when processing new information and trying to solve different tasks. The author also remarks that these actions are taken when the foreign language classroom adopts a problem-solving environment. Consequently, LLS become a tool which promotes the students' self-regulation of their learning process. Despite differences in some of their insights, most of these definitions acknowledge the role of LLS in the learners' mastery of the target language and the improvement of the learners' autonomy in their learning process (Pawlak, 2019). Oxford (1990) offered one of the most comprehensive taxonomies regarding LLS. They were divided into direct (memory, cognitive and compensation strategies) and indirect (metacognitive, affective and social) strategies. This classification inspired future taxonomies particularly designed for vocabulary learning. In fact, LLS have been approached from different angles. They have been classified in terms of use, that is, when learning or when using the target language (Cohen & Weaver, 2006). In the same line, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) propose their categorization based on function. They distinguished between metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective strategies. Others such as Cohen (2007) suggest classifying LLS by skill areas, among which vocabulary is considered.

The interest in vocabulary learning strategies is relatively recent. Hatch & Brown (1995) introduced five steps for L2 vocabulary learning which somehow set up the basis for research: a) encountering new words by consulting sources, b) gaining a visual or auditory image of the new words, c) focusing on word meaning, d) establishing a strong meaning-form link, e) using the new words. On this matter, Sanaoui (1995) observed that some learners structured their vocabulary learning and some others did not. The former were more independent in their learning process and approached vocabulary learning in a more systematic way, by reviewing and practicing, whereas this autonomy was not shown by the latter. These studies are in line with some of the VLS taxonomies proposed. Among the different attempts to classify VLS we find Gu & Johnson (1996), who primarily distinguished between metacognitive and cognitive VLS. These two broad dimensions were fine-tuned into six sub-categories: guessing, dictionary use, note-taking, rehearsal, encoding and activating. Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy organizes VLS into the categories of discovery and consolidation. The former encompases VLS for finding out the meaning of words encountered for the first time, whereas consolidation strategies help the learner to internalize those new words. Among discovery VLS Schmitt proposes determination and some social

strategies, whereas cognition, metacognition, memory and part of social strategies would belong to consolidation strategies.

More recent proposals are made by Nation (2001), Fan (2003) and Asyiah (2017). Nation (2001) identifies three types of strategies: planning, source and process. The first one points to how often and in which terms students should approach vocabulary, for instance, by selecting which words are important. The source strategies entail making use of the dictionary, the cotext and context to gain information about a word, while in process students use knowledge, retrieving and generating strategies as they are aware of their own learning. Another classification is introduced by Fan (2003). She adopts a cognitive perspective and promotes deep cognitive processing, as it seems to be better for vocabulary retention. Alternatively, Asyiah (2017) highlights the role of context when it comes to VLS. This is related to the well-known debate of word learning in context through reading, for instance, or out-of-context through association.

In addition to the different definitions and classifications, VLS have been explored from different angles. One of the most popular branches include studies which gauge VLS and L2 general proficiency or L2 vocabulary level. As for L2 proficiency, Goundar (2019) and Kocaman, Yildiz & Kamaz (2018) could observe a relationship between high L2 levels and wider and more varied use of VLS. A similar picture is found in Zhang & Lu (2015) or Little & Kobayashi (2015), who observed a causal relationship between the use of VLS and vocabulary size. Gender is one of the factors which has received broad attention within the field of VLS. Jiménez Catalán (2003), Gu (2002) and Soureshijani (2011) analyzed the differences between the type of VLS which were used by male and female students. The first two scholars could see that whereas males opted for visual strategies, females preferred rehearsal and planning strategies. In the case of Soureshijani (2011), she could also see significant differences between genders, but those differences pointed to higher use of gestures in men and a remarkable use of association in women. Also in relation to gender, Okyar (2021) looked at the frequency of use of VLS among female and male students. Once again, women and men differed in the type of VLS they preferred, although no significant differences were found in terms of frequency of use.

2.2. Textbooks and L2 vocabulary learning

Among the variety of foreign language (hereafter FL) teaching materials at offer nowadays, the textbook keeps its pride of place. Tomlinson (2012) highlights the convenience of this teaching tool as it provides "security, system, progress and revision" (p.158). FL teachers show their reliance on textbooks because they constitute a basis and guide for covering the curriculum and syllabus. Paradoxically enough, Norlund (2016: 49) laments the "lack of scientific grounding" in many teaching materials. In fact, Matsuoka & Hirsh (2010) warn that sometimes textbooks even contradict contemporary applied linguistics. They exemplify this idea by pointing to the linear approach adopted by many EFL coursebooks under the false premise that the full mastery of items is necessary before new concepts are introduced (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007). On this matter, textbook analysis has been approached from different perspectives. Research hinges on the communicative potential of their

activities (Carrasco-Flores & Alcaraz-Mármol, 2020), pragmatic elements (Limberg, 2016), type of instruction (Yaghoubi & Seyyedi, 2017), other linguistic aspects such as vocabulary.

In this sense, Sun & Dang (2020, p. 1) believe that textbooks are the "major source of vocabulary learning in FL contexts". In fact, one of the main sections composing EFL textbooks is usually devoted to vocabulary. Research on vocabulary in FL coursebooks mainly entails which and how many keywords are contained in those coursebooks and how these words are introduced and displayed. Vocabulary in textbooks has been examined from three main angles. One of them is based on analysing if the number of keywords in the textbook is enough to cover the learner's lexical needs (Nation, 2006). Thus, Van Zeeland & Schmitt (2013) argue that it is important to estimate the percentage of known and newly introduced words in textbooks, as there is a correct balance and learners can understand and progress at the same time. A second line of research focuses on frequency, both specific and general. Sibanda & Baxen (2016), Jiménez & Mancebo (2008) and Alcaraz-Mármol (2010) analyse the account of keywords in several textbooks from different levels. They all agree that there is a high variability of vocabulary - both in quantitative and qualitative terms - among coursebooks, and that this vocabulary does not meet the students' needs. As a case in point, O'Loughlin (2012) and McKinley & Hastings (2007) found out that the 2000 most frequent words were under represented in EFL coursebooks, limiting the usefulness and adequacy of the vocabulary contained in the analysed coursebooks. Word dispersion is a third common line of research for L2 vocabulary in textbooks. Alcaraz-Mármol (2015) advocates that despite the relevance of frequency for L2 vocabulary learning, word repetition should be complemented with other word aspects such as how these repetitions are distributed in time. Other issues of interest point to the teaching approach adopted by coursebooks (Nguyen, 2020), or whether the key vocabulary offered by materials is adapted to the needs of specific groups of learners (Elizondo, Pilgrim & Sánchez, 2019).

However, despite the plethora of studies about L2 vocabulary and textbooks, there is a scarcity of research dealing with L2 vocabulary from a strategy viewpoint. Researchers such as Oxford (2011) or Tomlinsom (2003) have addressed the integration of general LLS into courses. Indeed, Hajar & Wray (2017) insist on the "need to design strategy-rich L2 textbooks" (p. 131). Yet, very few have partitularly focused on VLS in classroom materials. Exceptions to this claim are Bastanfar & Hashemi (2010), Akbari (2015) and Murray (2019). Bastanfar & Hashemi (2010) analyse to what extent EFL textbooks follow insights from VLS research. Results show that textbooks are still far from an adequate approach to VLS. Akbari (2015) compares VLS found in EGP and ESP texts. She observed deficiences in the treatment of VLS in both types of courses, especially in the ESP coursebook. In the case of Murray (2019), four assessment criteria for the analysis of VLS were applied to three EFL textbooks. The author explored number and variety of VLS, practice opportunities, and inclusion of extra vocabulary material. The analysis pointed to a variety in the treatment of VLS among the three textbooks. None of them, though, seemed to excel in offering enough opportunities for practicing these VLS.

The present study goes one step further as regards the research commented above. Not only are VLS analysed from the textbook perspective, but also from the student's

angle. Put another way, there is a direct comparison between the VLS found in the coursebooks and the VLS preferably used by students, who are the target audience of those teaching materials.

3. Aim and research questions

The aim of the present study is to find out whether the VLS promoted in two B1 EFL textbooks are in the same line as the VLS used by B1 students of EFL. In order to do so, three research questions were posed:

- – What VLS are promoted by the two textbooks?
- – What VLS are mostly used by students?
- – Do the textbooks promote the VLS that are mostly used by their target student audience?

4. Methodology

4.1. Participants

A sample of 120 undergraduates of the 1st year of Infant and Primary Education teacher training degrees (75 women and 45 men) participated in the study. All of them got their degrees from the Faculty of Education at the University of Castilla-La Mancha. Their ages ranged from 18 to 30, although most of them were around 19. All participants were tested in terms of their proficiency level of English and were classified within B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference.

4.2. The textbooks

Two textbooks were analyzed, namely, Empower B1 (Doff *et al.*, 2018), which is adopted in the Pre-Primary Education degree, and English File Intermediate (Latham-Koenig *et al.*, 2019), used by the students in the Primary Education degree. They target intermediate-level students of EFL who want to attain the B1 level according to the Common European Framework. Empower B1 and English File Intermediate are widely used in the English subjects of several degrees of the University of Castilla-La Mancha – teacher training degree included –, as well as in the Official Language Schools of the region.

Empower B1 is one of the EFL materials edited by Cambridge University Press. The series Empower comprehends materials from elementary to advanced levels of EFL. It is a general course specifically created for adults who are native speakers of Spanish. The content of the textbook relies on the English Profile and the Cambridge English Corpus, and strictly adheres to the Common European Framework. This textbook is structured into 10 didactic units. Each unit is divided into 4 parts (A, B,

C, D) plus a review and extension. Activities are organized into sections within the units. These sections correspond to the four communicative skills – reading, listening, writing and speaking – together with grammar and vocabulary. Additionally, the course is complemented with three extra sections, that is, Communication, Grammar Focus and Vocabulary Focus, which provide extra activities. It comprehends 965 activities of which 146 (15.2%) are particularly focused on vocabulary.

English File Intermediate (2019) belongs to one of the series of Oxford University Press for adults' EFL learning. Similar to Empower B1, the series of English File covers almost all EFL levels, from A1 to C1, according to the Common European Framework. In line with Empower B1, it is structured into 10 didactic units which are divided into A and B sections, with activities for the development of the four communicative skills, as well as grammar and vocabulary. Every two units, there is a Revise and Check section with extra activities. Additional sections complement the textbook. There is a Practical English section with communication activities, a Grammar Bank and a Vocabulary Bank. The total number of activities in English File Intermediate is 638, of which 134 (21%) are specifically devoted to vocabulary learning.

It would be too simplistic to state that vocabulary learning in textbooks is reduced to specific vocabulary activities. Vocabulary learning should be understood as a cross-cutting element throughout the textbook. However, for the purpuse of this study, our analysis focuses on those activities which have been particularly designed for vocabulary learning, contained in the vocabulary sections of the two textbooks analyzed.

4.3. The construct of analysis: Strategies in Gu's taxonomy (2018)

As stated above, there are several ways of approaching VLS, and scholars have suggested different taxonomies, among which we have adopted Gu's proposal (2018). It is one of the most widely accepted and validated despite being relatively new. Gu's proposal brings together strategies previously identified by Gu & Johnson (1996), Schmitt (1997) and Nation (2001). Some of these strategies are part of the latest version of Gu's Vocabulary Learning Questionnaire. The questionnaire presents two main blocks, that is, one of beliefs about vocabulary learning, and a second block which comprehends different VLS. The VLS which are part of Gu's proposal and are considered for the present study are the following: metacognition, inferencing, dictionary use, note-taking, practice, codifying and activation.

Metacognition is defined by Anderson (2002) as "thinking about thinking" (p.1) and involves conscious decisions about what is important to learn and to pay attention to. The use of metacognitive strategies is related to the learner's autonomy, as they help the latter manage his/her own learning process (Zhou, 2016). According to Gu (2018) metacognitive VLS entangle actions such as deciding which words are important to learn in a text, looking for additional sources for vocabulary learning, trying to learn words other than the ones provided by the teacher, or paying attention to vocabulary that is not directly related to a test.

The strategy of inferencing implies the use of context and cotext in order to guess the meaning of unknown words. Nassaji (2003) highlights the benefits of inferencing,

as it can "contribute, if not lead to, immediate learning and retention of lexical and semantic information about words" (p. 646). For Gu (2018), inferring vocabulary means guessing from the text and looking for textual evidence which supports that guessing. Dictionary use is another VLS included in this study. This strategy implies looking up unknown words which are encountered several times by the learner. The dictionary is also used by learners when there is a target word which prevents the understanding of a sentence or a whole paragraph where that specific word is found. Learners also use the dictionary when they want to expand what they know about a word, for instance, different uses or meanings. The fourth VLS to be considered is note-taking. This strategy consists of taking notes about the meaning of a word or an expression. This note may adopt the L1 or L2, and it can be complemented by examples of use (Gu, 2018).

In Gu's proposal, practicing encompasses different actions of rehearsal, namely looking at a word list regularly, making vocabulary cards, saying a word aloud several times, writing a target word several times and memorizing how these words are spelt. We could say that, in practicing, the target vocabulary is recalled in a controlled context. Another VLS is codifying, which basically comprehends association of word meaning and gestures, mental images or sounds. It also implies grouping on the basis of similarities of meaning or pronunciation. Linguistic analysis may be part of codifying, as well. In fact, analysising the root and affixes of a word can help the learning of unfamiliar words, namely, in "international (inter-nation-al) (Gu, 2018). Finally, activation is understood by Gallo-Crail and Zerwekl as "using the new language in a variety of authentic situations" (2002, p. 60). Gu (2018) explains that this can be done by making sentences with recently learned vocabulary, and using the new target words as much as possible both in the oral and written contexts.

4.4. Instruments and procedure

A double analysis was needed for this study. On the one hand, the analysis of the textbooks was carried out by means of a checklist. Based on the seven strategies mentioned by Gu (2018), a checklist was designed to analyse the VLS found in both textbooks. Checklists are relatively popular instruments of textbook analysis (Dülger, 2016; Elizondo *et al.*, 2019; Carrasco-Flores & Alcaraz-Mármol, 2020). In this line, Carrasco-Flores advocates that this type of instrument has been proved to be a "systematic, comprehensive, reliable and cost- and time-effective method for materials evaluation" (Carrasco-Flores, 2019, p. 7). The checklist adopted the yes/no format to register the presence or absence of the strategies in each vocabulary activity. The procedure consisted of marking what VLS were promoted in each activity. If a strategy was present in an activity, it was registered with 1. By contrast, the VLS which were not found in the activity were marked with 0. The analysis was done by two raters who had previously received instructions on how to proceed.

On the other hand, the VLS used by the participants were analyzed. In this case, they were shown the seven VLS and a brief description of each, together with some examples. All this information was presented in Spanish, their mother tongue, so as to avoid poor understanding. Then, on the basis of the information provided, we asked the

students to rank the VLS from most to least used in their vocabulary learning process. They had to write in a numbered chart (1-7) the name of the strategies, the one at the top being the most used and the one at the very bottom of the chart corresponding to the least used.

4.5. Data analysis

The data obtained from the checklist and the chart were analyzed from a descriptive perspective. Percentages about the presence of each strategy were calculated for each coursebook and each student's rank. Additionally, Cohen's Kappa was applied in order to estimate inter-rater reliability of the analysis of the VLS.

5. RESULTS

5.1. What VLS are promoted by the textbooks?

As stated above, two raters analysed the vocabulary activities as regards the strategies promoted for vocabulary learning. The analysis of the coursebooks presents strong agreement between the two raters with Kappa values between 0.7 and 0.85 (Table 1).

	Metacognition	Inference	Dict	Note	Practicing	Codifying	Activation
k value	0.72	0.8	0.85	0.85	0.8	0.7	0.8

Table 1. *Kappa values of inter-rater reliability*

Table 2 shows the number of vocabulary activities where different VLS can be found. VLS seem to be concentrated in four categories, namely inferencing, practicing, codifying and activation. Both courses offer a similar picture, where the strategies of codifying and practicing outstand the rest. In the case of Empower, the predominant vocabulary strategy is codifying, which is present in almost 37% of the vocabulary activities. It is followed by practicing (30.8%), activation (25.3%) and inferencing (6.8%). The strategy with the highest weight in English File is practicing, found in almost 1 of each two vocabulary activities. The second position corresponds to codifying (29.1%), followed by activation with almost 18% and finally inference, which does not reach 4% of the vocabulary activities. No vocabulary activities promoting metacognition, dictionary use or note-taking were found.

	Metacogn	Inf	Dict	Note	Pract	Codif	Act
	Total (%)	Total (%)	Total (%)	Total (%)	Total (%)	Total (%)	Total (%)
Empower	0	10 (6.8%)	0	0	45 (30.8%)	54 (36.9%)	37 (25.3%)
English file	0	5 (3.7%)	0	0	66 (49.2%)	39 (29.1%)	24 (17.9%)

Table 2. *Presence of vocabulary learning strategies in*
Empower B1 and English File Intermediate

5.2. What VLS are mostly used by students?

As can be observed in Figure 1, participants ranked the VLS according to their use. The results reveal that the top three of the ranking correspond to inference in the first place, followed by dictionary use and note taking. Inference is the most used among participants. More than half of the students (64%) place it at the top of the ranking. It is followed by dictionary use in the second position, and note taking in the third place. Almost 3 out of 4 students (71.6%) coincided in attributing the fourth position to codifying. The last three positions in the ranking correspond to practicing in the fifth place, activation and metacognition, in that order.
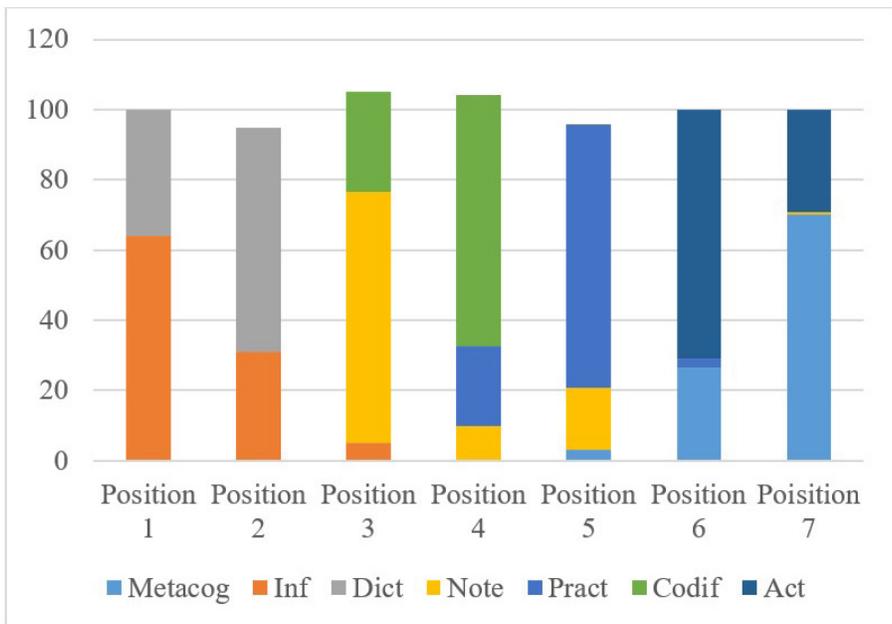

Figure 1. *Ranking of VLS used by students*

5.3. Do the textbooks promote the VLS that are mostly used by their target student audience?

The analysis shows that vocabulary activities in the two textbooks develop only four of the seven VLS which have been considered for this study. Accordingly, in order to answer this question, we focus on the first four positions of the students' ranking about the use of VLS. As can be observed in Table 3, inference and codifying are the only two strategies that appear in the textbooks, which are also among the most used among students. Neither dictionary use nor note taking – which had been very well positioned by students – are present in the vocabulary activities of the two courses analysed. These data suggest that the VLS promoted by the textbooks differ from the ones which are preferred by students in their vocabulary learning process.

Position	Empower B1	English File Intermediate	Students
1 (most present)	Codifying	Practicing	Inferencing
2	Practicing	Codifying	Dictionary use
3	Activation	Activation	Note-taking
4	Inferencing	Inferencing	Codifying
5	-	-	Practicing
6	-	-	Activation
7 (least present)	-	-	Metacognition

Table 3. *Presence of VLS in textbooks and preference of use among students*

6. DISCUSSION

In the light of our results, there seem to be important differences between the strategies for vocabulary learning promoted by the textbooks and the ones that are mostly used by students. Two of the four VLS found in the textbooks are at the bottom of the students' ranking. Thus, while practicing and activation are strongly promoted in the vocabulary activities of both Empower and English File, the use of these two strategies among students is highly limited. This contrast may indicate that textbooks are far from the students' preferences of strategy use as well as from the way they manage their L2 vocabulary learning process. Akbari (2015) observed that practice is not a popular vocabulary strategy for L2 learners. The author claims that students "definitely need awareness-raising" and that they need to "understand how much they can gain from systematic repetition" (p. 3). Nonetheless, this lack of practice and activation on the part of students leads us to think about the way learners approach L2 vocabulary. Hulstijn (2001) states that "several decades of psycholinguistic research have made it clear that lexical information must be activated regularly" (p. 286). Not only is this regular activation is essential for retention, but also for vocabulary to be fluently accessed in real-communication contexts. Nation (2001) notes that vocabulary gains cannot rely on just one meeting with a word, and repetition and practice are fundamental for

learning. What is more, this repetitive practice should be characterized by "regular vocabulary uptake" (Milton, 2009, p. 68). On this matter, Alcaraz-Mármol (2012) points out that vocabulary gain is not just a question of repetition, but a question of systematization. Put another way, not only should vocabulary be continuous and cumulative, but also rely on systematic and scheduled practice.

The case of inferencing is especially curious. Despite of being one of the VLS found in the textbook activities, it has a secondary role as it is the least promoted in both courses. Yet, it enjoys the first position in the students' ranking. Our results are in line with several studies where inference is widely used by L2 learners. Nassaji (2003) found out that this strategy was equally popular among learners of different levels. Similarly, Tanyer & Ozturk (2014) and Nematollahi, Behjat & Kargar (2017) observed that this strategy was the most used among EFL students. Pigada and Schmitt (2006) highlight the role of guessing as a tool to strengthen and enriching knowledge of partially known vocabulary. Accordingly, we agree with Nation (2015) that it is on the textbook designers to make sure to include an adequate and balanced number of known and unknown words so that constructive inference can be given.

On the other hand, the absence of the rest of VLS in both textbooks calls our attention. Metacognition, dictionary use and note taking are not part of the courses' plan to work on vocabulary. In the case of metacognition both the students and the textbooks analysed – where metacognition simply does not appear – coincide. The lack of promotion of metacognition in textbooks and among students is especially striking considering the importance attributed to this strategy among scholars. Bastanfar & Hashemi (2010) warn about lack of attention to metacognitive strategies in coursebooks. Their analysis of metacognition in a pre-university coursebook revealed that the presence of metacognitive VLS is far from the expected, and more attention to this and other VLS is required. Cubukcu (2008) states that metacognitive strategies are among the most helpful and determinant in the development of autonomous L2 learning. In fact, metacognition is particularly relevant in L2 vocabulary learning, as they provide self-direction and monitoring. Therefore, the author recommends specific training on metacognitive strategies, as they improve learners' language skills. In fact, she highlights the efficacy of metacognitive training for vocabulary learning, so that the students using metacognition become "autonomous and strategic learners" (p. 9).

Dictionary use is also completely excluded from the VLS found in the two textbooks, even though participants place it at the top of the rank, only surpassed by inferencing. However, it would be helpful to know if that use is adequate. In Akbari's words "learners do not have to be prompted to use dictionaries [...]. It is the quality of that use that is the problem" (2015, p. 3). Despite the students' tendency to use the dictionary, many learners fail to fully exploit this tool as they ignore some codes and formats. That is why some scholars (Alcaraz-Mármol & Almela, 2013; Liu, 2014; Bae, 2015) claim for the need to promote explicit training on dictionary use, as this can have a positive effect on vocabulary learning as well as on reading and writing. On this matter, we agree with Akbari (2015, p. 4) that "what is the main problem is that dictionary skills are not introduced in ELT coursebooks and the learners are expected to learn them by themselves", and this is the case in our study.

In a similar vein, note-taking is ignored by the two courses, although it is at the top three in the students' ranking. Fowle (2002) and Tezgiden (2006) found that most

of the participants in their studies showed a positive attitude towards vocabulary notebooks. Several studies have explored the effectiveness of note taking in L2 vocabulary learning (Uzun, 2013; Vela & Rushidi, 2016; Dubiner, 2017). These authors observed significant vocabulary gains in those students working vocabulary through note taking. Notwithstanding, Vela & Rushidi (2016) state that "simply writing the words on their vocabulary notebooks won't be very beneficial for the students in long term" (p. 205). In fact, they recommend to complement note taking with activities of practicing and activation. That is to say, keeping a register of new words might not be enough for vocabulary retention. The contact with a L2 in FL contexts is rather limited and almost reduced to the classroom. Thus, it is important to reinforce L2 learning beyond formal instruction. As Uzun (2013) remarks, note taking is a good instrument in promoting the student's autonomy in their L2 vocabulary learning process, and it can be especially useful in FL contexts.

7. Final Remarks

The present study seems to show that there are clear differences between the VLS contained in the textbooks analyzed and those that students tend to use. In fact, some of the strategies which are most used by students, such as the dictionary or note taking, do not even appear in the textbooks. In addition, inference, which is in first place among students, occupies a particularly modest position in the textbooks. Yet, both materials and students coincide in ignoring metacognitive strategies. In one way or another, the strategies used either by the students or found in the textbooks are oriented towards an improvement in vocabulary gains. However, they are far in their approach to vocabulary learning strategies. Therefore, specific training and guiding on how to apply these strategies is needed. Students need more guiding and training on the VLS they prefer to use. This can be done with the support of the materials they use in class, as long as materials and students adopt a similar perspective.

8. References

Akbari, Z. 2015. Key Vocabulary Learning Strategies in ESP And EGP Course Books. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature 4*(1): 1-7.

Alcaraz-Mármol, G. 2010. The role of frequency in the Elementary Foreign Language classroom. *Malaysian Journal of ELT Research 6*(1): 167-194.

Alcaraz-Mármol, G. 2012. Systematic introduction of vocabulary and its effect on acquisition: Primary Education students of English as a Foreign Language. *Porta Linguarum* 18: 149-160.

Alcaraz-Mármol, G. 2015. Dispersion and frequency: Is there any difference as regards their relation to L2 vocabulary gains? *International Journal of English Studies 15*(2): 1-16.

Alcaraz-Mármol, G. & Almela, A. 2013. The Involvement Load Hypothesis: Its effect on vocabulary learning in Primary Education. *Revista Española de Lingüística Aplicada* 26: 11-24.

Anderson, N. J. 2002. The role of metacognition in second language teaching and learning. *ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics*. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED463659.

Asyiah, N. D. 2017. The vocabulary teaching and vocabulary learning: Perception, strategies, and influences on students' vocabulary mastery. *Jurnal Bahasa Lingua Scientia 9*(2): 293-318. https://doi.org/10.21274/ls.2017.9.2.293-318.

Bae, S. 2015. A course in dictionary use for Korean EFL teachers. *ASIALEX* 2: 45-69.

Bastanfar, A. & Hashemi, T. 2010. Vocabulary Learning Strategies and ELT Materials: A Study of the Extent to Which VLS Research Informs Local Coursebooks in Iran. *International Education Studies 3*(3): 158-166.

Carrasco-Flores, J. A. 2019. Analysing English for Translation and Interpreting materials: skills, sub-competences and types of knowledge. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*. http://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2019.1647920.

Carrasco Flores, J. A. & Alcaraz-Marmol, G. 2020. Exploring ESP textbooks for commerce and medicine: An analysis of skills and types of instruction. *Journal of Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes 8*(3):265-281. https://doi.org/10.22190/JTESAP2003265C.

Cohen, A. H. 2007. Coming to terms with language learner strategies: surveying the experts. In Cohen A.D. & Macaro E. (Eds.), *Language learner strategies: 30 years of research and practice*: 29-45. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cohen, A. D. & Weaver, S.J. 2006. *Styles and strategies-based instruction: A teachers' guide*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota.

Common European Framework of Reference. 2016. Council of Europe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cubukcu, F. 2008. Enhancing vocabulary development and reading comprehension through metacognitive strategies. *Issues in Educational Research 18*(1): 1-11.

De Bot, K., Lowie, W. & Verspoor, M. 2007. A dynamic systems theory approach to second language acquisition. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition 10*(1): 7-21.

Doff, A., Thaine, C., Puchta, H., Stranks, J. & Lewis-Jones, P. 2018. *Empower B1* (4th Edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dubiner, D. 2017. Using vocabulary notebooks for vocabulary acquisition and teaching. *ELT Journal 71*(4): 456-466.

Dülger, O. 2016. Evaluation of EFL coursebooks taught in Turkey based on teachers' views. *Journal of Advances in English Language Teaching 4*(1): 1-11.

Elizondo, J. F., Pilgrim, Y. & Sánchez, A. 2019. Assessing ESP vocabulary and grammar through Task-Based Language Teaching. *Revista de Lenguas Modernas* 30: 73-95.

Fan, M. 2003. Frequency of use, perceived usefulness, and actual usefulness of second language vocabulary strategies: A study of Hong Kong Learners. *The Modern Language Journal 87*(2): 222-241.

Fowle, C. 2002. Vocabulary notebooks: Implementation and outcomes. *ELT Journal 56*(4): 380-388.

GALLO-CRAIL, R. & ZERWEKH, R. 2002. Language learning and the Internet: Student strategies in vocabulary acquisition. In Spreen C. A. (Ed.), *New technologies and language learning: Cases in the less commonly taught languages*: 55-79. Hawaii: University of Hawaii.

GORGOZ, S. & TICAN, C. 2020. Investigation of middle school students' self-regulation skills and vocabulary learning strategies in foreign language. *International Journal of Educational Methodology* 6(1): 25 - 42. https://doi.org/10.12973/ijem.6.1.25.

GOUNDAR, P. 2019. Vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) employed by learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). *English Language Teaching 12*(5): 177-189.

GU, P. Y. 2002. Gender, academic major, and vocabulary learning strategies of Chinese EFL learners. *RELC Journal*, *33*(1): 35-54. https://doi.org/10.1177/003368820203300102.

GU, P. Y. 2018. Validation of an online questionnaire of vocabulary learning strategies for ESL learners. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching 8*(2): 325-350.

GU, P. Y. & JOHNSON, R. K. 1996. Vocabulary learning strategies and language learning outcomes. *Language Learning 46*(4): 643-679.

HATCH, E. & BROWN, C. 1995. *Vocabulary, semantics, and language education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

HAJAR, A. & WRAY, C. 2017. Helping Learners Learn: Exploring Strategy Instruction Into Language Learning Textbooks. In H. Masuhara, F. Mishan & B. Tomlinson, (Eds.), *Practice And Theory For Materials Development In L2 Learning*: 131-148. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

HULSTIJN, J. H. 2001. Intentional And Incidental Second Language vocabulary learning a reappraisal of elaboration, rehearsal and automaticity. In R. Peter (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction*: 258-286. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

JIMÉNEZ CATALÁN, R. M. & MANCEBO R. 2008. Vocabulary Input In Efl Textbooks. *Resla* 21: 147-165.

JIMÉNEZ CATALÁN, R. M. 2003. Sex Differences In L2 Vocabulary Learning Strategies. *International Journal Of Applied Linguistics 13*(1): 54-77.

KOCAMAN, O., YILDIZ, M. & KAMAZ, B. 2018. Use Of Vocabulary Learning Strategies In Turkish As A Foreign Language Context. *International Journal Of Psychology And Educational Studies*, *5*(2): 54-63. Http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.17220/Ijpes.2018.02.007.

LATHAM-KOENIG, C., OXENDEN, C. & LAMBERT, J. 2019. *English File Intermediate* (3ʳᵈ Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

LIMBERG, H. 2016. Teaching How To Apologize: Efl Textbooks And Pragmatic Input. *Language Teaching Research 20*(6): 700-718.

LITTLE, A. & KOBAYASHI, K. 2015. Vocabulary Learning Strategies Of Japanese Life Science Students. *Tesol* 6: 81-11. Https://Doi.Org/10.1002/Tesj.141.

LIU, L. 2014. The Integration Of Dictionary Use Strategy Training Into Basic English Class. *Theory And Practice In Language Studies 4*(10): 2138-3143.

López-Mezquita, M. T. 2005. La evaluación de la dimensión léxica a nivel receptivo: Un marco para el diseño de instrumentos de medida. Perspectivas interdisciplinares de la lingüística aplicada. *Resla* 19: 381–390.

Matsuoka, V. & Hirsh, D. 2010. Vocabulary Learning Through Reading: Does An Elt Course Book Provide Good Opportunities? *Reading In A Foreign Language 22*(1): 56-70.

Mckinley, S. & Hastings, B. 2007. *Longman English Success*. New Jersey: Pearson Longman.

Milton, J. 2009. *Measuring Second Language Vocabulary Acquisiton*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Mungkonwong, P. & Wudthayagorn, J. 2017. An Investigation Of Vocabulary Size Of Thai Freshmen And Its Relationship To Years Of English Study. *Learn Journal: Language Education And Acquisition Research Network Journal 10*(2): 1-9.

Murray, C. 2019. Inclusion Of Vocabulary Learning Strategies In Elt Coursebooks. *The Journal Of Asia Tefl*, *16*(2): 727-734. Http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.18823/Asiatefl.2019.16.2.21.727.

Nassaji, H. 2003. L2 Vocabulary Learning From Context: Strategies, Knowledge Sources, And Their Relationship With Success In L2 Lexical Inferencing. *Tesol Quarterly 37*(4): 645-670.

Nation, P. 2001. *Learning Vocabulary In Another Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nation, P. 2006. How Large A Vocabulary Is Needed For Reading And Listening? *Canadian Modern Language Review 63*(1): 59-82. Https://Doi.Org/10.3138/Cmlr.63.1.59.

Nation, P. 2015. Principles Guiding Vocabulary Learning Through Extensive Reading. *Reading In A Foreign Language 27*(1): 136-145.

Nematollahi, B., Behjat, F. & Kargar, A. 2017. A Meta-Analysis Of Vocabulary Learning Strategies Of Efl Learners. *English Language Teaching 10*(5): 1-10.

Nguyen, C. 2020. Lexical Features Of Reading Passages In English-Language Textbooks For Vietnamese High-School Students: Do They Foster Both Content And Vocabulary Gain? *Relc Journal 58*(2): 1-14. Https://Doi.Org/10.1177/0033688219895045.

Nizonkiza, D. & Van Dyk, T. 2015. Academic Literacy Of South African Higher Education Level Students: Does Vocabulary Size Matter? *Stellenbosch Papers In Linguistics* 44: 147-174. Https:// Doi: 10.5774/44-0-159.

Norlund, M. 2016. Efl Textbooks For Young Learners: A Comparative Analysis Of Vocabulary. *Education Inquiry 7*(1): 47-68.

O'loughlin, R. 2012. Tuning Into Vocabulary Frequency In Coursebooks. *Relc Journal 43*(2): 255-269. Https://Doi.Org/10.1177/0033688212450640.

O'malley, J. M. & Chamot, A. U. 1990. *Learning Strategies In Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Okyar, H. 2021. Vocabulary Learning Strategies Of Turkish Efl Learners: A Focus On Gender. *Journal Of English Teaching 7*(1): 43-54. Https://Doi.Org/10.33541/Jet.V7i1.2289.

Oxford, R. L. 1990. *Language Learning Strategies. What Every Teacher Should Know*. New York: Newbury House.

Oxford, R. L. 2011. *Teaching And Researching Language Learning Strategies*. Harlow: Pearson Longman.

Pawlak, M. 2019. Investigating Language Learning Strategies: Prospects, Pitfalls And Challenges. *Language Teaching Research*, 4: 1-19. Https://Doi.Org/10.1177/1362168819876156.

Pigada, M. & Schmitt, N. 2006. Vocabulary Acquisition From Extensive Reading: A Case Study. *Reading In A Foreign Language 18*(1): 1–28.

Rubin, J. 1975. What The 'good Language Learner' Can Teach Us. *Tesol Quarterly* 9: 41–51.

Sanaoui, R. 1995. Adult Learners' Approaches To Learning Vocabulary In Second Languages. *The Modern Language Journal 79*(1): 15-28.

Schmitt, N. 1997. Vocabulary Learning Strategies. In N. Schmitt & M. Mccarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary: Description, Acquisition And Pedagogy*: 199-227. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sibanda, J. & Baxen, J. 2016. Determining Esl Learners' Vocabulary Needs From A Textbook Corpus: Challenges And Prospects. *Southern African Linguistics And Applied Language Studies 34*(1): 57-70. Http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.2989/16073614.2016.1159521.

Soureshijani, K. H. 2011. Gender-Oriented Use Of Vocabulary Strategies: A Comparative Study. *Theory And Practice In Language Studies 1*(7): 898-902.

Stern, H. H. 1992. *Issues And Options In Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sun, Y. & Dang, T. 2020. Vocabulary In High-School Efl Textbooks: Texts And Learner Knowledge. *System* 93: 1-13. Https://Doi.Org/10.1016/J.System.2020.102279.

Tanyer, S. & Y. Ozturk. 2014. Pre-Service English Teachers' Vocabulary Learning Strategy Use And Vocabulary Size: A Cross-Sectional Evaluation. *Journal Of Language Teaching And Research 5*(1): 37-45.

Tezgiden, Y. 2006. A Critical Review Of Teacher Education Models. *International Journal Of Educational Policies 10*(2): 121- 140.

Tomlinson, B. 2003. *Developing Materials For Language Teaching*. London: Bloomsbury.

Tomlinson, B. 2012. Materials Development For Language Learning And Teaching. *Language Teaching* 45: 143–179.

Uzun, L. 2013. Promoting Vocabulary Learning Through Vocabulary Notebooks: Teaching And Learning Strategies And Gender. *Journal Of Academic Language & Learning 7*(1): 1-13.

Van Zeeland, H. & Schmitt, N. 2013. Lexical Coverage In L1 And L2 Listening Comprehension: The Same Or Different From Reading Comprehension? *Applied Linguistics 34*(4): 457-479. Https://Doi. Org/10.1093/Applin/Ams074.

Vela, V. & Rushidi, J. 2016. The Effect Of Keeping Vocabulary Notebooks On Vocabulary Acquisition And Learner Autonomy. *Procedia, Social And Behavioural Sciences* 232: 201-208.

Yaghoubi, S. T. & Seyyedi, F. 2017. The Effect Of Explicit And Implicit Teaching Vocabulary On Iranian Efl Learners Vocabulary. *Studies In English Language And Education 4*(1): 15-25. Https:// Doi.Org/10.24815/Siele.V4i1.7001.

Zhang, X. & Lu, X. 2015. The Relationship Between Vocabulary Learning Strategies And Breadth And Depth Of Vocabulary Knowledge. *The Modern Language Journal 99*(4): 740-753. Https://Doi. Org/10.1111/Modl.12277.

Zhou, M. 2016. The Roles Of Social Anxiety, Autonomy, And Learning Orientation In Second Language Learning: A Structural Equation Modelling Analysis. *System* 63: 89-10.

Zimmerman, B. J. 2001. Theories Of Self-Regulated Learning And Academic Achievement: An Overview And Analysis. In Zimmerman, B. J. & Schunk, D. H. (Eds.), *Self-Regulated Learning And Academic Achievement*: 1-37. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.