



***MODERATING ROLE OF AFFECTIVE FACTORS ON RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES USE AND
VOCABULARY PERFORMANCE***

LAILA AIYAD ALI ABOZAID

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By

LAILA AIYAD ALI ABOZAID

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, University Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

January 2020

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Chairman: Ilyana BintiJalaluddin, PhD
Faculty: Modern Languages and communication

Vocabulary is a vital aspect of all language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. However, many Libyan undergraduates display various problems when encountering vocabulary in English. In order to develop Libyan students' vocabulary, there is a need to improve their strategies for learning vocabulary as it influences learning English in general. Therefore, the aim of this research is to examine the moderating role of affective factors on relationship between vocabulary learning strategies use and vocabulary performance. The first objective of this study was to identify the level of learners' vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) use, learners' affective factors (self-efficacy beliefs, learners' attitudes, learners' anxiety, and learners' self-regulating capacity), and the productive and receptive vocabulary knowledge of the respondents. It also tested the significance of the relationship between the selected Libyan learners' affective factors and their use of vocabulary learning strategies. Furthermore, it determined the significance of learners' affective factors in their productive and receptive vocabulary performance. The results were obtained through investigation of the moderating role of affective factors on relationship between VLS use and vocabulary performance. A total number of 200 Libyan EFL undergraduate students participated in the study, who were selected from a Libyan public university (Tripoli University). In this study, the data was collected through two sets of questionnaires. The first one was adopted from Schmitt's (1997) Vocabulary Learning Strategies Questionnaire (VLSQ). The second one was adapted from Tseng's (2006) Initial Appraisal of Vocabulary Learning Experience and Self-Regulating Capacity in Vocabulary Learning (IAVLE & SRCvoc). The Productive Vocabulary Levels Test (PVL) by Laufer and Nation (1999) and the Vocabulary Size Test (VST) by Nation and Belgar (2007) were adopted to achieve the goals of the study. Data was analysed quantitatively using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 25. Frequency counts, mean scores, and standard deviations were used to analyse students' frequency of vocabulary learning strategies, students' level of affective factors and students' vocabulary performance. The research also employed Pearson correlation to determine the relationships between variables. Furthermore, multiple regression analyses were performed to find the effect of affective factors on the relationship between vocabulary learning strategies use and vocabulary performance. The findings show that the respondents were determined as medium-level strategy users with a mean score of 3.4 and standard deviation of 0.5 for overall strategy use. The findings also show positive relationships between variables: the overall vocabulary

learning strategies were significantly related to self-efficacy, attitude, anxiety, and self-regulation; learners' scores of vocabulary size were significantly related to affective factors; and a statistically significant relationship between learners' vocabulary performance and their use of vocabulary learning strategies was found. In addition, the findings reveal that there is a moderating role of self-regulation on relationship between vocabulary learning strategies use and vocabulary performance. The results indicate that vocabulary learning strategies and vocabulary performance can improve through the integration of self-regulation.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KESAN FAKTOR AFEKTIF KE ATAS HUBUNGAN ANTARA
PENGUNAAN STRATEGI PEMBELAJARAN KOSA KATA DAN PRESTASI
KOSA KATA**

Oleh

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Kosa kata merupakan aspek penting bagi semua kemahiran bahasa: membaca, menulis, mendengar, dan bertutur. Penyelidikan ini meneliti kesan faktor afektif ke atas hubungan antara penggunaan strategi pembelajaran kosa kata dan prestasi kosa kata. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengenal pasti tahap terkini penggunaan strategi pembelajaran kosa kata pelajar (VLS), faktor afektif pelajar (kepercayaan, efikasi sendiri, sikap pelajar, kebimbangan pelajar, dan kapasiti kawalan sendiri pelajar), dan pengetahuan kosa kata produktif dan reseptif responden. Kajian ini juga menguji kesignifikan hubungan antara faktor afektif pelajar Libya terpilih dan penggunaan strategi pembelajaran kosa kata mereka. Tambahan pula, ia menentukan kesignifikan faktor afektif pelajar dalam prestasi kosa kata produktif dan reseptif mereka. Dapatan diperoleh melalui penelitian kesan faktor afektif ke atas hubungan antara penggunaan VLS dan prestasi kosa kata. Sejumlah 200 pelajar prasiswazah EFL Libya telah menyertai kajian ini yang telah dipilih secara rawak dari sebuah universiti awam Libya (Tripoli University). Dalam kajian ini, data telah dikumpul melalui dua set soal selidik. Soal selidik pertama, telah diterima pakai daripada Soal Selidik Strategi Kosa Kata (VLSQ) Schmitt (1997). Kedua, diubah suai daripada Penilaian Awal Pengalaman Pembelajaran Kosa Kata dan Kapasiti Kawalan Kendiri dalam Pembelajaran Kosa Kata (IAVLE & SRCvoc) Tseng (2006). Ujian Tahap Kosa Kata Produktif (PVL) oleh Laufer dan Nation (1999) dan Ujian Saiz Kosa Kata (VST) oleh Nation dan Belgar (2007) telah diterima pakai bagi mencapai matlamat kajian. Data telah dianalisis secara kuantitatif menggunakan Pakej Statistik bagi Sains Sosial versi 25. Kiraan kekerapan, skor min, dan sisihan lazim telah digunakan untuk menganalisis kekerapan strategi pembelajaran kosa kata pelajar, tahap faktor afektif pelajar dan prestasi kosa kata pelajar. Penyelidikan ini juga menggunakan korelasi tertib pangkat Spearman untuk menentukan hubungan antara pemboleh ubah. Di samping itu, analisis regresi berganda telah dilaksanakan untuk memperlihatkan pengaruh faktor afektif ke atas hubungan antara penggunaan strategi pembelajaran kosa kata dan prestasi kosa kata. Dapatan menunjukkan bahawa responden adalah sebagai pengguna strategi tahap sederhana dengan skor min 3.4 dan sisihan lazim 0.5 bagi keseluruhan penggunaan strategi. Dapatan juga menunjukkan hubungan yang positif antara pemboleh ubah: keseluruhan strategi pembelajaran kosa kata adalah secara signifikan berkaitan dengan efikasi sendiri, sikap, kebimbangan, dan kawalan sendiri; skor saiz kosa kata pelajar adalah secara signifikan berkaitan dengan faktor afektif; dan didapati bahawa hubungan antara prestasi kosa kata

pelajar dan penggunaan strategi pembelajaran kosa kata mereka secara statistik adalah signifikan. Tambahan pula, dapatan memperlihatkan bahawa terdapatnya kesan kawalan sendiri ke atas hubungan antara strategi pembelajaran kosa kata dan prestasi kosa kata. Dapatan kajian memperlihatkan bahawa strategi pembelajaran kosa kata dan prestasi kosa kata dapat dipertingkatkan melalui integrasi kawalan sendiri.



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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FL	Foreign Language
EFL	English as Foreign Language
VLSs	Vocabulary Learning Strategies
VP	Vocabulary Performance
L2	Second Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
VLSQ	Vocabulary Learning Strategies Questionnaire
STM	Short Term Memory
WM	Working Memory
LTM	Long Term Memory
GTM	Grammar Translation Method
YLS	Young Learners
VLT	Vocabulary Level Test
WAT	Word Associates Test
CPA	Controlled Productive Ability
LLS	Language Learning Strategies
NL	Native Language
PVLT	Productive Vocabulary Levels Test
VST	Vocabulary Size Test
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
L1	First Language
SILL	Strategy Inventory for Language Learning

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The learning of vocabulary is an essential and a perennial aspect of language learning (Gifford, 2013). Thornbury (2002) posited that “Vocabulary learning never stops even long after the grammar system is firmly in place” (p. 160). Zimmerman (2009) also was of the opinion that learning and enlarging one’s vocabulary is a lifelong process. This is because it facilitates the performance of a person in interviews, personality tests, and even in many competitive exams. Gifford (2013) stated that “a person having more breadth and depth of vocabulary has wider competence to communicate and to understand a communication, and is to be considered intelligent” (p. 18). The process of foreign language (FL) learning is an important activity for someone making the effort to learn a FL for various reasons in a country like Libya, and for many decades there has been much interest in investigating the nature of English as a foreign language (EFL) in that context and its effects on proficiency. This study examines the moderator role of affective factors on how the use of vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) and vocabulary performance (VP) are related in order to have beneficial inputs for the English vocabulary learning process in Libya. This chapter will begin with the background on vocabulary learning. Then, the problem statement will be presented to justify the importance of carrying out this study. To explain further about the study, the purpose and objectives of this study are outlined. This is supported by research questions and a conceptual framework which form the foundation of the study. Finally, the significance of the study will be discussed, and the chapter is concluded with the definition of key terms used in this thesis.

1.2 Background of the Study

For many decades, vocabulary learning was not important and was largely neglected (Meara, 1980). Even though the teaching and learning of vocabulary have been marginalised in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) for the major part of the learning process (Heidari & Tavakoli, 2016; Shintani, 2013; Webb, 2007), it is recognised that in learning a second language (L2), the acquisition of vocabulary commences as soon as the learner embarks on the learning process and continues long after all the other aspects of L2 learning have been mastered; it is in fact lifelong learning (Llach, 2011). Moreover, current teachers and language researchers have finally recognised the crucial role that vocabulary acquisition plays in various pedagogical activities. It is obvious that the majority of L2 instructors and learners now realise the significance of acquiring a sizeable store of words to help achieve proficiency in the use of L2s (Mohseni-Far, 2007; Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2010). Furthermore, lexical approaches in language teaching reflect a belief in the centrality of lexicon to language structure, second language learning, and language use (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Ma (2009) stated that “[no] linguist today would seriously contest the fact that, quantitatively, vocabulary dominates in the language field and that vocabulary

acquisition is the main obstacle to language acquisition” (p. 21). Without an adequate store of words, students will face problems in attaining proficiency in L2, reading, writing, and other communication, and this is why inadequacy of vocabulary has often been reported to be a major obstacle for L2 learners, while students in various academic programmes frequently seek more vocabulary instruction (Folse, 2004). In light of what has been stated above, Schmitt (2007) argues that vocabulary learning is incremental in nature, and thus poses certain complexities in any language learning activity, and as such, “words must be met and used multiple times to be truly learned” (p. 830).

Nevertheless, vocabulary is a fundamental aspect in language learning, it is easily mastered via strategies. Weinstein and Mayer (1986) defined strategies as “the behaviours and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning that are intended to influence the learner’s encoding process” (p. 315). Furthermore, Weinstein, Husman & Dierking (2000) explained learning strategies as “any thoughts, behaviours, beliefs, or emotions that facilitate the acquisition, understanding, or later transfer of new knowledge and skills” (p. 727).

According to Nambiar (1998), learning strategies consist of three different phenomena: (1) learning strategies that involve the behaviour the language learner adopts while learning the language, (2) learning strategies having to do with the knowledge that the learner exhibits while reviewing the way the language learning process works, and (3) learning strategies in respect to the learner’s acquired knowledge that affects the choice of strategies used that is recognisable and can indicate if his or her proficiency is adequate enough to affect the use of learning strategies in language learning.

Recently, researchers have focused more on autonomous learning. For this reason, they have given most attention to learning and the factors which may influence the learners’ learning process (Grenfell & Macaro, 2008). Cotterall (2000) mentioned that many language teachers have shown interest in integrating the tenets of learner autonomy in practice. In the classroom environment, teachers can nurture students’ independence by permitting and even motivating them to carry out classroom learning tasks on their own (Jones, 2007).

It is not only the learner’s choice to take full responsibility for his or her learning, but also the learning environment and the system should be geared towards recognising the rights of learners in contributing to their personal learning within the educational system (Benson, 2013). Therefore, the role of the teacher in providing the necessary support to learners and creating proper space for the development of autonomy is very crucial. This means enough freedom for learners in the classroom, but with essential restrictions.

Researchers have realised that students who think and work strategically possess higher levels of motivation towards learning and have higher levels of confidence in their capabilities. Consequently, they are self-dependent in learning vocabulary and are academically more successful compared to those who are devoid of effective strategies

for learning by themselves (Benson, 2013; Boud, 1995; Dam, 1995; Dickinson, 1993; Holec, 1981; Little, 2003; Omaggio, 1978).

VLSs play a vital role in vocabulary acquisition, and vocabulary knowledge could have an effect on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills for English as a second language (ESL) or EFL learners. The number of studies (Doczi, 2011; Nacera, 2010; Mizumoto, 2012; Ping & Sirg, 2012; Tseng, 2006) on learners' VLS use keeps increasing every year leading to various factors affecting learners' VLS use being taken into consideration.

The learning process is dependent on various factors: cognitive factors (language aptitude and learning strategies), affective factors (attitudes, motivation, and anxiety), metacognitive factors, and demographic factors (Henter, 2004). Affective factors are emotion-based factors which affect learning (Schütz & Pekrun, 2007). They can bring about negative or positive consequences. Negative affective factors are known as affective filters and are an important notion in theories on L2 learning (<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/affective-factors>). Mori and Mori (2011) stated that research on each difference in SLA supports the belief that some non-linguistic factors can clarify why some L2 learners succeed better than others. These individual differences may be derived from affective factors, such as motivation, anxiety, attitudes, and learner perceptions. Several affective studies (Habók & Magyar, 2018; Subon, 2013; Mohammadi, Biri, Koosha, & Shahsavari, 2013) have investigated various strategies used by learners with different goals, feelings, attitudes, and perceptions when they were faced with the same task and examined how these approaches impact the degree of success in language learning.

There are many studies that have focused on vocabulary learning strategies but have not taken into account the affective factors that influence the learning process. In light of this, the aim of this current study is to examine the influence of affective factors on VLSs. The section that follows deals with the problem statement of the study.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Vocabulary is a very vital aspect of the four language skills that will enable learners to read, write, listen, and speak. With the knowledge of vocabulary, a learner can convey the meaning of his or her ideas. Leacox and Jackson (2014) and Braker (2013) indicated that vocabulary is one of the basic ingredients for successful reading. Researchers like Laufer and Nation (1999), Maximo (2000), Read (2000), Gu (2003), Marion (2008) and Nation (2011) have recognised the fact that acquiring vocabulary is crucial to succeed in L2 use and plays an important part in the process of forming complete spoken and written texts. This shows the importance of vocabulary learning in English language learning whether in EFL or ESL. At present, it is widely recognized that learning strategies have become one of the main factors that help students learn a second or foreign language successfully (Oxford, 2003; see Montaña, 2017). In this sense, the researcher decided to tackle vocabulary strategies which are a sub-strategy of language learning strategies to

solve the problem of learning vocabulary related to the Libyan context as will be explained latter.

In Libya, English is taught as FL (Altaieb, 2013) and vocabulary is a big problem for most learners of them. Khalifa (2015) says that the main problem that learners complain about is that they cannot recall the words taught or their meanings. Another issue is orthography. Libyan learners find it difficult to spell the words correctly. In order to memorize new words, most Libyan learners normally use the word repetition strategy. For instance, they repeat the English word aloud with its Arabic translation or write it several times on a piece of paper or notebook with the Arabic equivalent. Some of the learners feel that using only the memorisation strategy does not generate any interest or enthusiasm to learn more new words on their own. Lastly, the learners have never been exposed to training on different vocabulary learning strategies.

In this context, Altaieb (2013) states that

“During my middle and high school experiences learning English, I had to memorize the lists of new words and grammatical rules given to me by my teachers on a daily basis... I always wondered if there were other ways for me to learn English than by the traditional memorization process that most teachers at that time adopted. I liked to use English communicatively rather than just memorizing new vocabulary and grammatical rules, which was the dominant approach followed by my teachers”. (Altaieb, 2013, pp. 1-2)

Furthermore, research findings by other Libyan researchers have mentioned that Libyan students have a smaller vocabulary size than what has been required in the English Teaching Syllabus (Aljdee & Orafi, 2015). In addition, results reported Libyan EFL learners were using a wide range of VLSs, although the frequency of use is relatively low (Aljdee, 2008). The majority of teachers in Libyan secondary schools have knowledge of the theoretical formulations of teaching vocabulary learning strategies to the students; however, they do not teach their students any vocabulary learning strategies to learn new English lexical items, and they do not encourage them to use resources out of the classrooms to enhance their vocabulary (Khalifa & Shabdin, 2016). Consequently, learners lack the exposure to various kinds of strategies to learn new lexical items (Altaieb, 2013; Khalifa, 2015).

The curriculum in Libyan secondary schools (2000) has changed from a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach. Thus, the new school textbooks in English provide various communicative activities and learning tasks which encourage learners to engage in group tasks. However, local researches have indicated that the instructional methods of most Libyan EFL teachers in secondary schools continue to be teacher-centred (Ahmad, 2004; Alhmali, 2007; Ali, 2008; Dalal, 2006; Orafi & Borg, 2009; Saleh, 2002).

In Libyan schools the teaching of English begins from the fifth grade when learners are at the age six. Since the curriculum is based on the communicative approach, the English

syllabus is usually varied to serve all the needs of the students. However, teachers continue to use the grammar-translation method in terms of teaching vocabulary. There is less attention paid to vocabulary teaching in class and emphasis continues to be on teaching English grammar rules. The grammar-translation method was the most used approach in the English classroom in the past and the situation has not changed (Altaieb, 2013, p. 4-5). This is a possible reason for the lack of vocabulary knowledge or the lack of autonomy in using learning strategies. Generally, the importance of VLSs, especially in the field of FL learning, should be taken into account.

The teaching of English in the Libyan context has passed through many stages as explained in (section 2.3) and produced a few studies which have been confined to examining the kinds of VLSs that are employed by learners and the frequency of using these strategies. For instance, Aljdee (2011) investigated Libyan EFL learners' range and frequency of VLSs using a VLS questionnaire (VLSQ), the vocabulary levels test (VLT), the vocabulary size test of controlled productive ability (CPA) and semi-structured interviews. A correlation was established for the students' answers and their results in two vocabulary tests and used to assess the students' reception and controlled production of vocabulary knowledge. The results demonstrated that the students used several VLSs, albeit with less frequency. It was also revealed that in terms of frequency of use, discovery strategies scored higher than consolidation strategies. In addition, it was revealed that the learners' vocabulary knowledge and some VLSs, including the use of a monolingual dictionary, contextual guessing, list, making of words, and media use, were very positively correlated.

Khalifa and Shabdin (2016) measured the attitude of secondary school English teachers in Libya towards the teaching of VLSs to their students in class. They aimed to determine the extent of awareness of teachers in secondary schools in Libya towards VLSs and their significance in the foreign language learning process. Structured interviews and two different kinds of questionnaire were used to collect data. The first questionnaire was meant to gather information on the confirmatory belief in VLSs of English teachers in secondary schools in Libya. A second survey was used to determine the number of teachers who practically implemented their beliefs in VLS theory. They concluded that as:

“The majority of teachers in Libyan secondary schools are aware of the theoretical formulations behind the advocacy of teaching VLSs to their students, and they expressed their confirmatory beliefs about the usefulness of VLSs in learning English. However, in general, they do not formally teach their students any VLSs to learn new English lexical items, and specifically, they do not encourage students to use present-day multimedia resources, such as the Internet resources, English music and films, etc., resources that students can use to enhance their vocabulary out of the classroom”. (Khalifa & Shabdin, 2016)

Nevertheless, despite the impressive level of current research on vocabulary acquisition in the Libyan context, it is disappointing to know that little work has been done investigating VLSs. In addition, Students who learn English need to practice both within the classroom and outside. However, students from EFL do not have the ability to train

outside the classroom. Libya is a traditional place where English is not spoken outside of the classroom. Libya is one of the countries that teaches English as a foreign language. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on the affective factors of students which in turn will reflect on their attitude towards the language learning process in general. Thus, there should also be a lot of concern for the development of Libyan students' vocabulary, which is a dynamic process involving several variables, such as affective factors. Affective factors contribute to students' feelings and emotional responses (e.g., attitudes, anxiety, motivation and self-efficacy) (Henter, 2014; Khaleghi, 2016). Affective factors can affect the learning of EFL either negatively or positively. Simply put, while it can encourage positive feelings of students towards the different facets of the learning process, their negative feelings will force them into erecting barriers to avoid it. Thus affective factors may promote an effective linguistic learning process if properly stimulated; otherwise, they may be one of the most significant reasons for language failure (Farzana, 2015; Khaleghi, 2016, Uysal & Güven, 2018). Consequently, recent studies in applied linguistics have highlighted the role of affective factors in EFL's learning process and its significance in English teaching and learning.

Consequently, for the importance of affective factors in the learning process of EFL, recent studies in applied linguistics have directed much emphasis on the analysis of the role of affective factors and its implications in teaching and learning of English. Therefore, the researcher intended to look to the vocabulary learning process with reference to the importance of affective factors in second language. Previous studies (Gu & Johnson, 1996; Hamzah, Kafipour, & Abdullah, 2009; Sener, 2009, 2015) confirmed the relationship between vocabulary learning strategies (independent variables) and vocabulary performance (dependent variable). The researcher intended to investigate the role of affective factors (moderator variables) on the above mentioned relationship. Based upon the above-mentioned role of the affective factors in learning EFL, the present research attempted to investigate the moderating role of affective factors on the relationship between VLS use and vocabulary performance.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

In general, this study attempts to explore if there is a moderating role of affective domains such as self-efficacy belief, attitude, anxiety, and self-regulation on the relationship between VLSs use and the performance of vocabulary in the process by Libyan EFL university students. The current study specifically aims to:

1. Identify the level of:
 - Learners' vocabulary learning strategy (VLS) use;
 - Learners' affective factors: self-efficacy beliefs, learners' attitudes, learners' anxiety, and learners' self-regulating capacity;
 - Productive and receptive vocabulary knowledge of respondents;
2. Test the significance of relationship between Libyan learners' affective factors and their use of VLSs;
3. Test the significance of learners' affective factors in their productive and receptive vocabulary performance;
4. Investigate if learners' vocabulary performance and their use of vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) are significantly related;

5. Test the moderating role of affective factors on the relationship between VLSs use and vocabulary performance.

1.5 Research Questions

In light of the purposes mentioned above, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the VLSs used by undergraduate Libyan learners majoring in English Language?
2. What is the level of Libyan university learners' affective factors in vocabulary learning?
 - a. Self-efficacy beliefs,
 - b. Learners' attitudes towards vocabulary learning,
 - c. Learners' anxiety,
 - d. Learners' self-regulation?
3. What is the level of productive and receptive vocabulary knowledge of respondents as measured by the Productive Vocabulary Levels Test (PVL) and vocabulary levels test (VLT)?
4. Is there any significant relationship between Libyan learners' affective factors and their use of vocabulary learning strategies?
The hypothesis corresponding to this research question is stated below:
H₁: There is a significant relationship between learners' affective factors and vocabulary learning strategies.
5. Is learners' productive and receptive vocabulary performance significantly associated with their affective factors?
The hypothesis corresponding to this research question is stated below:
H₂: There is a significant relationship between learners' vocabulary performance and their affective factors.
6. Are learners' productive and receptive vocabulary performance and their use of VLSs significantly related?
The hypothesis corresponding to this research question is stated below:
H₃: There is a significant relationship between learners' vocabulary performance and their use of vocabulary learning strategies.
7. To what extent do affective factors moderate the relationship between VLSs use and vocabulary performance?

1.6 Theoretical Framework of the Study

Despite the number of studies that are related to language learning methods, attention has been concentrated on the teacher-centred approach in Libya. Although textbook on the communicative approach was designed to support the learner-centred approach, according to the results of past studies (Ahmad, 2004; Alhmali, 2007; Ali, 2008; Dalal, 2006; Orafi & Borg, 2009; Saleh, 2002), the classroom is still teacher-centred in the Libyan context.

Although several theories or explanations exist that address specific elements of vocabulary acquisition (e.g., Carey, 1978; de Bot, Paribakht & Wesche, 1997; Jiang, 2000), there is still no theory to date capable of capturing all of the complexities of vocabulary acquisition (Tseng & Schmitt, 2008). As a result, Tseng and Schmitt (2008) attempted to take an initial step to address this gap. They tested their model with structural equation modelling (SEM), which is a “model of motivated vocabulary learning” and found it tenable. Due to the concentration of the current research on examining the effects of affective factors on the relationship between VLS use and vocabulary performance, the theoretical framework was adopted.

According to Tseng and Schmitt (2008), the vocabulary learning process is classified into three phases: (1) the preactional phase, which is the phase of choice motivation, which deals with the generation of motivation, the outcome of which is an initial assessment of vocabulary learning experiences; (2) the actional phase or executive motivation, which protects the motivation generated in the first phase and has three stages: self-regulating capacity in vocabulary learning, strategic vocabulary learning involvement, and mastery of vocabulary learning tactics; (3) the postactional phase, which includes motivational retrospection, which assists learners to assess the process of learning and represents vocabulary knowledge and assessment of vocabulary learning tactics. To continue the learning process, the postactional phase operates an effectiveness on the preactional phase. The theoretical framework of this study is clarified in Figure 1.1, below.

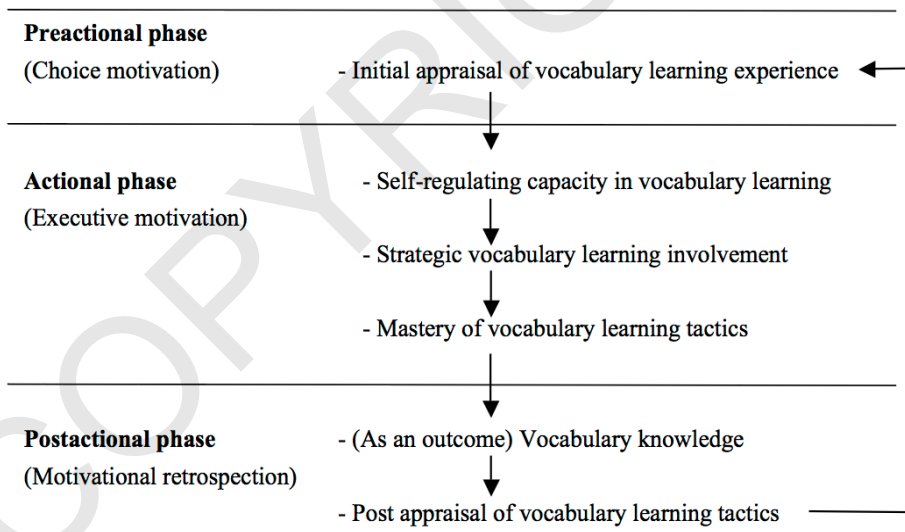


Figure 1. 1: A Model of Motivated Vocabulary Learning (Tseng & Schmitt, 2008)

Vocabulary learning model is applicable for this study since this study looks to vocabulary learning process with reference to the importance of affective factors. The researcher endorses the notion that vocabulary is cyclical in nature and initially assesses the experience of vocabulary learning (i.e. self-efficacy, anxiety, attitude, and self-

regulation), which represents the first motivating stage of the cycle of learning in general and vocabulary in particular. The initial degree of motivation affects the self-regulatory capacity of students to use vocabulary learning (Schmitt, 2010). Self-regulated learning contributes to "mastery of vocabulary learning tactics" which relates to the consistency aspect of the technique and involves the mastery of particular hidden or overt vocabulary learning methods. Vocabulary learning mastery impacts comprehension of vocabulary. Vocabulary knowledge aims at using language depth as a combination of 3 factors: language of the various possible meanings of a word (polysemy), comprehension of its collocation constraints and recognizing its spelling (Tseng and Schmitt, 2008). The postactional phase operates an effectiveness on the preactional phase to continue the learning process. Postactional signifies the period of self-reflection of task processes after completing the task (Tseng and Schmitt, 2008). According to Dörnyei (2001b), this phase is very important because "a critical retrospection contributes significantly to accumulated experience, and allows the learner to elaborate his or her internal standards and the repertoire of action specific strategies" (as cited in Tseng and Schmitt, 2008, 368). Hence, initial motivational state affects the processes of task performance along with having a retrospection of task performance affect in a cyclical manner (Tseng and Schmitt, 2008).

1.7 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework of the study was developed based on the motivated vocabulary learning model (see Figure 1.1). This model is applied as the content of the study to support vocabulary learning.

The vocabulary learning process is complex. Knowing a word requires several types of word knowledge, like meaning, word form, collocation, and register (Nation, 2001), meaning that in the same way that vocabulary size increases bit-by-bit, so does one's depth of knowledge about words (Schmitt, 2000). The mental lexicon contains individual lexical items, but they are interrelated in complex ways, as word association research has proven (e.g., Meara, 1983; Postman & Keppel, 1970). Furthermore, the lexical items comprise both individual words and different types of formulaic sequence (Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992; Wray, 2002). Mastering the range of these dimensions takes time as it is not straightforward (Tseng & Schmitt, 2008).

This study looks at VLSs in relation to crucial affective factors among EFL undergraduate students. Therefore, Figure 1.2 shows that the researcher has adopted a motivated vocabulary learning model and administrated Schmitt's (1997) classifications of VLSs to evaluate the extent and the frequency of the strategies that are employed by university learners. The researcher also used two kinds of lexical test to measure the vocabulary size of Libyan learners, receptively and productively: (1) the Vocabulary Size Test (VST), designed by Nation and Beglar (2007), and (2) the Productive Vocabulary Level Test (PVLVT), designed by Laufer and Nation (1999). To measure the objectives of the research, it was necessary to measure the affective variables of Libyan learners. Therefore, the affective factors were examined by Tseng and Schmitt's (2008) questionnaire on VLS self-efficacy beliefs, VLS attitude, VLS anxiety, and self-

regulation. These factors work as moderator variables (see 1.2) to explore their effects on the relationship between the two variables mentioned above.

Based on the objectives of the study, Tseng and Schmitt’s (2008) framework “A model of motivated vocabulary” was adopted to provide the theoretical support for the relationship between the two variables with the effects of moderator variables among them. The conceptual framework of this research can be clarified as shown below.

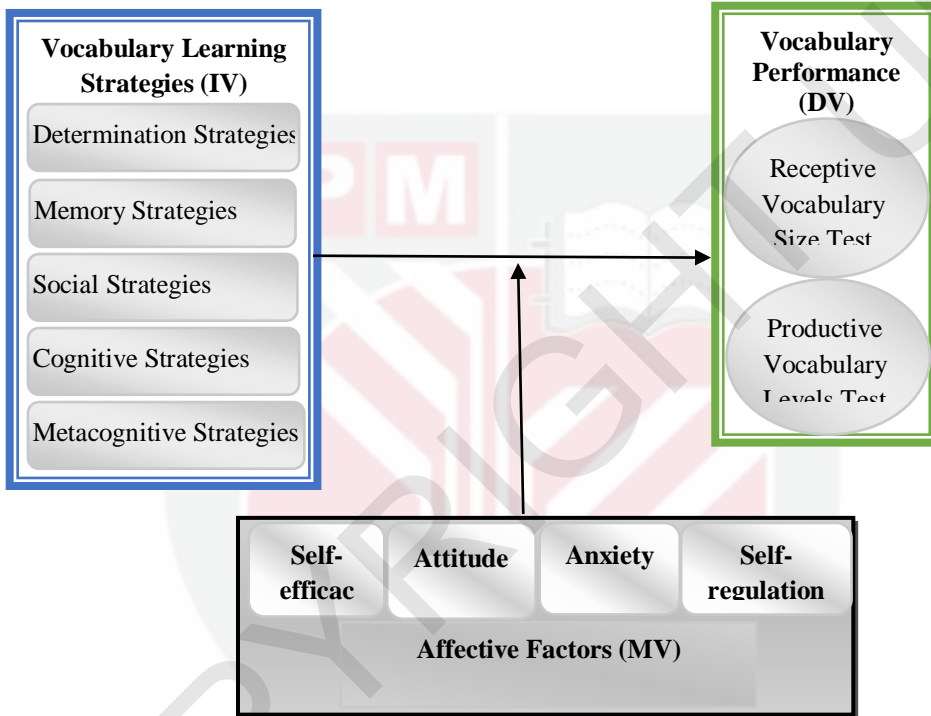


Figure 1. 2: Conceptual framework of the study

1.8 Significance of the Study

The importance of the study is not only that English is taught in a foreign language by the Arab-speaking countries, it is a ground breaking work in this neglected research area in Libya, but also in the entire Arabic world. The results of this research can be applied as a plan to evaluate the procedures of teaching English as a foreign language in Libya. Another significant point to consider is that the findings of this study would be beneficial to educators, educational authority, and curriculum designers in making empirical and pedagogical contributions. More precisely, it will help teachers and researchers reach a better understanding of the current situation of the vocabulary learning process in Libya. Finally, the exploration of vocabulary size and the range of using vocabulary strategies by Libyan university students will also give curriculum designers and textbook writers the appropriate emphasis on teaching vocabulary strategies.

1.9 Scope of the Study

As this thesis aims to investigate the effects of affective factors on the relationship between vocabulary learning strategies use and vocabulary performance among undergraduate students in Libya, the scope of this study covered only Libyan university students who are studying in public universities. In addition, since the research was carried out on a sample of students at only one university (Tripoli) in Libya, the results should neither be generalised to students at all universities in Libya nor to those Libyan students who are studying in other countries where the environment of education is totally different.

The study selected only one department, namely the English Language department, which has the highest level of exposure to the language. The context of teaching English in Libya is teaching EFL language, as the English language is not used in society. The students of other faculties consider the English language as a basic subject, and they study English only to pass the examination. Therefore, the researcher has restricted attention to only English Language students to obtain real and relevant results. In addition to that all participants in this study were females because 90% of students at the faculty of education - Janzour are female. Therefore, the researcher intended to participate only female students in this research since they are easier to deal with them than males.

The scope of this study covered affective factors since it is considered as a key principle in humanistic approach that teaching should focus on feeling. Therefore, the learner's affective side related to feeling needs to be explored to produce better learning outcomes. Affective variables can have a powerful effect on foreign language learning in tertiary education. Therefore, the researcher concentrate on such affective factors as self-efficacy, attitude, anxiety, and self-regulation.

Finally, the present study used a quantitative approach to examine the effects of affective factors on learning vocabulary. Due to the quantitative nature of recent research, the study employed an affective factors questionnaire, a questionnaire on vocabulary learning strategies, and two tests of vocabulary as instruments for collecting data. Therefore, different instruments are not included and the findings of this study are only limited to certain instrumentation.

1.10 Definitions of Terms

1.10.1 Language learning strategies (LLSs)

Learning language strategies refer to behaviours or thoughts that are employed by learners to help them understand the target language (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). Furthermore, language learning strategies are also defined by Oxford (1990) as techniques, operations, and actions that are used by learners to help them progress in acquiring foreign or second language skills. This definition is significantly meaningful

in this study since language learning strategies mean the techniques or actions that use by the learners to achieve progress in language.

1.10.2 Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a central aspect of L2 learning, which is crucial to language learners (Ming, 2007, as cited in Zhang, 2011). Broadly defined, vocabulary is knowledge of words, including explanations of word meanings. In short, a word is defined as a sound or a combination of sounds, or its representation in writing or printing that symbolises and conveys a meaning. To master a word requires obtaining its meaning and also knowing its register, association, collocation, grammatical behaviour, written form, spoken form, and frequency. All these properties are collectively referred to as “word knowledge” (Schmitt, 2000).

1.10.3 Vocabulary learning strategies

Catalan (2003, p. 56) defines VLSs as “knowledge about the mechanisms (process, strategies) used in order to learn vocabulary as well as steps or actions taken by students (a) to find out the meaning of unknown words, (b) to retain them in the long-term memory, (c) to recall them at will, and (d) to use them in oral or written mode” (Vasu & Dhanavel, 2015). In this study, VLSs refer to the methods and techniques used by EFL learners in their vocabulary acquisition. The current study adopted the classification presented by Schmitt (1997). In this classification, the strategies are divided into five domains, which are the determination, memory, social, cognitive, and metacognitive domains.

1.10.4 EFL learners

In the present study, EFL learners comprised Libyan students who were learning English as a foreign language. The participants were undergraduate students who were majoring in English in the Language department of Tripoli University. Their ages ranged between 19 and 22 years.

1.10.5 Affective factors

Affect is “a term that refers to the purposive and emotional sides of a person’s reaction to what is going on” (Stevick, 1999, P. 117, as cited in Tasnimi, 2009). Affective factors refer to emotions, feelings, and attitudes that play a part in the learning experience and the roles they play in motivation (Dörnyei&Taguchi, 2010; Hurd, 2008). The major definitions of the kinds covered in this study are provided below.

1.10.5.1 Self-efficacy

Bandura (1986, 1997, 2007) defines self-efficacy as a personal assessment of one’s level of competence in the execution of certain behaviours or achievement of certain outcomes

in the future; thus, they need not necessarily mean a true or correct assessment of one's actual level of competence (as cited in Shea & Bidjerano, 2010).

1.10.5.2 Anxiety

Anxiety has been considered by many researchers as one of the most important affective factors that influence second language learning (Brown, 2000; Dornyei, 2005; Ellis, 1994; Horwitz, 2001; Na, 2007). Furthermore, anxiety is defined as “an unpleasant emotional state or condition which is characterised by subjective feelings or tension, apprehension and worry, and by activation or arousal of the autonomic nervous system that accompanies these feelings” (Spielberger, 1972, as cited in Lana Čiček, 2014, p. 7).

1.10.5.3 Attitude

Latchanna and Dagnev (2009, as cited in Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011) state that attitude is recognised as a crucial concept to understand human behaviour and is defined as “a mental state that includes beliefs and feelings”(p. 994). Beliefs about language learning have a direct association with success in language classes.

1.10.5.4 Self-regulation

Self-regulated learning for L2 learners refers to the process during which L2 learners proactively utilise strategies to enhance a particular English language skill by managing their language learning activities to attain language learning goals (Oxford & Shchramm, 2007; Zimmerman, 2002b, as cited in Zahidi, 2012). Dörnyei (2005, as cited in Zahidi, 2012) describes self-regulation in L2 learning as “the degree to which individuals are active participants in their own learning” (p. 191). In this study, Self-regulation refers to the capability of learners to be active in their own learning.

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter comprised an introduction to the current research and its importance to Libya. It presented the background of the study, the statement of the problem, and research questions in relation to the objectives of the study. This chapter also presented the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study. It also explained the significance of the study and provided operational definitions of the important terms used in this study. The next chapter will focus on a review of the literature relevant to vocabulary learning strategies and affective factors.

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