# Exploring Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) among Primary ESL Learners

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**Abstract**
Successful language learners do have their preferred language learning strategies. Not only that, in order to improve their vocabulary, learners do have their way of learning vocabulary. Thus, this study aims to identify the vocabulary learning strategies employed by the primary ESL learners. This study utilized a quantitative research design where a survey was used to collect the data. Thirty students were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The data collected were collected using a survey and were analyzed descriptively. Based on the findings, the two most prominent percentages of favored vocabulary learning strategies among the learners in the primary school studied: the cognitive strategy and metacognitive strategy while learners utilized determination strategy the least. These findings stand to provide the educators, especially the primary ESL teachers' perspectives on effective vocabulary strategies that can maximize impact while also enhancing learners' awareness of their progress in vocabulary acquisition by exploring those VLS strategies. This study concluded by identifying several research gaps observed in previous studies. Researchers have explored VLS' use in ESL learning and by proficient ESL learners to a lesser extent. This paper anticipates that future research will address these identified gaps and conduct research based on the use of VLS in acquiring vocabulary and the relationship between VLS and good language learners.
**Keywords:** English as a Second Language (ESL), Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS),  Primary English as Second Language (ESL) Learners.

**Introduction**
Vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) are defined as tactics or actions that can help language learners acquire and retain vocabulary knowledge (Schmitt, 1997).  They have become important tools in ESL pedagogy that help learners learn and remember lexical knowledge. Learners may use a variety of strategies and approaches that are suitable, beneficial as well as practical to expand their vocabulary.  They can increase their vocabulary using a range of cognitive and metacognitive techniques in VLS.  Recognizing how such techniques work with primary ESL learners has significant implications for their academic progress and language development. According to Jaikrishnan and Ismail (2021), vocabulary includes both individual

words and phrases or chunks of words that convey specific meanings, similar to single words. This underscores the necessity of learning vocabulary when acquiring a second language, as lexical knowledge is crucial. According to Rahmani (2023), it is now widely believed that to learn English as a second or foreign language, one must acquire a substantial vocabulary. Without adequate vocabulary knowledge, students are unable to understand others' ideas or effectively express their own as cited by (Subasi, 2014). It forms the foundation of communicative language proficiency, making it an essential component of effective communication in any language. Thus, mastering a second language is intrinsically linked to understanding and using its vocabulary, highlighting the importance of lexical knowledge in achieving language proficiency and effective communication.

Usage of ineffective vocabulary learning strategies and lack of vocabulary are crucial problems in second language learners as vocabulary is also considered a major part of the learning of any language. When learners have limited vocabulary it affects their listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities as mentioned by Wilkins (cited in Schmitt 2010, p. 3) "Without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed,". Students who do not have sufficient vocabulary or word-learning strategies continue to struggle throughout their educational careers, which leads to a cycle of frustration and continued failure (Khany & Khosravian, 2014). In Malaysia, these vocabulary learning strategies play an important part and are also the fundamental element in learning English, especially for second language learners. This strategy is a method for students to acquire the necessary vocabulary and make learning more interesting (Fitrianti et. al., 2023).

Effective vocabulary acquisition for learning a second language involves using all four language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing- creating pathways for better communication. One of the key linguistic components of language learning, according to McCarthy (1990), is vocabulary. Mastering vocabulary is essential to learning English fluently which aids in both written and reading texts. Students who are learning a language cannot utilize it effectively if they do not have a sufficient understanding of the word and its meaning. The meaning of words in English must be acquired alongside the vocabulary itself. Also, to develop a meaningful knowledge of a language, vocabulary mastery is crucial as it is the key to learning a language, claims (Megawati, 2017). ESL learners often become demotivated or even give up on learning the language if they are unable to acquire the necessary vocabulary knowledge (Karami & Bowles, 2019; Sari & Abdulrahman, 2019; Sundari, 2018).

According to Ien et al (2017); Prisla and Yunus (2019), many Malaysian primary school learners are weak in vocabulary knowledge due to insufficient practice and exposure, assessment-driven approaches Ali (2003), and limited application opportunities in the classroom (Rafiah et al., 2016; Yee & Wahab, 2016). These constraints can affect classroom social and academic interaction as well Ab Rahman et al (2020) and result in them being unable to master the English language (Misbah et al., 2017). Thus, this research aims to explore and identify the vocabulary learning strategies used among primary ESL learners to learn and develop their vocabulary. The significance of the study can provide policymakers and ESL teachers to design and create more efficient vocabulary learning strategies to meet the needs of primary ESL learners. The goal is to improve language learning outcomes and experiences for primary ESL learners by bridging the gap between research and practice. By focusing our attention on primary ESL learners, we recognize the fundamental significance of vocabulary acquisition in fostering language proficiency and fluency, elucidated through their utilization of learning strategies. Hence this paper seeks to answer the following question:

1. What are the vocabulary learning strategies preferred by primary ESL learners to learn and develop their vocabulary?

**Literature Review**
**Language Learning Strategies**

Language learning strategies (LLS) play a crucial role in the learning process, allowing students to achieve their desired outcomes in different subjects, including language learning (Mayer, 1988). LLS can be defined as the behaviours or actions of learners that influence how they process information (Mayer, 1988). Over the years, numerous researchers have studied and defined LLS. Wedden and Rubin (1987) define LLS as any sets of operations, plans, or routines the learner uses to facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) describe LLS as the special thoughts or behaviours individuals use to comprehend, learn, or retain new information. Oxford (1990) further categorizes LLS into direct and indirect strategies, with direct strategies involving specific actions to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, and more transferable, and indirect strategies supporting language learning without directly using the language.

In English language learning, Oxford's (1990) classification of LLS is one of the most comprehensive and detailed. Direct strategies include memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies, while indirect strategies include metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. These strategies encompass various aspects of language learning, such as comprehension, production, memory, and emotional regulation. Meanwhile, vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) are a subset of LLS and are essential for developing language proficiency. Understanding the relationship between LLS and VLS is crucial for effective vocabulary acquisition (Asgari & Mustapha, 2012). Early research on LLS aimed to identify characteristics of successful language learners, leading to the development of strategies to enhance learning outcomes (Hardan, 2013; Kölemen, 2021).

Vocabulary, as defined by Alias (2018), encompasses not only single words but also complex and compound terms, along with meaningful language units. Vocabulary learning strategies, as outlined by O'malley et al (1990), refer to specific mental processes or actions individuals employ to understand, acquire, or retain information. These strategies are pivotal in enhancing language learners' proficiency. According to Nation (2001), such strategies empower learners to engage in self-directed learning, facilitating the acquisition of a substantial vocabulary. Al-Bidawi (2018); Bahanshal (2015) emphasize that vocabulary learning strategies serve as tools for learners to decipher the meanings of unfamiliar words and commit them to long-term memory. Kafipour and Naveh (2011) underscore the importance of employing vocabulary learning strategies, which significantly contribute to the vocabulary acquisition process contingent upon learners' efforts. Over the past decades, researchers have highlighted various vocabulary learning strategies within the realm of language learning strategies, reflecting their increasing importance. The utilization of VLS has been proven to enhance vocabulary learning and retention (Al-Bidawi, 2018; Bahanshal, 2015). Vocabulary learning strategies enable learners to take control of their learning and acquire a large vocabulary (Nation, 2001). The integration of vocabulary learning strategies in language instruction, such as visual aids and flashcards, further enhances vocabulary acquisition (Hadi, 2017; Naeimi & Foo, 2014).

In conclusion, language learning strategies (LLS) are crucial for effective language learning, with vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) being a significant subset. Researchers have provided various definitions and categorizations of LLS and VLS, emphasizing the

importance of learners' active involvement in acquiring, storing, retrieving, and using information. Oxford's (1990) comprehensive taxonomy of LLS and VLS provides a valuable framework for understanding the different types of strategies employed in language and vocabulary learning. Further research and exploration of LLS and VLS are necessary to continue enhancing language learning outcomes and facilitating vocabulary acquisition.

**Good Language Learners**

Vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) is not only about choosing a strategy in vocabulary acquisition but also is equally about knowing how to use a strategy successfully. An accomplishment in acquiring the target language solely depends on the use of the learning strategies by the learners. This has been proven in many research findings that the learners improve their proficiency based on the learner strategies that they used in the acquisition of the target language. According to Dawi et al (2021), the use of multiple or various language learning strategies can improve the learner's proficiency, especially their accuracy and fluency in their target language to mold them to become good language learners. The findings of this study indicate that language learning strategies (LLS) is the main category that derives the subcategory of vocabulary language strategies (VLS).

The study conducted by Tiing et al. (2021) showed that the educators should consider the inclinations of VLS between genders (female and male) when implementing the differentiated learning approaches. This could promote vocabulary learning among the learners to become more engaged in ESL classroom lessons. This is because female learners apply more VLS strategies compared to male learners that resulted to become more successful language learners. Besides, one of the recent researches conducted by Elpit et al (2023) recommended a few common strategies to be followed by the language learners to contribute to their learning to become good language learners. Those strategies are translating, memorizing, constructing sentences using new words and highlighting the new words that they will learn on the next day.

Numerous researchers have demonstrated their interest in investigating Virtual Learning Spaces (VLS). However, it's noteworthy that there is a greater emphasis on studies regarding Language Learning Spaces (LLS) compared to VLS. Even among those focusing on VLS, the focus tends to be on its application and efficacy among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, specifically tertiary and adult learners Meganathan et al (2019), with relatively fewer studies examining its utilization among English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. The research done by Melinda and Anita (2022) stated that vocabulary acquisition among the young learners can be attained through watching movie subtitles. According to the participants, watching movie subtitles is very useful in terms of reading comprehension and in improving English language skills especially in increasing the vocabulary. Thus, the learners can understand and comprehend various vocabulary and can utter the words accordingly in order to become good language learners.

According to Kehing and Yunus (2021), learners who employ a wider range of language learning strategies, including metacognitive, social and memory strategies, tend to excel as good language learners when they can discern the appropriate strategies for language acquisition. Consequently, it can be inferred that greater academic success is typically attained by learners who employ a greater variety of strategies in language learning (Oflaz,

2019). Therefore, it can be concluded that by incorporating these strategies into their vocabulary learning routine, learners can enhance their ability to acquire, retain and use new words effectively in various contexts. Besides, a notable discovery from this study was that certain participants incorporated newly learned English words into their everyday conversations which enhance their speaking skill (Elashhab, 2019). This suggests that the study revealed a notable trend of language adoption and integration among the participants, indicating a potential impact or influence of the study on their language usage patterns.

**Methodology**
**Research Design**
A descriptive research design has been used to conduct the research. This research design is used to describe the facts and characteristics systematically and accurately (Dulock, 1993). The objective of the research is to identify the Year 6 primary school students' vocabulary learning strategies. This approach allows researchers to comprehensively depict the phenomena under investigation, shedding light on various aspects without altering or manipulating them. The utilization of a descriptive research design ensures that data collection and analysis are conducted in a systematic and rigorous manner. Through a carefully adopted questionnaire, researchers can gather rich quantitative data regarding students' vocabulary learning strategies.

**Research Sample & Sampling Technique**
For this research, the sample will be drawn from the population of Year 6 primary school students. Informed consent will be obtained from both students and their parents or guardians prior to their participation in the research. 30 students from a school in Selangor, Malaysia, were selected to be part of the study. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants. This sampling offers researchers flexibility and control in selecting participants who best serve the research objectives. Purposive sampling can yield valuable insights and facilitate focused exploration of specific aspects of the research topic.

**Data Collection Procedure**
The chosen methodology for this study was a survey. The survey instrument utilized was a questionnaire adapted from Riankamol (2008), consisting of 25 items based on Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy. Schmitt's taxonomy comprises six categories, namely Determination strategy, Social (Discovery) strategy, Social (Consolidation) strategy, Memory strategy, Cognitive strategy, and Metacognitive strategy. Riankamol (2008) modified Schmitt's taxonomy to create a comprehensive list of vocabulary learning strategies that aligned with the research objectives. The survey involved 30 pupils who were asked to complete the questionnaire. Data collection occurred through an in-class questionnaire administered during the English language period. The questionnaire aimed to identify the pupils' preferred learning strategies and was divided into two parts. Part 1 gathered general information, while Part 2 focused on questions pertaining to vocabulary learning strategies.

The Vocabulary Learning Strategies Questionnaire comprises two primary sections. The first section is designed to collect personal information about the respondents. This includes details such as age, gender, and the duration of their English language studies. Additionally, the final segment of this section addresses the participants' gadget accessibility, online behavior, and social media usage to gauge their awareness of Information and

Communication Technology (ICT). The questions in this part of the survey are presented as checklist items. The second section of the questionnaire focuses on the students' use of various vocabulary learning strategies. This section employs a Likert scale to measure the frequency with which each strategy is used. The scale ranges from 4 to 0, where 4 indicates "Always use it," 3 signifies "Sometimes use it," 2 represents "Usually use it," 1 stands for "Seldom use it," and 0 means "Never use it." The items in this section are categorized into six types of vocabulary learning strategies: Determination, Social (Discovery), Social (Consolidation), Memory, Cognitive, and Metacognitive. To analyze the data, the mean (x) and percentages were calculated using Microsoft Excel, which served as the statistical tool for this purpose. In the first part of the data analysis, descriptive statistics were utilized to determine frequencies, percentages, and the mean (x) for the collected personal information. For the second part, focusing on the six categories of vocabulary learning strategies, the mean (x) and percentages were again employed to process and interpret the data. This structured approach ensures a comprehensive analysis of how frequently each vocabulary learning strategy is employed by the respondents.

**Findings and Discussion**

The total respondent of this survey was 30. Based on table 1, there are 15 female students (50%) and 15 male students (50%). The students were all of age 12 as they are from the same class. The majority of the students have been studying English for about 5 to 10 years. There are 9 students (30%) who have been studying English for more than 10 years and 4 students (13%) who have been studying English for 3 to 5 years.

Table 1
*Respondents' personal information*

| Item | | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | Female | 15 | 50 |
| | Male | 15 | 50 |
| **Age** | 12 years old | 30 | 100 |
| **Years of English Learning** | 3 – 5 years | 4 | 13 |
| | 5 – 10 years | 17 | 57 |
| | > 10 years | 9 | 30 |

Research Question: What are the vocabulary learning strategies preferred by primary ESL learners to learn and develop their vocabulary?

The analysis of vocabulary learning strategies among primary ESL learners revealed diverse patterns of engagement and effectiveness across various methods. While a significant proportion of respondents demonstrated consistent practice in repeatedly practicing new words (33%), there were notable gaps in the utilization of memory aids such as flashcards (77%) and recording vocabulary from movies (67%). Additionally, the findings highlighted the

efficacy of audio-based learning methods, with a considerable proportion of respondents (37%) usually learning words by listening to vocabulary CDs. The strong correlation between repetition and word recall was evident, as a significant number of respondents (47%) reported usually writing or saying a word repeatedly for memory retention. However, the majority of respondents (87%) did not engage in creating portable vocabulary cards for continuous learning outside the classroom setting. These insights underscore the importance of tailored instructional approaches that promote active engagement, memory retention, and varied learning modalities to enhance vocabulary acquisition among primary ESL learners.

## Determination Strategy
Table 2

| Item | Degree of Frequency | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Always use it | | Usually use it | | Sometimes use it | | Seldom use it | | Never use it | |
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| 1. I use bilingual dictionary to help me translate English words into Bahasa Melayu. | 0 | 0 | 3 | 10 | 12 | 40 | 10 | 33 | 5 | 17 |
| 2. I use pictures illustrated in the textbook to find the word meanings. | 7 | 23 | 8 | 27 | 10 | 33 | 4 | 13 | 1 | 3 |
| 3. I learn meaning of words by identifying its part of speech. | 2 | 7 | 10 | 33 | 11 | 37 | 5 | 17 | 2 | 7 |

*Descriptive Statistics of Strategy Use in Individual Item of Determination*
The usage of various strategies for understanding vocabulary learning strategies among respondents varies, as indicated by the data provided for Items 1, 2, and 3. Firstly, concerning the usage of bilingual dictionaries (Item 1), it is evident that a significant proportion of respondents (40%) usually employ this strategy, while 33% often do so. However, 17% only

sometimes resort to using a bilingual dictionary for translation. The usage of dictionaries is still prominent at school for students as it is part of DSKP in schools. Moving on to Item 2, which pertains to utilizing pictures illustrated in textbooks to find word meanings, it emerges as a moderately common practice among respondents. A majority of 60% usually or often rely on this method, with 23% usually and 27% often resorting to it. Nevertheless, 13% only sometimes use pictures for word meanings. Students, in general, are attracted to pictures more than wordings. Hence, it explains the high percentage of respondents using this strategy. Finally, learning the meaning of words by identifying their part of speech (Item 3) is a prevalent strategy among respondents. A majority of 70% usually or often utilize this method, with 37% usually and 33% often identifying word meanings through their part of speech. However, 17% only sometimes adopt this approach. As students learn grammar, it is easier for them to relate the vocabulary to the parts of speech to learn the word.

**Social (Discovery) strategy**
Table 3
*Descriptive Statistics of Strategy Use in Individual Item of Social Strategy*

| Item | Degree of Frequency | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Always use it | | Usually use it | | Sometimes use it | | Seldom use it | | Never use it | |
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| 4. I ask my teacher to translate the words into Bahasa Melayu. | 1 | 3 | 7 | 23 | 3 | 10 | 17 | 57 | 2 | 7 |
| 5. I ask my teacher to put an unknown word into a sentence to help me understand the word meaning. | 0 | 0 | 4 | 13 | 5 | 17 | 10 | 33 | 11 | 37 |
| 6. I ask my classmates for meaning. | 16 | 53 | 4 | 13 | 6 | 20 | 2 | 7 | 2 | 7 |
| 7. I know some new words when working in groups. | 2 | 7 | 4 | 13 | 17 | 57 | 5 | 17 | 2 | 7 |

Item 4 reveals that most respondents, that is, 57% of the respondents always ask their teacher to translate words into Malay language, while 23% do so usually and 7% do it

"Sometimes." In Malaysian context, most students do ask for translation for a better understanding as well as to get a bigger picture of the word which they believe would make their learning process easy. For Item 5, the most common response is "Never use it" ,37%, indicating that many respondents don't ask their teacher to put unknown words into sentences. However, 33% of the respondents sometimes request this assistance. Most students did not practice this as it challenges them in terms of learning the word. There might be a tendency of students opting to ignore the word. However, there are quite a few students who would want to take up challenges and enjoy learning languages that way. In Item 6, the majority of respondents always ask their classmates for meaning, with fewer respondents reporting they usually use it,13% or sometimes use it, 20%. This is common among students as they first seek their friends to get to know the meaning of any words they are not familiar with. Item 7 suggests that a significant portion of respondents,57%, always learn new words when working in groups, while 17% do so sometimes.

## Social (Consolidation) Strategy
Table 4
*Descriptive Statistics of Strategy Use in Individual Item of Social Strategy*

| Item | Degree of Frequency | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Always use it | | Usually use it | | Sometimes use it | | Seldom use it | | Never use it | |
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| 8. I practice English in group work activities. | 2 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 13 | 43 | 4 | 13 | 10 | 33 |
| 9. I ask native speakers for help. | 0 | 0 | 4 | 13 | 3 | 10 | 2 | 7 | 21 | 70 |
| 10. I learn words about the culture from English speaking countries. | 7 | 23 | 10 | 33 | 8 | 27 | 4 | 13 | 1 | 3 |

Item 8 indicates that a considerable proportion of respondents,43% usually practice English in group work activities, with 33% reporting sometimes they use it. During English lessons in the classroom, mostly students are encouraged to speak in English, especially during group tasks. In Item 9, the majority of respondents (70%) never ask native speakers for help, while 13% do so sometimes. Students may not have the access to communicate with native speakers and that contributes a high percentage to this matter. Finally, for Item 10, the most common response is usually used, 33%, indicating that many respondents learn words about culture from English-speaking countries, followed by "Always use it" (23%) and "Sometimes use it" (27%).

**Items of Memory srategy**

Table 5

*Descriptive Statistics of Strategy Use in Individual Item of Memory*

| Item | Degree of Frequency | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Always use it | | Usually use it | | Sometimes use it | | Seldom use it | | Never use it | |
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| 11. I write a new word in a sentence so I can remember it. | 2 | 7 | 2 | 7 | 7 | 23 | 11 | 37 | 8 | 27 |
| 12. I study the spelling of new words. | 4 | 13 | 10 | 33 | 10 | 33 | 6 | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 13. I use physical actions when learning words. | 1 | 3 | 7 | 23 | 6 | 20 | 4 | 13 | 12 | 40 |
| 14. I speak words out loud when studying. | 6 | 20 | 8 | 27 | 9 | 30 | 4 | 13 | 3 | 10 |

Item 11 illustrates that a significant portion of respondents (37%) "Usually" write a new word in a sentence to aid in remembering it, while 27% "Always" do so. Additionally, 23% "Sometimes" engage in this practice. This is practiced in the classroom when they do writing tasks especially. For Item 12, the majority of respondents (33%) "Usually" study the spelling of new words, followed by another 33% who "Sometimes" do so. However, 13% "Seldom" engage in this activity. Again, classroom practices play a major role in students' choice of learning vocabulary. In Item 13, a notable proportion of respondents (40%) "Never" use physical actions when learning words, while 23% "Usually" do. Conversely, 20% "Sometimes" use physical actions for learning. Item 14 indicates that a considerable number of respondents (30%) "Usually" speak words out loud when studying, while 27% "Always" do so. However, 20% "Sometimes" engage in this practice. Students' different learning styles may have influenced their choices in Item 13 and 14.

**Cognitive Strategy**

Table 6

*Descriptive Statistics of Strategy Use in Individual Item of Cognitive*

| Item | Always use it | | Usually use it | | Sometimes use it | | Seldom use it | | Never use it | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| 15. I repeatedly practice new words. | 10 | 33 | 3 | 10 | 8 | 27 | 5 | 17 | 4 | 13 |
| 16. I write a new word on a flash card so I can remember it. | 3 | 10 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 67 | 1 | 3 | 23 | 77 |
| 17. I learn words by listening to vocabulary CDs. | 2 | 7 | 2 | 7 | 7 | 23 | 11 | 37 | 8 | 27 |
| 18. I record vocabulary from English soundtrack movies in my notebook. | 1 | 3 | 4 | 13 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 10 | 20 | 67 |
| 19. When I try to remember a word, I write or say it repeatedly. | 9 | 30 | 14 | 47 | 2 | 7 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| 20. I make vocabulary cards and take them with me wherever I go. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 10 | 26 | 87 |

In analyzing the cognitive strategies employed by primary ESL learners, we observe varying frequencies of engagement in different activities. For Item 15, which involves repeatedly practicing new words, it is notable that 33% of respondents usually engage in this activity, while an additional 27% usually do so. Moreover, 17% sometimes practice new words, with only 13% seldom doing it. This indicates a significant portion of learners actively engage in repetitive practice to enhance their vocabulary retention. Moving on to Item 16, we find that the majority of respondents 77% never write a new word on a flash card to aid in remembering it. However, 10% sometimes utilize this method, while 67% occasionally write new words on flash cards. This suggests a potential area for improvement in utilizing flashcards as a memory aid for vocabulary acquisition. In Item 17, a considerable proportion

of respondents 37%usually learn words by listening to vocabulary CDs, with 27% always doing so. Surprisingly, 7% never engage in this activity, highlighting a diverse range of preferences in learning methods among learners. Regarding Item 18, the data reveals that the majority of respondents 67% never record vocabulary from English soundtrack movies in their notebooks, while 13% seldom do so. This indicates a lower inclination towards utilizing this particular strategy for vocabulary enhancement. For Item 19, a significant number of respondents 47% usually write or say a word repeatedly when trying to remember it, with 30% always doing so. However, 10% seldom engage in this practice, suggesting a strong correlation between repetition and memory retention for vocabulary learning.

Lastly, Item 20 indicates that the vast majority of respondents 87% never make vocabulary cards and carry them wherever they go. Only 10% sometimes engage in this practice, while 3% occasionally make and use vocabulary cards. This highlights a potential area for promoting the use of portable vocabulary aids for continuous learning outside the classroom setting. Overall, the data on cognitive strategies usage among primary ESL learners underscores the importance of understanding individual preference and habits in vocabulary acquisition.

**Metacognitive Strategy**
Table 7
*Descriptive Statistics of Strategy Use in Individual Item of Metacognitive*

| Item | Always use it | | Usually use it | | Sometimes use it | | Seldom use it | | Never use it | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| 21. I listen to English songs and news. | 22 | 74 | 4 | 13 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 3 |
| 22. I memorize word from English magazines. | 3 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 27 | 5 | 17 | 14 | 47 |
| 23. I review my own English vocabulary cards for reviewing before the next lesson starts. | 1 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 10 | 23 | 77 |
| 24. I am not worried very much about the difficult words found when reading | 3 | 10 | 3 | 10 | 10 | 33 | 9 | 30 | 5 | 17 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| or listening, I pass them. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25. I use online exercises to test my vocabulary knowledge. | 3 | 10 | 3 | 10 | 7 | 23 | 6 | 20 | 11 | 37 |

In examining the metacognitive strategies, listening to English songs and news occurs as a common practice among respondents, with a majority 74% usually engaging in this activity. However, only 13% sometimes listen to English songs and news, indicating a strong inclination towards regular exposure to English language media for vocabulary enrichment. Memorizing words from English magazines is not a dominant strategy, as the majority 47% never engage in this activity. Nevertheless, 27% sometimes memorize words from English magazines, suggesting a moderate interest in utilizing print media for vocabulary expansion. Reviewing one's own English vocabulary cards before the next lesson starts is infrequently done, as the majority 77% never engage in this activity. However, 10% sometimes review their vocabulary cards, indicating a minority who recognise the value of self-assessment and revision in vocabulary retention. Many respondents 33% exhibit a lack of concern about difficult words encountered during reading or listening, as they tend to pass over them. Additionally, 30% sometimes skip difficult words, while 17% usually do so. This behavior reflects varying levels of persistence and comfort with encountering linguistic challenges during language learning activities. Using online exercises to test vocabulary knowledge is a strategy that is sometimes employed by respondents, with 37% usually engaging in this activity. However, 23% sometimes use online exercises for testing vocabulary knowledge, indicating a moderate interest in digital tools for self-assessment and skill development. In summary, the data on metacognitive strategies usage among primary ESL learners highlights a range of approaches to vocabulary learning, from active engagement with media sources to varying levels of self-assessment and persistence in tackling linguistic difficulties.

**Implications and Conclusion**
Given that education operates as a creative sector, familiarity with vocabulary language learning strategies can significantly enhance the teaching and learning process. Consequently, this paper offers the educators the prominent and valuable insights into language strategies especially the vocabulary language strategies and their efficacy, encouraging them to recognise the importance of implementing these strategies, especially for learners who are facing difficulties and challenges in learning the English language. Hence, teachers must notice the predominant vocabulary language learning strategies employed by the learners when acquiring the words. This study examined the most and least utilized VLS strategies among the learners at a primary school at Selangor for English vocabulary acquisition. The findings suggest that strategies are commonly utilized while strategies are the least utilized. There are several implications on exploring the vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) among primary

ESL learners. Exploring vocabulary learning strategies among primary ESL (English as a Second Language) learners can lead to improved language acquisition, enhanced communication skills, and greater academic success. By understanding which strategies are most effective for young learners, educators especially the primary ESL teachers can tailor instruction to meet the diverse needs of their learners, fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment. This exploration can also provide valuable insights into the cognitive processes involved in language acquisition, informing future teaching practices and curriculum development.

Despite having limited vocabulary knowledge, learner's adoption of strategies in their learning approach facilitated language production through consistent practice and repetition. Teachers should expose their learners to various strategies, requiring them to acquire or master the knowledge about these strategies and on how to implement the strategies among the primary ESL learners. Teachers can focus on the various training models of VLS that can lead or help them in teaching their learners on how to incorporate the strategies in different language activities that could help them to build their vocabulary in order for them to apply them during the language classroom.

To sum up, the findings across various cognitive, social, memory, metacognitive, and determination strategies shed light on the diverse approaches adopted by primary ESL learners in vocabulary learning strategies. Thus, primary ESL learners can advance more rapidly and effectively in language acquisition with proper guidance, practice and educators possessing well-equipped knowledge and skills of these strategies. Moreover, there is a noticeable scarcity of studies on Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS), particularly within primary ESL contexts. Thus, more future research or studies could be done on the above stated approaches or domains to confirm and reinforce the efficacy of VLS in ESL learning especially among the primary ESL learners. This would contribute to the existing understanding of VLS and benefit primary ESL teachers and learners across various levels and schools.

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