

ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES TO LEARN VOCABULARY IN THE ENGLISH AND
FRENCH PROGRAM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NARIÑO

by

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RESUMEN

Una de las razones por la que este estudio fue hecho, es la necesidad de conocer si los estudiantes del programa de Inglés – Francés de la Universidad de Nariño usan estrategias para el aprendizaje de vocabulario escrito, principalmente, diferentes a las actividades desarrolladas en clase por el profesor. Los resultados obtenidos a través de esta investigación han sido muy interesantes y han colmado con las expectativas que el investigador tenía cuando empezó a desarrollar este trabajo.

Esta investigación, hizo una revisión general desde las raíces del aprendizaje, las teorías, pasando por los métodos, hasta llegar a un tópico específico, estrategias

Este estudio puede ayudar a que los estudiantes comprendan la importancia y los beneficios que les brinda el uso de estrategias aprendizaje de vocabulario para incrementar su conocimiento y sus niveles comunicativos. También puede contribuir a que los docentes motiven a sus estudiantes a que usen este tipo de actividades para obtener mejorar la calidad de educación Estos aspectos serán mencionados en el siguiente trabajo.

ABSTRACT

One of reasons for this study to be conducted was the need to know if the students from the English and French program of the University of Nariño use strategies to learn new foreign language vocabulary, specially in the writing skill, different from the ones done in class by the teacher. However, this study gave many results which carried out the expectations that the researcher had at the beginning of this work.

This work has a general review since the roots of learning: Approaches; passing among the Methods; to come to a specific topic: Strategies

Therefore, this work may help students to understand the importance and the benefits to use vocabulary learning strategies to improve their vocabulary knowledge and communicative levels. It may help teachers to motivate their students to use strategies and activities outside the classroom to obtain better levels of learning.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Languages are an important and fundamental tool for our personal and professional development. By means of them we can access new worlds, cultures and best opportunities, but learning a second language may result in a difficult process. It includes many skills and aspects that have to be treated in a careful way. Foreign language students, who are the direct participants of this process, are conscious that they have to work and develop skills like reading, listening, speaking and writing to acquire an appropriate second language level.

Many times, as a student I could say that the vocabulary level of the language is a useful tool to help improve the learning skills, especially writing. For this purpose, teachers use different methodologies, strategies, and techniques that include the use of games and activities or have students look up the structures in a grammar book or textbooks on their own. Nevertheless, in some cases the students could use more specific strategies to learn more language than they receive in class. This affirmation is going to be analyzed and checked later on.

Problem Statement

Currently, aspects like globalization and cultural influence from countries like The United States and England, among others, contribute in making us be in contact with a foreign language. This situation requires students to have a low proficiency on the language. Foreign language students from the University of Nariño understand this situation and they, as future teachers, understand that they must manage an acceptable degree of competence in the four skills of language: reading, listening, speaking and writing. On this research a special emphasis is placed on writing.

Previously, it was said that a very good level of vocabulary is very useful to improve these skills, specially the writing one. Coady & Huckin (1997) affirm that vocabulary is central to language and it is of great importance in the learning process. Teachers are conscious of this kind of affirmations and they apply methods, strategies and techniques to improve the vocabulary level of their students. Some of the actions might include the use of different activities like games, translations and lists of words, but they know that pupils not only learn from the explanations, but also from practice. This becomes a responsibility for foreign language learners. They should look for and use any kind of strategy that allows them to learn new words. On the other hand there has been no action to know if this really takes place or not. It is uncertain to know if the students are using strategies or simply avoid them and limit themselves to activities done in class by the professor.

Research Question

Do the students from the English and French program of the University of Nariño use strategies to learn new foreign language vocabulary different from the ones done in class by the teacher?

Purpose

To determine and to analyze through a survey if the students from the English and French program of the University of Nariño use strategies to learn new foreign language vocabulary different from those done in class by the teacher.

Significance of the study

This study is significant because it is necessary that the foreign language students understand their role in a continuous learning process. In the case of vocabulary, if they want to have a good preparation and a higher level they must work by themselves and not

depend only on the teacher's training. According to the Curricular Parameters for Foreign Language Teaching (1999), into this process, the teacher assumes a guiding role, using strategies that allow students the discovery of their own meanings and learning styles.

By means of this study, the students may meditate about the responsibility that they have in the learning process and give some information for teachers and students about some strategies to learn vocabulary in a writing skill. Although, it is understandable that students and teachers are accountable for what happens in the learning process.

Limitations

The information was collected in a qualitative way by means of surveys applied to thirty of the students from the English and French program. Due to the size of the sample and because the first semester was not included, it is possible that the conclusions might not be generalized to all the population, and only be elements of a general view of the use of additional strategy to learn new foreign language vocabulary outside the classroom.

Time

The research was developed from October 2003 to January 2004.

Definition of Terms

In the following section some terms have been included to assure a better understanding of the literature review.

Approach: refers to theories about the nature of language and language learning that serve as the source of practices and principles in language teaching. (Richards & Rodgers, 2001)

Method: a way of doing something, often one that involves a system, a theory, a principle or a plan. (Cambridge Learner's Dictionary, 2002)

Strategy: the act of planning how to achieve something. (Cambridge Learner's Dictionary, 2002)

Technique: a particular or special way of doing something, according to a specific art, science or function. (Cambridge Learner's Dictionary, 2002)

Skill: the ability to do an activity or job well, especially because you have practiced. (Cambridge Learner's Dictionary, 2002)

Vocabulary: all the words that exists in a language, or that are used when discussing a particular subject, all the words that you know in a particular language. (Cambridge Learner's Dictionary, 2002)

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Language Acquisition Approaches

Language acquisition is one of the central topics in cognitive science. According to Pinker (1997), each theory of cognition has tried to explain it, because a language is one of the principal human traits: all “normal humans” speak, no nonhuman animal does. Language is the principal mean through is possible to know about other people's thoughts, and the two must be intimately related. Every time that a human being speaks, he/she is revealing something about language, so the facts of language structure are easy to come by; these data mention at a system of extraordinary complexity.

In the case of second language acquisition, Ellis (1986) states that SLA is not a uniform and predictable phenomenon. There is not a simple way to let students acquire a second language; this is the result of several factors pertaining to the learners and the learning situation. For this situation, it is important to recognize and analyze the complexity and diversity of this process.

Behaviorist Approach

According to Hernandez (1984), the main idea of Behaviorism or Conductism was to convert Psychology in an objective science. Watson, cited by Hernandez (1984), was the founder and the creator of the term. He agreed with the use of objective methods like laboratory experiments designed to obtain results that were statistically valid which analyze the facts on the following terms: the stimulus of an organism (input), and its response (output). For this reason Skinner considered the human mind processes as a “black box”

$$(Input) \quad S \rightarrow (black\ box) \rightarrow A \quad (output)$$

After conducting an experiment with a little child, Skinner affirmed that words were just a verbal answer: when we are thinking, really we are talking to ourselves. The emotions are a glandular response, and all the behavior could be explained with a stimulus-response formula. For Skinner, cited by Hernandez (1984), the verbal responses corresponded directly with the stimulus without the necessity to mediate variables like the meaning or other grammatical rules. He explained the behavior with a stimulus-response model too, but he introduced a new component, the reinforcement.

Reinforcement, according to Deutsch & Krauss (1995), *is any event that continues to an answer and makes increase the probability of repetition of the same one*. In language field, Skinner, mentioned by Deutsch & Krauss (1995), suggest that a person can control the behaviour to other one, if the controller can manage the incidental reinforcements that exist around the other one, with the language acquisition incident, the process is similar. It is given through a slow and careful model of the behaviour for action of the differential reinforcement. It could be positive if the answer is correct and is rewarded, or it could be negative if the answer is wrong and is punished.

According to Skinner, cited by Hernandez (1994), all primary verbal behavior requires the interaction of two persons: a speaker and a listener. When the speaker emits a verbal response to some stimulus, the listener gives a reinforcement or no-reinforcement, or even a punishment to what the speaker has said. This situation makes the listener emit the same response or a similar one, in the future. The listener's behavior can be verbal or no verbal; but it is the way the speaker act what we have to consider. According to Skinner, the *operant* is the most appropriate model of learning. In this one, the action comes to be repeated until the original action converts in part of the repertory of the person's behavior.

A child makes a sound when, stimulus, he/she finds a reward. This situation will induce the repetition of this sound wherever the stimulus appears. Through this reinforcement on the part of the listener, the child learns to say the name of things, persons, games, etc., and then, shortly, he/she is able to talk about his/her environment. If he/she has problems with pronunciation, the speaker will act like a teacher, he/she will correct the word or phrase, in an echoic way. Similar resources have been used to teach children to read.

Skinner, cited by Hernandez (1994), believes that all these aspects are shaping gradually, into the operant conditionment. By means of the attention, approval, and satisfaction of biological needs, adults reinforce the performance of speech repertory. The development of this is determined only by the reinforcing behavior of the parents.

It is notorious that this approach does not make emphasis in writing that is our main research topic, but is important to know how human beings acquire language.

Innatist Approach

According to Hernandez (1984), Innatism or Mentalism sees the human mind as the only source of knowledge, opposite to empiricists who think that all knowledge origins from experience.

Chomsky considers that we are born with a number of specific faculties (that constitute the *mind*) to play an important role in our knowledge acquisition and they enable us to act like free agents and do not determinate (although no necessarily unaffected) by extern stimulus of the environment (Hernandez, 1984).

According to Hernandez (1984), the Innatism Approach model is constituted by three fundamental components. The first contains the linguistic primarily data: the “realization” by the user to the language. The child is exposed to the language, which

activates the LAD (Language Acquisition Device – “device” series of abstract operations) expanding it acquiring a series of linguistic universals. Two essential properties characterize this device: first, it is a process of *evaluation* because it allows the child to define the manifold grammars which are developing. Second, it serves to *deduce the linguistic universals* that exist in the primarily data.

According to Hernandez (1984), the child knows how to choose what he/she wants from his/her environment because he/she has been born with an innate ability, an ability that starts automatically, but, if there is not exposure to data, it cannot develop it. LAD is essentially, a hypothesis about those features of language structure that are progressively used by the child when it was mature.

In other terms, the models in the environment of the child establish the linguistic primary data used at the beginning. The LAD suggests how the child operates; he/she can make hypotheses about the grammar of the language of his/her environment (which are the statements, where does the subject go in a statement, etc. in a language). In English, for example, this internal device takes the child to the conclusion that when a word begins with a vowel, its article is “an”, or when it starts with a consonant, its article is “a”, etc. In this way, the child collects specific information about the structure of his/her language using the universal or general principles of it. The acquisition of this grammatical competence could be expressed in the production of coherent statements, although just before to process of right and error that allowed a constant revision of his hypotheses about how the language is formed.

This approach deals with the oral part of the vocabulary but it does not mention the writing part. The last two approaches talk about learning by hearing.

Connectionism Approach

Connectionism--within cognitive science--is a theory of information processing. It is based on some principles of the behaviouristic learning like analogy and the reinforcement (Fromkin, Rodman & Haymes, 2003). In this approach the grammatical rules are not necessary, unlike classical systems which use explicit, often logical, rules in order a hierarchy to manipulate symbols in a sequential way. However, connectionist systems rely on similar processing of sub-symbols, using statistical properties as an alternative of logical rules to transform information.

According to Fromkin, Rodman & Haymes (2003), linguistic knowledge is represented by a set of neurons like connections between different phonological forms, for example, between *like* and *liked*, *ask* and *asked*, *drive* and *drove*, and so on. The repeated contact with particular verb pairs in the input reinforces the connection between them, mimicking rule-like behavior. Based in similarities between words, this model can produce a past tense form that it was not before exposed. They mention the following example: on analogy to *like - liked*, it will change *save - saved*; on analogy to *drive - drove* it will change *ride - rode*.

As a model of language acquisition, connectionism confronts some serious challenges. Fromkin, Rodman & Haymes (2003), state that the model relies on detailed properties of the input data. However, research of the input that actual children receive shows that it is not consistent with the suppositions of this model. Past tense learning cannot be based on phonological form alone but must also be sensitive to information in the lexicon, the writing part. For example: with the irregular forms of some verbs in past tense or with the irregular plural of some words.

Connectionist approaches to language are controversial. According to Christiansen & Charter (1998), aspects like the phonology and the semantics of a language can be worked, analyzed and understood by means of the connectionism approach, but there are other aspects like the grammatical structures of a language that could not be worked and understood in connectionist terms, this structures need a special analysis that the connectionism can not provide. For some, *“connectionism is not just an additional method for studying language processing, but it offers an option to traditional theories, which describe language and language processing in symbolic terms”* (Christiansen & Charter, 1998).

For this research, this approach is important because it mentions the writing part, it tells us how the mental connection of some words could be in an oral or written way. It makes us obtain more words without the need to look for them in a dictionary or ask them directly to a teacher.

Natural Approach

Krashen & Terrell (1983) argue that it has been designed mainly to allow beginning students to reach acceptable levels of oral communicative ability in the language classroom. They consider that the principal function of the language is serving as a mass media of messages and meanings. They make emphasis on the importance of the meaning and the vocabulary when learning a second language. Grammar is a language component that must be introduced in a progressive way and according to a certain level of difficulty and the students' knowledge. In this approach, *“students are not forced to speak before they are ready. In addition, speech errors which do not interfere with communication aren't corrected; while this correction may help learning, acquired competence comes from comprehensible input.”* (Krashen & Terrell, 1988, p. 20).

To Krashen and Terrell (1988), this approach includes the following principles:

1. The comprehension precedes production: listening or reading comprehension precedes speaking or writing abilities. Some implications of this principle are:

- The instructor always uses the target language.
- The focus of the communication will be on a topic of interest for the student.
- The instructor will strive at all times to help the students understand.

2. The production is allowed to emerge in stages: these consist of:

- Response by nonverbal communication.
- Response with a single word.
- Combinations of two or three words.
- Phrases.
- Sentences.
- Finally more complex discourse.

3. The course syllabus consists of communicative goals: this means that the focus of each classroom activity is organized by topic, not grammatical structure.

4. The activities done in the classroom aimed at acquisition must foster a lowering of the affective filter of the students: these ones center at all times on topics which are interesting and relevant to the students and encourage them to express their opinions and emotions

The Natural Approach is based on a theoretical model consisting of five hypotheses; Coady & Huckin (1997) present the following summary:

1. *The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis*: the distinction between “natural” acquisition as seen in L1 and the formal learning that emphasizes conscious rules and error correction.
2. *The Natural Order Hypothesis*: the grammatical structure tends to be naturally got in a rather predictable order without artificial sequencing of input.
3. *The Monitor Hypothesis*: conscious learning has the limited function of “monitoring” or editing language performance.
4. *The Input Hypothesis*: language is acquired when input is in an interesting and relevant context that is a little above one’s current level of competence.
5. *The Affective Filter Hypothesis*: that attitudinal factors are related to language acquisition; acquirers with a “low affective filter” – an optimal attitude – will be more receptive and more likely to interact with confidence.

This methodology makes emphasis on a comprehensible and meaningful input rather than grammatical correct production. The vocabulary is considered by the Natural Approach like a very important aspect in the language acquisition process. “*Acquisition depends crucially on the input being comprehensible. And comprehensibility is dependent directly on the ability to recognize the meaning of key elements in the utterance. Thus, acquisition will not take place without vocabulary comprehension*”. (Krashen & Terrell, 1983, p. 155)

It is notorious that these methods consider the importance of vocabulary, especially the Natural Approach, but not all of them make little emphasis on the writing part. That is our principal research topic. In spite of this, it is important for this study to know how these theories explain language acquisition in the human being and how some ideas of each one of them can help us to develop this research. For example, how we can

use reinforcement outlined by the Behaviorist approach to make students work with the language in their homes, or see if the students develop their innate abilities outlined by Chomsky in the Innatism approach when they are working with words, or if they make connections between words when they are working in some writing text. On the other hand if these methods and strategies include useful and interesting vocabulary topics. After knowing and analyzing how language acquisitions occurs, according to the vision of each approach, now it will be interesting to know and analyze how the methods proposed and used by some teachers can influence the use of vocabulary strategies by the students.

Second Language Teaching Methods

Different fields like Psychology, Sociology, Linguistics, among others, have made contributions to develop methods to improve the Foreign Language Teaching. These have been put on practice and complemented by the contributions and concepts from approaches and others methods. But how can these methods influence the vocabulary learning of students? In the following section these methods and doubts will be explained and analysed.

Grammar Translation Method

This method was first introduced to teach modern languages. *“The primary goals of this method were to prepare students to read and write classical materials and to pass standardized exams.”*(Coady & Huckin, 1997. p. 5). According to Richards & Rodgers (2001), reading and writing are the major focus; little or no systematic attention is paid to speaking or listening.

Initially, it was used to teach classic languages through classical literature chosen as material for its intellectual content. This makes students loose contact with the reality

of the language but they benefited from a good mental exercise. Teachers gave detailed explanations of grammar in their native language, concepts to memorize, and bilingual vocabulary lists to learn with the only purpose of translating texts (Coady & Huckin, 1997).

This method does not have an origin or influence to any approach and the apogee and diffusion of this method was established with the publications of grammar books and bilingual dictionaries, these would serve to prepare the students to second language learning. It is the most common method in our context. The classes are taught in the mother tongue with little active use of the target language. The writing skill is worked since the beginning by means of copy exercises of words and statements, and basically, through statements translation.

Direct Method

It was based on the Reform Movement of Henry Sweet. According to Richards & Rodgers (2001), it made emphasis in the primacy of oral language and phonetic training; its name came from the priority of relating meaning directly with the target language without the step of translation.

It stated that interaction like the heart of natural language acquisition. Its proponents used the target language as the language of instruction in small, intensive classes consisting of carefully graded progressions of questions and answer exchanges. Everyday vocabulary and sentences were used (Coady & Huckin, 1997). It included social, literary and cultural aspect to a language to develop of this method. It was a great contribution to Second Language teaching.

This method benefits to learners because use vocabulary of the real life, it is useful, but for its oral nature, it does not make a big emphasis on the writing skill. But the

learner could work his/her writing skill by means of dictations or writing on the board the statements or words worked in class.

Reading Method

It was aimed primarily at the development of reading skills, a response in part to the 1929 Coleman report (Coady & Huckin, 1997). This study concluded that foreign language learners did not have a good conversational level for three reasons:

1. The reduced time assigned to foreign languages in the high school.
2. The limited knowledge to foreign language by the teachers.
3. The irrelevance to the oral skill for the common student because many of them do not have the opportunity to travel other countries.

Its principles are related with the reading practice. Reading is a silent process that pretends to understand directly long statements and paragraphs without the need to translate. It was classified in two parts:

Intensive: include a carefully grammatical analysis of the text and to obtain specific details of it.

Extensive: it is the identification to main ideas and in the entertaining reading, without make a grammatical analysis or translates the text.

Other of its purposes is familiarized the students with the history and the culture of foreign country. The writing skill is worked in exercises that reinforce their vocabulary and basic grammatical structures. The words are selected according to the reading topics. By means of reading, they can revise the writing part of the vocabulary that they will learn from books.

Audio-Lingual Method

The Audio-lingual Method or Structural Approach was developed by Americans structural linguists during World War II. According to Richard & Rogers (2001) they create the “Army Specialized Training program” that for its discipline, intensity, selection, small groups and so motivated students, gave good results. Its success was not by a good established method or a specific theory, to direct contact with L2, the intensity of the courses and the groups selected appropriated and almost obligated to learn that language. On the other hand, this method suggested that most problems experienced by foreign language learners concern the conflict of different structural systems (Coady & Huckin, 1997).

According to Moulton (1961), this method comes from the following slogans of the Structuralist Linguistic:

1. Language is speech, no writing.
2. A language is a set of habits.
3. Teach the language, not facts about the language.
4. A language is what its native speaker say, not what someone thinks they ought to say.
5. Languages are different.

For this method the vocabulary learning is not so indispensable, it just intends for the students to use vocabulary learned from experience to practice the grammatical structures. It makes emphasis on the oral part because its main purpose is to allow communication among the students in a quickly way. The writing skill is worked by means of little activities like short texts or tales.

Audio-Visual Method

Its name corresponds to the kind of materials that it uses: magneto phonic tapes and slides. (Bastidas, 1993). This method is used to teaching a living langue, that is, a speaking langue. Therefore, its emphasis is in the oral part. This method conceive to the langue established by sounds, vocabulary and grammar, in consequence, these components should be selected suitably to teaching. Just the vocabulary and the grammar necessary to basic communication should be the object of teaching. The language is an instrument to serve to express our thoughts, feelings, emotions and sensations; it arises to connect to external world with the internal world of the human beings. The language develops through situations and is inseparable of the movement of these situations.

Regarding vocabulary, it uses few words that let that students understand the lesson that they are working in class. But although the vocabulary level is not high, it should serve to the student to describe situations of the daily life. This method treats the writing skill after working with the oral one because it considers that the writing skill will be an obstacle to L2 learning. The main reason for this could be that the learner will depend to the writing material and he/she does not make an effort to understand the lessons in an oral way.

According to Rivers (1981), in the Audio-lingual method literature, there could not be found an explicit theory of learning. Although, by the methodological process, some behaviourist principles can be deduced like: memorization, observation, imitation, repetition and, these are considered like fundamental process to L2 learning.

Series Method

It was created by François Gouin after being unsuccessful in his purpose to learn German through traditional methods of that time, and after observing the fast way in which his nephew, a child of three years old learned French. Its name comes from

organizing and making phrases on a series of events to shape a process to do something in the pass of time (Bastidas, 1993).

Gouin memorized the grammar and the irregular verbs, learned one hundred roots of words, lived with a barber and tried to speak with his clients, learned lessons and words from dictionary and grammar books. But these activities result fruitless because he could not communicate with naturalness in German. When he saw that his nephew had learned French language for the same period of time with better results, he decided to observe him; Gouin framed some concepts of this observation and helped him organize the Series Method (Brown, 1994).

For Gouin, language is a way to think and represent the world. It is a process by which humans try to organize their world perceptions in terms of linguistic concepts. The language is a system governed by rules. But this does not mean that grammar should be learned through abstracts rules and paradigms like in the Classic method. This method proposes a quick vocabulary learning obtained from statements and a series context. These situations allow students to learn a lot of words that can be remembered easily by means of practice. Writing is considered after speaking and it is reinforcement by oral practice.

Total Physical Response Method

This method derives its name from the use of a series of orders give to the teacher from the students make them. The practice includes a physical response. James Asher was its creator. Based in a conception of the Evolutive Psychology, he affirms that the conversation directed to children is compounded mainly to orders that, at the beginning, they response in a physical way after to produce the speaking language. So, Asher proposes to follow a similar process in a L2 teaching (Bastidas, 1993).

From the Psychology and the Humanistic Education, this method takes its principles on the role of the affective component in learning and it applies them at language learning. Therefore, this method includes the physical movements and removes, at the beginning, the exigencies in the linguistic field with the purpose to reduce the anxiety and create a positive attitude to facilitate the new language learning.

The vocabulary level is intensified as the classes go advancing, the writing activities are used to consolidate the grammatical structures and the vocabulary is applied for students to have a visual memory but they need work the writing part, too.

Silent Way Method

Its name comes from its preoccupation by the teacher stays in silence the most part of the time, according to the level, while the students try to produce the second language every time in a major part. Its name does not suggest that the class was in silence all time, on the contrary, the students produce an oral activity guided by the teacher's gestures or answers. The "silence" that presents in this kind of classes is a period in which the student thinks, argues and fights to make his statements and transmits his ideas in L2.

Gattegno (1972), affirms that language is a substitute of the experience; the experience gives meaning to language. The student should make an effort to discover the phonological and syntactic elements and the combinations of these to shape syllables, words and statements. He makes emphasis, too, in the importance of the L2 vocabulary. The langue is used to self-express our feelings, emotions, thoughts and perceptions. The vocabulary learning is limited to selected words about topics like food, colours, family, etc. later, appears functional vocabulary like prepositions, pronouns, numbers, etc. that can be combined to produce statements. For vocabulary increase and the creation of

situations, it uses pictures, too. In this method the four skills are integrated through the course.

Suggestopedia Method

Richards & Rogers (2001) define Suggestopedia as a specific set of learning recommendations to derive to science called “Suggestology”. It is a method that is based on mentalist conceptions on learning. By Lozanov, quoted by Richards & Rodgers (2001), all men are enabled to learn something and there is the need to take advantage of this gift. But the problem is that the human being has created a set of obstacles that stop the learning. This author decides to create a method to help to eliminate these obstacles and facilitate the leaning in favourable conditions.

This method is known by the kind of course where the sessions have place. It is a good carpet room, with comfortable chairs and decorated with art pieces and gaudy pictures and the presence to select music. This environment is important to stimulate the informal contact and the free and natural communication. Lozanov proposes this kind of environment to differentiate to traditional classroom, for him, it is a symbol of frustration, failure and falsely. It receives the influence from the yoga because it uses techniques of mental concentration and rhythmic breathing.

The vocabulary level is very important for this method; it considers that if there are more words in each unit, there are more possibilities that the students can remember them. For this purpose, it suggests the use of songs, games, tales and crossword puzzles. The writing part is not frequently in this method, the oral one receive more attention since the beginning of the course.

All these methods make especial emphasis in the oral skill; writing and reading are put in second place, except the reading method that works with reading comprehension. The previously mentioned methods (e.g., the Audio-Visual Method, The Direct Method) consider that it is basic to work with the oral part at the beginning of instruction, and use writing and reading activities to reinforce the vocabulary learned. But like the research topic of this work is the strategies that the students use outside the classroom, on the next part, these strategies will be defined and analyzed because it is relevant for this research to have a clear concept of what is a strategy, how many strategies are and what consist each one.

Learning Strategies

According to Oxford (1990), learning strategies are alternatives that the students use to increase their own learning. *“These are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence. Appropriate language learning strategies result in improved proficiency and greater self-confidence.”* (Oxford, 1990, p.1).

Most Language learning strategies are oriented to develop communicative competence. Oxford (1990) states that the development of this competence requires of a real interaction between learners and useful, meaningful and contextualized language. Strategies help learners to be actively participants of a real communication. These ones work in both general and specifics ways to support the development of communicative competence. She mentions the following list with the features of language learning strategies:

Features of language learning strategies

1. Contribute to the main goal, communicative competence.

2. Allow learners to become more self-directed.
3. Expand the role of teachers.
4. Are problem-oriented.
5. Are specific actions taken by the learner
6. Involve many aspects of the learner, not just the cognitive.
7. Support learning both directly and indirectly.
8. Are not always observable.
9. Are often conscious.
10. Can be taught.
11. Are flexible.
12. Are influenced by a variety of factors.

To Oxford (1990) these strategies are divided into two major classes: *direct* and *indirect* strategies. And these are divided into six groups: *memory*, *cognitive*, *compensation* (Direct), and *metacognitive*, *affective*, *social* (Indirect). “*Direct and Indirect strategies support each other, and that each strategy group is capable of connecting with and assisting every other strategy group.*” (Oxford, 1990, p. 30)

Direct Strategies

To Oxford (1990), language learning strategies that directly involve the target language are called direct strategies. All the ones require a mental processing of the language, but the three groups of these ones do this processing in a different way and for different purposes.

Memory strategies

Sometimes called mnemonics, these have a very specific function: to help students accumulate and retrieve new information (Oxford, 1990). Memory strategies are

recognized like powerful mental tools but the development of this potential depends on the interest and contributions of the students. If they want the best results; they can integrate metacognitive strategies like pay attention and affective strategies like reduce the anxiety by means of breathing exercises. (Oxford, 1990)

According to Oxford (1990), these strategies have some simple principles like order things, make associations and reviewing, these ones involve the meaning. The vocabulary that is going to be worked must be useful and meaningful. Teachers think that this vocabulary learning is easy but for the students are difficult remember all the words that they learn, to later apply them. By means of these principles, these strategies propose that students can associate the verbal material with the visual one to create, associate and remember words when they need them. Memory strategies fall into four sets:

1. Creating mental linkages

According to Oxford (1990), these strategies form the basis for the rest of memory strategies:

- Grouping: classifying or reclassifying language material into meaningful units, mentally or in writing, to make the material easier to remember by the reducing number of elements according to the type of words.

- Associating/ elaborating: relating new language information to concepts already in memory or relating some information to another, to create new associations on memory. These can be simple or complex but it has to be useful for learners.

- Placing new words into a context: put a word in a meaningful sentence, conversation or story in order to remember it. It has to include all the possible clues, context and meaning.

2. Applying Images and sounds

These involve remembering by means of visual images or/and sounds:

- Using imagery: relate new language information with concepts in memory by means of meaningful images, these could be in the mind or in an actual drawing.

- Semantic mapping: make a plan of words into a picture, which has a key concept at the center or at the top and related words and concepts linked with the key concept by means of lines or arrows.

- Using keywords: remember new words using auditory and visual links. These must be useful for the learner.

- Representing sounds in memory: remember new language information according to its sound using spelling, accent marks or rhymes.

3. Reviewing well

The new language information has to be studied and practiced frequently to be remembered.

- Structured reviewing: review the new information in carefully spaced intervals for this one will be more familiar, natural and automatic.

4. Employing action

There are two strategies in this part that involve some kind of meaningful movement or action:

- Using physical response or sensation: it includes physical activities to increase new expressions about feelings or sensations.

- Using mechanical Techniques: it uses creative and technique activities to remember new language information.

Cognitive strategies

These strategies are essential in learning a new language. Oxford (1990) states that these ones make emphasis on the practice, repetition and analysis of expressions to add them to our vocabulary. The strategies have a common function: manipulate and transform to the target language by the learner. Oxford (1990) also mentions that these strategies are very popular between language learners. The learners often are in contact with words from radio, TV programs, movies, articles, etc. but for this contact will be useful, they have to strategies like take notes to add these words to their vocabulary, practiced them and used them for speaking and writing according to the grammatical structures of the langue. The cognitive strategies are divided into four sets:

1. Practicing

According to Oxford (1990), these are the most important cognitive strategies; they allow students to remember words more easily, in a natural way.

- Repeating.
- Formally practicing with sounds and writing systems.
- Recognizing and using formulas and patterns.
- Recombining.
- Practicing naturalistically.

2. Receiving and sending messages

These are necessary tools, according to Oxford (1990), one such strategy, known as getting the idea quickly, helps learners locate the main idea by means of analogy, this strategy involves that it is not necessary for learners to centre them in every single word:

- Getting the idea quickly: by means of preview questions without translating texts or conversations.

- Using resources for receiving and sending messages: use any kind of resources to send messages and understand incoming ones.

3. Analyzing and reasoning

These strategies are commonly used by language learners. Oxford (1990) mentions that the students construct a model in their minds based on analysis and comparison create general rules and revise these ones when new information is presented. Often learners can use these strategies to understand the meaning of a new expression or to create a new expression:

- Reasoning deductively: using general rules and applying them to new target language situations.

- Analyzing expressions: analyze the meaning by sections.

- Analyzing contrastively: compare elements to determine similarities and differences between languages.

- Translating.

- Transferring: apply directly knowledge of words, concepts or structures from one language to another.

4. Creating structure for input and output

These strategies are ways to create structures; this is an essential part for comprehension and production in the new language:

- Taking notes: writing down the main idea or specific points.

- Summarizing: make a resume of a longer passage.

- Highlighting: employ a variety of techniques to underline the important information of a passage.

Compensation strategies

Oxford (1990) suggests that these strategies allow learners to use new language for either comprehension or production despite limitations in knowledge. These are planned to make up for an inadequate repertoire of grammar and, especially, of vocabulary. These strategies let the students produce spoken or written expressions in the new language without complete knowledge of the language.

1. Guessing intelligently in listening and reading

Oxford (1990) mentions that the two strategies which contribute to guessing intelligently refer to two kinds of clues: linguistic and non-linguistic.

- Using linguistic clues: searching and using language-based clues with the purpose to guess the meaning of what is heard or read in target language, if the students do not have a complete knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and other elements of the language.

- Using other clues: searching and using clues that are not language-based with the purpose to guess the meaning of what is heard or read in target language, if the students do not have a complete knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and other elements of the language.

2. Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing

These strategies are used to overcome difficulties in speaking and writing. Some ones just make emphasis on the speaking skill, but some ones can be used for writing skill, too. Oxford (1990) mentions the following eight:

- Switching to the mother tongue: use an expression of the mother tongue, without translate it. It may include adding word endings from the new language into words from the mother tongue, too.

- Getting help.

- Using mime or gesture.
- Avoiding communication partially or totally: avoid partially or totally the communication when difficulties are anticipated. It may include communication in general or some topics and expressions.
- Selecting the topic: according to interest of the participant for it and assure that they have the sufficient vocabulary and grammar to participate in the conversation.
- Adjusting or approximating the message: modify the message by means of the omission of some information items; make the idea simpler or less precise.
- Coining words.
- Using a circumlocution or synonym.

Indirect Strategies

According to Oxford (1990), these strategies are called indirect because they support and manage language learning without directly involving the target language. They are useful in all language learning situations and are applicable in the four language skills.

Metacognitive Strategies

Oxford (1990) defines metacognitive strategies like actions which go beyond purely cognitive devices and which provide a way for learners to coordinate their own learning process. These are divided into three groups:

1. Centering your learning

According to Oxford (1990), these strategies help students to join their attention and energies on certain language tasks, activities, skills or materials. These provide a focus for language learning:

- Overviewing and linking with already known material: revise carefully a concept or set of materials in a future language activity to associate it with what is already known.

- Paying attention.

- Delaying speech production to focus on listening: retard totally or partially the speech production, until listening comprehension skills are better developed.

2. Arranging and planning your learning

To Oxford (1990) these strategies help learners to organize and plan so as get the most out of language learning:

- Finding out about language learning: make an effort to find out how language learning works by reading books or talking with others, later, use this information to increase their own language learning.

- Organizing.

- Setting goals and objectives.

- Identifying the purpose of a language task: decide the purpose of a particular language task involving listening, reading, speaking or writing.

- Planning for a language task: planning for the language elements and functions necessary for an anticipated language task or situation.

- Seeking practice opportunities.

3. Evaluating your learning

We found two related strategies, both aiding learners checking their language performance. Oxford (1990).

- Self-monitoring.

- Self-evaluating.

Affective strategies

Oxford (1990) mentions that it is important to analyse like affective factors influencing in language learning. By means of language strategies, students can gain control over factors like emotions, attitudes, motivations and values. *“Good language learners are often to those who know how to control their emotions and attitudes about learning.”* (Oxford, 1990, p. 140)

1. Lowering your anxiety

To Oxford (1990), it found three anxiety-reducing strategies. Each one has a physical and a mental component:

- Using relaxation, deep breathing, or meditation.
- Using music.
- Using laughter.

2. Encouraging yourself

These strategies are usually forgotten by learners, especially who expect support mainly from others and do not make they can provide their own. Oxford (1990) states that the most powerful encouragement may come from inside learner:

- Making positive statements.
- Taking risks wisely.
- Rewarding yourself.

3. Taking your emotional temperature

The following strategies help learners to consider their feelings, motivations and attitudes and, sometimes, to relate them to language tasks. These are helpful for discerning negative attitudes and emotions that difficult learning process. (Oxford, 1990)

- Listening your body.

- Using a checklist.
- Writing a language learning diary.
- Discussing your feelings with someone else.

Social strategies

According to Oxford (1990) language is a form of social behaviour and the communication process occurs between and among people. Social strategies are important because language learning involves other people and we must know which ones are appropriate in this process.

1. Asking questions

According to Oxford (1990), these strategies involve asking someone, possibly a teacher or native speaker or even a more proficient fellow learner:

- Asking for clarification or verification.
- Asking for correction.

2. Cooperating with others

To Oxford (1990), these strategies involve interaction with one or more people to improve language skills:

- Cooperating with peers: work with other language learners to improve language skills.
- Cooperating with proficient users of the new language: work with native speakers or other proficient users of the new language, usually outside of classroom.

3. Empathizing with others

According to Oxford (1990), empathy can be developed more easily when language learners use these two strategies:

- Developing cultural understanding: try to empathize to another person the learning of his/ her culture.

- Becoming aware of others' thoughts and feelings: observe the behaviours to others as possible expressions of their thoughts and feelings.

All these kinds of strategies are mentioned because if the research topic is the use of these ones by students. It is necessary to understand and analyze what these strategies consist, where they originate and who influence them. It is important to know them since the beginning to analyze if they can benefit or damage the vocabulary learning of students.

Vocabulary Learning

Semantics and lexicon have been useful tools for English teachers. Now, some general issues about vocabulary learning will be analyzed. According to Hatch & Brown (1995), the discussions about vocabulary learning are often divided between intentional and incidental learning. Intentional is designed, planned for, or intended by teacher or student. Incidental is the type of learning that is a by-product of doing or learning something else.

The intentional learning, in particular teaching, aid in the knowledge of words, but many studies had demonstrated the direct instruction provides few words compared to how many vocabulary the students need to know. Neither the most ambitious teaching program can provide the vocabulary that students need to develop the language. Most of the work with incidental learning has focused on the vocabulary learned from reading (Hatch & Brown, 1995).

Hatch & Brown (1995), cite Haycraft (1978), who defines receptive vocabulary as “words that the student recognizes and understands when they occur in a context, but

which he/she cannot produce correctly”, and productive like “ words which the student understands, can pronounce correctly and use constructively in speaking and writing” (p. 370). These terms had began discussion among different authors, but the most important point of the receptive and productive discussion is that it suggest that there are different ways to “know” a word, that what is considered enough knowledge in some circumstances and will probably not be enough in other ones.

Acquisition does not emerge to be a simple throwing of a button between knowing and not knowing; rather, there seems to be a continuum of knowledge about any word and a learner can be anywhere along the field. Knowledge about words must include information than make that learners can choose not to produce them (Hatch & Brown, 1995), these authors suggest that any theory or model of vocabulary learning must count with these levels of knowledge about and use of words.

Five essential steps in vocabulary learning

Teachers have been interested in understanding how students learn vocabulary. By means of research, observation and conversations with learners, teachers have worked to acquire more profitable strategies to help their students. Brown and Payne (1994) did and analysis that resulted in a very clear model where the strategies fall into five essential steps (Hatch & Brown, 1995):

1. Encountering new words

To Hatch & Brown (1995), this is the first essential step to acquire a source of words. The most common strategies used by the students are listen TV and radio, and reading books, newspapers and magazines. It is very important that L2 learners were in contact with the vocabulary of this language, in that way, the incidental learning of vocabulary takes place. Other factors that influence in this step is the learners’ interest to

pay attention to some words than others according with a specific area. When the student talks with his/her teacher uses some native words to express their ideas, must be the teacher who supplied the second language words.

Other elements that may be more effective in some circumstances are the work with interactive materials like videos and CD ROMs, their desire to know more words, make that they associate images with words and later, in the video script or instructional exercises, the words were supplied for what the learners had seen, this produce a faster learning. Other important aspect is the frequency which those words are practiced, it is necessary that the student was in contact with situations that provides words like the reading, listening or informal conversations, and will be those situations that let that him/her can practice the vocabulary learned before. There are other kind of strategies may not be a personally interactive and interesting, but they serve learners, for example textbooks, list of words assigned by teachers or made them for the same students; and dictionaries.

2. Getting the word form

Hatch & Brown (1995) state that the second step comes out when the student want to get a clear image – visual or auditory or both – of the form of the vocabulary item. In this step, we can see comments like: “associating new words with words that sound similar in my native language”, “writing the sounds of words using sound symbols from my native language”, “associating words that are similar to words in other languages I have studied”, “associating a word with a similar sounding English word I know”, and “seeing a word that looks like another word I already know. In this part, the significance to have a clear image of the form of a word starts when we think about what happens when we try to take back words. In the case of the L2 learners, sometimes the really form

of a L2 word is affected by the forms of the native words that the L2 students use. The importance of this step also appears when students are asked to give definitions for words, the problems start with the beginners who confuse easily, the forms of one word for other ones, other error is when the students translate words or statements according to forms of their native words or statements and not with the form of the original ones. *“Many of the errors seem to be caused by, or related to the confusing of words similar in form either to a native language word or to another English word.”* (Hatch & Brown, 1995, p. 378).

3. Getting the word meaning

The third step is the one which is most often associated with the idea of vocabulary learning: getting the word meaning. It includes strategies as “asking native English speakers what words mean”, “asking people who speak my native language the meaning of new words”, “making pictures of word meanings in my mind”, and “explain what I mean and asking someone to tell me the English word” (Hatch & Brown, 1995). The level of distinctions that must be made in word definitions depends to the needs and the level of the learner. For example, a beginner learner just want to have general meanings and an intermediate one want to know a more specific definitions to differentiate between near synonyms. Students may want too, different kinds of definitions and distinctions depending on the words being learned and the reasons for needing them. Advanced ones may find sources more suitable than dictionaries to supply the finer distinctions in meaning that they need, but they show some errors making with native languages translations for English words.

Hatch & Brown (1995) mention other strategies that students employ for this purpose, they are the use of monolingual or bilingual dictionaries, having a bilingual

friend or a teacher explain, and finally one very popular way, and we can say that is the only way in incidental learning for students to get the meaning of words is through context. They guess the meaning of words from the situation, discourse, and/or context in which they are used, and from the structure of the words themselves. *“Although the depth of definition needed may vary and the sources from which meaning can be extracted may be quite different, all learners must get the meaning of words in some manner, or the words can never be considered truly learned”*. (Hatch & Brown, 1995, p. 385).

4. Consolidating word form and meaning in memory

The fourth step needs the consolidation of form and meaning in memory. The vocabulary learned by means of activities like flashcards, crossword puzzles, etc., strengthen the form-meaning connection. (Hatch & Brown, 1995). They mention the memory strategies that Oxford (1990) proposes to consolidate the connection between word form and meaning in memory.

According to Hatch & Brown (1995), generating words is a difficult work for learners, much of them opt for more traditional ways to consolidate word forms with word meanings. One of the most traditional ways is memorizing words and their meanings from lists, it can be so fun or interesting like others but there are many persons who have learned languages in this way so that it should not be discounted. *“Which methods learners use for this step does not seem to be as crucial as they do it. The more words learners can get through this step, the more words they will know overall”*. (Hatch & Brown, 1995, p. 389).

5. Using the word

The final step is using the words. According to Hatch & Brown (1995) this step is important because it lets the students put in practice the word knowledge that they have and, in that way, provide a mild guarantee that words and meanings will not fade from memory once they are learned. *“Although there is a broad range of activities, strategies or techniques that individuals use at teach step, the necessity of the steps seems more constant. Learners need all five in order to have a full knowledge of the words they want to learn.”* (Hatch & Brown, 1995, p. 391).

All these approaches, methods and strategies are mentioned because the topic of this research is the use of vocabulary learning strategies by the students, and to understand what this process involves it might turn good results to analyze the learning process since the beginning, see the different theories that explain the language acquisition and extract important concepts like reinforcement, connections, among others. Later, understand how these theories serve as a base to create the teaching methods and look as each one of them work with the vocabulary learning and the writing skills and if this work is enough for the students.

When learning strategies are mentioned in general, we want to know what a strategy is; what topics or skills that it want to work and increase, and what activities propose to achieve this goals. And we mention vocabulary learning strategies we want to know, specifically, what activities they propose to increase the vocabulary level of students, if they are easier and common between students and what topics and levels work. Our purpose is not using them, it is know them, to can design and apply a survey.

Learning vocabulary is a complex process that involves understanding and analyzing their roots since the most general part, approaches to the most specific one, strategies and activities to learn vocabulary.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Design

This was a qualitative research. This study was basically descriptive; the study was based on the information provided by the students in the surveys.

Subjects

The subjects of this study were 30 students from the English and French program of the University of Nariño, ten students from third semester, ten from the fifth and ten from the seventh semester, women and men chosen at random. The students belong to a medium socio-economical status and some come from different parts of the department of Nariño. Their ages range between 18 and 27 years old.

Instruments

For the data collecting, surveys were employed because they provided the specific information needed to describe the phenomena studied. The surveys consisted of twenty – five questions, they had the following answer options: never, occasionally, sometimes, usually and always. After reading each statement the subject chose the item that better suited to describe his/her situation.

Procedures

To carry out the data collecting of this work, the following steps were considered:

1. To prepare the twenty – five questions of the surveys according to the literature review. After a review, organize it keeping in mind the theoretical and technical content.
2. To choose at random, ten students from third, fifth and seventh semester to apply the survey. Then explain to them what the survey consists of and answer the possible

doubts that they could have. In the same way, to recommend their honesty in the response of the questionnaire.

3. After applying the surveys in the semesters, and proceed to analyze the data and reach conclusions.

Pilot study

Applying the survey to five students tested the measurement instrument. This was done in order to determine the time they would take answering it and to state possible misunderstandings in the statements. After the pilot study some technical errors like letters and spacing lines were corrected to avoid confusion and mistakes in the answers.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISSCUSSION

Once the survey has been applied, the next step in the development of this research is the presentation and analysis of the information collected. The results obtained in the survey are presented and later analyzed in order to describe the situation studied.

Based on the information collected, the students of the English and French program of the University of Nariño have an acceptable attitude to the use of additional vocabulary learning strategies outside the classroom but with a positive possibility to increase it.

Table 1 presents the number of frequencies to each answer option. :

Table 1
Frequencies Distribution

Answer Options	Frequencies	%
Always	97	12.9
Usually	205	27.3
Sometimes	230	30.7
Occasionally	155	20.7
Never	63	8.4
TOTAL	750	100%

According to the before table the most used option answer was *Sometimes*, with a total frequency of 230 times, that is equivalent to 30.7%. The second answer option was *Usually*, with a total frequency of 205 times, that is equivalent to 27.3%, these results confirm the description done at the beginning of this chapter. On the third place, the answer option *Occasionally*, with a total frequency of 155 times, it is equivalent to 20.7%. The fourth one was *Always*, with a total frequency of 97 times, that is equivalent

to 12.9%, and finally, the answer option *Never*, is the less used with a total frequency of 63 times, that is equivalent to 8.4%. These results show that the students are not totally indifferent to the use of vocabulary learning strategies.

All the information collected in the surveys has also been revised in an individual way.

Each question has a percentage resulting from the analysis of the students' answers. The results of this survey are shown in table 2.

Table 2
Results of the Survey

STATEMENT	Always	usually	sometimes	occasionally	Never
I have a specific day and/or hour to work with new vocabulary.	0%	16.7%	53.3%	20%	10%
I make a periodical control of my vocabulary learning to identify possible mistakes.	3.33%	20%	53.3%	16.7%	6.7%
I work with the new vocabulary learned, writing cards, sentences or short texts.	10%	36.7%	26.7%	23.3%	3.33%
I read books and articles to know new words from them.	16.7%	33.3	36.7%	13.3%	0%
I create useful situations to practice my new words.	3.33%	36.7%	36.7%	13.3%	10%
I learn new words by means of bilingual dictionaries.	26.7%	30%	23.3%	16.7%	3.33%
I read a new word several times to learn it.	16.7%	33.3%	26.7%	23.3%	0%
I make a periodical self-evaluating of my learning process by means of short tests, readings, and/or writing activities.	6.7%	13.3%	40%	30%	10%
I relate similar words to express my ideas.	6.7%	33.3%	33.3%	26.7%	0%
I use computers programs or CD ROMs to learn new words.	6.7%	10%	13.3%	36.7%	33.3%
I prepare the new words of a lesson in advance.	13.3%	20%	20%	40%	6.7%
I use games, flashcards, crossword puzzles and other activities to learn new words.	3.33%	10%	36.7%	20%	30%
I ask teachers and native speakers to know new words.	16.7%	30%	23.3%	16.7%	13.3%
I make my own lists of new words to learn them.	13.3%	30%	30%	16.7%	10%
I invent some words to express my ideas.	20%	10%	13.3%	36.7%	20%
I use mimic or gesture to understand a new word.	10%	23.3%	30%	20%	16.7%
I learn new words paying attention in class.	16.7%	53.2	13.3%	16.7%	0%
I hear a new word several times to learn it.	10%	33.3%	43.3%	10%	3.33%
I use visual imageries to learn and remember new words.	13.3%	13.3%	46.7%	23.3%	3.33%
I work and interact with my classmates to learn new vocabulary.	10%	26.7%	20%	30%	13.3%
I listen to sounds and songs to learn new words from them.	33.3%	26.7%	33.3%	6.7%	0%
I write a new word several times to learn it.	6.7%	43.3%	16.7%	26.7%	6.7%
I ask teachers and native speakers for clarification and/or correction.	26.7%	36.7%	20%	10%	6.7%
I take notes in class and later study them to take out new words.	20%	40%	30%	6.7%	3.33%
I work with a specific vocabulary topic.	13.3%	23.3%	46.7%	16.7%	0%

After to know the percentages of each question, this is the individual analysis of the survey according to the authors' proposes:

- *Specific day and/or hour to work vocabulary*: Oxford (1990) mentions that it is important to choose a specific day and/or hour to prepare a special space that lets students have an optimal learning in the new language. Work with a continuous and own rhythm by means of a schedule and a language learning notebook. According to the results of this survey, this strategy does not have a good level of acceptance, in the answer options *usually*, *sometimes* and *occasionally*, the strategy presents a regular level with a 16.7%, 53.2% and 20%, respectively. This supposes that the students do not dedicate the time that Oxford (1990) recommends to work with vocabulary. The results in the options *always* and *never*, with a 0% and 10%, respectively, it can be concluded that in this strategy aspects like interest and time disposition of the students can influence the results.

- *A periodical control to identify possible mistakes*: Oxford (1990) suggests that it is important that students make a periodical control of their own learning to identify errors, determining which ones can cause a serious confusion or offence in a real situation and the most important aspect: correct them on time. The students of English and French program agree with this recommendation, 3.33% of the participants answered *always*, 20% of the participants answered *usually*, 53.2 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 16.7 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 6.7% of the participants answered *never*. It shows that the level of acceptance to this strategy is increasing, the students might be conscious of the importance to learn new words, and they might be conscious of the importance to identify, understand and correct on time the possible mistakes that they could have.

- *Work with new vocabulary by means of writing activities:* For this statement, 10% of the participants answered *always*, 36.7% of the participants answered *usually*, 26.7 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 23.3 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 3.33% of the participants answered *never*, this results show that these writing vocabulary strategies have a good and positive level of acceptance between the students, the major percentage is presented with the option usually, followed by the option sometimes. Hatch & Brown (1995) mention five essential steps to vocabulary learning, one of them is “Using the Word”, and this step proposes that students use simple activities like writing short letters and texts, simple phrases or poems to help them to practice and consolidate a writing skill of the foreign language vocabulary. So, the English and French students understand that the permanent practice of their writing vocabulary skill might help them to increase and improve this skill.

- *Read books and articles to know new words:* For this statement, 16.7% of the participants answered *always*, 33.3% of the participants answered *usually*, 36.7 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 13.3 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 0% of the participants answered *never*. These results present a high level of acceptance to this strategy; the major percentage with the option usually followed by the option always, and the 0% in the option never makes of this strategy one of the most used ones among the students. Hatch & Brown (1995) mention this strategy into the first essential step to learn vocabulary: “Encountering new words”, the authors suggest that the reading of books, magazines, articles and newspapers, is one of the most common strategies to acquire a source of new words. It lets that students learn vocabulary to help to develop a quick reading comprehension and a better memorization and use of words in writing activities. The English and French students might understand the great advantages that

this strategy offers them; it is for that reason that this strategy is so popular between them.

- *Create useful situations to practice the new vocabulary:* Oxford (1990) and Hatch & Brown (1990) agree to suggest that is important that students must search the way to create useful situations to put in practice the knowledge learned. It would be useful to have elements of real life and by means of these activities, the vocabulary will be consolidated in the students' memory. For this statement, 3.33 % of the participants answered *always*, 36.7% of the participants answered *usually*, 36.7 % of the participants answered *sometimes*, 13.3 % of the participants answered *occasionally* and 10% of the participants answered *never*, it shows a high and positive level of acceptance by the students, reflected in the answer options usually and sometimes that have the major percentage respectively, they might be interested not only on strategies to learn words, they might be interested on strategies to practice those new words too.

- *The use of dictionaries:* For this statement, 26.7% of the participants answered *always*, 30% of the participants answered *usually*, 23.3% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 16.7% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 3,33% of the participants answered *never*. According to Hatch & Brown (1995), this is one of the most important and common strategies among students to getting a word meaning, the third essential step to learn vocabulary. The author suggest that dictionaries are the most easy way to know the meaning of a word, and the students of the English and French program have the same opinion to the dictionaries, the level of acceptance is high and good, with the answer options usually and always with the major percentage respectively, this strategy is one of the most common strategies among them, it could be possible because all learners have access to a dictionary.

- *Read a new word several times to learn it:* For this statement, 16.7% of the participants answered *always*, 33.3% of the participants answered *usually*, 26.7% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 23.3% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 0% of the participants answered *never*, Hatch & Brown (1995), suggest that this strategy makes part of the consolidating a word form and meaning in memory process, the fourth essential step to learn vocabulary, the authors affirm that when learners read and study a word several times, at the end, the word will be familiar because they will be memorize them. The students of the English and French have an acceptable and positive attitude to this strategy, reflected in the answer options usually, sometimes and always, that have the major percentage respectively, and with the answer option never that have a 0%, it is possible that they read articles and books to know several words, but they might not do much emphasis in only one word to memorize it, but the results show that reading strategies have a good acceptance among students.

- *A periodical self-evaluating by means of writing and/or reading activities:* Oxford (1990), suggests that self-evaluating helps students watch over and evaluate their own learning progress. After three or six months, students can see the positive results of their process, which contributes to students' motivation. For this statement, 6.7% of the participants answered *always*, 13.3% of the participants answered *usually*, 40% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 30% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 10% of the participants answered *never*, according to this information, the students have a regular level of acceptance to this strategy but with the possibility to down, with options sometimes and occasionally have the major percentages followed by the options never and always in the last place, the students might not know the benefits that Oxford (1990)

proposes by means of this strategy, if they knew these aspects, perhaps their level of acceptance and motivation to the use of this strategy and all ones could increase it.

- *Relate similar words*: For this statement, 6.7% of the participants answered *always*, 33.3% of the participants answered *usually*, 33.3% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 26.7% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 0% of the participants answered *never*, this strategy has a positive level of acceptance between English and French students. The major percentage options are usually and sometimes with the same numbers, and in the last place is the option never with 0%. According to Oxford (1990) this strategy lets that students can express their ideas altering the message by omitting some information and making ideas simpler or less precise and using Synonyms.

- *The use of computer programs and CD- ROMs*: Hatch & Brown (1995), suggest that the use of the computer programs and CD- ROMs like one of the sources to help students to encountering new words, the first essential step to learn vocabulary, and later, these materials help students to consolidate word form and meaning in memory. That is the fourth step of vocabulary learning. Oxford (1990) includes this strategy in the category of mechanical techniques. This strategy presents a low level of acceptance according to the following results: 6.7% of the participants answered *always*, 10% of the participants answered *usually* 13.3% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 36.7% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 33.3% of the participants answered *never*, according to this information, with the major percentages in the answer options occasionally and never, respectively, and in the last place the option always, this strategy is the less used one by the students of the English and French program. One of the aspects which can influence these results is that the majority of the students do not have access to computers in their homes or in the university.

- *Prepare the vocabulary of a new lesson in advance*: For this statement, 13.3% of the participants answered *always*, 20% of the participants answered *usually*, 20% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 40% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 6.7% of the participants answered *never*, the students have a regular but negative attitude to this strategy. The major percentage is concentrated in the answer option *occasionally*, followed by the options *usually* and *sometimes* that had the same number. Oxford (1990) mentions that this strategy include activities like describing the situation, determining needs and requirements, checking the topics or words that will be worked in class and determining additional language elements to profit the class. The students of the English and French program still do not know the real benefits to prepare the lessons in advance.

- *The use of games to learn new words*: Hatch & Brown (1995) propose that games are a good tool to consolidate the word form and meaning in memory, these activities are fun and interesting for learners, but the results show a different position. For this statement, 3.33% of the participants answered *always*, 10% of the participants answered *usually*, 36.7% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 20% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 30% of the participants answered *never*, this numbers demonstrate that the students have a regular but negative attitude to the use of games to know and consolidate words, with the major percentage centred on the answer options *sometimes* and *never* respectively, and with the option *always* in the last place, this is one of the less used strategies, contradicted to many authors like Hatch & Brown (1995), who suggest that games are interesting by the students.

- *Ask to teachers and native speakers for new words*: The 16.7% of the participants answered *always*, 30% of the participants answered *usually*, 23.3% of the

participants answered *sometimes*, 16.7% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 13.3% of the participants answered *never*, the students has regular but increasing attitude to this strategy, the major percentage is centred in the option usually, followed by the option sometimes Oxford (1990) suggest that this strategy allows students to interact and put into practice their vocabulary with persons that had been in contact with the culture and the reality of the foreign language. This strategy involves particular attention to the conversational roles that each person takes.

- *Make own lists of words*: For this statement, 13.3% of the participants answered *always*, 30% of the participants answered *usually*, 30% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 16.7% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 10% of the participants answered *never*, the students of the English and French program have a good level of acceptance of this strategy, with the same high percentage in the options usually and sometimes. According to Hatch & Brown (1995), by means of this strategy students can make lists of words according to their needs and the topics that they want to work. This strategy is useful when students have oral presentations or exams.

- *Invent some words*: In this statement, 20% of the participants answered *always*, 10% of the participants answered *usually*, 13.3% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 36.7% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 20% of the participants answered *never*, the level of acceptance of this strategy is regular but it does not present a positive or negative possibility to increase or down because the results of the answer options always and never present the same percentage, according to Oxford (1990), students use this strategy when they want to express a desired idea, they make up words, use some words of their mother tongue or they add word endings from the new language and/or their mother tongue.

- *The use of mimic or gesture to understand a word:* according to Oxford (1990), sometimes students employ physical movements to give the meaning of an expression; they relate a meaningful new expression to a physical feeling or sensation. These were the results, 10% of the participants answered *always*, 23.3% of the participants answered *usually*, 30% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 20% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 16.7% of the participants answered *never*, these results show that students of English and French have an acceptable but positive attitude to the use of this strategy, it can see that the option *sometimes* has the major percentage followed by the options *usually* and *always*.

- *Pay attention in class:* according to Oxford (1990), it is important to decide in advance to pay attention in general to a language learning task and to ignore the distractors, and/or to pay attention to specific aspects of the language or to situational details. For this statement, 16.7% of the participants answered *always*, 53.2% of the participants answered *usually*, 13.3% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 16.7% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 0% of the participants answered *never*, these percentages demonstrate that this strategy has a good level of acceptance among the students, with the major percentage in the option *usually*, followed by the option *always*, in the last place is the option *never* with 0%, according to these results, this is a common strategy that has a big chance to increase it.

- *Hear a new word several times to learn it:* For this statement, 10% of the participants answered *always*, 30% of the participants answered *usually*, 43.3% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 10% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 3.33% of the participants answered *never*, with the answer options *sometimes* and *usually* which have the major percentage respectively, this strategy has an acceptable level of

acceptance between the students of the English and French program. According to Oxford (1990), when students repeat a word over and over, at the end, they will go memorizing the word and later they would imitate and pronounce the word like native speakers.

- *The use of visual imageries:* according to Oxford (1990) this strategy relates new language information to concepts in memory by means of meaningful visual imageries. This image can be a picture of an object, a set of locations for remembering a sequence of words or expressions, or a mental representation of the letters of a word. For this statement, 13.3% of the participants answered *always*, 13.3% of the participants answered *usually*, 46.7% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 23.3% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 3.33% of the participants answered *never*, according to this results, the students show a regular level of acceptance to this strategy, the answer option sometimes has the major percentage followed by the option occasionally.

- *Work and interact with the classmates:* For this statement, 10% of the participants answered *always*, 26.7% of the participants answered *usually*, 20% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 30% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 13.3% of the participants answered *never*, the students have a regular attitude to this strategy with the major percentages in the answer options occasionally and usually, followed by sometimes, there is not a factor that determine if this strategy has a positive or negative tendency. According to Oxford (1990), this strategy proposes that students work with other language learners to improve language skills, it frequently involves controlling impulses toward competitiveness and rivalry. This strategy proposes to observe the behaviour of others as a possible expression of their thoughts and feelings.

- *Listening sounds and songs*: according to Hatch & Brown (1995) this strategy makes that students start to encounter new words of real situations by means of songs and, radio and television programs, later the same activities help to students to consolidate word form and meaning in memory, practice pronunciation and after can use these words. For this statement, 33.3% of the participants answered *always*, 26.7% of the participants answered *usually*, 33.3% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 6.7% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 0% of the participants answered *never*, this results show that this strategy has a high and positive level of acceptance. The answer options always and sometimes have the major percentages and with the option never with a 0% in the last place made that this strategy has been the most used by the students.

- *Write a word several times to learn it*: Hatch & Brown (1995), suggest that this strategy makes part of the consolidating a word form and meaning in memory process, the fourth essential step to learn vocabulary, the authors affirm that when learners write and study a word several times, at the end, the word will be familiar because they will be memorize them. For this statement, 6.7% of the participants answered *always*, 43.3% of the participants answered *usually*, 16.7% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 26.7% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 6.7% of the participants answered *never*, these numbers shows that students of the English and French program have a regular but positive attitude to this strategy. The answer option usually has the major percentage followed by the option occasionally.

- *Ask teachers or native speakers for clarification and/or correction*: For this statement, 26.7% of the participants answered *always*, 36.7% of the participants answered *usually*, 20% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 10% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 6.7% of the participants answered *never*, the answer option

with the major percentage is usually followed by the option always, these results shows that students presents a high and positive attitude to the use of this strategy. According to Oxford (1990), this strategy consist to ask to speaker to repeat, explain or give examples; ask if a specific word is correct or if a rule fits a particular case. This strategy most often occurs in conversation but may also be applied to writing.

- *Take notes in class*: according to Oxford (1990), this strategy makes students take notes of the principal ideas or specific points of the class and later, based on this information, students can make their own lists of words to study them. For this statement, 20% of the participants answered *always*, 40% of the participants answered *usually*, 30% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 6.7% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 3.33% of the participants answered *never*, the level of acceptance of this strategy is high and positive, the answer options usually and sometimes have the major percentages.

- *Work with a specific topic*: according to Oxford (1990), it is important to choose a specific topic to work with vocabulary because it lets that student has one's own interests and the learning process will be organized and more productive. For this statement, 13.3% of the participants answered *always*, 23.3% of the participants answered *usually*, 46.7% of the participants answered *sometimes*, 16.7% of the participants answered *occasionally* and 0% of the participants answered *never*, the attitude to this strategy is regular, the answer option sometimes has the major percentage and the option never has 0%, this number suggests that this attitude will be negative.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

From the results obtained in the survey it can be concluded that the use of additional strategies to learn vocabulary by the students from the English and French program of the University of Nariño is average but with a high tendency to improve. According to Oxford (1990), learning strategies are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing a good communicative competence. These allow students to be active participants in the learning process and help to improve their own learning. According to the results of the study, they do not show the interest that this affirmation wanted. The attitude of students about the use of learning vocabulary strategies is regular but is increasing. The attitude in the three semesters studied is homogeneous. There is no semester that shows a high average. On the other hand, there is no semester that shows a low average either.

Hatch & Brown (1995), suggest that the use of computer programs and CD-ROMs are important sources to follow the five essential steps in vocabulary learning. By means of computers it is possible to encounter new words, get the word form, get the word meaning consolidate word form and meaning in memory and finally use the words. In spite of all these advantages, with the 30% in the option never and 6.7% in the option always, this strategy is the least used one by the students, this situation could be caused because some students do not have access to computers at home or in other places, and others have computers at home or have access to computers in other places, but they do not use computers to enhance vocabulary learning.

Hatch & Brown (1995) affirm that the use of these strategies depends on the interest and motivation that learners demonstrate. Sometimes they only use them because they needed words for a specific situation, not because they wanted to enlarge their vocabulary knowledge. This situation is presented in this study, in the question one: “*I have a specific day and/or hour to work with new vocabulary*” the answer option *always* is the only question that has 0% in this option. This demonstrates that the English and French students do not have a specific time to work with vocabulary. This result support Hatch & Brown’s affirmation and it is notorious that students use vocabulary learning strategies in special situations and not like a permanent study method, according to the answer option *usually* that has a 16.7%.

Among the most used strategies are: listen to songs and sounds with a 33.3%, the use of dictionaries and ask teachers and native speakers for corrections with a 26.7%, these results with the other ones show that students do not use specific strategies to specific skills. In the surveys were included strategies related to speaking, reading, listening and writing skills and some related to all of them, but there is not a question that presents a high preference among learners.

Many teachers, students and authors like Wright, Betteridge & Buckby (1983), affirm that games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work. But the results of this study show that, after the use of computer programs and CD ROMs, the use of games are the least used strategies. This result contradicts the popular affirmation that games are the preferred strategy among students.

As a general conclusion of this work one can say that the students of third, fifth and seventh semester of English and French program of the University of Nariño, may have a good average of the use of vocabulary learning strategies and it seems that there is

a high possibility to increase. The students do not place a great emphasis in writing, they use vocabulary learning strategies to practice and work the four skills.

Recommendations

- If authors like Oxford (1990) say that learning strategies are good tools for a better development of the students' competences, it would be interesting to find out how teachers motivate students to use vocabulary learning strategies, not just with the purpose of increasing their vocabulary knowledge, but also to improve aspects like proficiency and greater self-confidence.

- Oxford (1990) affirms that language learning strategies are oriented to develop communicative competence, but for this is necessary for learners to have a real interaction among themselves and it is needed for them to employ useful, meaningful and contextualized learning. The results of this study show that the creation of real and meaningful situations by the students is one of the less common strategies. It would be useful to know what suggestions teachers can give to change this situation. The experience teachers have may provide good insights to improve the situation.

- Hatch & Brown (1995) states that sometimes students do not have a specific time to work vocabulary, this situation depends on their interest and motivation. Students use strategies only when they need them. How can teachers make that their students understand the importance that language learning strategies have in their academic formation? How can they define a specific time to work with strategies and how they can profit the tools that the University offers them (laboratories, VCRs, computers) ? The findings from this work may not be general for all the population, so it is important that a reply is done using a more representative sample and including all semesters (second, fourth, sixth and eighth) or a different measurement instrument such as an oral interview.

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Appendix

UNIVERSITY OF NARIÑO
HUMAN SCIENCES FACULTY
LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT

SEMESTER: _____

Instructions:

Read carefully each one of the following statements and according to your personal opinion state your agreement or disagreement using the elements in the scale:

always	usually	sometimes	occasionally	never
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OBSERVATIONS:

- Answer the following questions as sincerely as possible
- Your answers are not right or wrong, our principal interest is to know your personal opinion
- This survey is not an exam, answer according to your opinion
- Your answers will be known only by the researcher
- Please answer all the questions
- If you do not understand a question feel free to state your doubts to the researcher

STATEMENT	always	usually	sometimes	occasionally	never
I have a specific day and/or hour to work with new vocabulary.					
I make a periodical control of my vocabulary learning to identify possible mistakes.					
I work with the new vocabulary learned, writing cards, sentences or short texts.					
I read books and articles to know new words from them.					
I create useful situations to practice my new words.					
I learn new words by means of bilingual dictionaries.					
I read a new word several times to learn it.					
I make a periodical self-evaluating of my learning process by means of short tests, readings, and/or writing activities.					
I relate similar words to express my ideas.					
I use computers programs or CD ROMs to learn new words.					
I prepare the new words of a lesson in advance.					
I use games, flashcards, crossword puzzles and other activities to learn new words.					
I ask teachers and native speakers to know new words.					
I make my own lists of new words to learn them.					
I invent some words to express my ideas.					
I use mimic or gesture to understand a new word.					
I learn new words paying attention in class.					
I hear a new word several times to learn it.					
I use visual imageries to learn and remember new words.					
I work and interact with my classmates to learn new vocabulary.					
I listen to sounds and songs to learn new words from them.					
I write a new word several times to learn it.					
I ask teachers and native speakers for clarification and/or correction.					
I take notes in class and later study them to take out new words.					
I work with a specific vocabulary topic.					

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME AND COLLABORATION