The Relationship between Iranian Upper-Intermediate EFL Learners' Contrastive Lexical Competence and Their Use of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

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Abstract
Regarding the vital role of lexical competence as an important requisite for the attainment of full mastery of the four language skills, this study tried to investigate the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' contrastive lexical competence and their use of vocabulary learning strategies. To fulfil this objective, 60 Iranian upper-intermediate male and female language learners were selected based on the results of an Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT). Afterwards, the researcher administered the Contrastive Lexical Competence Test (Ziafar, 2017). After carrying out the CLC test, the participants answered the Questionnaire of Vocabulary Learning Strategies. The questionnaire adapted from the taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) developed by Schmitt (1997). After analyzing the data, it was revealed that determination strategies were the most frequently-used strategies of the five vocabulary learning strategies, followed by cognitive strategies. Moreover, the result indicated that the relationship between CLC and vocabulary learning strategies was a strong positive one and this relationship was of statistical significance. The implications of this study can make teachers aware of the importance of choosing an appropriate strategy of vocabulary learning for language learners to pave the way of improving lexical knowledge for them.

Keywords: Contrastive lexical competence, vocabulary learning strategies, vocabulary learning

Introduction

In learning English as a second or foreign language, vocabulary knowledge plays a vital role. Read (2000, p.1) expressed that "words are the fundamental building pieces of language, the units of meaning from which larger structures like, sentences, passages and entire text are framed". The previous statement demonstrates the significance of vocabulary in affirming thoughts and transmitting meanings and it can also be an indicator that communication will inadequately and poorly be comprehended without a substantial number of words.

Students have rarely been taught that they should increase efficient information of vocabulary with a specific end goal to create meaningful sentences. Language learners ought to be shown VLSs keeping in order to be able to decide the significance of new words and remember them. Learning turns out to be more productive and successful by the utilization of strategies and students turn out to be more capable in a L2 when they utilize strategies. Moreover, if students have a tendency to procure the vocabulary in a L2, they require a good knowledge of VLSs. Thornbury (2005) proclaimed that the great language students are those learners who can build up their own VLSs with the goal that they do not need to be instructed how to learn.

Students invest much energy in retaining words however sadly, they confront issues and can't convey well when they require them. The good language students are the individuals who utilize effective VLSs and control their vocabulary learning. This implies choosing the most reasonable system from an assortment of known strategies and deciding how to follow the strategy and when to change to another.

The connection between Iranian EFL students' Contrastive Lexical Competence (CLC) and their vocabulary learning strategies is managed in the current research. CLC can be characterized as capacity in language gained through mastering reciprocals for Lexical Chunks (LCs) between languages (Larzade & Ziafar, 2016). It likewise includes knowing how L2 LCs can be utilized as a part of request to do similar functions acknowledged through utilizing similar LCs in L1. Language learning with the goal of picking up CLC is useful in that it promptly brings L1 and L2 cultural norms and standards into play. Attempting to discover the messages inserted in L2 LCs sharpens language students to the distinctions that exist between the two perspectives and social peculiarities (Larzade & Ziafar, 2016).

CLC facilitates the problematization of taken for granted cultural norms (Larzade & Ziafar, 2016). "From clash between the native culture and the target culture meanings that were taken for granted are suddenly questioned, challenged, and problematized" (Kramsch, cited in Thanasoulas, 2001, p. 9). Inside a CLC worldview, underestimated thoughts are tested through standing out LCs in C1 from LCs in C2. Two cultures (C1 & C2) might be comparative or unique; the part of CLC is better felt when managing contrasts, although as indicated by Yassine (2006):

Regarding the important role of CLC and vocabulary learning strategies in English language learning process, this study tried to explore the relationship between two variables to understand if those students who use vocabulary learning strategies more frequently, have high lexical competence.

The Study

This study aims to investigate the relationship between Iranian Upper-Intermediate EFL Learners' Contrastive Lexical Competence and Their Use of Vocabulary Learning Strategies.

As language learning environment is abundant with, new structures, and unknown lexicon and grammar, learning strategies play a vital role in language learners' achievement. An awareness of the impact of learning strategies used by students as prominent way for EFL learning is of great importance and would result in teachers' modifications in planning and execution of lessons in order to better help the students overcome learning difficulties.

Strategy training studies will prepare particular information about why, when, and where strategies should be used (Brown, 2000). Teachers will be able to enhance the students' learning when become aware of the number of strategies used by successful and unsuccessful learners. Furthermore, teachers can identify and instruct learning strategies to learners and help students to become autonomous learners. In this case as Oxford (1990) mentions, students take more responsibility of their learning and more learning happens. Most of the latest studies are focused on general language learning strategies. Little attention has been given to the relationships between CLC and vocabulary learning strategies and furthermore, teachers and students will take advantage of this relationship survey used in this study. For instance, completing the survey can encourage some learners to employ some of the learning strategies.

Moreover, Dornyei (2005) believes, learners feel more self-confident and motivated in the language classroom if they are informed about procedures applied to classroom context which would help higher lexical competence.

Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

RQ 1. What are the most and the least common vocabulary learning strategies used by Iranian college EFL learners?

RQ 2: Is there any relationship between Iranian Upper-Intermediate EFL Learners' Contrastive Lexical Competence and Their Use of Vocabulary Learning Strategies?

Review of Literature

Theoretical Background

Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Learning vocabulary is considered as a key piece of dialect learning and creation as constrained information of vocabulary brings about student challenges underway and also understanding of dialect. Concerning the multifaceted nature of this issue, vocabulary learning techniques, as a piece of dialect learning procedures, appear to be exceptionally essential in dialect learning and therefore monitoring these systems is imperative for the two instructors and understudies. Fan (2003) contends that all vocabulary learning systems comprise of five stages: (1) to experience the word (2) to get a visual or sound-related picture of the word. (3) to take in the significance of the word (4) to influence a solid memory to interface between the structures and the implications of the words and (5) to utilize the word.

Various researchers (Gu & Johnson, 1996; O'Malley & Chamot 1990; Oxford, 1990; Schmitt, 2000) have proposed different classifications of vocabulary learning procedures. However, with the end goal of this examination, the scientific classification created by Schmitt (1997) has been utilized. He proposes two parts of vocabulary learning strategies: discovery strategies and consolidation strategies. Discovery strategies allude to procedures used to reveal the significance of the words exhibited to the student out of the blue while consolidation strategies are connected to enable the student to disguise the significance when he/she experiences the word a short time later.

These systems are subdivided into five classifications as determination strategies (DET) alluding to singular learning procedures which help students to find the importance of words independent from anyone else without getting any assistance from their educators or companions. Social strategies (SOC) which draw in students in cooperation with others, memory strategies (MEM) which include students in taking in the recently learned word by relating their current or foundation information with the new word. Cognitive strategies (COG) in which students are not associated with mental handling rather they are occupied with more mechanical preparing, and metacognitive (MET) strategies which are strategies concerning procedures, for example, basic leadership, observing and assessing student's advance.

Past researches demonstrated that students with various foundations have their inclinations in receiving vocabulary learning strategies. They likewise exhibit that successful students connected an extensive assortment of efficient vocabulary learning strategies deliberately, freely, and effectively, knew about and in charge of their general learning performance, augmented their introduction to vocabulary by means of looking for different open doors amid extra-curricular periods, and frequently investigated vocabulary. What's more, Schmitt's scientific classification (1997) additionally exhibited obviously organised and complete classes of various particular VLS, influencing etymologists and educators more to comprehend the differing kinds of VLS.

Second Language Lexical Competence

Expanded enthusiasm for the subject of vocabulary goes back to the 1970s. The principal persuasive meaning of lexical competence originated from Richards (1976). He proposed what is referred to the literature as the separate attribute with the accompanying constituting components for lexical information: "knowing the level of probability of experiencing that word in discourse or print; knowing the restrictions on the utilization of the word as per varieties of capacity and circumstance; knowing the syntactic conduct related with the word; knowing the hidden type of a word and the inferences that can be produced using it; knowing the system of relationship between that word and different words in the language; knowing the semantic estimation of a word; and knowing a significant number of the diverse implications related with the word" (Richards, 1976, cited in Read, 2000, p. 25).

This list is viewed as comprehensive and knowing these components consequently involves having lexical information. Be that as it may, the proposal was strongly reprimanded for being excessively hypothetical (Nation, 2001). McCarthy (1990) incorporated the ideas of receptive vs. productive learning of words in the classification above. For a spoken shape, for example, receptive learning concerns what the word sounds like, and productive information answers the inquiry 'how is the word pronounced?'(Nation, 2001). His getting the receptive and productive information, two vital parts of vocabulary learning, made the grouping a stride further.

As a contrasting option to the different characteristics, Meara (1996a) and Henriksen (1999) proposed few quantifiable measurements which reflect properties of the vocabulary overall - at the worldwide level. Meara (1996a) recognized two measurements: size and association. In a similar vein, Henriksen (1999) included a third, the open beneficial measurement, constituting an adjusted position between the worldwide and the different qualities see. This model was upheld by numerous researchers including Zareva, Schwanenflugel and Nikolova (2005) and the accompanying measurements are presently regularly recognized:

(i) Vocabulary measure: what number of words one knows (Henriksen 1999). This measurement is worried about the reasonable importance (Schmitt 1994), and has gotten impressive consideration in the writing (Greidanus, Bogaards,Linden, Nienhuis, & Wolf,2004; Read 2007).

(ii) Depth learning: how well a word is known (Henriksen 1999). Likewise alluded to as nature of lexical learning, it quantifies parts of profound word information at the paradigmatic, syntagmatic, and explanatory levels (Read, 1993; Henriksen, 1999; Read, 2000; Greidanus et al. 2004). L2 scientists generally concur on this approach which expect network among words in the psychological dictionary, despite the fact that despite everything they separate as respects what quality or profundity precisely involves (Zareva et al. 2005).

(iii) Reception-creation: saw as a continuum where a word goes from being understood to being delivered (Gairns & Redman, 1986), which is alluded to as control (Henriksen, 1999) or full extent of a student's L2 vocabulary (Van de Poel and Swanepoel, 2003). It is considered in a few structures as spanning between lexical ability and execution (Zareva et al. 2005) and L2 specialists concur that word cognizance does not consequently foresee its right utilize (Laufer & Paribakht 1998; Van dePoel & Swanepoel 2003; Zareva et al. 2005). The worldwide quality approach which sees lexical fitness regarding the measurements alluded to above will be received in this examination. This approach, particularly depending on the second measurement, takes lexical fitness past individual words and includes the idea of lexical units or collocations.

Empirical Studies

Through introducing translexis as the major aspect of a contrastive lexical approach to second language teaching, Khatib and Ziafar (2012) attempted to indicate how learners' ability in

their native-like literary productions can be progressed by literary translexis. They believed that contrastive lexical approach to teaching literature improves the positive effects of instructing literature and eliminates significant criticisms against literature as a benignant source for language teaching through assisting students of both L1 and L2 literary units of languages in the form of literary translexis. Such an approach maintains language learners' enthusiasm in literary and poetic language and appends their creativity and specter.

In addition, Khatib, Hassanzadeh, and Rezaei (2012) investigated the Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners' preferable vocabulary learning strategies. To check the participants' language proficiency, a TOEFL test was run to 146 undergraduate EFL students at the university of Vali-e-Asr in Rafsanjan, Iran. Those scoring above 480 were arbitrarily labeled as upper-intermediate. Then a questionnaire known as VOLSI (Vocabulary Learning Strategies Inventory) was administered to the same subjects realize their preferred vocabulary learning strategies. At the end, a stepwise multiple regression analysis showed that 11.4% of the variance in the learners' L2 proficiency can be accounted for by three strategy categories involving self-motivation, word organization, and authentic language utilization. Additionally, an independent-samples t-test showed no significant difference between learners' gender and their VLS selection.

In another study, Ziafar and Seyyedrezaei (2014) attempted to check the influence of contrastive lexical approach on EFL/ESL learners' WTC. After administering a quasi-experimental research through a pretest-posttest, nonequivalent group design, it was revealed that CLA progresses language learners' general WTC and that although a lexical approach has been verified to be efficient in enhancing language learners' affective conditions, it requires to be understood through L1-L2 comparisons to give EFL/ESL a head start in their WTC over the other learners.

More related to this study, Ziafar and Maftoon (2015) examined the part of contrastive lexical approach (CLA), in correlation with unequivocal and certain strategies, in Iranian EFL learners' even minded execution. Contrastive and lexical underpinnings of CLA, as hypotheses that loan themselves to showing sober minded skill, furnished the force to contrast CLA and the other two instructional techniques. 47 members were arbitrarily appointed to three treatment gatherings. The members got instructional treatment for 10 sessions using video clasps and PowerPoint records. Albeit no huge distinction was found crosswise over dialect showing strategies, comes about uncovered that every one of them advanced the participants‟ businesslike execution. Taking interpretation as a subcomponent of express educating may have frustrated the aftereffects of other comparative examinations to the benefit of unequivocal instructing. The relative preferred standpoint of CLA over the other two strategies in this investigation, explore writing, and the participants‟ remarks about the positive part of contrastive practices in their less demanding utilization of local like target structures may give inspiration to the incorporation of contrastive LCs in language classrooms. As the discoveries in this investigation recommend, language showing practices can be enhanced using contrastive methods in teaching pragmatic performance.

Furthermore, Ansari, Vahdany, and Banou Sabouri (2016) checked the frequency of the use of Iranian male and female EFL learners' vocabulary learning strategies and it additionally investigated the relationship between gender and the of these strategies. Eighty intermediate EFL learners who studied English in Shokouh Language Institute took part in their research. They utilized Kudo's (1999) classification of vocabulary learning strategies and also Kudo's (1999) Likert-scale questionnaire. After carrying out the data analysis, the finding indicated that the frequencies mean for the utilization of psycholinguistic and metacognitive strategies as well as the overall frequency mean were moderately higher for the female learners. However, no

significant difference was found between Iranian male and female intermediate EFL learners in the use of vocabulary learning strategies.

Moreover, Ziafar (2017) attempted to approve a test to quantify contrastive lexical competence as another construct. A test intended for this new capability measures the nature of utilizing L2 immediately in genuine circumstance. To this end, the recently created (CLC) was given to 10 experienced instructors (Ph.D. degree) of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) for promote thought. Subsequent to indicating the documented things in CLC test, the three decided tests (CLC test, OPT test and Pragmatic test) were given to 130 Iranian members of the two sexual orientations with the age scope of 18 to 35, who were chosen from Iranian EFL students. The gathered information was checked by Cronbach's alpha to locate the interior consistency of the CLC test. Likewise, graphic measurements and ordinariness of circulation of the entire specimen were researched. Exploratory factor investigation, with test things as factors, was done to find the subcomponents of the test. The connection and coefficient of assurance were figured. Correlation tests were led so as to discover conceivable critical connection between Iranian EFL students' CLC and their both pragmatic and language general competence. Findings recommend the presence of an exceptional conception that can be measured through giving L1 elective for L2 LCs and the other way around. It can be claimed that EFL learners' knowledge about LCs and their capability to properly translate formulaic language plays a vital role in their communicative competence.

Method

Participants

The participants of this study were 60 upper-intermediate male and female language learners who were selected through availability sampling from Payame Noor University in Ahvaz, Iran. Participants' age range was from 25 to 32, and their first language was Persian. They had been studying English as a foreign language for at least five years. Their level of English language proficiency was determined on the basis of their scores on the Oxford Placement Test (OPT).

Instruments

A number of various testing instruments were used in the present study. To carry out the primary research, Oxford Quick Placement Test, Contrastive Lexical Competence Test and Questionnaire of Vocabulary Learning Strategies test were employed to further understanding about the goal of this study. Three measurement instruments were thus provided as follows:

Oxford Quick Placement Test

The first instrument used in this study was the Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT) which is a proficiency test to measure the general English language capacity of the EFL learners and was utilized to determine the proficiency level of the target respondents. The test outcomes can be balanced against the levels system given by the standard European structure of reference for languages. There are two sections in this version of QPT (version 1): section one contains 40 items assessing situations (5 items), cloze passages, assessing prepositions, grammar, pronouns, and vocabulary, (15 items), and completion items (20 items). Section two consists of 20 items: 10 items related to cloze passages and 10 completion-type items, all in multiple-choice format. The offered time to answer the questions is 40 minutes. In this test, each accurately answered item was relegated 1 point; otherwise, it was scored as 0.

Contrastive Lexical Competence Test

As the name speaks for itself, the Contrastive Lexical Competence Test, designed by Ziafar (2017), was administered to measure the CLC of the participants. It had 20 items which was divided into two parts. The first part included 8 items; 8 English sentences were given to the students and they were asked to select the best Persian equivalent of each sentence. In the second part, 12 items were included; 12 incomplete words were given to the students and they were asked to complete each word with correct letters based on the Persian meaning of the words. It should be noted that Persian meaning of the incomplete word was provided for the students. The CLC's validity and reliability had previously been surveyed (Ziafar & Maftoon, 2015; Ziafar, 2017); however, to get sure, it was examined by ten experts for its face and content validity. That is, to get sure about the Content Validity Index (CVI) of the test items, ten teachers who also taught English for more than 5 years read through the tests and made some changes regarding the clarity, simplicity and the representativeness of items. Moreover, a reliability of .989 was obtained after using Cronbach's Alpha test. The allotted time was 30 minutes and the correct answer to each item received one point. There was no penalty for false responses.

Questionnaire of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (QVLSs)

The next instrument utilized in this study was a questionnaire based on Schmitt's Taxonomy. It was planned particularly for the goal of this research. It aimed to identify the vocabulary learning strategies the participants employed. It was a 40-item Likert-scale questionnaire with the reliability coefficient of 0.73; the reliability coefficient obtained by Kafipour and Hosseini Naveh (2011) for Iranian learners. The questionnaire utilized in this study was developed by the researcher with a few adjustments from Schmitt's questionnaire (1997) displayed in his scientific categorization of vocabulary learning strategies. A pilot study was directed with 20 learners who were like the real subjects. Items that were risky were disposed of. Questionnaires in English language was developed and modified under the conductance of an expert in English language teaching. It should be mentioned that as students were in the upper-intermediate proficiency level, it was not necessary to translate the questionnaire into Persian language.

Table 1. *Distribution of strategy items according to the five strategy types*

Strategy type	Item	Total
Memory	1-11	11
determination	12-20	9
Social	21-26	6
cognitive	27-35	9
metacognitive	36-40	5
Total		40

All 40 items in the questionnaire were reorganized and classified under 5 different groups of strategies as eleven statements on memory strategies (items1-11), nine statements on determination strategies (item 12-20), six statements on social strategies (items 21-26), nine statements on cognitive strategies (items 27-35), and five statements on metacognitive strategies (items 36-40). The frequency of use was measured by 5-point Likert-scale from 1 (never use it) to 5(always use it). Statistical analysis was carried out using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, version 25). The 40-items questionnaire were gotten some information about the

frequency of the utilization of vocabulary learning techniques implemented by English skilled learners. Although the completion of the questionnaire took approximately 15-20 minutes, the researchers informed the participants that there was no fixed time in completing it.
The following scales were utilized to demonstrate the recurrence of the use of every strategy:
1 = never use it
2 = seldom use it
3 = sometimes use it
4= often use it
5 = always use it

Moreover, according to Oxford (1990) classification, learners with the mean of 3.5 or more will be considered as high strategy users, learners with the mean of below 2.4 are low strategy users and the mean for medium strategy users is between 2.4 and 3.5.

Procedure

At first, 60 upper-intermediate EFL students from Payame Noor University of Ahvaz in Iran were selected through the administration of OQPT. Next, the researcher administered the Contrastive Lexical Competence Test in order to determine the Contrastive Lexical Competence of the participants. Afterwards, QVLSs was performed among the participants to determine the type of vocabulary learning strategies and frequency of strategy use. When the data has been gathered via the mentioned instruments, it will be time to carry out the analysis. Regarding the nature of the data and the purpose of the study, multiple regressions was used to determine the amount of variance of the dependent variable (CLC) predicted by the independent variable (strategy types).

Results

Vocabulary Learning Strategies Questionnaire (VLSQ) Analysis

Having analyzed the questionnaire data, the researchers tried to report the findings based on the research questions. The VLSQ items were analyzed by utilizing descriptive statistics. The VLSQ responses were scored using a score scale of 1 to 5. Five was given for 'always', 4 for 'often', 3 for 'sometimes', 2 for 'seldom', and 1 for 'never' (5-point scale). To describe the most and least frequently used vocabulary learning strategies, descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations of the five categories and their subdivisions are employed. The results of descriptive analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.*Descriptive Statistics for Each Vocabulary Learning Strategy* *N=60*

Strategy	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Determination Strategy	9.00	45.00	35.25	11.27	1
Cognitive Strategy	9.00	45.00	29.70	9.27	2
Memory Strategy	11.00	55.00	26.95	13.34	3
Metacognitive Strategy	5.00	25.00	11.66	5.34	4
Social Strategy	6.00	30.00	10.20	4.45	5

As the above table indicates, determination strategies (M=35.25; SD=11.27) are reported as the most frequently-used of the five vocabulary learning strategies, followed by cognitive strategies (M=29.70; SD=9.27), memory strategies (M=26.95; SD=13.34), metacognitive strategies (M=11.66; SD=5.34), and social strategies (M=10.20; SD=4.45).

When it comes to the most and the least frequently used vocabulary learning strategies with respect to individual items, Table 2 shows that the most frequently used strategies spread across the two categories of vocabulary learning strategies, namely determination strategies (DET) and cognitive strategies (COG).

Table 3. *Top 6 of the most frequently used vocabulary learning strategies*

Rank	Description	Item	Category	Mean	SD
1	I consult a monolingual dictionary	16	DET	4.31	.74
2	I guess from textual context	14	DET	3.83	.80
3	I repeat the new word verbally	29	COG	3.78	.88
4	I identify the part of speech of the new word	20	DET	3.70	.88
5	I use new word in sentence	9	MEM	3.68	.91
6	I keep a vocabulary notebook	34	COG	3.60	.90

As Table 3 shows, the highest mean (M=4.31) was achieved by strategy item 16 "I consult a monolingual dictionary". Strategy Item 14 "I guess from textual context" reaches the second highest mean of 3.83 followed by verbal repeating (Item 29; M=3.78), analyzing the parts of speech (Item 20; M=3.70), using new word in sentence (Item 9; M=3.68), and keeping a vocabulary notebook (Item 34; M=3.60).

Table 4. *Top 6 of the least frequently used vocabulary learning strategies*

Rank	Description	Item	Category	Mean	SD
1	I use spaced word practice	37	MET	1.53	.50
2	I ask the teacher for L1 translation	21	SOC	1.76	.67
3	I put English labels for physical objects	33	COG	1.81	.65
4	I remember word's initial letter	11	MEM	1.86	.62
5	I use flash cards	38	MET	1.93	.75
6	I ask teacher for a sentence including the new word	24	SOC	1.98	.72

The results shown in Table 4 reveal that using spaced word practice (Item 37; M=1.53), asking the teacher for L1 translation (Item 21; M= 1.76), putting English labels for physical objects (Item 33; M= 1.81), remembering the initial letter (Item 11; M=1.86), using flashcards (Item 38; M= 1.93), and asking teacher for a sentence including the new word (Item 24, M= 1.98) were determined as the least frequently used strategies.

The Relationship between Contrastive Lexical Competence (CLC) and Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS)

Table 5 shows the correlation coefficients for the relationships between the EFL learners' CLC and the different types of vocabulary learning strategies:

Table 5. *Correlation Coefficients for the Relationships between CLC and Vocabulary Learning Strategies*

	CLC	Determination	Cognitive	Memory	Metacognitive	Social

Pearson Correlation	CLC	1.00	.90*	.89*	.81*	.95*	.86*
	Determination	.90*	1.00	.97*	.90*	.94*	.87*
	Cognitive	.89*	.97*	1.00	.87*	.94*	.84*
	Memory	.81*	.90*	.87*	1.00	.84*	.85*
	Metacognitive	.95*	.94*	.94*	.84*	1.00	.85*
	Social	.86*	.87*	.84*	.85*	.85*	1.00

The relationship between CLC and determination strategies was a strong positive one (r = .90), and this relationship was of statistical significance. Likewise, CLC was found to have strong, positive, and statistically significant relationships with cognitive strategies (r = .89), memory strategies (r = .81), metacognitive strategies (r = .95), and social strategies (r = .86). To find out whether variance in vocabulary learning strategies could account for variance in CLC, one needs to examine the multiple regression analysis table below.

Table 6. *Model Summary for Multiple Regression*

R	*R* Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.95	.91	.91	.52

In Table 6, the value given under the *R* Square column shows how much of the variance in CLC is explained by vocabulary learning strategies. The value here is .91, which means that vocabulary learning strategies accounted for 91 percent of the variance in CLC scores. To examine the statistical significance of this result, Table 7 should be consulted:

Table 7.*Statistical Significance of the Multiple Regression Results*

Model	Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	*Sig.*
Regression	167.04	5	33.40	122.80	.00
Residual	14.69	54	.27		
Total	181.73	59			

In Table 7, *Sig.* equaled .00, which is smaller than the alpha level of significance (p = .00 < .05), indicating that the model reached statistical significance. In other words, vocabulary learning strategies (as a composite variable) could significantly predict CLC of the EFL learners. Now it is high time we looked at the Table 8 to see which of the different types of vocabulary learning strategies contributed more to the prediction of CLC.

Table 8.*Predictive Powers of Different Learning Strategies for CLC*

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	*t*	*Sig.*	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	*Std*. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	10.13	1.26		8.01	.00	7.60	12.667

Determination	.42	.06	.89	6.82	.00	.30	.550
Cognitive	.08	.03	.20	2.36	.02	.01	.165
Memory	-.00	.02	-.03	-.33	.73	-.05	.037
Metacognitive	.02	.08	.05	.27	.78	-.15	.198
Social	-.05	.07	-.15	-.81	.41	-.20	.085

To compare the predictive powers of determination, cognitive, memory, metacognitive, and social strategies, the values under *Beta* in the column labeled standardized coefficients should be checked. Looking down this column, one could notice that the largest value was the one for determination strategies. Determination strategies thus made the strongest unique contribution to explaining CLC. The relevant *Beta* value for cognitive strategies was the second highest value out there, indicating that it made less of a contribution. The other values were .15, .05, and .03 respectively for social, metacognitive, and memory strategies; these vocabulary learning strategies' contributions to the prediction of CLC were very small.

For each of these variables, the value under the column marked *Sig.* must be checked. This shows whether this variable was making a statistically significant unique contribution to the equation or not. Determination strategies and cognitive strategies had a *Sig.* value less than the significance level (.05); it could thus be concluded that among the five different types of language learning strategies, determination strategies and cognitive strategies could significantly predict CLC of the EFL learners.

Discussion

The primary result of the current study is that amongst the five vocabulary learning strategies regarding Schmitt's taxonomy, Determination Strategies were observed as the utmost frequently-utilized strategies, followed by Cognitive Strategies as the second uttermost frequently-utilized strategies, and Memory, Metacognitive, and Social Strategies are in the next order. Therefore, "using flash cards" and "asking teacher for a sentence including the new word" were ranked at the downward of Table 4. This finding appeared to be in line with with the outcomes from Arjomand and Sharififar's (2011) research with Iranian EFL freshman students who utilized social strategies slightest frequently.

The most conceivable clarification for this issue is that the idea of vocabulary learning is viewed as an individual or asocial process. In this way, learners oppose asking others' help for the meaning of new words. This finding likewise lines up with the discoveries of a research done by Kafipour (2006) who underlined that learning in an EFL domain was a noteworthy reason why social strategies were not extensively utilized, that is, in an EFL domain there is no compelling reason to arrange the meaning of the word in communication circumstances. He further disclosed that what is by all appears fundamental is the dynamic commitment of learners in various learning settings, for example, classroom exercises. Another shortcoming is because of instructive framework in Iran which is known as teacher-oriented. Instructors are in front of the classroom and give all information learners require. Educators gave the data through lecturing and the learners should simply listen and observe. Such training method did not have any place for team work or discussion in classroom.

Findings of the present study also revealed that dictionary strategies (M=4.31) and guessing from context (M=3.833), as the utmost preferred ones, were utilized by 80% and 90% of the participants, respectively and were choosen as two ascendance strategies (see Table 3). This result of the present study confirmed the findings of Marin-Marin (2005) that some proficient

learners utilized more guessing from context and dictionary strategies than any other sort. Likewise, this finding is consistent with the other researched on guessing the meanings from the context done by Gu and Johnson (1996), and Schmitt (1997). Data analysis additionally demonstrated that memory strategies are the third repeatedly utilized strategies. This result was contrary to the outcomes of Kafipour's (2010) research who discovered that memory strategies as the utmost repeatedly applied strategies by Iranian EFL undergraduate students. The testimony is presumably owing to the postgraduate learners as more successful learners who aimed to utilize an extensive span of vocabulary learning strategies rather than only memorization and rote learning (Kafipour, 2010). This perspective is in agreement with Schmitt's (1997) allegation that there is some proof that more advanced learners are willing to utilize more intricate and meaning-oriented strategies than less advanced learners.

Since the association between student variable and language learning, in this case the students' VLS and their vocabulary knowledge, goes in the two route, i.e., both can impact one another (Cook 1986), building a vocabulary store would enable students to utilize a extensive scope of VLS like guessing from context, using monolingual dictionaries and utilizing media that require a specific learning of vocabulary (around 3000) to be utilized proficiently; Such techniques thus will improve implicit learning and assist to enhancing students' vocabulary learning. In addition, educators should concentrate their students' attention on the VLS positively related with the students' vocabulary information, particularly after discovering that the greater part of the VLS associated with their receptive vocabulary were corresponded with the controlled profitable vocabulary learning as well.

The consequences of this study are consistent with Amirian and Heshmatifar (2013) goals at examing what strategies are more or less popular for learning vocabulary among EFL university students at Hakim Sabzevari University in Iran. A questionnaire adapted from the taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) proposed by Schmitt (1997) was run to 74 EF L students (18 males and 56 females). Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were additionally administered with ten learners who filled the written questionnaire to get further data about their beliefs and attitudes in terms of vocabulary learning strategies. The outcomes demonstrated the addendum sequence of strategy utilization by the learners from the utmost frequent to the minimum frequent one: determination (DET), cognitive (COG), memory (MEM), metacognitive (MET), and social strategies (SOC).

The results of this study are also congruent to the study of Ziafar and Maftoon (2015); they examined the role of contrastive lexical approach (CLA), in comparison with explicit and implicit methods, in Iranian EFL learners' pragmatic performance. Contrastive and lexical underpinnings of CLA, as theories that lend themselves to teaching pragmatic competence, provided the impetus to compare CLA with the other two instructional methods. 47 participants were randomly assigned to three treatment groups. The participants received instructional treatment for 10 sessions through the use of video clips and PowerPoint files. Ziafar and Maftoon concluded that language teaching practices can be improved through the use of contrastive techniques in teaching pragmatic performance.

This study also confirmed the results of Ziafar and Seyyedrezaei (2014) who tried to check the influence of contrastive lexical approach (CLA) on EFL/ESL learners' willingness to communicate. They concluded that CLA progresses language learners' general WTC; moreover, lexical approach has been verified to be efficient in enhancing language learners' affective conditions.

Moreover, the findings of this study also supported the study conducted by Ziafar (2017) who endeavored to design a test to quantify contrastive lexical competence as a construct. Ziafar

concluded that EFL learners' knowledge about LCs and their capability to properly translate formulaic language plays a vital role in their communicative competence.

Generally speaking, research history indicates that chunks knowledge and L1-L2 translation have a significant importance in communicative competence (Ziafar, 2017). CLC has been introduced to fill a gap which may be a serious barrier for language learners who wish to use a target language spontaneously and effectively. Every day experience reveals that L1 exerts a strong influence on L2. Only recently have people come to see that L2 also affects knowledge and use of L1 (Cook, 2003). Although learners may have the knowledge and ability in translation, they are able to find equivalents just in formal situations and there is no guarantee for them to be able to generalize and extend these abilities to functional situations.

Putting all these findings together one may come up with the conclusion that contrastive language learning enhances language learners' opportunity in easily remembering L2 native-like structures which might be harder and thus less likely to happen without translation. It appears that such contrastive practices do not impose an L1 thinking process when utilizing L2 forms on language learners. On the other hand, L1-L2 equivalents easily provide language learners with automaticity in L2 native-like use without making them think in their L1 before producing L2 forms. This is the idea that Abutalebi (2008), Yamashita and Jiang (2010) and some others support.

Conclusion

The main aim of this study was to explore the relationship between contrastive lexical competence and vocabulary learning strategies. Moreover, this study tries to specify the most and least frequently vocabulary learning strategies utilized by Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners. Gathering data through the aforementioned instruments, it was revealed that determination strategies such as consulting a dictionary and guessing from context were the most frequent strategies, whereas social strategies were the least frequent ones. The results of this study likewise demonstrated that the uttermost of students did not utilize definitive vocabulary learning strategies like semantic maps and discovering meaning through team work exercise. Indeed, it looks that not many students are acquainted with these strategies. Hence, the current study proposes that it is fundamentally crucial for learners to be instructed on vocabulary learning strategies. In the same vein, Nation (2001) believed that there is sufficient testimony that teaching strategies explicitly enhance learners' strategic information. In addition, strategy teaching results to learner autonomy. It assists them to become informed about their own preferences and habits and feel accountable for own learning.

Another fundamental result was that there the relationship between CLC and VL Strategies especially determination and cognitive strategies was a strong positive one and this relationship was of statistical significance.

Regarding pedagogical implications, instructors should permit learners to know about their preferable learning strategies and particularly assist them become increasingly accountable to reach their learning objectives. Consequently, instructors will have the capacity to aid learners become better language learners by teaching them in applying the correct strategies or proper strategies that are suitable to their level. Both objectives and goals can be obtained when learners are nobly educated in strategies utilized. Later they will probably turn out to be progressively autonomous with exposure to the target language. Because the language learning strategies are viewed as other great instruments for language learners, it is envisaged that this research will be capable to help the English teachers' instructional perspectives and give valorous up-to-date

knowledge on how the learners process information and choose the utmost appropriate vocabulary learning strategies to promote their SLA.

Generally speaking, the current study can increase the consciousness of vocabulary learning and learning strategies in second language totally because vocabulary learning and training has been an overlooked zone of language for some time. The findings can make instructors of second language progressively mindful of the requirement for vocabulary learning strategy awareness and utilize their instructing to recommend VLSs and techniques to their learners. Teachers who are keen on knowing how Iranian learners work with vocabulary can get more knowledge about how their students reach vocabulary learning and possibly plan their instruction in terms of my results. This can propose a plausibility for their learners to utilize more instruments in managing vocabulary learning and the troubles it might incorporate.

Besides, as Oxford (1990) claim, learning strategies can assist the student to become progressively self-coordinated and help the learning procedures. However, the learners may not have the proper instruments for accomplishing that despite the fact that they may authenticate the meaning of vocabulary in language proficiency. Acing the utilization of learning strategies, the learner can effortlessly accomplish his objective, effective learning. In this way, educators should upgrade the meaning of learning strategies and propound the chance to become more acquainted with and try out the various strategies in school so that every student can understand the best strategies for them. Moreover, considering the consequences of the present study, students feel that classroom is the best place for getting information on learning strategies so that it is possible to everyone to reach to that information. In particular, instructors would be the ones to present that information.

Finally, besides assisting instructors to reclaim and amend their training and aiding the students in their learning process, the current study can additionally help the teacher teaching programmes. As previous studies showed that students feel that skilled teachers are paramount factors in successful language learning; hence, it could be beneficial to consider the role of vocabulary learning and training when instruction subsequent second language teachers.

Although the results of this study can illuminate language teachers and propound them a wider comprehension as to how to plan more efficient vocabulary learning tasks to better suitable Iranian EFL learners at various levels, it does not look to be definitive and administering additional studies with much extensive population appear to be indispensable.

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