

A Case Study to Identify Vocabulary Learning Strategies as Employed by the Undergraduates of Rajarata University, Sri Lanka

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Abstract – Expanding vocabulary is crucial to ESL learners in acquiring productive and receptive skills in English. Complete or partial failure to adopt a pragmatic strategy can hinder the acquisition of vocabulary and the subsequent mastery of the language. This study aims to determine the most frequently used vocabulary learning strategies undertaken by the undergraduates in the Faculty of Medicine and Allied Sciences of Rajarata University. The data were collected through a questionnaire based on the framework of O’Malley and Chamot (1990), and Schmitt taxonomy (2000). 110 samples received from the online survey conducted among the Second-year undergraduates were analysed incorporating the method of Descriptive Analysis as the research is quantitative in nature. The results indicated that Selective Attention is commonly preferred by the students in their approach to learning and improving vocabulary. The famous method of Cognitive strategy falls behind the expected functionality and acceptance among these students, though it is not completely ignored. Compensation, Memory, and Social Strategies are equally and relatively lower in popularity among the students. The results showed that Metacognitive Strategy is of high acclaim as a vocabulary learning approach. On the basis, it is clear that other four strategies also involve individual significance. More research based on them should be conducted to define their performance rate.

Keywords: Vocabulary learning strategies, Metacognitive Strategy, Selective Attention