

Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by Humanities and Social Sciences Students of the University of Ruhuna

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One of the challenges a second language learner is confronted during the progression of second language (L2) learning is grasping its vocabulary. Vocabulary acquisition is vital for L2 learning because the lexical knowledge of a target language is significant in effective communication. Without an enriched vocabulary in the target language, meanings cannot be conveyed and learners will find it difficult to comprehend words in lesson materials and other reading texts. A significant way to address this is to motivate students to become independent learners during the L2 vocabulary learning. Thus, this study aims at exploring the use of different vocabulary learning strategies among adult English as a second language learners. To meet this objective, a random sample of 50 second year students of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna were selected and a questionnaire was employed to understand the vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) they frequently used. The findings of the research revealed that determination strategy is the most frequently used type of VLS of the selected participants. By-hearting words, referring to dictionaries, translations are quite preferred, whereas improving vocabulary through metacognitive strategies were very limited. This research highlights the importance of raising awareness about the importance of using VLS among these learners because a vast and comprehensive vocabulary in L2 is a requisite if a learner aspires to be highly competent user.

Keywords: *Second Language Learning, Vocabulary Learning Strategies*

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