



Proficiency and Size of Receptive Vocabulary: Comparing EFL and ESL Environments

Azadeh Nemati

Department of Studies in Linguistics, University of Mysore, Karnataka State, India.

Email: laiazadehnematiar@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study was an attempt to find the relationship between proficiency and size of vocabulary of 80 freshmen students majoring in English Language and literature both in Iran and in India as representatives of EFL/ESL contexts. Furthermore, it was intended to measure receptive size of vocabulary of the participants totally and at different frequency levels by Nation's (1990) vocabulary level test. The results of correlation between proficiency and vocabulary level test showed a highly positive correlation both for Iranian and Indian participants. Regarding different frequency vocabulary levels, again significant correlations were observed for Indian participants. While, for Iranian participants no statistically significant correlation were observed between 5000 low frequency word, Academic vocabularies and proficiency, for the rest the results were significant. In addition, by means of a set of t-tests between proficiency as well as the size of vocabulary of Iranian and Indian participants it was find out that the results were significant. This implied that the Indian participants outscored their Iranian counterparts with higher proficiency and size of vocabulary.

KEYWORDS: *proficiency, size of vocabulary, vocabulary level test, receptive vocabulary, EFL/ESL context.*

INTRODUCTION

There are several reasons why vocabulary, the building blocks of language, is regarded as an important component of language. Firstly, without a rich vocabulary no meaningful communication can take place and communication competence relies heavily on vocabulary (McCarthy, 1990). Even, to acquire a language words need to be known and that a good stock of vocabulary is the key to using the language effectively (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986). Secondly, vocabulary knowledge is one of the best predictors of reading comprehension (Laufer, 2003; Nation, 2001), in other words full comprehension of text cannot take place without understanding its vocabulary.

Thus, research has highlighted vocabulary as an indication of how well a learner can comprehend text as well as communication. Therefore, one thing that all the researchers can all agree upon is that learning vocabulary is an essential part of mastering a second language (Schmitt, 2008). Vocabulary learning is central to language acquisition, whether the language is second or a foreign language (Decarrico, 2001) and crucial to the learners' overall language acquisition (Gao, 2003).

Furthermore, if vocabulary proved to provide enabling knowledge required to be successful in other areas of language considering different aspects of vocabulary such as size, depth, receptive and productive, the way vocabulary is taught and influencing factors namely age, gender, educational background and the environment of learning seems to be important.

One of the general issues that have emerged regarding vocabulary is the distinction between vocabulary breadth or size and vocabulary depth. Vocabulary depth shows how well a person knows the words, including the synonymy, polysemy, and collocations of the words. While, vocabulary breadth which is the main concern of this study, illustrates how many word families a person knows, and usually only the primary meaning of the words (Laufer & Nation, 1999). In the ensuing part vocabulary size and EFL/ESL context as an influencing factor on vocabulary size will be dealt with.

Breadth of Vocabulary

Breadth of vocabulary knowledge has been taken up to refer to the quantity or number of words learners know at a particular level of language proficiency (Nation, 2001). The most ambitious goal is to know the number of words in a

language although this is not an easy question to resolve because there are some other questions to be answered including the definition of 'word'.

There are several ways of deciding how words will be counted such as type, token and lemma. One easiest way is simply to count every word form in spoken or written text and if the same word form occurs more than once, then each occurrence of it is counted (Nation, 2001) which is called 'tokens'. Or one can count the word in a sentence without considering the same word again which is called 'type'. And finally 'lemmas', which consist of a head word and some of its inflected and reduced forms, may be used to mark words. Thus, as mentioned by Nation (2001), there are 114,000 word families excluding proper names in Webster's Third New International Dictionary (1963) which is a very larger number and is well beyond the goals of most first and second language learners.

The main question for L2 vocabulary acquisition is how many words does an L2 learner need? "It will come as no great surprise that the answer will be less than that for how many words does a native speaker know let alone how many words are in the target language" (Nation & Waring, 1997, p. 6). Addressing the number of words native speakers know, a conservative rule of thumb given by Nation (2006), educated native speakers of English know around 20,000 word families and for each year of their early life they add on average 1,000 word families. Studies of native speakers' vocabulary seem to suggest that second language learners need to have a vocabulary size of 2,000 most high frequency words to understand about 80% of the running texts.

Regarding the size of vocabulary researchers have more or less the same idea since August et al. (2005) also, reported that children are said to learn approximately 800 to 900 roots a year up to 12 years old and have 5000 to 7000 vocabulary repertoire in their L1 before they enter school. This means that a five year old beginning school will have a vocabulary of around 4,000 to 5,000 word families. About a second language learner the situation is quite different. According to Nation and Waring (1997), learners need to know a minimum of 3,000 or so high frequency words because it provides coverage of at least 95 % of a running text.

Receptive Vocabulary

Regarding vocabulary 'receptive' and 'productive' or 'passive' and 'active' as they are often called should also be considered. Usually, these two terms are defined in relation to the language skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing. An individual's active vocabulary includes words which are used in speech and writing. Contrarily, one's passive vocabulary embodies those which are understood as they occur in reading materials or while hearing something. To some linguists, words are receptively known until they reach a point where they become fully productive.

In a foreign language environment, Laufer (1998) investigated the gain in three types of English vocabulary knowledge i.e. 'passive', 'controlled active' and 'free active' in one year of school instruction. She also examined how these aspects of lexical knowledge are related to one another, and what changes occurred in these relationships after one year of instruction. The conclusion was that the three dimensions of lexical knowledge developed at different rates as learners proceeded in their L2 leaning.

Considering passive, controlled active and free active as well as variables such as passive vocabulary size, language learning context (second or foreign) and knowledge of French, Laufer and Paribakht (1998) conducted another study. They concluded that as expected passive/active vocabulary gap was smaller in the foreign language than in L2 context.

In a study conducted by Lau (2004) the mean score for these students in Nation's Receptive Levels Test (Nation 1990, 2001) of the most frequently used 3,000, 5,000 and 10,000 words were 72.91%. This result indicated that the students have a relatively large receptive vocabulary size. However, the quality of the students' receptive knowledge is somehow not sufficient for them to make use of many of these words in productive situations. Therefore, the challenge for English teacher should be to investigate ways in which the deepening of word knowledge can be facilitated and that the students would be able to use the learnt words or words in their receptive repertoire in appropriate situations.

Although estimating vocabulary size and its relationship with other areas of language namely, reading, writing and listening has been of great interests to researchers, many of the studies have focused on the native speakers of language and many on second language learners (Waring, 1997). Very few researches were conducted to estimate or compare the size of vocabulary in the two EFL/ESL environments. Studies that compare vocabulary size of individual are the most difficult and somewhat dated (Waring, 1997). Hence, this study is going to shed some light on the comparative part of the vocabulary size in the two EFL/ESL environments.

Classification of EFL/ESL Contexts

The context of the learning situation and the cultural values of the learner's society can be expected to have a strong influence vocabulary. It is a common observation that students from different English backgrounds do not always

learn in the same way (Griffiths & Parr, 2000; Pennycook, 1997; Pierson, 1996, White, 1989). The EFL/ESL distinction has been and important one in language pedagogy because, in each case, the context in which the teaching takes place is very different and requiring different materials, syllabuses and pedagogy. We are faced, then, with a situation where English varies between and within those countries where it is spoken widely. There is, then, multiplicity of varieties, and this make it difficult to describe English as any one thing (Harmer, 2001).

One would assume that as language-conscious professionals we had our own house in good order and would use the terms which are neatly defined and totally unambiguous, but far from it. The ironic fact is that the terminologies we need in language pedagogy are often ambiguous and sometimes downright confusing. "We must from the outset be alert to the source of possible misunderstanding and try to minimize it by explaining the term we use" (Stern, 1983.).

In the past, the term foreign language was most widely used in contrast to native language. In recent decades the other term second language has been increasingly applied to all types of non-native language leaning but a conceptual distinction is expressed in the use of second or foreign language. In contrasting the two terms there is today consensus that a necessary distinction is to be made between a non-native language learnt and that used within one country to which the term second langue has been applied and a non-native language learnt and used with reference to a speech community outside national or territorial boundaries to which the term foreign language is commonly given (Stern, 1983). Griffiths (2003) succinctly defined second language as the environment where English language is spoken for instance Somalis studying English in New Zealand and intending to stay in New Zealand whereas foreign language refers to environments other than where it is spoken, for example French as it is taught in England or New Zealand.

Put simply it is defined that the term ESL is used to refer to situations in which English is being taught and learnt in countries, context and cultures in which English is the predominant language of communication. The teaching of English in countries such Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States typifies ESL. The term ESL is also current in countries where English is widely used as lingua franca these include Hong Kong (where its usage reflects the regions recent past as a colony of the Unites Kingdom), Singapore (a multilingual society with English as lingua franca) and India (where the populations speak a range of other languages and where English, as well as Hindi, enables communication between these diverse linguistic group) (Carter & Nunan, 2001).

EFL is used in contexts where English is neither widely used for communication, nor used as the medium of instruction. Brazil, Japan, Korea, Thailand, and Mexico are countries where English is taught as a foreign language, either as a part of curriculum, or in private schools and other educational settings (Carter & Nunan, 2001).

Another classification which is wieldy used and may help us to think about English around the globe is Kachru's (1985,) three circles. He suggests the division of English- speaking world into three concentric circles, the inner circle, the outer circle and the expanding circle. In the first, inner circle, Kachru puts countries like Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Britain and the Unites States where English is spoken as a first language. The outer circle is primarily made up of countries where English has a colonial history. Thus, in the second outer circle are the countries where English is spoken as a second or significant language, such as Singapore, India, Pakistan Malawi, Malaysia, and Nigeria. In the third expanding circle, there are countries where English has acquired cultural and commercial importance like China, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Greece, Japan, Israel, etc. where English plays a role here as a foreign language for international communication and for specific purposes as in the reading of scientific or technical materials (Rajadurai, 2005).

Thus, based on the above classifications in this article Iran is an example of an EFL environment and India is an example of ESL environment. As mentioned in Griffiths (2003) this may be at least partly because different cultural backgrounds and different educational systems foster different strengths and weaknesses in learners.

Research Questions

With this background regarding EFL/ESL context and size of vocabulary the following research questions were formulated to be answered:

- 1) Is there any relationship between the proficiency level and receptive vocabulary size of EFL participants?
 - 1.1) Is there any relationship between the proficiency level and receptive vocabulary size as reflected in different frequency levels of 2000, 3000, 5000, Academic of EFL participants?
- 2) Is there any relationship between the proficiency level and receptive vocabulary size of ESL participants?
 - 2.2) Is there any relationship between the proficiency level and receptive vocabulary size as reflected in different frequency levels of 2000, 3000, 5000, Academic of ESL participants?
- 3) Is there any difference between receptive vocabulary size of EFL participants in comparison to their ESL counterparts?

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Participants

In this study 80 male and female freshmen students pursuing their master in English language and literature participated both in Iran and In India (40 in each environment). The participants in Iran (EFL environment) were randomly selected from amongst the first year students in the educational year of 2009-2010 in Shiraz University, Iran. Since the participants were majoring in English language and literature, English was used as the medium of the instruction for them.

Similarly, to match with the Iranian participants, the Indian participants (ESL environment) were again randomly selected from the students majoring in English language and literature at Mysore University, India. The academic year in India was commenced at the same year (2009-2010) and it was an English medium college. In both environments the selected participants were within the age bracket of 18 to 26.

Instruments

Nelson Proficiency Test

An already available standard proficiency test (NELSON Series 400B) was utilized to divide the participants into high, intermediate and low proficiency levels. This instrument, in the form of multiple choice questions, consisted of 50 questions in the form of one cloze comprehension passage as well as vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation sections.

Vocabulary Level Test (Test B)

In this study, paper and pencil vocabulary level test (VLT) was used in to find out the size of vocabulary items. The test measures size of vocabulary as opposed to tests measuring depth of vocabulary also called vocabulary knowledge scale (VKS). The test was devised by Paul Nation at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand in early 1980s as a simple instrument for classroom use by teachers to help them develop a suitable vocabulary teaching and learning program for their students (Read, 2000). Its utility has been proved for diagnostic vocabulary teaching and has been widely used and validated by different researchers since 1980s (Laufer and Nation, 1995; Laufer and Nation 1999; Laufer, 1998; Lufer and Paribakht, 1998). Meara (1996) called it the nearest thing we have to a standard test in vocabulary. For ten years or so after it was first developed, Schmitt (2001) wrote 3 new forms of the test following the original specification by taking fresh samples of words for each level. The vocabulary level test employed in this study was one of the equivalent forms of the original one revised and validated by Schmitt et al. (2001).

The test embodies five parts, representing five levels of word frequency in English namely, 2,000, 3,000, 5,000, Academic and 10,000. According to Nation (1990), the 2000- and 3000-word levels contain the high frequency words that all learners need to know in order to function effectively in English. The 5000-word level represents the upper limit of general high-frequency vocabulary that is worth spending time on in class. In other words, it is in the boundary of high and low frequency words (Nation, 1983). Words at the Academic level should help students in reading their textbooks and other academic reading material and finally the 10,000-word level covers the more common lower-frequency words in the language (This level was not used in the study simply because it was far beyond the vocabulary level of learners). Vocabulary size testing has been found to be a useful tool in diagnostic or placement exams. It can discriminate between groups of learners (Meara, 1996) and aid in admissions (Laufer, 2003), as well as help in placing students into appropriate institutional placement levels within a program (Laufer and Nation, 1999).

As for the format, the test involved word definition matching exercises although in standard practice, it is the words that test takers need to match to the definitions provided. That is, definitions rather than words comprise the test items. This unconventional format was designed to involve as little reading as possible while at the same time minimizing chances of guessing correctly (Read, 2001). The test can be classified as a sensitive vocabulary test meaning that the format is sensitive to partial word knowledge. A less sensitive test, e.g. a multiple choice cloze test that focuses only on specific content words, would result in lower scores even if the same words were tested (Beglar, 2000).

In this version of the VLT, there are 10 clusters at each level, except the Academic vocabulary level that consists of 12 clusters. Therefore, the total number of items was 156. The 10,000-word level was not employed simply because it was beyond the participants' knowledge level, hence the total number of items decreased to 126.

Each frequency level of the test comprised 6 words and 3 definitions. Testees were required to match target words with their corresponding definitions as illustrated below:

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 1 business | |
| 2 clock | _____ 6 _____ part of a house |
| 3 horse | _____ 3 _____ animal with four legs |
| 4 pencil | _____ 4 _____ something used for writing |

5 shoe

6 wall

As indicated above, there are 3 words to be selected by the students. Test-takers need, however, to know 6 words because they should check every word against the definitions in order to make correct matches.

Procedure

First, Nelson proficiency test then, the paper and pencil vocabulary level test (VLT) of Nation (1990) were distributed during the students' regular class time. Since the format of the vocabulary level test was not familiar to the students, they were instructed about how to answer the test in advance. The students had enough time to complete the tests, and they were informed that there is not a negative score for their wrong responses, so they were asked to don't leave unanswered question. This procedure was used both in India and in Iran similarly.

Data Analysis

After collecting the papers and correcting each of them the results were submitted to SPSS (version 16.5) to be analyzed. To answer the research questions 1 and 2 with its subparts, correlation coefficient was utilized between proficiency and vocabulary at different frequency levels of 2000, 3000, 5000 and Academic vocabulary and their total score

Table 1: correlation coefficient between proficiency and size of vocabulary totally and at different levels.

Research groups	r	level 2000	level 3000	level 5000	Academic level	Total
proficiency India	Pearson Sig. (2-tailed)	.677** .000	.422** .007	.421** .007	.357* .024	.514** .001
proficiency Iran	Pearson Sig. (2-tailed)	.534** .000	.446** .004	.264 .10	.306 .055	.484** .002

* *Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

As was shown in the above table, In India the results of correlation between proficiency and different bands were mostly highly significant (except for academic vocabulary which was significant). In other words, there was a highly relationship between proficiency and the size of vocabulary totally as well as different frequency levels hence, students with higher proficiency level enjoy larger vocabulary repertoire and larger vocabulary size leads to higher proficiency.

In Iran significant correlations were observed for 2000 and 3000 levels, i.e. for the two most frequently levels of vocabulary as well as for the total score. Whereas, although there were correlations between proficiency level and vocabulary knowledge of 5000 and Academic, they were not statistically significant ($P > .05$). In other words, by increasing the proficiency level, the size of vocabulary at 5000 and Academic vocabulary did not increase.

To answer research question 3, a number of independent t-tests were run. In the following table the descriptive statistics are tabulated.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of proficiency and size of vocabulary totally and at different levels.

Research groups	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Proficiency Iran	40	9.875	2.593	.410
Proficiency India	40	19.675	3.944	.623
Vocab 2000 Iran	40	18.250	8.995	1.422
Vocab 2000 India	40	21.775	4.604	.728
Vocab 3000 Iran	40	11.625	8.675	1.371
Vocab 3000 India	40	16.000	5.159	.815
Vocab 5000 Iran	40	4.775	5.441	.860
Vocab 5000 India	40	11.575	5.732	.906
Academic Iran	40	8.825	11.227	1.775
Academic India	40	14.675	7.290	1.152
Total Iran	40	43.475	31.245	4.940
Total India	40	64.025	17.572	2.778

The above table illustrated that the mean score of the proficiency level as well as vocabulary of different frequency levels in India were higher in comparison to Iranian participants. In Table 3 the results of independent sample t-tests are presented.

Table 3: The results of independent t-tests between Iran and India.

Research groups	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Proficiency	13.129	78	.000**
Level 2000	2.206	78	.031*
Level 3000	2.741	78	.008**
Level 5000	5.441	78	.000**
Academic level	2.764	78	.007**
Total	3.626	78	.001**

**The results are significant at the .01 level.

* The results are significant at the .05 level.

From the above table it was revealed that the results of all the computed t-tests were significant at the .05 level of significant in favor of Indian participants. By means of Table 2 it was displayed that the mean scores of Indian participants for proficiency as well as size of vocabulary were higher than that of Iranian participants. This implied that the size of vocabulary of Indian participants were higher.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Vocabulary knowledge is considered by both first language and second language researchers to be of great significance in language competence (Laufer & Nation, 1999). Since the importance of vocabulary, as a component of every language, in communication, reading and other aspects of language learning is recognized. Estimating vocabulary size has been of great interest to researchers and over the years there have been many vocabulary size studies trying to find out something about the vocabulary size of people (Warning, 1997).

In the first two research questions of this study it was intended find out the relationship between proficiency and size of vocabulary in the two EFL/ESL environments totally and at different frequency bands. The correlation coefficient test results indicated that for both Iranian and Indian participants, this correlation between the total size of vocabulary and proficiency was highly significant. Hence the result can be supported by other researches that the more extensive one's vocabulary, the higher their language proficiency will be (Nation, 2001). Zareva (2005) also stated that regarding the relationship between vocabulary size, proficiency level and reading comprehension, word knowledge has been known as an important factor in language proficiency.

Similarly for different frequency levels of Indian participants, there were correlations between proficiency level and the four frequency bands of 2000, 3000, 5000 and academic vocabularies. While for the Iranian participants the results were less encouraging at 5000 and academic vocabulary knowledge. Since, for those bands the correlations were low and statistically not significant. For the rest i.e. 2000, 3000 and total vocabulary size a highly significant correlation was observed. Implying that for the EFL participants, proficiency was a contributing factor for low frequency vocabularies of 2000 and 3000, whereas it is not effective for high frequency as well as academic vocabularies. The sizes of low frequency words as well as academic vocabulary of EFL participants who are limited only to the class teaching were low. Thus, it is identified that Iranian students have certain deficiencies regarding the 5000 word frequency and Academic vocabularies that may hinder their academic progress.

Regarding the third research question the results of a set of t-tests between India and Iran in Table 3 were significant showing Indian participants excelled their Iranian counterparts. By looking across each row in Table 2, it was clear

that generally speaking the mean scores of proficiency as well as all different frequency levels and their total vocabulary size of Indian students were higher in comparison to Iranian participants. This can be related to the context of learning.

According to social integrationists, although biological and cognitive processes may be necessary for language development, they are not sufficient. Language development must occur in the context of meaningful social interaction. Social interactions stress the importance of the development of language through interaction with others. This interaction does not exist in EFL context like Iran. Wei (2007) called EFL environments as input-poor environments. Then she continued that in such an environment vocabulary knowledge to be of real use must become integrated into discourse. Since learning words individually does not necessarily take care of other aspects of communication competence. English text books can play a crucial role in this regard. Turn-taking exercises in the classroom are also important to compensate this shortcoming.

Another insightful outcome taken from this study was a rapid drop of mean score from 2000 frequency level to 3000, 5000 whereas; from low frequency words of 5000 to academic words there was an increase in both EFL/ESL environments. It is quite justifiable since the students in both environments know virtually the 2000 high frequency words. While they are less familiar with low frequency words and since they are university students their familiarity level with academic words are more. This is true to both environments. The findings are congruent with the work of Cobb (2008) who tested first and second year City University students of Hong Kong. All subjects scored high on the 2000 and 3000 most common words but lower scores on the 5000 and Academic word level,

IMPLICATIONS

Traditionally the teaching of vocabulary above elementary levels was mostly incidental limited to presenting new items as they appeared in reading or listening. Nowadays it is widely accepted that vocabulary teaching should be part of the syllabus, and taught in a well-planned and regular basis, and it should be at the center of language teaching (Moras, et al., 2001).

Utilizing vocabulary level test in this study proved to be useful for helping teachers to determine the kind of attention they should be giving to vocabulary for particular groups of learners. As stated by Laufer and Nation (1999) this is an important decision in terms of the cost-effectiveness of the use of class time to determine which vocabulary should be taught, because high-frequency vocabulary development requires a different program from low-frequency vocabulary development. The reason for this distinction between high and low frequency words is primarily one of cost-benefit that teachers and curriculum designer can apply in their curriculum design purpose. Then teachers can diagnose at what stage their learners are in their vocabulary development. This gives motivation to teach and learn vocabulary. Vocabulary size tests can allow teachers to identify and remedy deficiencies in their students' vocabularies.

In their article Laufer and Nation (1999) mentioned that from the teaching point of view, the words in the most frequent 2000 words in English deserve individual attention. Because, according to Nation, a small number of different words account for a very large proportion of the running words in a book. For example, if students know the 2,000 most frequent words of English, they actually know 81% of the words on any page (Nation, 1983). Beyond that level that is the word in the third, fifth 1000 level and academic levels. Teaching attention should be directed more towards strategies for learning and coping with these words such as guessing from context, memorization technique and procedures and the learning of word parts. Then they added that learners should continue to expand their vocabulary but teachers should not necessarily teach particular words directly.

Although this study generated interesting findings regarding the size of vocabulary at the two EFL/ESL environments, it only caught a glimpse at the status of vocabulary of the participants. A larger sample with different background such as age, major of study, gender would be desire able to yield more generalizable findings and lead to more thorough investigation in the field of language learning, specifically vocabulary teaching and learning.

REFERENCES

- [1] August, D., Carlo, M., Dressler, C., & Snow, C. (2005). The critical role of vocabulary development for English language learners. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, 20(1), 50-57. Retrieved May 17, 2007, from <http://www.daneshyar.org/products.php?sh=&proid=12&serid=0&pid=&status=on&sort=db>.
- [2] Beglar, D. (2000). Estimating vocabulary size. *Shiken: JALT testing and Evaluation SIG newsletter*, 4(1).
- [3] Carter, R., & Nunan, D. (2001) (Eds.). *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

- [4] Cobb, T., & Horst, M. (n.d.). vocabulary size of some City University students. Retrieved on 23, Jul, 2008 from <http://www.er.uqam.ca/nobel/r21270/cv/CitySize.html>.
- [5] Decarrico, J. S. (2001). Reading for academic purpose: Guidelines for the ESL/EFL teacher. Boston: Heinle and Heinle.
- [6] Dubin, F., & Olshtain, E. (1986). *Course design*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [7] Gao, X. (2003). Changes in Chinese students' learner strategy use after arrival in the UK: A qualitative inquiry. Great Britain: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [8] Griffiths, C., & Judy M. P. (2000). Language learning strategies, nationality, independence and proficiency. *Independence*, 28, 7-10.
- [9] Griffiths, C. (2003). Language learning strategy use and proficiency. PhD doctoral dissertation, University of Auckland. Retrieved Feb 2, 2008, from auckland.ac.nz/bitstream/2292/9/5/01front.pdf.
- [10] Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching*. England: Longman.
- [11] Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk and H. Widdowson (Eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- [12] Laufer, B., & Nation, P. (1995). Vocabulary size and use: Lexical richness in L2 written production. *Applied Linguistics*, 16(3).
- [13] Laufer, B., & Nation, P. (1999). A vocabulary-size test of controlled productive ability. *Language Testing*, 16(1), 33-51.
- [14] Laufer, B. (1998). The development of passive and active vocabulary in a second language: Same or different? *Applied Linguistics*, 19(2), 255-271.
- [15] Laufer, B., & Paribakht, T. S. (1998). The relationship between passive and active vocabularies: Effects of language learning context. *Language Learning* 48(3), 365-391.
- [16] Laufer, B. (2003). Vocabulary acquisition in a second language: Do learners really acquire most vocabulary by reading? *Canadian Modern language Review*, 59(4), 565-585.
- [17] McCarthy, M. (1990). *Vocabulary*. Oxford: OUP.
- [18] Meara, P. (1981). Vocabulary acquisition: A neglected aspect of language learning. *Language Teaching and Linguistics Abstracts*, 13, 221-246.
- [19] Meara, P. (1996). The dimensions of lexical competence. In G. Brown, K. Malmkjaer & J. Williams (Eds.), *performance and competence in second language acquisition* (pp. 35-53). Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
- [20] Moras, S., Carlos, S. (2001). Teaching vocabulary to advance students: A lexical approach. Karen's Linguistics Issue online journal. Retrieved from www3.telus.net/linguisticsissues/teachingvocabulary.html.
- [21] Nation, I. S. P. (1983). Testing and teaching vocabulary. *Guidelines*, 5, 12-25.
- [22] Nation, I. S. P., & Waring, R. (1997). Vocabulary size, text coverage and word lists. In N. Schmitt and M. McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary, description, acquisition and pedagogy*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
- [23] Nation, I. S. P. (1990). Teaching and learning vocabulary. Boston: Heinle and Heinle Publishers.
- [24] Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [25] Nation, I. S. P. (2006). How large a vocabulary is needed for reading and listening. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63(1), 59-82.
- [26] Pennycook, A. (1997). *Cultural alternatives and autonomy*. In Benson, Phil & Peter Voller (Eds.), 35-53.
- [27] Pierson, H. D. (1996). Learner culture and learner autonomy in the Hong Kong Chinese context. In Pemberton et al., (Eds.) 49-58.
- [28] Rajadurai, J. (2005). Revising the concentric circles: Conceptual and sociolinguistic considerations. *EFL Asian Journal*, 7(4), article 7.
- [29] Read, J. (2001). *Assessing vocabulary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [30] Schmitt, N., Schmitt, D., & Clapham, C. (2001). Developing and exploring the behavior of two new versions of the Vocabulary Levels Test. *Language Testing*, 18(1), 55-88.
- [31] Schmitt, N. (2008). Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research*, 12(3), 329-363.
- [32] Stern, H. H. (1983). *Fundamental concepts of language teaching*. Oxford: OUP.
- [33] Waring, R. (1997). A comparison of the receptive and productive vocabulary size of some second language learners. Appeared in immaculate; the occasional paper at Notre Dame Seishin University. Retrieved February 13, 2008, from <http://www1.harenet.ne.jp/~waring/papers/vocsize.html>.
- [34] Wei, M. (2007). An examination of vocabulary learning of college-level learners of English in China. *Asian EFL Journal*, 9(2), 129-134.
- [35] White, Cynthia J. (1989). Negotiating communicative language learning in a traditional setting. *ELT Journal*, 1(43):23-25
- [36] Zareva, A. (2005). Models of lexical knowledge assessment of second language learners of English at higher levels of language proficiency. *System*, 33, 547-562.