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VOCABULARY LEARNING IN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

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ABSTRACT

The research presented is aimed on vocabulary learning in English proficiency. There are five participants on this research who show how vocabulary can improve their English proficiency. The participants are aiming to be English teachers and currently are studying the degree of “Licenciatura en la Enseñanza Del Inglés/LEI” at the “Facultad de Lenguas” in B.U.A.P. University. Throughout the research is a representation of certain strategies and resources to use to improve vocabulary growth. Thus, the current research leads to a “vocabulary test” in which participants reflect on the importance of gaining words to understand ideas on different contexts. This research was carried out in 2018 during summer classes.

DEDICATIONS

To all my family.

To Professor Scott Hadley who showed me the world of knowledge.

To my beloved girlfriend and best friend.

To my research readers who gave me their support and guidance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"A book is a loaded gun in the house next door...Who knows who might be the target of the well-read man?"

— Ray Bradbury

Years ago while I was getting interested in books, magazines and other sources for increasing my knowledge, I receive a special gift from Scott Hadley. This gift could be seen as simple; a large notebook with the title “Scientia Potestas Est” which means in English “Knowledge is Power.”

I consider myself to be a humble, loyal and intelligent being. However, I am not rich or powerful in society. So the quote on the notebook changed my perception of the world and even myself. While reading books Professor Scott gave to me, I discover the hidden world for the few that crave to learn and be aware of their own origin, that is to say literature and history. Without Professor Scott Hadley I would not even be able to stand in front of a group of teenagers, adults and even life itself. The first time I entered his classroom was certainly another dimension listening Professor Scott talking about other cultures, languages, music, movies, books, history that were not from his nation was absolutely stunning. Maybe this is not relevant at all, but learning from a teacher giving a class with only a marker and his own brain to teach was an experience that changed my whole existence.

I was afraid to be another brick on the wall but I am not anymore and I would like to give all of my thanks to Scott Hadley that showed me the beauty of learning while reading.

Juan Cardenas Velazquez

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem statement

Vocabulary is the core of a language (Lewis, 1993). Learning a second language today is significantly important for adults as well as young learners. In order to master a foreign language, learners should take into account that vocabulary growth has a great influence on English proficiency. Many students have to take an English proficiency test to obtain national or international proficiency recognition of it. Passing an English proficiency test indicates that you are able to communicate in the language in a certain level or specific contexts.

A personal experience while studying the LEI degree is that I had to take subjects only dealing with grammatical structures and some others dealt with culture, research and humanities. Although there are subjects to increase the lexicon, not all teachers deal with translation or etymologies. As a result, some teachers are not concerned about the importance of learning vocabulary, but only on “well-structured” grammar. It is then that Lewis (1993) proposes that vocabulary learning must be carried out in classes.

Increasing the lexicon in a second language is not an obligation, one can see that in the Mexican students’ context, but while vocabulary is gained by reading, it is noticed that a large lexicon is the vehicle to understand ideas in communication. Folse (2004) discusses how vocabulary is used to get the “essentials” to learn and communicate in a foreign language. To make long story short, this author lived in a small village in Japan. He was isolated from all big cities he had to gain vocabulary just to buy food from the locals. Here I recall my interest in how these “words”, gaining vocabulary, helps a learner to commute ideas and ease the process of learning a foreign language. Although there are many points to start for teaching vocabulary such

as lexical blends, chunks (lexical approach), each learner has to choose which points are more appropriate according to his or her needs.

Regarding vocabulary learning, today some common resources are reading, using dictionaries, using mobile phones, using computers, playing online games and surfing on the internet and so on. Albeit, reading and using dictionaries seem to be an obsolete way of learning, many adult learners find them easier to use. While using mobile phones, computer programs, playing online games and surfing on the net are new tendencies for all English Language Learners (ELL). Because of the interaction with the learner, these resources and tools seem more proper and suitable to fulfill English Language Learners' (ELL) needs and for developing the foreign language.

The reason for focusing on and researching this issue is because the lack of vocabulary in students has grown. Actually, the level of mastery of English in students is very important in English Language Teaching (ELT). That is why a relevant resource in an academic context is enhance vocabulary growth which could be by reading books. For instance, while enjoying a well-written text, one can increase your lexicon inferring words presented in different contexts. There are a lot of advantages for gaining vocabulary, for example, passing an English proficiency test allows you to travel abroad, to get a well-paid job, to get a scholarship or to get a degree. However, my interest in this research is to present how acquiring vocabulary leads to a better English proficiency.

1.2 Aim

The aim of this research is the following:

- To characterize the importance of vocabulary learning in students of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (Licenciatura en la Enseñanza Del Inglés/LEI).

1.3 Research questions

- How does vocabulary learning affect five English Language Learners (ELL)?
- What are the most useful and practicable resources that learners use to improve their vocabulary growth?

1.4 Context of the research

This is a mixed research because it is focused on understanding the topic; it is also considered a subjective research since it does not generalize the whole process of English Language Learning; the results will be written as a narrative and these will lead to conclusions based on the data gathered. The research takes place in the state of Puebla and in its capital Puebla City located in the United Mexican States. The target group of participants are from the Facultad de Lenguas of the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (B.U.A.P) located at Calle 24 Norte #2003, Humboldt, C.P.72370 in Puebla, Pue. The target group of participants consider themselves intermediate learners. Despite this, the students' level is still between A2 and B1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The average age of the participants is between twenty-one and thirty years old. They are studying the degree of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (Licenciatura en la Enseñanza Del Inglés/LEI) though some of them aim to be translators. Hence, the data collected will be useful to interpret the development in their English proficiency. I personally chose these participants and place due to the importance of their language level for the chosen degree. Moreover, at the end of their degree, they are going to apply for a certification in English language in which their skills will be measured. Throughout this research is important to recall that the process of gathering the data to guide the reader on the thesis statement was based on the action research method.

1.5 Thesis overview

This research is presented in five chapters. Chapter I introduces the context of the research and the problem. Chapter II deals with all the related concepts and information to support this research. It contains a brief explanations on vocabulary learning, lexical approach, chunks, blends, English proficiency tests and vocabulary test. Chapter III explains the instruments to be used and how to collect the essential information. It also explains how it is going to be applied. Chapter IV explains the results that were found using the instruments described in Chapter III. Finally, Chapter V contains the conclusion of the research, as well as topics for further investigation and limitations of the presented inquiry. This thesis might help people that want to take a look on how vocabulary learning affects the proficiency in English Language Learners (ELL).

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to present data regarding vocabulary learning and English proficiency. The following sub-topics explain a bit about vocabulary learning, lexical approach, chunks and blends, English proficiency tests as TOEFL PBT, ITP and Cambridge FCE and vocabulary test. These points support this research.

2.1 Vocabulary learning

As it is stated in the research by Pavicic (2008) there is an approach for teaching vocabulary but many teachers fail to teach it. This is mainly caused by the lack of cooperation between learners and teacher. According to Pavicic vocabulary can be defined as “a dictionary or set of words” (ibid: 4). Pavicic (ibid:4) quotes Carter (1992) when defining “word” as “a sequence of letters bounded on either side by a space or a punctuation mark.” By comparison, the Greek word “lexis” refers in English to all the words in a language, hence its vocabulary (Barcroft, Sunderman, & Schmitt, 2011). The structure of a language does not only focus on grammar rules. Actually, to have a good domain of it you must have a large lexicon. Lewis (1993) stated that a large lexicon leads to a better development of communicative skills in a foreign language. Nevertheless, in ELT it is more important to consider the quality rather than the quantity of the lexicon to teach. All learners know what they want to learn and achieve, thus the vocabulary acquired must be constantly used to not forget it (TESOL, 2019).

2.1.1 Lexical approach, chunks, blends

The whole almanac of words that belongs to a foreign language can also have lexical chunks which are phrases of two or three words together inferring a different meaning of its original meaning. Some of these words are: *of course*, *in front of*, *excuse me*, *by the way*, *in other to* and so on. The lexical approach is beyond of well-structured grammar, and “basic” vocabulary.

Therefore, the purpose is to present that language consists of “combined words” which produces a better fluency of the language acquisition (Lewis, 1997).

While learning linguistics, students can notice there are words commonly found together with a certain meaning. This phenomenon is called “lexical chunk.” The British Council (2019) considers that focusing on lexical chunks in the classroom leads learners to control the foreign language. Therefore, it can expedite comprehension of the words’ meaning according to the context. For this reason, the lexical approach must be carried out in the classroom to improve learners’ lexicon.

In the same way, a portmanteau word or blend is formed by merging the sounds and meanings of two or more words. This is called lexical blending. The most common type of blend is a full word followed by a word part called “splinter.” E.g. *motorcade* (*motor* + *cavalcade*). Lexical chunks and blends increase in foreign language learners the cohesion in their spoken and written expressions (Li, 2014).

2.1.2 Vocabulary learning resources

In English Language Learning (ELL) some vocabulary resources can be found in using dictionaries, books, encyclopedias, newspapers, or journals. Moreover, the use of mobile phones and its apps to socialize or communicate are tools to gain words in a person’s lexicon. However, in an indirect form to expand lexicon is also via multiplayer online videogames or surfing on the internet.

While reading, many words cannot be comprehended clearly by readers because they are not native speakers of the language (Lawson & Hogben, 1996). But, Daskalovska (2014) states that gaining vocabulary while reading a well-written text, it is acquired by the words’ frequency

and the context presented. So, acquiring vocabulary in a foreign language takes a previous analysis of the words' meaning to establish an abstract or physical representation in the reader's mind.

In relation to advanced learners, they tend to rely on dictionaries to increase their lexicon and for knowing the meaning of certain words. In order to retain words found in a dictionary, learners tend to mind map the words with its description and representation. Hence, knowing the meaning and form of a word, turns into a consolidated memory (Nosidlak, 2013, Hatch & Brown, 1995).

On the contrary, Suwantarathip and Orawiwatnakul (2015) proposed that the knowledge and the use of mobile phones by adults and children who are learners has increased. The social apps in the mobile phone works as vocabulary exercises and unconscious practice. Although, many users have their phones configuration into their native language, some others do not. Suwantarathip and Orawiwatnakul (2015) detected that mobile phones are an effective tool for students to learn vocabulary and moreover, it helps to motivate them while using a device in their daily life.

Similar, the computer-assisted language learning (CALL) it ensembles a program called Technology-Enhanced Strategy Use (TESU) it has started to be used in the field of learning for increasing vocabulary in a second language. This program contains different vocabulary learning strategies and encourages learners to practice lexical items. Besides the variety of activities that TESU program brings, just a few of them could be useful to practice. The following table contains a list of strategies built in TESU (Liu, Yu-Ju, & Jenkins, 2014).

Type of strategy	Description
Practice	Write or say newly learned words repeatedly in order to remember them.
Note-taking	Write learned words, such as the meaning, prefix, or suffix of a word, etc.
Keyword	Use the sound of a word in English in association with a word in Chinese or use the sound to make meaningful associations.
Contextualization	Use a set of new words to create a situation or make a funny story in order to remember the words.
Grouping	Group words that involve the same or similar characteristics, words like “computer,” “draw,” “flower,” “girl,” “sing,” “boy,” “students,” “classroom,” “walk” to be divided into a group of verbal words (“draw,” “sing,” “walk”) and a group of noun words (“computer,” “boy,” “students,” “classroom”).
Imagery	Use some words to create a mental image or describe ideas or situations.
Recombination	Combine a known word with a new word or vice versa to become another word, e.g., if the word “man” has been learned, a new word “super” or

	“door” along with “man” become “superman” or “doorman.”
Deduction	Use a set of grammatical rules like the prefix “un” meaning “not” to infer meaning.
Analysis	Examine a word and break it down into morphemes, such as the word “speechlessness” that consists of the root “speech” and the suffixation “less” and “ness.”
Physical response	Physically act out a new word to enhance its meaning or the understanding of the word.
Translation	Translate one language to another.
Transfer	Transfer the ideas or rules of known words to those in new words, such as “smooth” can be applied to an object, say, “a smooth table” and such meaning can be transferred to have an abstract meaning like “a smooth day.”

This table was taken from Liu, S. J., Yu-Ju, L., & Jenkins, J. R. (2014). Technology-Enhanced Strategy Use for Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition. *English Teaching & Learning*, 38(2), p.112.
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Moreover, today vocabulary can be acquired from recreation activities such as; videogames. Bytheway (2015) proposed that online role-playing games (MMORPGs) are an efficient tool because of the frequency of words, reading game’s information and examples of those words in different contexts of the game. Due to the repetition of words, as well as inferring meaning of lexicon in game’s context can be associated to reading. The improvements showed in

Bytheway's (2015) research was learners developed an autonomous learning and well-structured outputs in the second language while playing videogames.

Lastly, the use of Internet presents multiple contexts which guide the learner through different web-pages to interact with audiovisual material (Nagy & Scott, 2000). In Ebner and Ehri's (2013) research, findings showed that internet tools ease students' vocabulary acquisition because of the variable contexts.

Vocabulary growth can be exposed as a process of self-learning tasks because of the metacognitive learner's choice (Gu, 2003). In summary, the reading resources and working with the CALL, are adequate resources for vocabulary growth, whereas these are more appropriate to advanced learners. In contrast, mobile phones, multiplayer online videogames and internet might be successful tools for young or old learners in a basic level of English language.

2.1.3 Vocabulary learning strategies

A strategy starts when the learner analyses the task, the situation and the things ordered in his/her repertory to select and deploy the effectiveness of that into the action and he/she decides if it is need to re-plan or not during the action (Gu, 2003:2).As long as you are reading this research you could retrace some methods that might be effective to encourage learners to increase their lexicon. Here I make a pause, translation method and strategy might be attractive but if you use it, students take the custom to use their first language so translating is not efficient and it is dismiss on this research. In order to get a proficient lexicon you must have proper Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS). These strategies were defined by Gu (2003) as a series of actions that a learner takes to ease a task.

“Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed (David Wilkins, Dellar H, Hocking D. Innovations LTP). Vocabulary seems to be a collection of items which cannot be used without a syllabus (grammar structures).” This fragment was taken and paraphrased from Thornbury (2002) which implies the relevance of increasing vocabulary at school. Throughout LEI’s degree you could work with printed or digital resources (course books/dictionaries/photocopies/articles/etc.) to ease your progress. Nevertheless, Thornbury (2002) states clearly that course books will limit learners’ lexicon so the best way, and I agree, it is to expose learners in extensive learning (literature) which must be carried out more for pleasure rather than for seeking information.

In addition to this statements, the Penguin Editorial sets the graded readers by classifying their books in how many words you understand or had gained, the following description it’s a sample of Penguin Editorial to check your level in English by reading: Beginner 200 words, Elementary 300 words, Pre-Intermediate 1,200 words, Intermediate 1,700 words, Upper-Intermediate 2,300 words and Advanced 3,000 words.

These scales are accurate to display how lexicon is important while learning and in proficiency of a foreign language. As long as you can understand 3,000 by inferring them by context then you are able to comprehend information in different aspects. Although inferring context should be a good tool in English proficiency the lack of words in each scholar hinder this process (Sharpe, 2001). In other words, context could be defined as the combination of vocabulary and grammar that surrounds a word (ibid. p.305). Eventually, Stenberg (1987) cited in Pavicic’s work (2008) says that vocabulary can be learned through exposure in various contexts. Here is mark that increasing vocabulary by reading is not only for leisure but for the exposure on different contexts besides information collected through it could be later applied on

different disciplines, therefore, on English proficiency (Nagy, 2000). It is important to remind that English Language cannot be concealed in a single class or course or even by a single source (ibid: p. 32).

As for one strategy that resulted to be efficient and indirect is the “Free Reading.” In Folse (2004) who quotes Graves (1987) concludes that besides of all the effort done in a school by teachers, students have to learn independently. Therefore, it makes sense to encourage students to adopt personal plans to expand their vocabulary on different topics (ibid. p. 177). For this, Sanaoui’s work (as cited in Folse, 2004) presented that there is not any “magic” or “chosen” strategy to enhance students’ lexicon.

2.2 English language proficiency

When learning a language inputs are performed according to different situations presented (Green, 2015). The most important thing in a learning process is how accurate you carry out the knowledge learned. Thus, what English proficiency means is how well you implement your knowledge to interact in the foreign language. Correspondingly, English proficiency is linked to academic material such as networks, apps and books. That is to say, these materials help to build tests to practice and show an improvement in English language proficiency. Using academic material, shows a progress in scholars and hence its use is relevant for them (Torregosa, Ynalvez, Schiffman & Morin, 2015).

Martirosyan, Hwang and Wanjohi’s (2015) showed that learners who spoke at least three languages are able to have better English language proficiency. Hernandez (2010) states that this is caused by different factors such as; their academic training, students who travel abroad with scholarships and sociocultural interaction. All of these factors, might affect the performance of

English learners (ibid). Students who travel abroad tend to learn foreign languages better because they overcome barriers related to it.

2.2.1 English proficiency tests

An English proficiency test is an integrated tool for learners and all the public that wants to measure and certify a level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). There are different tests to approve your English level internationally. The structures of these tests vary. However, both contain four segments related to the four skills in English. Those skills are reading, writing, listening and speaking. The sequence and of the four skills might be different depending on which test you take. So, taking an English proficiency test allows you to approve an official score of domain in a foreign language, which is in this case, English.

2.2.2 Toefl PBT and Toefl ITP

The TOEFL PBT is an American test which measures your ability to use and understand English in a professional level. As its name infers, it is a paper-based test in which each student can measure how accurate perform and combine the four skills in English (reading, writing, listening and speaking). TOEFL's applicants are students in a higher education, scholarship candidates, English language learners that want to improve their progress in different professional branches. On the top of that, more than 9,000 colleges, agencies and other institutions in over 130 countries accept TOEFL PBT scores and hence, it is well recognized all over the world (Exam English Ltd, 2019).

On the other hand, TOEFL ITP (Institutional Testing Program) is a paper-based test that evaluates the English proficiency of nonnative English speakers. The test evaluates English skills starting by listening comprehension, structure & written expression and reading comprehension.

The TOEFL ITP's tests are divided in two levels: Level 1 for intermediate to advance. The other test is for Level 2 which is for high beginning to intermediate level. TOEFL's content is about arts, humanities, life sciences, social sciences, business, environment, food, media, objects, personal stuff, and so on. However, this test it is only recognized at a national level, therefore it does not have validity in any international institution. As it was mentioned before, both TOEFL Test cover general topics such as; history, geography, astronomy, geology, literature, sociology, zoology, etc. that are taught in American Universities (Broukal, 1997). In general strategies to approve this test is to focus reading in online newspaper so you can read widely on anything listed above.

2.2.3 Cambridge FCE

The First Certificate in English (FCE) refers to a test that qualifies and approves language skills in English. It is a British test and considered the most important in Cambridge exams. It can be taken in paper-based form as well as in computer-based format. As the TOEFL test, the FCE test has four sections associated with the four skills and its cost will depend on actual Euro's value. Moreover, this test will be permanent and internationally official in case to be passed by the applicant (Cambridge Assessment English, 2019).

2.3 Vocabulary Tests

Vocabulary tests are focused on testing how many "words" you know in a language. These tests can be found on internet and most of them are for free (Educational Testing Service, 2019). However, some good tests that may help to improve and make you aware of how much vocabulary you have learnt are from Cambridge and TOEFL.

2.4 Summary of the chapter

Throughout this chapter, the sub-topics presented showed background of vocabulary learning in a foreign language. Vocabulary is also beyond of basic words, indeed, it contains lexical blends and chunks. These phenomena are the basis to develop cohesion in learners' communicative expressions. Furthermore, the brief descriptions of the most important and the most common tests for certifying English in the CEFR were given to present how proficiency is linked to the learning resources that students use. In conclusion of this chapter, there could be other sub-topics to be considered but this investigation is focusing on how learners reinforce their English by learning vocabulary as well as which resources are more useful in proficiency. The information presented was taken from different sources from internet, at B.U.A.P's virtual library and from the library at the Facultad de Lenguas. The following chapter describes the research methodology for this project.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

As mentioned in the previous two chapters, this research is focused on showing the most useful resources to learn vocabulary and how gaining vocabulary affects English proficiency. In Chapter I, some points such as; the research's methodology, the participants of this investigation and a bit of the context of the research were described. Nevertheless, the research context is going to be described, as well as the instruments, data collection and the procedure.

3.1 Research Method

This research is based on the action research method. According to Ferrance (2000), action research is gathering data to be later will be reflected on. Some characteristics to select the action research method is because the formulated questions on the instruments reflect and discuss on the data collected to propose an action. It is important to emphasize that this research does not lead to any actions to implement; therefore, it does not answer or state a solution to a hypothesis. For this reason, the main point is only to confer relevance on which resources students use the most and how vocabulary learning affects students' proficiency.

3.2 Approach

As established in Chapter I, the approach from this research is mixed. The problem statement is aimed to be a small sample in which the findings will be generalized. The selection of the instruments are related to qualitative (see Appendix A) and quantitative research (see appendices B & D). Quantitative instruments are semi-structured with closed-ended questions which later can be overviewed. On the other hand, qualitative instruments include general questions and a personal reflection and description of data. So the purpose is to combine both approaches, in order to have a better understanding of the problem statement.

3.3 Research design

The design of the research is a cross-sectional study which is an observational study. The cross-sectional study is intended to be a “snapshot” from a group of individuals and it is only used with fewer instruments for being conducted. (Aldridge, Melissa & Morrison, 2009, p.77-78). Also, the cross-sectional study is used to understand or identify conditions or issues in a certain context, which for this case is academic. It is important to recall that the data compiled is a limitation because the findings are generalized and the evidence presented will have a temporal exposure coming from the results in Chapter V.

3.4 Purpose

The main purpose of the research is to explore and characterize the importance of vocabulary learning in students of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (Licenciatura en la Enseñanza Del Inglés/LEI). Therefore, the inquiry is a single study in which the data gathered from the mixed approaches is examined briefly.

There are four instruments throughout this research; all of them are applied face to face for each participant; in the case of the interview (instrument 1), it is an individual interaction and the responses are open while being recorded; questionnaire (instrument 2) is going to be applied in a paper-based form. The vocabulary test (instrument 3) is presented as a reading segment taken from a book and the questionnaire (instrument 4) divided in two parts related to the reading segment. The instruments are later explained throughout this chapter and the results obtained are going to be useful to answer the research questions.

3.5 Participants

The five students involved in the research were chosen from the Facultad de Lenguas of B.U.A.P. They are three women and two men studying the summer term of courses. These students are in the program of English Language Teaching (ELT) and they have completed more than seventy percent of the major. Their ages are between 21 and 30 years old. All of them want to be future English language teachers so their opinions and experiences are going to be relevant because they will focus on teaching and hence language proficiency with vocabulary growth.

In order to select the right participants, I asked them face to face if they plan to teach English in their future. That is why I decided to center my attention on these group of students because of their future development in ELT, in which they must master a language by vocabulary. It is important to mention there are students in the Facultad de Lenguas studying there because of job requirements; others are focusing on the area of translation; and some others just on personal requirements for specific purposes. Thus, the entire student body is not aiming for ELT.

3.6 Data collection

First, Instrument 1 (Appendix A), which is an interview, is going to be applied face to face and the participants are recorded to catch their open responses. Notice that participants are asked for their permission to be recorded while carrying out Instrument 1. Later on, a date is arranged for applying Instrument 2 (Appendix B). As well as in Instrument 1, participants were allowed to settle a date and hour so as not to interrupt their daily activities. After Instrument 2 was carried out, Instrument 3 (Appendix C), a reading segment, and Instrument 4 (Appendix D), a questionnaire divided in two parts, are applied at the same time and date. Furthermore, data is gathered individually because each participant is by his/her own and the only action for the

researcher is to guide them just if there is any doubt while answering each instrument. Finally, data is going to be collected with the aid of the aforementioned instruments.

3.6.1 Instruments 1 and 2

In order to understand the structure and selection of Instruments 1 and 2, according to the American Statistical Association, the word “survey” is used most often to describe a method of gathering information from a sample of individuals (Duke & Mallette, 2004:3). As for Jaeger’s diary (as cited in Duke & Mallette, 2004), he defines survey as “a study in which data is collected from part of a group for the purpose of describing one or more characteristics of a whole group” (ibid: 450). A survey typically involves the administration of a questionnaire or an interview.

Instrument 1 is a made up interview on how vocabulary learning influences the lifetime of a future English language teacher. The interview is a good way to address participants because they feel free to answer. The instrument is made up of six questions and it takes at about ten minutes to answer. This instrument was chosen because it could bring open responses. Its purpose is to show their personal opinions on how vocabulary growth can improve language proficiency. The purpose of it is to gather and see if English is going to be part of students’ future job. Therefore, it will show how much interest in learning vocabulary they have and what resources they use the most and what skills have developed using those resources. (See Appendix A)

Instrument 2 is a questionnaire consisting of eight questions; six closed questions and two open questions. Here is important to recall Mercado (1999) who says that a questionnaire can be “structured”, “semi-structured” or “unstructured.” While instrument 2 is “semi-structured”

because of the open responses; multiple choice questions and dichotomous questions (ibid: p.64). Similar to Instrument 1, its purpose leads to present the importance of learning vocabulary and how it is linked to an English proficiency test, as well to expose if they had taken an English proficiency test. Moreover, it is aimed not to measure in a statistic way but certainly to rank what is asked for; to show the most useful resources for vocabulary learning. This instrument is planned to be answered in 8 minutes. (See Appendix B)

3.6.2 Instrument 3

This instrument consists of a reading segment taken from the book *The Illustrated Man* by Ray Bradbury (1951) and the story selected is “The Last Night of the World.” The reading is going to take part as a previous vocabulary test in which students must read it and later they must answer Instrument 4. After Instrument 4 part one is done, the five students are going to receive a paper sheet with a list of all unknown vocabulary throughout the reading. Then, the students are asked to read the segment again, but this time using the paper sheet with the unknown vocabulary list (See Appendices C and D).

3.6.3 Instrument 4

Instrument 4 according to Mercado (1999) is a “semi-structured” questionnaire divided in two parts. As stated by Mercado (ibid) a “semi-structured” questionnaire is used for dichotomous questions (ibid: 64-65). The first part of it contains four questions about how difficult the reading was. So here, students are going to express if they could understand the text or not. Then, the second part is going to be answered after participants read the segment again with the unknown vocabulary of the paper. Here the results gathered are going to be analyzed as to how important vocabulary is in English proficiency. (See Appendix D)

3.6.4 Instrument 5

Instrument 5 is a list of words that are marked as “unknown” because they cannot be inferred by the reading segment. This instrument is given to the participants after they answered the first part of Instrument 4. (See Appendix E)

3.7 Data analysis

The data is going to be analyzed by observing the results. Here the researcher is going to write a narrative and therefore describe the results collected from the three instruments (1, 2 & 4). As a result, the findings are analyzed generally to get a better observation of what was collected. It is important to highlight that, as action research method, this is only an understanding and observation on how vocabulary learning influences the English proficiency in students. So, the possible responses are to express that gaining vocabulary is useful to get a better development while taking an English proficiency test. As stated previously, the organization of data is gathered by the observational form to dismiss useless data.

3.8 Summary of the chapter

In this chapter, the descriptions were detailed about what the methodology includes collecting the data, as well as describing the context of the investigation, how it is carried out and which instruments were selected. The reason for choosing instruments was a source to get into participants’ experiences and to observe how learn, as in the interview in Instrument 1; the questionnaire (Instrument 2) is mainly aimed to scale a rank of agreement in students about finding useful or useless to gain vocabulary in English; the reading segment (Instrument 3) is focused on noticing how much can students understand a text without searching the “unknown” vocabulary. The questionnaire (Instrument 4) consists of two parts- part one shows how much they understood and the second part demonstrates how much they understood now with the

unknown vocabulary defined. The following chapter deals with the results obtained from what had been described here.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

As previously mentioned, this is an action research method that took part in a public university. The number of participants are five. Their responses or the data gathered presented here are linked to answer the research questions about which resources are better to acquire a larger vocabulary and how learning vocabulary affects English proficiency.

The results are narrated and presented generally, it is important to mention that participants were asked if they could be recorded while answering Instrument 1 (Appendix A). However, while responding Instrument 1, all of the participants refused to be recorded because they thought they had to talk a lot and all of them said that their schedules were unfortunately busy. So, a few changes occurred; the answers from Instrument 1 are just written and were not transcribed as planned since the beginning of this research. The analysis for each instrument is chronological, hence, Instrument 1, then Instrument 2 and so on.

4.1 Analysis of Instrument 1 (Appendix A)

The first instrument is an interview in which the responses are only written since students refuse to be recorded on their answers. The results presented in here are analyzed generally and in order to check the participants' responses it is suggested to see Appendices A.

The research participants were five; three women and two men. From questions 1-3 students agreed to be focused in ELT. English proficiency is important for them for getting a good job. From 4 out of 5 participants (student 1, 3, 4 & 5) agreed learning vocabulary is easy because of the variety and resources available. Only one (student 2) of the five participants said

that gaining vocabulary is more or less easy. She mentioned it because of the big variety of resources when choosing one resource that suits her needs better to increase her lexicon.

On the other hand, in question 4 while asking if they feel able to teach English with their current level of the foreign language, student 2 and student 4 said “yes.” Students 3 and 5 said “no” and student 1 said “more or less”. The participants who answered “yes” mentioned to have a proper level to teach, although, they could improve it if they gain more vocabulary. Students who answered “no” said that they would like to improve it more before teaching, which is the case of student 1 answer.

Finally, from question 5-6, students 1 and 2 stated that they developed more the skills of writing and reading. Student 3 mentioned to have developed more speaking and reading. Student 4 said he has developed the four skills in balanced way. While student 5 told that only Reading is the skills she improved the most. Among all of these answers, we can notice all of them developed more reading skills and then writing and speaking. Moreover, they agreed that reading books, using internet websites, using dictionaries, playing videogames, reading magazines and watching movies or listening to music are good resources to increase their vocabulary.

As conclusion of this instrument, the relevance of reading books and using internet were stated as the most useful resources to acquire more vocabulary. Many students do not pay attention on the sub-ability of vocabulary and when teaching a foreign language having a limited lexicon could hinder the process. Consequently, English proficiency affects different factors like the teaching process or the paid in a job.

4.2 Analysis of Instrument 2 (Appendix B)

Instrument two was made up to gather data about the relationship between vocabulary learning and English proficiency. The questionnaire consisted of eight questions with closed answers (see Appendix B). The instrument was carried out on an agreed date for the researcher and participants. While applying this questionnaire there were not any issues neither objections as happened in instrument 1. The results gathered in this questionnaire are presented generally which later are discussed and based on the participants' answers.

From the questions 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 all of the students recognized the use of different resources that help them to improve their English level. It is important to manage a large vocabulary to get a good job as instrument's 1 results showed. Hence, the participants are aware of learning vocabulary is a good manner to master a foreign language.

In the case of question 4, student 1 disagrees about reading books might be feasible and good for her because she still does not feel ready to teach the language. On the other side, question 6 shows that 3 students that took part in the research have taken an English proficiency test. But, the other two have not taken any. The expected answers from questions 7 and 8 demonstrate that vocabulary learning helps to develop the receptive and productive skills in English, so lexicon eases the process of communicating.

The data presented shows that; vocabulary learning influences the score when taking and English proficiency test. The use of different resources helps people to master better the foreign language and for some students seems easier and useful to take books as tools for gaining words to them. With this in mind, the amount of known words (vocabulary gained) is going to influence

to reach a higher score while applying to TOEFL or CAMBRIDGE proficiency tests. Thus, higher the score is likely get a better “job” for future students in ELT.

4.3 Analysis of Instrument 3 and 4 (Appendix C & D)

Finally, the last two instruments were focused on gathering data about how important vocabulary is in a text commonly found in English proficiency tests. Instrument 3 consists in science fiction story called “The last night of the world” taken from the book of a collection of short stories titled as “The Illustrated Man” written by Ray Bradbury (1951). Actually, this reading is linked to the fourth instrument (Appendix D) where students must answer four questions after reading the whole text without any tool that can define the unknown words. Later, they have to answer four more questions but with a list of all unknown vocabulary from the reading segment. This list (see Appendix E) was able to guide them for understanding certain words, lexical chunks and lexical blending.

In order to not get lost, see appendices C and D. After instrument 1 and 2 were accomplished, instruments 3 and 4 are focused on noticing the relevance in how vocabulary affects when applying for an English proficiency test. Throughout the reading segment students 2, 3 and 4 could understand the text however as it showed in the questionnaire results, some words could be inferred by the context. We can notice that student 2 and 4 are able to give a synthesis of the reading segment. However, student 3 and 5 could be able to do it. Although, in the case of student 1; she shows is not able to give any synthesis of it.

On the contrary, after students received the list of “unknown words” (see Appendix E), all of them could understand the text. Moreover, student 2, 3 and 4 said that it is not necessary to get all the “unknown” words before reading a text. While students 1 and 5 said it could be good

to get all the “unknown” words before interacting with the text. From the questions 7-8 only student 5 was undecided about giving a synthesis even with the vocabulary list. All of the participants recognized that reading different sort of texts will help them out to improve their proficiency in the foreign language.

As a result, we can considerate in the TOEFL and CAMBRIDGE proficiency tests, vocabulary plays an important role while answering the “reading comprehension” where each student is asked to summarize and respond questions related to the texts. It is highly probable that unfamiliar words can be inferred by context, such as happened in students 3 and 5. Thus, increasing lexicon is required to pass a proficiency test which measures skills and sub-skills.

4.4 Summary of the chapter

According to the instruments described in Chapter III, the results compiled were described narratively a later discussed to have a better comprehension. The analysis for each instrument was chronological, hence, Instrument 1 and then Instrument 2 and so on. While this chapter was aimed at putting the results together and explaining them, the upcoming chapter leads on answering the research’s questions stated in Chapter I.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

Through this final chapter, the research questions are going to be answered, as well as mentioning what the investigation showed. Also, a personal reflection on the process of the investigation a really brief introduction for further research on the problem statement are given.

5.1 Thesis aim, focus of the study and research conduction

First of all, the aim of the research was to characterize the importance vocabulary learning. The investigation was implemented in the B.U.A.P University at Facultad de Lenguas. The research participants were five students (three women and two men) of English Language Teaching (ELT). The gathering of data and the research conduction had been carried out during the term of summer 2018 (academic term in the Facultad de Lenguas B.U.A.P from May to June). Significantly this research started in May 2018 and finished in June 2018.

The approach of this research was mixed and focused on five instruments- an interview, two questionnaires, one reading segment simulating a reading comprehension test and a list of unknown words. The first instrument presented showed that reading books, the use of internet as well as particular websites, and using dictionaries are the most useful resources for the students taking part in this research. Also, it presented results linked to how vocabulary influences the development of different skills and also how they feel about teaching English with their current level.

Instrument 2 shows that vocabulary learning strongly affects students. In order to finish the major of English Language Teaching, almost all the students must take an English proficiency test. Thus, different resources for vocabulary growth play an important role to learn new words to start inferring what they mean by an established context. Also, the research

participants showed that to get a well-paid job as teacher, the score obtained on the English proficiency test will influence the approval and promotion during a job interview.

Instrument 3 and 4 were instruments aimed at gathering and showing how unknown vocabulary can be inferred by context. However, some other words might not; this is caused by the strong relationship between English proficiency and vocabulary learning. We can see how they recognized the importance of lexicon in the second part of Instrument 4. The questions presented in Instrument 4 were aimed to see if students feel able to give a synthesis or how much they understand the text (see Chapter IV). Later, students received a list (see Appendix E) of all the unknown vocabulary and were able to understand it completely and most of them were able to give a detailed synthesis (see Chapter IV).

5.2 Answering the research questions

Here, the questions stated at the beginning are going to be answered by the data collected in Chapter IV.

The first question asked how vocabulary learning affects five English Language Learners (ELL). It was found that it affects them positively since increasing their vocabulary helps them develop the four skills unconsciously. Moreover, in order to get a well paid job in ELT they must prove their English proficiency by taking a TOEFL or CAMBRIDGE test that will measure their mastery in it. This question is answered by the results taken from instrument 1, 2 and 4.

The second question asked what the most useful and practicable resources that learners use to improve their vocabulary growth are? As a result, from Instruments 1 and 2, the participants mentioned that the most useful resources for vocabulary growth are reading books, using the

internet (websites about English learning), using dictionaries, playing videogames, reading magazines as well as listening to music.

5.3 Personal reflection

The research topic was chosen because of a personal experience. After taking Literature 1 and 2 in the LEI major, I felt it was really important to increase my vocabulary while reading books of classic English literature. After reading seven books in English in eight months, my vocabulary increased a lot. When the teacher from Research Seminar I asked us to take the TOEFL Training to measure our English level, I obtained a score of 530 points. I was really amazed with this score because I did not study anything related to grammar nor vocabulary with specific books or websites. Hence, I learnt many words by only reading books of different genres. These topics concerned me a lot because after the score reached, I taught a course to new students to reinforce their English skills.

As a consequence of reading books, I was not only able to read texts and understand the author's tone and plot, but I could express my ideas better and faster than before. Therefore, while enjoying a good written text I did not notice that I improved my English incredibly. Basically, reading is a good resource to increase our lexicon, so I chose to research if reading was an effective resource to acquire vocabulary while seeing how it enhances mastering a foreign language, which is the case of English. I really enjoyed researching on this since many students of the Facultad de Lenguas; although they are advanced learners, they still fail when interacting in the English language. Furthermore, I noticed that in order to get a high score in TOEFL or CAMBRIDGE, we need to analyze and understand different texts which contain a lot unknown words so information is gotten correctly without any misunderstandings.

5.4 Research contributions

Until this point, this research showed how vocabulary learning influences students' proficiency. Also the research presents concerns about focusing only on grammar and not increasing students' lexicon, as well as how vocabulary eases the process to learn and understand a foreign language, which in this case is English. The main contributions are related to focusing more on outputs rather than inputs, otherwise learners will fail to express their ideas or catch information in English. Some of the topics to continue with this concern are listed in further research.

5.5 Limitations

Throughout the research, some points were dismissed because of the methodology presented in Chapter III and lack of time. The topics and questions that were not discussed in here are the following and can be researched on the sources that ease the process.

- How different resources improve students' English proficiency.
- How vocabulary growth could ease the process in learning English as a second language.
- How to distinguish the most practicable and useful strategies according to students' level.
- What resources are needed to teach or increase vocabulary at schools.
- What the difference of students' that are increasing lexicon in a proficiency test as TOEFL and CAMBRIDGE is.

5.6 Further research

For further research and based on the findings of this research, here I state some topics to be investigated about as well some sources to review.

One of the problems in vocabulary learning is that students forget the lexicon learned so Schneider (2002) listed some experiences to enhance the use of it. To mention further research you can seek cognitive depth, affective depth, etc.

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APPENDIX A - STUDENT 1

Question	Open response
1. Is English going to be part of your job?	Yes, because I chose this career to be an English teacher.
2. Is your English proficiency important for your future job?	Yes, because we have to know all things related to English. Also, we have to improve it every day and we have to make different activities to make it.
3. Do you consider the path of learning vocabulary difficult or easy? Why?	I consider it easy because nowadays we have many resources to learn it.
4. Do you feel to have an appropriate level of English to teach it?	More or less, because I think that I need to improve 'because we can learn more all days.'
5. What is the skill you have developed the most in English?	Writing and reading.
6. Which resources will help you acquire an extensive vocabulary?	Dictionaries, apps for my mobile phone, reading books, magazines and internet.

APPENDIX A - STUDENT 2

Question	Open response
1. Is English going to be part of your job?	Yes, it is an important tool for teachers and I want to be one of them.
2. Is your English proficiency important for your future job?	Yes, it is a requirement to pass and English proficiency test and well also for get a good teaching job.
3. Do you consider the path of learning vocabulary difficult or easy? Why?	More or less. We have many resources nowadays but it is difficult to choose one that is fun and useful and also focused on what I want to learn.
4. Do you feel to have an appropriate level of English to teach it?	Well, I believe and I feel able to teach English but I would like to learn more about the language and specially vocabulary.
5. What is the skill you have developed the most in English?	Writing and reading.
6. Which resources will help you acquire an extensive vocabulary?	The internet, special websites to learn English, videogames and reading books.

APPENDIX A - STUDENT 3

Question	Open response
1. Is English going to be part of your job?	Yes, I am going to be and focused in ELT.
2. Is your English proficiency important for your future job?	Yes, it is an important factor to get and good job because of the level reflected on the English proficiency test.
3. Do you consider the path of learning vocabulary difficult or easy? Why?	Yes, today it is easier to learn more vocabulary throughout many resources.
4. Do you feel to have an appropriate level of English to teach it?	Not yet. However, I will be able to teach if I keep studying more about the language.
5. What is the skill you have developed the most in English?	Speaking and Reading.
6. Which resources will help you acquire an extensive vocabulary?	Reading books in a physical way or online, videogames, magazines and dictionaries.

APPENDIX A - STUDENT 4

Question	Open response
1. Is English going to be part of your job?	Yes. I am going to an English teacher.
2. Is your English proficiency important for your future job?	Yes, it is important to pass the TOEFL and get a reference on the CEFR. Also to get a good job.
3. Do you consider the path of learning vocabulary difficult or easy? Why?	I guess it is easy. We have many resources in the school to learn vocabulary as well on internet.
4. Do you feel to have an appropriate level of English to teach it?	Yes. I feel comfortable when teaching adolescents. The topics are intermediate and I can teach vocabulary.
5. What is the skill you have developed the most in English?	The four skills. Writing, Reading, Listening and Speaking.
6. Which resources will help you acquire an extensive vocabulary?	Reading books is better for me, the use of internet, dictionaries and sometimes playing videogames.

APPENDIX A - STUDENT 5

Question	Open response
1. Is English going to be part of your job?	Yes, as a future English teacher it is necessary.
2. Is your English proficiency important for your future job?	It is so important for me, because I want to be a good teacher and I want my students to be encourage by this subject.
3. Do you consider the path of learning vocabulary difficult or easy? Why?	In my opinion, I think it is easy but the problem is to practice it. When it is not our native language, we can't practice the language. Well, we can get some of it, it's not impossible but sometimes we don't look for new vocabulary
4. Do you feel to have an appropriate level of English to teach it?	I would like to write," yes, of course" but I cannot say that because I need to practice and study more. In fact, I try to my English will be better. Therefore, no.
5. What is the skill you have develop the most in English?	Reading.
6. Which resources will help you acquire an extensive vocabulary?	Watching movies, listening music and reading that grabs my attention. These are the resources which help me. I know with these I can get vocabulary the problem I don't practice.

APPENDIX B

Question	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5
1. The use of different resources helps to improve your English?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. Is it important to manage an extensive vocabulary in a high level of English?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
3. Do you consider learning vocabulary a good strategy to domain English?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4. Do you think reading books of different genres is useful to gain vocabulary?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5. Do you like to learn with different resources? e.g. The use of internet, portable devices and apps.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
6. Have you taken a proficiency test?	No	No	Yes, TOEFL training	Yes, TOEFL training	Yes, OM Personal English

*If you have chosen “yes” mention the one you took:					
7. Do you think vocabulary is good to express better your ideas in a foreign language?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
8. Does vocabulary learning will help you to develop another skill in English? If so, mention which skills:	All of them	Speaking and writing	All of them	All of them	Listening and speaking

APPENDIX C
The Last Night of the World

“WHAT would you do if you knew that this was the last night of the world?”

“What would I do? You mean seriously?”

“Yes, seriously.”

“I don’t know. I hadn’t thought.”

He poured some coffee. In the background the two girls were playing blocks on the parlor rug in the light of the green hurricane lamps. There was an easy, clean aroma of the brewed coffee in the evening air.

“Well, better start thinking about it,” he said.

“You don’t mean it!”

He nodded.

“A war?”

He shook his head.

“Not the hydrogen or atom bomb?”

“No.”

“Or germ warfare?”

“None of those at all,” he said, stirring his coffee slowly. “But just, let’s say, the closing of a book.”

“I don’t think I understand.”

“No, nor do I, really; it’s just a feeling. Sometimes it frightens me, sometimes I’m not frightened at all but at peace.” He glanced in at the girls and their yellow hair shining in the lamplight. “I didn’t say anything to you. It first happened about four nights ago.”

“What?”

“A dream I had. I dreamed that it was all going to be over, and a voice said it was; not any kind of voice I can remember, but a voice anyway, and it said things would stop here on Earth. I didn’t think too much about it the next day, but then I went to the office and caught Stan Willis looking out the window in the middle of the afternoon, and I said a penny for your thoughts, Stan, and he said, I had a dream last night, and before he even told me the dream I knew what it was. I could have told him, but he told me and I listened to him.”

“It was the same dream?”

“The same. I told Stan I had dreamed it too. He didn’t seem surprised. He relaxed, in fact. Then we started walking through the office, for the hell of it. It wasn’t planned. We didn’t say, ‘Let’s walk around.’ We just walked on our own, and everywhere we saw people looking at their desks or their hands or out windows. I talked to a few. So did Stan.”

“And they all had dreamed?”

“All of them. The same dream, with no difference.”

“Do you believe in it?”

“Yes. I’ve never been more certain.”

“And when will it stop? The world, I mean.”

“Sometime during the night for us, and then as the night goes on around the world, that’ll go too. It’ll take twenty-four hours for it all to go.”

They sat awhile not touching their coffee. Then they lifted it slowly and drank, looking at each other.

“Do we deserve this?” she said.

“It’s not a matter of deserving; it’s just that things didn’t work out. I notice you didn’t even argue about this. Why not?”

“I guess I’ve a reason,” she said.

“The same one everyone at the office had?”

She nodded slowly. “I didn’t want to say anything. It happened last night. And the women on the block talked about it, among themselves, today. They dreamed. I thought it was only a coincidence.” She picked up the evening paper. “There’s nothing in the paper about it.”

“Everyone knows, so there’s no need.”

He sat back in his chair, watching her. “Are you afraid?”

“No. I always thought I would be, but I’m not.”

“Where’s that spirit called self-preservation they talk so much about?”

“I don’t know. You don’t get too excited when you feel things are logical. This is logical. Nothing else but this could have happened from the way we’ve lived.”

“We haven’t been too bad, have we?”

“No, nor enormously good. I suppose that’s the trouble—we haven’t been very much of anything except us, while a big part of the world was busy being lots of quite awful things.”

The girls were laughing in the parlor.

“I always thought people would be screaming in the streets at a time like this.”

“I guess not. You don’t scream about the real thing.”

“Do you know, I won’t miss anything but you and the girls. I never liked cities or my work or anything except you three. I won’t miss a thing except perhaps the change in the weather, and a glass of ice water when it’s hot, and I might miss sleeping. How can we sit here and talk this way?”

“Because there’s nothing else to do.”

“That’s it, of course; for if there were, we’d be doing it. I suppose this is the first time in the history of the world that everyone has known just what they were going to do during the night.”

“I wonder what everyone else will do now, this evening, for the next few hours.”

“Go to a show, listen to the radio, watch television, play cards, put the children to bed, go to bed themselves, like always.”

“In a way that’s something to be proud of—like always.”

They sat a moment and then he poured himself another coffee. “Why do you suppose it’s tonight?”

“Because.”

“Why not some other night in the last century, or five centuries ago, or ten?”

“Maybe it’s because it was never October 19, 1969, ever before in history, and now it is and that’s it; because this date means more than any other date ever meant; because it’s the year when things are as they are all over the world and that’s why it’s the end.”

“There are bombers on their schedules both ways across the ocean tonight that’ll never see land.”

“That’s part of the reason why.”

“Well,” he said, getting up, “what shall it be? Wash the dishes?”

They washed the dishes and stacked them away with special neatness. At eight-thirty the girls were put to bed and kissed good night and the little lights by their beds turned on and the door left open just a trifle.

“I wonder,” said the husband, coming from the bedroom and glancing back, standing there with his pipe for a moment.

“What?”

“If the door will be shut all the way, or if it’ll be left just a little ajar so some light comes in.”

“I wonder if the children know.”

“No, of course not.”

They sat and read the papers and talked and listened to some radio music and then sat together by the fireplace watching the charcoal embers as the clock struck ten-thirty and eleven and eleven thirty. They thought of all the other people in the world who had spent their evening, each in his own special way.

“Well,” he said at last.

He kissed his wife for a long time.

“We’ve been good for each other, anyway.”

“Do you want to cry?” he asked.

“I don’t think so.”

They moved through the house and turned out the lights and went into the bedroom and stood in the night cool darkness undressing and pushing back the covers. “The sheets are so clean and nice.”

“I’m tired.”

“We’re all tired.”

They got into bed and lay back.

“Just a moment,” she said.

He heard her get out of bed and go into the kitchen. A moment later, she returned. “I left the water running in the sink,” she said.

Something about this was so very funny that he had to laugh. She laughed with him, knowing what it was that she had done that was funny. They stopped laughing at last and lay in their cool night bed, their hands clasped, their heads together.

“Good night,” he said, after a moment.

“Good night,” she said.

The Illustrated Man by Ray Bradbury (1951).

APPENDIX D

Question	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5
1. Could you understand what the whole text was about?	More or less	Yes	Yes	Yes	More or less
2. Is it necessary for you to search immediately an unknown word when reading?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
3. If you were asked to give a synthesis about the reading, would you be able to do it?	No	Yes	More or less	Yes	More or less
4. Now that you answered the previous questionnaire, do you think learning vocabulary influences in English proficiency tests such as TOEFL?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Second part of the questionnaire					
5. Now, with the vocabulary given could you understand what the whole text was about?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
6. Do you think it would be good to get all the unknown vocabulary before reading a text?	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
7. Now that you have understood the text could you give a detailed synthesis of the reading?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	More or less
8. Do you think that reading different types of texts and using dictionaries will help you to improve your English proficiency?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

APPENDIX E
List of “unknown words”

Word	Definition
Poured (verb)	To make a substance flow from a container, especially into another container, by raising just one side of the container that the substance is in.
Parlor (noun)	A room in a private house used esp. for entertaining guests.
Rug (noun)	A piece of thick heavy cloth smaller than a carpet, used for covering the floor or for decoration.
Brewed (verb)	If you brew tea or coffee, you add boiling water to it to make a hot drink, and if it brews, it gradually develops flavor in the container in which it was made.
Warfare (noun)	The activity of fighting a war, often including the weapons and methods that are used.
Glanced (verb)	To give a quick short look.
Awhile (adverb)	For a short time.
Nodded (verb)	To move your head down and then up, sometimes several times, especially to show agreement, approval, or greeting, or to show something by doing this.
Fireplace (noun)	A space in the wall of a room for a fire to burn in, or the decorated part that surrounds this space.
Charcoal (noun)	A hard, black substance similar to coal that can be used as fuel or, in the form of sticks, as something to draw with.
Embers (noun)	A piece of wood or coal, etc. that continues to burn after a fire has no more flames.
Lay back (phrasal verb)	To move the top half of your body from a sitting to a lying position.
Sink (noun)	To (cause something or someone to) go down below the surface or to the bottom of a liquid or soft substance.
Lay in	To stay in bed later than usual in the morning.

**The listed words above were defined by the Dictionary of Cambridge University Press.*