MASTERARBEIT

Titel der Masterarbeit

"Vocabulary learning strategies – an evaluation of EFL vocabulary textbooks"

Verfasserin

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List of abbreviations

CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
COG – cognitive strategies
CPH – critical period hypothesis
DET – determination strategies
EFL – English as a foreign language
ESL – English as a second language
ESP – English for specific purposes
GSL – General Service List of English Words
LTM – long-term memory
MEM – memory strategies
MET – metacognitive strategies
MWU – multiword unit/s
PARSNIP – politics, alcohol, religion, sex, narcotics, isms, pork
PPP – presentation, practice, production
SOC – social strategies
STM – short-term memory
VLS – vocabulary learning strategy/ies
WM – working memory

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1. Introduction

Word learning is a fundamental building block in the acquisition of language.

(Gaskell, Ellis 2009: 3607)

1.1. Personal motivation

"How are languages learned?" This is the question I used to ask myself quite often and I still cannot say that I have an immediate answer to it. The same question was raised in the literature related to foreign language learning (Lightbown & Spada 2013; Tomlinson 2012: 270). Research has been abundant to try to give a straightforward answer to this question, the answer that would hold a key to the human mind and language learning in particular. Nevertheless, language learning, though being a universal phenomenon, is also individual and, as a result, still elusive and enigmatic. This universal individuality constitutes the paradoxical nature of language learning that cannot be fully explored at least for the time being but can only be approached in a way that would establish a balance between these two components: universality and individuality.

Over years, the above question has transformed in my head into "How are languages learned effectively?". Nobody would mind learning a few foreign languages quickly and effortlessly. The history holds examples of polyglots such as Giuseppe Mezzofanti (1774-1849), Heinrich Schliemann (1822-1890), Kató Lomb (1909-2003), etc., just to name a few. However, common sense tells me that such people are more an exception than the rule. The majority of people do not happen to learn foreign languages so easily. Therefore, they are likely to require help and guidelines either from a teacher and/or from a coursebook.

Obviously, a research topic of effective language learning is too broad to be discussed within the framework of a Master thesis. That is why, firstly, my attention is focused on the English language due to its widely-accepted status of a modern lingua franca. All over the world if the English language does not happen to be one's mother tongue, it should be learned as a second (ESL) or a foreign language (EFL). It is worth mentioning from the very beginning that within the framework of this Master thesis no distinction will be made between the terms *EFL* and *ESL* as it is deemed irrelevant for the current study. For the ease of reference the abbreviation EFL will be preferred over ESL. Another terminological borderline to be drawn is between native speakers for

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whom English is a mother tongue, i.e. L1, and learners of English as a foreign language who, in contrast, will be gathered under an umbrella of L2 (Carter & Nunan 2001: 87; Cook & Singleton 2014: xi). Cook and Singleton also pinned down a more "convenient" term *L2 user* for "somebody who is actively using a language other than their first" (Cook and Singleton 2014: 4). Since the focus of this thesis is vocabulary learning and teaching the preference should be given to the term L2 learner. The latter term shall be interchangeably used together with the term *English language learner* (Murray; Christison 2011: xii) or student. Secondly, I am particularly interested in adult education. The category is more of theoretical than of practical use here but it helps to exclude the category of children who tend to learn a new language implicitly, i.e. without conscious mental effort.

Furthermore, the interest lies in the sphere of English vocabulary learning/teaching with primary emphasis on the explicit/intentional approach. The choice was dictated by the fact that unlike grammar, which is claimed to be a closed system, vocabulary is considered to be an open system and, to be mastered, it is likely to require more effort and time from a learner. In other words, the question can be narrowed down to "How is vocabulary learned effectively?" (Hedge 2000: 111). It is tempting to think that there must be conscious ways to facilitate the effort of learning and to make this activity as effective as possible. It is assumed that there exist vocabulary learning techniques or strategies (VLS) that might help organize and speed up the process of vocabulary learning in general and of English vocabulary in particular.

The fact that the role of vocabulary should not be underestimated can be illustrated by a well-known axiom that communication between people is possible without sufficient grammar knowledge but it may be hindered or is unlikely to take place at all without sufficient vocabulary knowledge (Carter 1998: 185; Hedge 2000: 111; Lightbown & Spada 2013: 60; Wilkins 1972: 111). The same holds true for comprehension of written texts (Coady & Huckin: 1997: 20). This importance of vocabulary is another reason for choosing it over grammar as the subject of the research.

Nowadays the communicative approach to language teaching that has been on the rise since the 1970s is "supported" by the vocabulary-control movement which also regained popularity over the last 30 years through numerous publications. Moreover, there is one idea that unites most of the researchers in the area, namely that learners

should be made aware of vocabulary learning strategies (Oxford 2011a; Nation 2001; Schmitt 2000, etc.). Since the widespread use of the English language spurred by globalization demands a general increase in language proficiency and classroom learning can hardly cover this need in full, thus, learning that takes place outside classroom should also be taken into consideration. In this context autonomous learning should be promoted. To sum up, the role of English vocabulary cannot be underestimated, learning vocabulary of the English language is no longer limited to *what* to learn but also *how* to learn and, last but not least, *how* to learn it *effectively*.

A lot of publications on vocabulary learning and teaching have accumulated by now. However, some authors posit that "there is [...] a mismatch between some of the pedagogic procedures of current textbooks and what second language acquisition researchers have discovered about the process of learning a second or foreign language" (Tomlinson 1998: 265) and "[n]ot only are there few textbooks specifically devoted to vocabulary enlargement but of those that do exist few are derived from linguistically principled descriptions of the lexicon" (Carter 1998: 213). Hence, the research purpose is to juxtapose the outcomes of theoretical research on vocabulary learning and teaching (and on VLS in particular) against evidence of practical application (if any) of that research in EFL textbooks.

My attention will be directed to English vocabulary textbooks designed by the authors of some of those publications for adult (self-)learners and for teachers willing to use supplementary materials in addition to the main coursebook. As a result, another aspect of interest is to be investigated within the scope of this thesis, namely whether these materials are teacher- or learner-oriented, on the one hand, and whether they are appropriate for classroom use or promote self-study.

1.2. Thesis structure and research questions

The Master thesis consists of six chapters, starting with the introduction as its first chapter. The second chapter will outline theoretical background in relation to EFL vocabulary research. Its four sections will track the history of the vocabulary-control movement, clarify the term *vocabulary* and dwell upon its theoretical underpinnings such as possible classifications of vocabulary (general English, academic and technical).

The third chapter is devoted to EFL vocabulary learning and teaching. Likewise it consists of four sections and will develop the topic in detail and highlight psychological processes involved in vocabulary learning as well as reflect the division

of vocabulary learning and teaching into implicit/incidental vs. explicit/intentional. As mentioned, emphasis will be laid on explicit/intentional vocabulary learning and teaching. On top of that, proficiency levels, individual factors (language aptitude, motivation, linguistic background and age), vocabulary learning strategies and learner autonomy will be brought to light and discussed.

The fourth chapter provides a step-by-step description of the empirical part of the research bearing information about the source of data and justifying the choice of methodology and evaluation types. Consequently, the fifth chapter will describe the results with a subsequent discussion thereof. It will also specify limitations of the current research and offer suggestions for future research. The ambition behind this part of the study is to put under scrutiny vocabulary textbooks issued globally by different prominent publishers, such as Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press and Pearson Longman. The aim is to see which vocabulary and VLS are offered to the learner/teacher and are favoured in those materials. Finally, the sixth chapter will dwell on the conclusions to be drawn on the basis of the current research.

In sum, the aim of this Master thesis is to try to answer the following research questions:

1. Which vocabulary is presented in the vocabulary textbooks?

2. What vocabulary learning strategies are advised/favoured in the vocabulary textbooks?

3. To what extent is there a correlation between theoretical underpinnings of vocabulary learning and practical application of vocabulary learning strategies in the vocabulary textbooks?

4. Which role is given to repetition?

5. To what extent are these textbooks learner- or teacher-oriented?

2. EFL vocabulary and its theoretical underpinnings

The importance of vocabulary is highlighted by the oft-repeated observation that learners carry around dictionaries and not grammar book.

(Schmitt 2010: 4)

The second chapter deals with the notion of vocabulary and, above all, with the notion of the English vocabulary. After a brief historical overview of the vocabulary-control movement I will present possible working definitions of the term *vocabulary* as well as quantitative data about the size of the English vocabulary and possible classifications thereof.

2.1. History of vocabulary-control movement

It can hardly be denied that at the dawn of the 21st century the "rediscovery of vocabulary", as Meara (2002: 393) describes it, is in full swing in English applied linguistics. Indeed, vocabulary is no longer considered "a neglected aspect of language learning" (Meara 1980: 221) but instead has transformed into part and parcel of successful English language learning and teaching (Coady & Huckin 1997: 1). However, the word "rediscovery" hints at the fact that there have already been earlier attempts to handle vocabulary learning and teaching in its own right (Meara 2002: 406).

To be exact, the history of EFL vocabulary research can be traced back to Harold E. Palmer (1877-1949). For instance, Carter (1998: 206) calls Palmer "one of the founding fathers of English language teaching". Similarly, Stein (2008: 4) refers to Palmer as "the father of British applied linguistics". A teacher of English as a foreign language in Japan, Palmer was the first to raise questions about English vocabulary learning and teaching[1]. Yet, Palmer's ideas did not attract much attention among his contemporaries, which might be explained by the dominance of the grammar-translation method at that time (Davies & Pearse 2000: 188). The latter cherished grammar and ignored the aspect of vocabulary *per se*.

Of course, Palmer was not the only one to raise questions about vocabulary selection and teaching. Thus, there were earlier attempts to oppose the obsolete vocabulary taught within the grammar translation method paradigm but those

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[1] The summary can be found in his "Carnegie Report" compiled for the 1936 conference in New York. A comprehensive outline of the issues raised there can also be found in the article by Paul Meara (2002).

attempts were mainly based on intuition. In 1864 Thomas Prendergast in his manual *The Mastery of Languages, or, the Art of Speaking Foreign Tongues Idiomatically*, listed "the most common English words, based entirely on his intuitive judgement" (Coady & Huckin 1997: 7). Surprisingly enough, his judgements coincide with subsequent word lists compiled "on statistical measures" after the 1920s (Coady & Huckin 1997: 8).

Needless to say, the so-called vocabulary-control movement initiated by Palmer and aimed "to systemize the selection of vocabulary" (Schmitt 2000: 15) did not die out, its development in the middle of the 20th century was narrowed down to word lists. To be more specific, statistical word lists compilation was initiated already in 1929 by Charles Kay Ogden (1889-1957) who in that year published his list of *Basic English* (Ogden 1930 cf. Carter 1998: 23-28). The list comprised 850 words and was meant as a basis for "leading into general English" (Carter 1998: 25).

Still, one of the most prominent achievements of the English lexicometrics to date is Michael West (1888-1973)'s *General Service List of English Words* (GSL) published in 1953 (West 1953). The list comprises about 2000 word families and is based on a corpus of the written English language as "one of West's main aims [...] was to provide a list of pre-reading or simplified reading materials" (Carter 1998: 207). According to Carter (1998: 206), the word list is widely used today forming the basis of the principles underlying the *Longman Structural Readers* and of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (LDOCE, 1978). Some researchers, nonetheless, express concerns that Michael West's GSL is the result of studies carried out in the 1930s and requires reviewing (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 14-15). Even though the list is considered "outdated" nowadays (Carter 1998: 207), it has not lost its classical status nor has it been replaced by any other unanimously accepted list of general English remaining "one of the most innovative examples of foreign-language pedagogy and lexicometric research" (Carter 1998: 208) in the 20th century.

At the end of the 20th century there were further attempts to introduce English word lists such as Paul Nation's *University Word List* of 836 words published in 1984 (Xue & Nation 1984) and Averil Coxhead's *Academic Word List* (AWL) of 570 words published in 1998 (Coxhead 2000) to name the most prominent ones. None of them was aimed at replacing the GSL but rather concentrated on a particular vocabulary group, namely academic vocabulary. Moreover, Nation's list was designed as a supplement to the GSL and does not contain words from the GSL. To a certain extent, the word list boom can be explained by the ascent of English corpus linguistics assisted

by computers which allowed to process huge amounts of linguistic data. Corpus linguistics and word lists also influenced compilation of learner dictionaries which were based on the data obtained from corpora (Schmitt 2010: 15). In the 20th century the most influential of them were *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (*OALD* 1974), *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (*LDOCE* 1978), *Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary* (*CCED* 1987) and *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* (*CIDE* 1995). As a result of their popularity and widespread adoption differences were made between monolingual and bilingual dictionaries as well as between dictionaries for native speakers and non-native learners of English (Carter 1998: 151).

To sum up, English-language lexicography went through "a phase of considerable invention and innovation in the last three decades of the twentieth century" (Carter 1998: 180).

In applied linguistics it was not until the 1980s when the topic of vocabulary emerged and was no longer treated only as a word list issue but rather as an independent aspect worth learning and teaching separately. "The rediscovery of vocabulary" was prompted by such modern pioneers as Paul Meara and Paul Nation. The latter's book *Learning vocabulary in another language* (2001) can be considered as one of the most fundamental reading materials of its time as it consolidates in itself citations of about 600 articles and books. In his turn, Meara can be given credit for introducing the understanding of vocabulary as a network of interconnected elements rather than a linear list of items to be memorized. Related thereto is Meara's computer modelling attempts that strive to grasp the process of L2 vocabulary learning (e.g. the Birkbeck Vocabulary Project held in the 1980s, for more information about the project cf. Carter 1998: 197-202). What constitutes this network and how its elements might be connected with each other is a complicated issue to be approached later in this chapter.

To round off the brief historical overview of the vocabulary-control movement and of its landmarks, a few more prominent modern linguists in the area should be mentioned such as Norbert Schmitt, Michael McCarthy and John Read. The former researcher is known for his publications about English vocabulary and VLS. The second is most famous as the author of a series of vocabulary textbooks while the latter is well-known thanks to his research in vocabulary assessment but this aspect shall remain outside the scope of this paper. While this can hardly be called an exhaustive

account of all researchers and linguists working in the discipline, it should be seen as a reflection of the most conspicuous milestones[2] in the history of the vocabulary control movement.

2.2. What is vocabulary?

These days the importance of vocabulary for EFL learning is estimated so highly that some linguists place it above grammar (Nation 2001: 55). Moreover, there are claims that "language ability is to quite a large extent a function of vocabulary size" (Anderson 2005: 88 in Schmitt 2010: 5). Nonetheless, such statements should be treated with caution. Thus, Martin and Ellis (2012: 404) warn that even though there are "differences between L1 and L2, however, empirical research demonstrates the intimate interdependencies of lexis and grammar throughout language usage, both at the beginning and at later stages of learning". To put it another way, it should not be forgotten that vocabulary learning is only one of many others goals to be achieved in the process of language learning. Table 1 below shows the place of vocabulary learning in language learning seen generally. In the table vocabulary and strategies are marked in bold as they form the focus of this Master thesis.

Table 1 Goals for language learning (Nation 2001: 1)

General goals	Specific goals
Language items	Pronunciation
	Vocabulary [my emphasis]
	Grammatical constructions
Ideas (content)	Subject matter knowledge
	Cultural knowledge
Skills	Accuracy
	Fluency
	Strategies [my emphasis]
	Process skills or subskills
Text (discourse)	Conversational discourse rules
	Text schemata or topic type scales

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[2] Further reference can be made to the article "The bibliometrics of vocabulary acquisition" by Paul Meara (2012) that mirrors authorship trends in L2 vocabulary acquisition literature for the year 2006.

Before the idea of vocabulary size is developed further, I would like to pay attention to the fact that in order to distinguish vocabulary from grammar or other goals of EFL learning a working definition of vocabulary should be established. It is acknowledged that the division is artificial and is done for the research purposes only, in practice such notions as vocabulary and grammar are hardly separable as one is part and parcel of the other (Martin & Ellis 2012: 406). Nevertheless, the centre of attention in this paper is vocabulary and artificial borderlines should be drawn.

Surprisingly enough, virtually all literature I could find with the word *vocabulary* in its title fails to provide a fully-fledged definition of what the term *vocabulary* means. The only exception is the book by McCarthy (2010: 1) which opens up with a statement that "vocabulary is all about words". As a definition this seems quite superficial. The same holds true in relation to the mental lexicon which was labelled "as a storehouse, a library, an encyclopedia, and a computer" (Hedge 2000: 122).

Rather, most of the authors switch their attention to vocabulary size and discuss which units should be counted for this purpose. This is where the first obstacle is usually encountered. What should be counted: words, lemmas, word families, multi-word-units? To be able to proceed with the discussion of what vocabulary is and how it can be narrowed down, if possible, to a single definition, the above-mentioned terms will be clarified first.

I will start with the term *word.* For example, Schmitt (2010: 8) calls a word "a basic lexical unit". According to McCarthy, O'Keefee and Walsh (2010: 1), "a word represents one unit of meaning and, in writing, has a space either side of it". Carter (1998: 5) defines a word as "the minimum meaningful unit of language". However, *word* as a term seems insufficient and "defining it is far from straightforward" (Cook & Singleton 2014: 38), though quite convenient and widely spread for general reference. In this connection, corpus linguistics splits the notion of a word into two more terms, namely *token* and *type*. To clarify the distinction between the two terms Nation relates the former to the question "How long is this book?" while the latter can help to answer the question "How many words do you need to know to read this book?" (Nation 2001: 7). In other words, it is the term *type* that is most often replaced by the common term *word* in the literature on L2 vocabulary non-related to corpus linguistics.

The next term *lemma* can be defined as a headword together with its inflected and reduced forms provided that all of these items belong to the same part of speech

(Nation 2001: 7). For example, the lemma of the word *cat* will also include its plural form *cats* and possessive forms *cat's/cats'*.

Another frequently used term (especially in the sphere of dictionary compilation) is *word family*. Unlike *word* and *lemma*, a word family is a more capacious term and implies "a headword, its inflected forms, and its closely related derived forms" (Nation 2001: 8). It can be assumed that all of these items are not necessarily of the same part of speech. Thus, the afore-mentioned example will also include an adjective *catlike*. That is, it is common practice that modern monolingual dictionaries structure their entries around a single headword and its word family (Schmitt 2010: 9).

Consequently, there are five more terms that can be found in the literature on English vocabulary – *multiword unit (MWU), lexeme, lexical unit, collocation, formulaic expression, chunk*. Schmitt (2000: 1) suggests that all of them can be defined as "an item that functions as a single meaning unit, regardless of the number of words it contains". For instance, *to rain cats and dogs* can be an example of such an MWU. In his turn, Carter (1998: 51) defines the term *collocation* and classifies collocations as follows:

> Collocation is a term used to describe a group of words which occur repeatedly in a language. These patterns of co-occurrence can be ***grammatical*** [original emphasis] in that they result primarily from syntactic dependencies or they can be ***lexical*** [original emphasis] in that, although syntactic relationships are involved, the patterns result from the fact that in a given linguistic environment certain lexical items will co-occur.

The above terms are all related to the so-called *formulaic language* and, according to Moon (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 43-47), include compounds, phrasal verbs, idioms, fixed phrases and prefabs. Carter (1998: 66) also gathers all of them under the umbrella of "fixed expressions". Formulaic language is a relatively new area of English vocabulary research and is gaining popularity (cf. Schmitt 2010: 8-12). What is more, it adds complexity to vocabulary learning and teaching as "the mental lexicon is a good deal more interesting than simply a mental list of words" (Cook & Singleton 2014: 40). Whether modern EFL vocabulary textbooks reflect such complexity will be checked in the empirical part of this research.

In the light of the above at least three working definitions (instead of a single one) can be derived for the term *vocabulary:*

1) if applicable to a person, vocabulary is <u>a system of words and MWU</u> known by this person;

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2) if applicable to a language, vocabulary (or lexicon) is <u>a set of words/word families and MWU</u> available for use in the language;

3) if applicable to a dictionary, vocabulary is <u>a set of entries/word families</u> included in the dictionary.

To continue, the next section will deal with the English vocabulary size, and such notions as *vocabulary breadth* and *vocabulary depth*.

2.3. Vocabulary breadth and depth

To date, plenty of research has been done on the English vocabulary size. Below is a table based on estimates suggested by Schmitt (2000: 142; 2010: 6) for learner's English vocabulary size.

Table 2 Learner's English vocabulary size

Number of word families	Vocabulary size description
120	"survival list"
2000-3000	necessary for informal daily conversation (95% coverage)
6000-7000	necessary for informal daily conversation (98% coverage)
8000-9000	necessary to read authentic texts
16000-20000	expected of educated native speakers

As can be seen, the basic vocabulary size that allows communication amounts to 2000-3000 word families. This is what Nation calls "the threshold where they [learners] can start to learn from context" (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 11). The so-called "survival list" (Schmitt 2000: 142) can provide basis for very simple communication, presumably backed up by gestures. For a daily conversation the minimum of 6000 word families is required. To reach a native-like proficiency a learner is expected to know above 16 000 word families. It should not be forgotten that each word family contains a headword together with a few more derivatives and inflected forms. For learners of English that makes the task of vocabulary learning far from effortless.

Counts of all vocabulary in the English language vary drastically. The most cited example is Webster's *Third New International Dictionary* which consists of about 54 000 word families (Schmitt 2000: 3). Such counts are irrelevant for this research as neither native speakers nor learners can ever learn all words existing in the English

language. What should be borne in mind is that because the amount of vocabulary items is so large, vocabulary is usually considered to be an open system. Unfortunately, human memory is limited in its capacity (to be discussed in detail in the third chapter of this thesis) and, as a result, requires time and effort for this system to be mastered. Furthermore, another sore point is the fact that vocabulary tends to change over time (cf. McCarthy, O'Keefee & Walsh 2010: 113-124). Thus, EFL learners have to address a lot of challenges at a time.

In short, the above data provide insight into English *vocabulary breadth*, i.e. quantity. However, there is another term that should be equally dealt with in regards to vocabulary description, namely *vocabulary depth*, i.e. quality of knowledge. In this connection it is most illustrative to provide an overview of 9 aspects that constitute word knowledge as suggested by Nation (2001: 27).

Table 3 Aspects of word knowledge

Form	spoken	R*	What does the word sound like?
		P**	How is the word pronounced?
	written	R	What does the word look like?
		P	How is the word written and spelled?
	word parts	R	What parts are recognisable in this word?
		P	What word parts are needed to express the meaning?
Meaning	form and meaning	R	What meaning does this word form signal?
		P	What word form can be used to express this meaning?
	concepts and referents	R	What is included in the concept?
		P	What items can the concept refer to?
	associations	R	What other words does this make us think of?
		P	What other words could we use instead of this one?
Use	grammatical functions	R	In what patterns does the word occur?
		P	In what patterns must we use this word?
	collocations	R	What words or types of words occur with this

			one?
		P	What words or types of words must we use with this one?
	constraints on use	R	Where, when, and how often would we expect to meet this word?
	(register, frequency...)	P	Where, when, and how often can we use this word?

*R = receptive knowledge,

**P = productive knowledge

Table 3 reflects Nation's idea (2001: 4) that "learning a word is a cumulative process involving a range of aspects of knowledge". Vocabulary division into *receptive* and *productive* will be highlighted in the subsequent section. Alternative terms are *passive* vs. *active* (Hedge 2000: 116).

Carter and Nunan (2001: 43) sum up what knowledge of a word implies in the following way:

> There is a general measure of agreement that 'knowing' a word involves knowing: its spoken and written contexts of use; its patterns with words of related meaning as well as with its collocational partners; its syntactic, pragmatic and discoursal patterns. It means knowing it actively and productively as well as receptively.

Together with complexity of word knowledge Nation also introduces the term *learning burden* of a word which means "the amount of effort required to learn it" (Nation 2001: 23). In other words, some words are easier to learn than others depending on their characteristics. Moreover, Laufer claims (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 142-154) that there are factors that can affect word learnability such as

- pronounceability (phonemes, stress);
- orthography;
- length;
- morphology (inflectional and derivational complexity);
- synformy (similarity of lexical forms, e.g. cute/acute);
- grammar (part of speech);
- semantic features (abstractness, specificity/register restriction, idiomaticity, multiplicity of meaning).

Interestingly enough, "[i]n L2 learning ... words that are easy to imagine seem to be more readily learnable than words that are less easy to 'see' mentally; it is easier to remember the word *horse* than the word *generalise*." (Cook & Singleton 2014: 44)

Together with enormous amounts of vocabulary and its variation, numerous aspects of word knowledge make learning vocabulary one of the biggest challenges in L2 learning (Schmitt 2010: 8)**.** Hence, learning goals and priorities in vocabulary learning should be clearly set from the very beginning. Relevant textbooks should be chosen in accordance with those goals and priorities.

2.4. Classifying vocabulary

As mentioned above, this section starts with dividing vocabulary into *receptive* and *productive*, or, alternatively, into *passive* and *active*. There is no agreement on this division as definitions of those terms vary. Within the scope of this thesis these notions will be understood in line with definitions suggested by Nation, who claims that "receptive vocabulary use involves perceiving the form of a word while listening or reading and retrieving its meaning" (Nation 2001: 24-25). On the other hand, "productive vocabulary use involves wanting to express a meaning through speaking or writing and retrieving and producing the appropriate spoken or written word form" (Nation 2001: 25). He also duly mentions that it is receptive use that usually dominates in normal language learning (Nation 2001: 29). Predictably enough, a learner's productive vocabulary is expected to be smaller than his/her receptive vocabulary (Carter 1998: 213; Schmitt 2010: 21). Both Nation and Schmitt support the idea that word knowledge should be seen as "a knowledge scale" (Nation 2001: 30) or a continuum instead of a binary opposition known versus unknown or receptive versus productive as vocabulary leaning is "incremental" in its nature (Schmitt 2010: 20-21). It may be hypothesised that learners usually do not acquire all aspects during the first encounter. That is why, it is "most useful to see vocabulary knowledge as a scale running from recognition of a word at one end to automatic production at the other" (Hedge 2000:116).

The above classification takes into account **the degree of word knowledge** as the main criterion. Furthermore, there are other criteria that are commonly used in corpus linguistics and can provide basis for vocabulary classification in the English

language. First of all, in accordance with their **function** all words can be divided into grammatical and lexical words. Carter (1998: 8) sums it up as follows:

> The former comprises a small and finite class of words which includes pronouns (*I, you, me*), articles (*the, a*), auxiliary verbs (*must, could, shall*), prepositions (*in, on, with, by*) and conjunctions (*and, but*). **Grammatical words** [original emphasis] like this are also variously known as 'functional words', 'functors', 'empty words'. **Lexical words** [original emphasis], on the other hand – which are also variously known as 'full words' or 'content words' – include nouns (*man, cat*), adjectives (*large, beautiful*), verbs (*find, wish*) and adverbs (*brightly, luckily*). They carry a higher information content and, as we have seen, are syntactically structured by the grammatical words. Also, while there are a finite number of grammatical words, there is potentially unlimited number of lexical words.

Secondly, in terms of **visualisation** words of a language can be either *concrete* or *abstract*. As it was already mentioned before concrete words are easier to learn while abstract words may be more "difficult". (Carter 1998: 192)

Thirdly, it is a widely-accepted fact that **frequency** is another important criterion whose application results in the split of the English lexicon into

- high-frequency words and
- low-frequency words.

If the **sphere of use** of the above two groups (as an extra criterion) is taken into consideration, they can be consequently subdivided into

- general English words,
- academic words/sub-technical words,
- technical words/specialised vocabulary (cf. Nation 2001: 11- 22).

As it can be inferred from the terms, *high-frequency words* are words that are met/appear very frequently in the English language while *low-frequency words* tend to have lower frequency of use. The boundary here cannot be drawn with precision and is rather arbitrary as personal vocabularies can be very individual depending on a person's life situation. According to some estimates, "the distinction can be most usefully made somewhere between the most frequent 1500 words and the most frequent 7000 words." (Coady & Huckin 1997: 239) Nevertheless, the necessity to establish a *basic core vocabulary/ies* "for initial language learning purposes" is of real importance (Carter 1998: 35). One of such attempts to provide a list of high-frequency words is the previously discussed General Service List. However, it should be remembered that, though taking into consideration more than one criterion, the list

is primarily based on written texts. In this respect Schmitt (2010: 14), for instance, expresses his concern that frequencies of words are not identical in speech and print.

High-frequency words constitute what can also be called *general English*. Plus, it comes as no surprise that among high-frequency words there are many grammatical words (Schmitt 2010: 14). It is generally assumed that for communication in everyday life 2000 words must suffice (cf. table 2). This amount is also called "the core, or survival level" (McCarthy, O'Keefee & Walsh 2010: 11), though a more extreme point of view has it that the lexicon of 120 words is sufficient to form "survival vocabulary" (Schmitt 2000: 142).

The group of general English is followed by the group of *academic words*. The latter are interdisciplinary words and are "common to a wide range of academic texts" (Nation 2001: 189). As for *technical words* that constitute the third group in the above classification they can otherwise be called specialised vocabulary. Usually these are low-frequency words as they are used in specific spheres of life (e.g. *linguistics*). Technical words are expected to be acquired after "the 2000-3000 words of general usefulness in English" have been mastered (Nation 2001: 187). Of course, depending on a concrete learning goal this sequence of vocabulary acquisition can be changed and adjusted to the learner's needs so that technical terms, for example, are learned in parallel with general English but the latter case is more an exception than the rule and is part of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses.

For learning and teaching purposes, another term should be introduced here, namely *target vocabulary*, i.e. words that should be learned at a particular stage of the learning process in compliance with learning goals. At initial stages learners' target vocabulary usually includes only high-frequency words with a subsequent move to low-frequency words as well as to multiple meanings of high-frequency words. Overall ,the general recommendation is that "high-frequency words are so important that anything that teachers and learners can do to make sure they are learned is worth doing" (Nation 2001: 16). Accumulation of high-frequency vocabulary is claimed to be related to reading and to result in better reading comprehension (Coady & Huckin 1997: 20-21). As for low-frequency words, which in some situations can be part of the target vocabulary, "[t]he teacher's aim is to train learners in the use of strategies to deal with such vocabulary" (Nation 2001: 20). This statement brings us closer to the discussion of vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) which are to be paid particular

attention in the next chapter of this paper dealing with EFL vocabulary learning and teaching.

It is worth mentioning here that the above classifications do not embrace lexical collocations, which again points to the fact that they are a challenge for linguistic research. It can be explained by the fact that quantitative data accumulated on MWU is "less advanced than data on simple units" (Coady & Huckin 1997: 160). Some parameters (e.g. degree of fixedness, syntactic nature, etc.) are difficult to unite. But importance of MWU for language teaching and learning, according to Tomlinson (1998: 33) can hardly be underestimated:

> When even very good learners of the language speak or write English, the effect is often slightly odd. There is something that is obviously wrong, but somehow native speakers know that they would not express themselves in quite that way. The problem is often one of collocations – the words which are frequently used together.

According to Sinclair (1991: 110-115), the structural patterning of lexis is based on two principles: "the open choice principle" and "the idiom principle". The names speak for themselves, thus, separate words that we have classified above are not sufficient to reflect the vocabulary system of a language as there is another group of lexical units which should be accounted for – collocations.

For example, there is one classification of MWU, proposed by Lewis (Coady & Huckin 1997: 255-256), which reflects four types thereof, namely
- word/ polywords (e.g. *Stop, Sure! By the way*)
- collocations (e.g. *to raise capital, a short-term strategy*)
- institutionalised utterances (e.g. *If I were you, We'll see*)
- sentence frames or heads (e.g. *firstly, secondly, finally*).

Within the scope of this paper the terms *MWU* and *collocation* can be used interchangeably as, though possible, no difference will be distinguished between them.

3. EFL vocabulary learning and teaching

Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day.

Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.

(Chinese proverb)

Before I fully dedicate my thoughts to VLS which are central to this research a few more terms deserve attention in this chapter to ensure thorough understanding of vocabulary acquisition mechanisms. That is why, the first three sections of this chapter will cover various issues closely related to vocabulary acquisition, such as psychological processes (noticing, retrieval, creative use) involved in language learning; fundamental role of repetition; types of learning (incidental vs. intentional); language proficiency levels as specified by the European Council and, finally, individual factors (e.g. age, motivation, linguistic background, etc.) all of which might interfere with vocabulary learning and teaching. In the end, "[e]very teaching/learning situation is a unique combination of context and personality" (Cunningsworth 1986: 55) and, ironically, "it is still far from clear how learners acquire vocabulary or how it can best be taught [...] and there is no way to predict which words will be learned, when, nor to what degree" (Coady & Huckin 1997: 174).

3.1. Psychology of vocabulary learning

"When you have one language already in mind, what happens when you acquire another?" (Cook & Singleton 2014: 2). In other words, do different aspects of L1 and L2 influence each other, for instance, vocabulary?

According to Schmitt (2010: 97), "there is currently no overall theory of vocabulary acquisition"[3] and the general vector of the current research can be summed up by the word "complexity" (Carter & Nunan 2001: 91). On the one hand, such imperfection can be partially explained by the numerous aspects of word knowledge that should be taken into consideration (cf. table 3). On the other hand, there is another reason that accounts for such incompleteness, namely the human mind itself as "the mind is not a machine that we can easily open up to see how it works" (McCarthy 2010: 101). Likewise the theory of vocabulary acquisition which is dependent on the theory

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[3] Within the scope of this Master thesis the terms *vocabulary acquisition* and *vocabulary learning* are used interchangeably.

of brain functioning is far from its finalisation and completeness (Gaskell & Ellis 2009: 3613). Thus, there exist only general guidelines regarding brain dynamics as will be outlined below that can be given to learners and teachers to help to ease the burden of language learning and teaching. Such burden cannot be denied as "novel language learning entails a reorganization of the language processing system to adapt to the new language's rules of grammar and phonotactics, and to the new vocabulary" (Altarriba & Isurin 2013: 32).

The first association that comes to mind in relation to vocabulary learning is likely to be the notion of *memory* as learners are expected to remember a lot of new words whose naming nature is arbitrary (Cook & Singleton 2014: 7-8). The classic division is usually drawn between *short-term memory (STM)* and *long-term memory (LTM)*. The former is also labelled as *working memory (WM),* which is a more recent term. The choice of a new term was dictated by the desire to underline that "its role went beyond simple storage, allowing it to play an important role in cognition" (Baddeley 2010: 138). To be exact, WM is considered to be "the system or systems that are assumed to be necessary in order to keep things in mind while performing complex tasks such as reasoning, comprehension and learning" (Baddeley 2010: 136). In other words, WM is deemed to be involved in the process of foreign language vocabulary learning (Baddeley 2010: 139) and this is where the agreement in relation to memory functioning seems to end.

The absence of agreement on memory dynamics can be demonstrated, for instance, through the fact that two theories on WM functioning are presently in use. One is Alan Baddeley's theory, which is also called a multiple-store model. His theory holds that there are "distinct neural components for the two systems" (Altarriba & Isurin 2013: 11). In contrast, the other theory, namely Cowan's unitary store-model, suggests that "STM represents the reactivation of LTM representations, concluding that both systems rely on the same underlying neural architecture" (Altarriba & Isurin 2013: 11).

Irrespective of the different views on the memory architecture, both approaches find common ground in the fact that, first, there is a functional division into WM and LTM (Altarriba & Isurin 2013: 9), second, that the WM feeds vast LTM (the only question is how) (Baddeley 2010: 140) and, third, that **working memory has limited capacity** [my emphasis] (Baddeley 2010: 137). The phenomenon of WM limited

capacity is crucial for vocabulary learning as it is in the WM where encounters with lexical units are processed (Randall 2007: 15-16).

Figure 1 schematically represents an information processing framework. Verbal material to be learned is repeated in WM phonological loop which is considered to be "the principle route by which new material is learnt" (Randall 2007: 126). In accordance with the Power Law of Practice (the more repetitions there are, the better is the retention) repetition plays "the central role played [...] in learning verbal material" (Randall 2007: 127).

Phonological loop

rehearsal

| Language phrase to be learnt | **Sensory register** | selected attention | **Working memory** | coded and stored | **Long term memory** |

forgotten
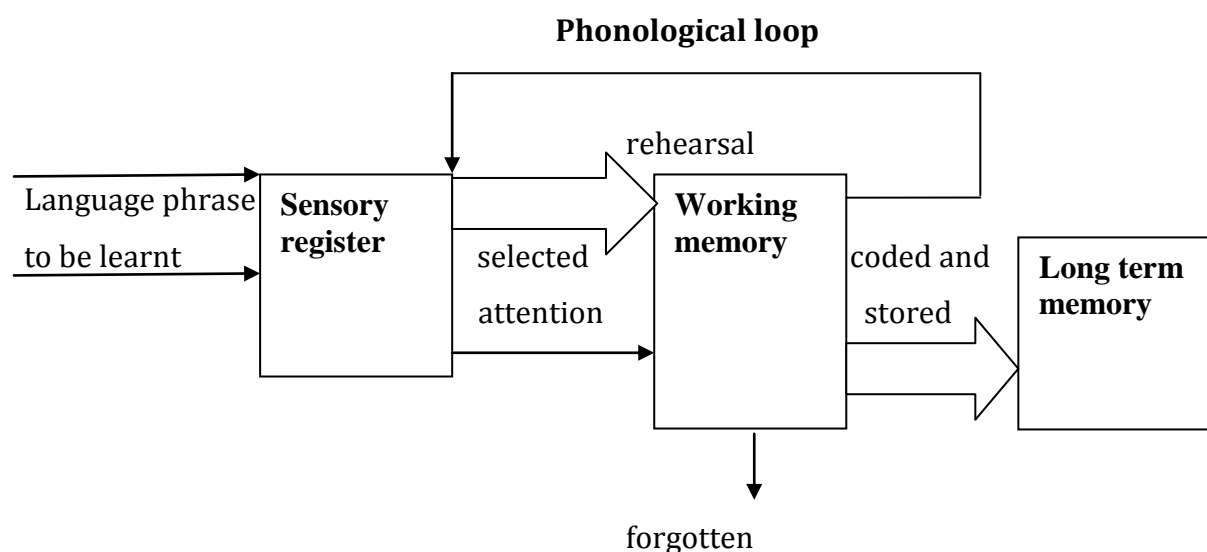
Figure 1 Model of how material can be learnt using the phonological loop in WM (Randall 2007: 126)

"Vocabulary acquisition is not a tidy linear affair, with only incremental advancement and no backsliding" (Schmitt 2010: 23) and "learning a word is a cumulative process" (Nation 2001: 81), that is why, it is necessary to gear it up with sufficient repetition/rehearsal. A word cannot be learned at the first encounter, further steps are to be made on the way of word knowledge consolidation (Nation 2001: 296) It is common knowledge that **repetitio est mater studiorum** [my emphasis] [Lat. repetition is the mother of studies] (Lomb 2008: 59). As shown above, rehearsal, or recycling, is "the principle route to storage in the LTM" (Randall 2007: 169). But in case of transfer to LTM the information is not immediately available and requires numerous retrievals (Ellis 1990: 176; Cook & Singleton 2014: 45). Such retrievals would strengthen neuron connections and prompt automatization of memory nodes. The latter is necessary due to WM limited capacity which should be freed in this way to make sure that new information could be processed (Ellis 1990: 176).

But mere repetition is not the only key to successful vocabulary learning. Randall (2007: 171) claims that "the difference between effective and less effective use of repetition would appear to lie in the depth of processing". The term *depth of processing*, coined by Craik and Lockhart (1972), means that "the chance of some piece of new information being stored into long-term memory is not determined by the length of time that it is held in short-term memory but rather by the shallowness or depth with which it is initially processed" (Hulstjin & Laufer 2001: 540). Moreover, it is important to pay attention to a variety of features together with a large amount of rehearsals, i.e. *sufficient practice.* In case rehearsals are few and practice is scarce such use of repetition can be deemed insufficient and, as a result, less efficient, as the material to be remembered will be stored temporarily and subsequently forgotten (Randall 2007: 169).

It is claimed that *spaced repetition* is an excellent solution for information to be remembered, with the minimum amount of ten repetitions for each new word encountered during reading (Coady & Huckin 1997: 176). However, caution should be taken in terms of time span. Thus, if the interval between the first encounter and a subsequent repetition of a word is too long (over a month), the meeting with this word can be considered as the first encounter (Nation 2001: 67).

While further subdivision of WM is outside the scope of this paper, what is important to remember is that vocabulary learning is dependent on the limited capacity of the WM. The minimum length is supposed to constitute "seven items at a time" (Miller 1956: 133). According to Miller, "it is length, not variety, that imposes major restrictions upon immediate memory" (Miller 1956: 132). To introduce and clarify his notion of "chunking", Miller (1956: 131) provides the following comparison:

> It is economical to organize the material into rich chunks. To draw a rather farfetched analogy, it is as if we had to carry all our money in a purse that could contain only seven coins. It does not matter to the purse, however, whether these coins are pennies or silver dollars. The process of organizing and reorganizing is a pervasive human trait, and it is motivated, at least in part, by an attempt to make the best possible use of our mnemonic capacity.

To sum up, input should be recoded and reorganized into enriched chunks. Such regrouping Miller also calls "unitization" (Miller 1956: 133). Later estimates provide a more modest upper limit of 3-4 chunks at a time (Altarriba & Isurin 2013: 12; Baddeley 2010: 139).

Another point that should be kept in mind is that the research shows that about half of discourse consists of formulaic language (Schmitt 2010: 9-10). From the psychological perspective it can be explained by the fact that prefabricated phrases "are stored as single wholes and are, as such, instantly available for use without the cognitive load of having to assemble them on-line as one speaks" (Schmitt 2010: 11), thus, compensating for the limited capacity of WM. That is, learners should be exposed not only to words but also to frequently-used phrases or MWU which are richer in content if compared to single words, but occupy the same "slot". Unfortunately, research on acquisition of collocations is scarce (Sonbul & Schmitt: 2013: 126).

The aspect of memorization is only one of a few components of language aptitude. The latter term shall be defined and explained in detail in the following section. What should be repeated is that the necessity to cope with a significant amount of words, especially at the beginning, is the main challenge for all EFL learners (Nation 2001: 44). Moreover, these words are not isolated items, they are thought to belong to a system of interconnected networks and "existence of some kind of hierarchical organization in all languages must not be ignored" (Miller 1956: 134). These relations can be of two types syntagmatic - those of collocability, and paradigmatic - those of synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy (Hedge 2000: 114-115). All words that tend to collocate with a certain word form a *cluster* of this word. A few clusters form a *lexical set*, lexical sets can be gather under an umbrella of one *topic* (Carter 1998: 52-53). The latter is a common organizing element of textbooks.

Computer modelling attempts to build a person's lexicon demonstrate that a person's vocabulary is not just a set of words permanently stored in a human mind as defined at the beginning of this paper but is rather a system of networks. Meara (Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997: 118-119) describes a vocabulary network as follows:

> An acquisition event consists of the building a connection between a newly encountered word, and a word that already exists in the learner's lexicon. This connection might be a link between the new L2 word and its L1 translation equivalent, or it might be a link between the new L2 word and an already known L2 word. Unknown words are words that have no connections of any kind to the learner's lexicon. Known words are words that are connected, but the number of these connections may vary. [...] Poorly-known words are words with few connections, while better-known words are simply words with many connections. On this model, any word which is encountered frequently enough will, in time, develop a rich set of connections with other words.

Connections can be built through three stages of information processing, namely noticing, retrieval and creative (generative) use. As mentioned, repeated retrieval (i.e. repetition) can make connections stronger, and vice versa insufficient amount of repetition results in fewer/weaker connections or their disappearance. According to Schmitt (2000: 129), receptive vocabulary unlike the productive one is the first to be forgotten. In the context of foreign language learning the latter phenomenon is called *attrition*. It is a very interesting topic in itself (cf. Meara 2004) but lies outside the scope of this research. Instead we shall look closer at the three above-mentioned processes that "lead to a word being remembered" (Nation 2001: 63).

Noticing, which requires motivation and interest as important factors, means that learners pay attention to a word and consider it as a useful item to be remembered. Noticing takes place when learners, for example, try to figure out the meaning of a word by means of a context or a dictionary. The same holds true when an explanation is provided to them in relation to that word (Nation 2001: 63).

Retrieval, which is the second process that might ensure remembering of a word, takes place "if that word is subsequently retrieved during the task" (Nation 2001: 67), i.e. connections will be established and, if repeated, they will become stronger making later retrieval easier. It is important to mention that retrieval does not take place if learners are given the form and its meaning at the same time.

Finally, the term *creative (generative) use* should be introduced as the third major process. Nation (2001: 68) suggests that "generative processing occurs when previously met words are subsequently met or used in ways that differ from the previous meeting with the word". Moreover, just like vocabulary, generation can be split into receptive and productive where "productive recall is more difficult than receptive because there are many competing paths to choose from, and the ones within the L1 lexical system are likely to be stronger" (Nation 2001: 29).

While psychologists, neurologists and linguists are trying to decipher the "memory code" and to answer the question "What does it mean to know a word?", teachers and learners can only try to check the validity of those claims by applying them to real language teaching and learning situations. From general theories on universal brain functioning I would like to switch my attention to individual differences that should also be taken into consideration when it comes to EFL vocabulary learning and teaching.

3.2. Vocabulary learning, individual factors and proficiency levels

Since the 1980s "the area of individualization" (Skehan 1989: 39) has been actively developed and attracted considerable interest. Burns and Richards (2012: 8) posit that "[l]anguage learning is not necessarily a direct consequence of good teaching but depends on understanding the different ways in which learners learn, the role of individual learning styles, motivations, backgrounds, and purposes in learning". In other words, universality of brain functioning does not result in the fact that all human beings, though conformable to each other, are identical. It is then and there where individual factors come into play and make each person special in his/her way. Psychological, linguistic and social factors that are deemed important and that should be taken into consideration during EFL vocabulary learning and teaching are as follows:

- language aptitude,
- motivation and attitudes,
- linguistic background,
- proficiency level,
- age and linguistic-cultural identity.

The first factor to be discussed is **language aptitude**. According to Carroll (Skehan 1989: 26-27), the standard components of it are thought to be phonemic coding ability, grammatical sensitivity, inductive language learning ability and rote learning activity for foreign language materials (or good memory). *A phonemic coding ability* is an ability to "code foreign sounds in such a way that they could be recalled later" and even more important, "the ability to impose some sort of analysis on the unfamiliar foreign sounds and also the ability to transform the sound into a form more amenable to storage" (Skehan 1989: 26-27). *Grammatical sensitivity* is "the ability to recognize the grammatical functions the words fulfil in sentences" (Skehan 1989: 27). The third component can be defined as an ability "to infer from limited evidence" and to spot relationships between syntactic form or meaning (Skehan 1989: 27). The second and third components are closely related to each other and will be treated as one category, namely language analytic ability (cf. table 4). And, finally, the forth component, which lay people would call good memory, presumes "the bonding [...] of connections between stimuli (native language words), and responses (target language words)" (Skehan 1989: 27). Such ability differs from person to person, as a result, people "vary in speed of vocabulary growth" (Skehan 1989: 27).

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In this connection Skehan (1989: 35) suggests a division of language learners into eight types as presented in table 4 below.

Table 4 Learner types

	Phonemic coding ability	**Language analytic ability**	**Memory**	
1	+	+	+	General, even high aptitude
2	+	+	-	Good auditory and analytic ability, poor memory
3	+	-	+	Good auditory and memory abilities; poor analysis
4	+	-	-	Good auditory ability; poor otherwise
5	-	+	+	Poor auditory; good analysis and memory
6	-	+	-	Poor auditory and memory; good analysis
7	-	-	+	Poor auditory and analysis; good memory
8	-	-	-	Evenly poor aptitude

In terms of teaching implications such differentiation might help to ensure more diversified teaching aimed at "capitalizing upon strengths and compensating for weaknesses" (Skehan 1989: 35). To put it another way, for different learners different types of instruction can be more effective (Skehan 1989: 39-40). Yet, many phrases are not created every day anew, instead, most of them are used ready-made. In this connection, as any language consists of numerous such phrases, formulaic language should be well taken care of and, consequently, the memory component is then thought to be the most important (Skehan 1989: 41).

Further complexity of vocabulary acquisition is built up by other variables such as ***motivation and attitudes,*** which are seen as important in any learning context (Cook & Singleton 2014: 91). It is common knowledge that feeling positive about an

activity or an experience is likely to result in continuation. However, "[m]otivation goes beyond having good feelings about a task, and needs to be seen as whatever actually spurs a person on to 'do the job' " (Cook & Singleton 2014: 90).

Gardner (1985) proposes the following equation for motivation:

MOTIVATION= Effort + Desire to achieve a goal + Attitudes

Figure 2 Motivation equation

He defines motivation as "the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (Cook & Singleton 2014: 91). Besides motivation, Gardner includes into his theory two more variables, those of attitudes and integrativeness. In his opinion, they distinguish motivated learners from unmotivated. However, "of the above three variables, the crucial factor for achievement in L2 acquisition is the third – motivation – while the role of the other two is supportive" (Cook & Singleton 2014: 97). The limited scope of this paper prevents from also discussing motivation types (cf. Cook & Singleton 2014: 95-100).

It goes without saying that not only students but also teachers are expected to be motivated and enthusiastic about the learning process. As in accordance with the phenomenon of *emotional contagion*, "the intentional behaviour of a teacher to be enthusiastic can raise the level of enthusiasm and vitality of students." (Mitchell 2013: 20)

To sum up, Cunningsworth's (1986: 59) words may be quoted:

> Motivation is arguably the most important single factor in success or failure at language learning. A well-motivated student badly taught will probably do better than a poorly-motivated student well taught. Motivation determines the student's level of attention during class, and the assidity with which he does his homework and revises what has been taught during the day. It certainly has a deep influence on the effectiveness of learning.

In terms of **_linguistic background_** learners can also vary. Some can be monolingual, some are bilingual, others are multilingual. First of all, the role of L1 (learner's mother tongue) is of crucial importance. According to Cook and Singleton (2014: 8) for many it is not easy "to break the shackles of our first language". There is some evidence that at the initial stage of learning, L2 vocabulary system is built with the help of the conceptual system of the L1, "even if the first and second language are totally unrelated" (Cook & Singleton 2014: 43). Nevertheless, "as second language proficiency increases, the dependency of second language lexical knowledge on the

first language lexical knowledge diminishes and the autonomy of the second language lexical knowledge increases." (Cook & Singleton 2014: 50). Schematically, this can be reflected as "an integration continuum" (Cook & Singleton 2014: 13) shown in Figure 2.

separation   interconnection   integration
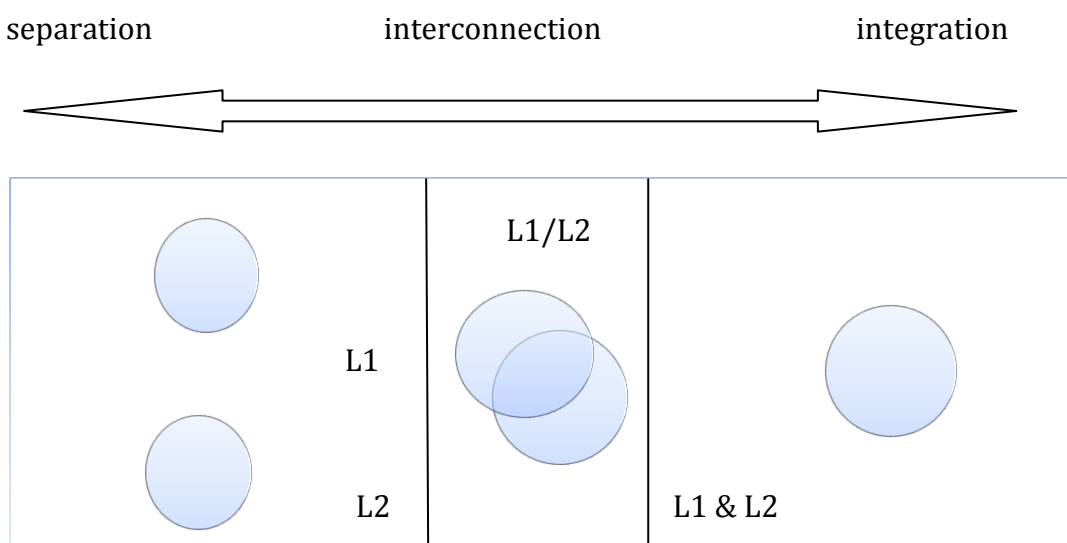
Figure 3 Integration continuum of relationships between two languages in one mind

As seen above, there are two poles from total separation to total integration. The continuum works in both directions. At different proficiency levels learners can be placed at different places of the continuum (Cook & Singleton 2014: 13). Furthermore, Cook and Singleton (2014: 14) are convinced of the following:

> When you learn another language, the result may not be the merger of two languages but something new – if you merge hydrogen and oxygen you get water. If you merge a first language and a second, you get something new, which is identical to neither the first nor the second language.

Typological proximity of one's mother tongue to the English language can be advantageous as "L1 orthography has a long-lasting impact on L2 processing" (Coady & Huckin 1997: 43). The same holds true if the learner has knowledge of other foreign languages, i.e. he/she is multilingual. It is well-known that the most difficult is to learn L2, but starting from L3 the process of foreign language learning is easier due to "a better feel for language in general" (Cook, Singleton 2014: 7). However, typological proximity has both its advantages and disadvantages. Thus, in case the languages that a multilingual learner already speaks are typologically very similar and none of them is his/her mother tongue, it may result in such a phenomenon as *interference/crosslinguistic influence/transfer* which is defined as "the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired" (Odlin 1989: 27). In this case together with the challenge of learning a new language "the learner

must be able to mitigate interference from more strongly represented proficient languages, and increasing processing demands" (Altarriba & Isurin 2013: 32). What is meant by more strongly represented proficient languages is the fact that learners can be at different levels of proficiency for different languages they know. In this respect another factor should be mentioned, namely **proficiency levels**.

To begin, the concept of proficiency is rather vague. According to Murray and Christison (2011: 197), "[l]anguage proficiency is clearly a scale along different dimensions of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing". Consequently, there are different scales of measurement. The most widely accepted tool of such measurement in Europe was developed by the Council of Europe and is called the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The framework presents and describes common reference levels of *language proficiency,* which Ellis (1990: 175) also defines as "the ability to use their [learners'] L2 knowledge". Table 4 reflects the hierarchy consisting of six levels where level A1 is considered to be the lowest while C2 is the highest on the scale.

Table 5 Common Reference Levels (Council of Europe 2001: 24, 30)

CEFR level	Description	Comment
A1	Breakthrough	Basic user
A2	Waystage	Basic user
B1	Threshold	Independent user
B2	Vantage	Independent user
C1	Effective operational proficiency	Proficient user
C2	Mastery	Proficient user

Quite often, there is further subdivision of these levels into sublevels, such as A2.1 and A2.2. Such subdivision will be left outside the scope of this research as most UK-publishers opt for the general levels specified above.

Interplay of psychological and linguistic variables can hardly be ignored if one strives to grasp the process of language learning. Another criterion that will be dwelled upon in this section is **age** and related to it linguistico-cultural identity. The role of the age factor cannot be underestimated in language learning and teaching (Cook & Singleton 2014: 18). At least three age groups can be outlined as presented in table 6.

Table 6 Age groups (Cook & Singleton 2014: 22)

Age group	Age	Linguistico-cultural identity
Young learners (children)	2-12 years old	not yet fully formed
Adolescents (teenagers)	13-19 years old	on the way to being fully formed
Adults[4]	20 years old and onwards	fully formed

The table shows that there is another factor closely related to that of age, namely of **language identity**, which is thought not to be established before the age of 12. In other words, before that age people "are still open to change and to their inevitably frequent contact with members of the host community than to biological maturation as such" (Cook & Singleton 20144: 23). Some authors suggest more detailed classifications that comprise additional factors such as social aspects. My focus here is on the age category *per se* rather than on related social implications as no particular situation is held in mind within the scope of this study.

The most frequently encountered notion in relation to the age factor is the *Critical Period Hypothesis* (CPH) associated originally with Eric Lenneberg's suggestion that "normal L1 acquisition ceases in the early teens" (Cook & Singleton 2014: 33). In relation to early foreign language learning (before the age of puberty), "the CPH claims L2 learners past a certain age do not achieve 'native-like' competence, need to work harder and use different types of learning" (Cook & Singleton 2014: 33). In other words, it is a common opinion that "younger = better" (Cook & Singleton 20144: 18) and many European countries included EFL into the primary-level syllabus (Cook & Singleton 2014: 31). However, "younger = better" is only a tendency and not the ultimate truth in its own and should be interpreted with caution depending on which conditions are implied: naturalistic or instructional settings (Cook & Singleton 2014: 21).

In case of naturalistic L2 acquisition "adolescent and adult subjects may have an

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[4] Characteristics that make adults different from young leaners can be found in Murray & Christison 2011: 136.

initial advantage" but "in the long run younger beginners are more likely to attain very high levels of proficiency" (Cook & Singleton 2014: 28). In case of instructional settings a different pattern was discovered: given the same amount of instruction, adults outperformed children. In sum, Cook and Singleton (2014: 30) admit as follows:

> While young children may be superior to older learners at implicit learning, implicit learning requires massive amounts of input that a typical foreign language setting does not provide; and that in regard to older learners, these seem to be superior to young children at explicit learning for which the classroom setting provides many opportunities.

Needless to say, adults tend to have problems coping with pronunciation or memorization but these are not "insuperable obstacles to progress", thus, age is considered to be no excuse in this sense (Cook & Singleton 2014: 19) and "given motivation and perseverance, good results in second language learning can in fact be achieved at any age" (Cook & Singleton 2014: 33). Returning to CPH, some criticism should be mentioned as more recent research holds it that decline in learning capacity does not stop at a certain age but instead is a continuous, gradual and linear process which is not in line with the CPH (Cook & Singleton 2014: 29).

Having enumerated the individual factors that might interfere with vocabulary learning and teaching, it is high time to pay some attention to the traditional split of vocabulary learning and teaching into implicit vs. explicit as well as into incidental vs. intentional.

3.3. Implicit/incidental vs. explicit/intentional vocabulary learning and teaching

According to Tomlinson (1998: 4), "[l]anguage learning can be explicit (i.e. the learners are aware of when and what they are learning) or it can be implicit (i.e. the learners are not aware of when and what they are learning)". To begin with the implicit/explicit distinction in vocabulary learning four hypotheses identified by Ellis (1995 quoted in Carter 1998: 203) are placed on a continuum:

> 1. A strong implicit learning hypothesis holds that words are acquired largely by unconscious means.
> 2. A weak implicit learning hypothesis holds that words cannot be learned without at least some noticing or consciousness that it is a new word which is being learned.
> 3. A weak explicit learning hypothesis holds that learners are basically active processors of information and that a range of **strategies** [my emphasis] are

used to infer the meaning of a word, usually with reference to the context in which it appears.

4. A strong explicit learning hypothesis holds that a range of **metacognitive strategies** [my emphasis] are necessary for vocabulary learning. In particular, the greater the depth of processing involved in learning, the more secure and long term the learning is likely to be." In other words, the more connections between the new words and the learner's lexicon are established.

In the light of the above, it seems plausible to assume that the first hypothesis is more likely to be appropriate to L1/L2 learning in childhood. The second and the third positions can be regarded as the golden mean as the former presupposes paying attention to the lexical unit to be learned while the latter is advantageous with its use of strategies that are expected to facilitate and boost up vocabulary learning. The fourth hypothesis which takes the use of strategies to an extreme is likely to be handy only for advanced language learners familiar with language (self-)learning and teaching as "[t]he better students become at a language, the more conscious they need to be of its patterns and uses" (Tomlinson 1998: 42). At the same time beyond a certain level of proficiency vocabulary development is mainly implicit or incidental (Carter 1998: 202). Co-occurrence of the words "conscious" and "implicit" in relation to advanced language learners sounds paradoxical. I will try to explain it.

On the one hand, the importance of implicit vocabulary learning cannot be denied as we are usually not taught all words explicitly. On the other hand, "that does not automatically entail that we have not taught ourselves" (Carter 1998: 203). It is no secret that advanced learners enlarge their vocabulary through extensive reading. The question that arises here is whether "instructional intervention could support the process and make it more directed and efficient" (Coady & Huckin 1997: 174). As reading implies guessing unknown words in context, chances are high that it will be a slow error-prone process which does not always lead to long-term retention (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 237-238). Thus, questions in relation to incidental vocabulary learning are still abundant (Cook & Singleton 2014: 49). Nonetheless, the general advice is "*not to replace* [original emphasis] incidental learning by intentional learning, *but to follow up* on incidental learning with intentional learning" (Hulstijn, Hollander & Greidanus 1996: 337).

No matter how much the line is drawn between the terms implicit and explicit, "they are related" (Randall 2007: 163). In other words, they can be considered more complementary than competing. Moreover, Sonbul and Schmitt (2010: 253) confirm

that "[i]n practice, teachers of English in many foreign language contexts combine explicit and incidental approaches, and with good reason, as research has shown that this combination is effective" as through explicit teaching acquisition is speeded "by making the underlying patterns more salient" (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 133). Sökmen (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 239) nicely sums up the current vector as follows:

> The pendulum has swung from direct teaching of vocabulary (the grammar translation method) to incidental (the communicative approach) and now, laudably, back to the middle: implicit and explicit learning. Nevertheless, the question remains about how best to implement this kind of vocabulary instruction in the classroom.

However, a few words should be said about the terminology itself as there are "inconsistent uses and definitions of the basic terms in literature" (Rieder 2004: 24). The terms *explicit* and *implicit* were borrowed from psychology. Within the framework of applied linguistics, Schmitt (2000: 116) suggests "two main processes of vocabulary acquisition: *explicit learning* through the focused study of words and *incidental learning* through exposure when one's attention is focused on the use of language, rather than the learning itself". At the same time there is another interpretation of incidental learning in linguistics, closer to its definition in experimental psychology which implies that subjects in an experiment are not informed in advance that they will be checked on retention (Hulstijn *et al.* 2009: 116). For the sake of clarity it should be said that the terms *incidental/implicit* and *intentional/explicit* are used interchangeably within the framework of this thesis. The latter imply direct teaching, especially the use of strategies. Obviously, learners cannot cope with all the vocabulary they need only in classroom. That is why, it is logical to assume that they should be helped "to continue to acquire vocabulary on their own" (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 255). This brings us closer to the discussion of VLS and autonomous learning.

However, before we proceed with the above it should not be forgotten that within the framework of both implicit and explicit learning and teaching we should deal not only with separate words but also with MWU. Theory has it that "[i]nstruction seems to facilitate the acquisition of formulas" (Ellis 1990: 165), i.e. of MWU.

When it comes to teaching of formulaic language, in his book entitled *The Lexical Approach* (1993), Lewis stresses the importance of learning chunks of language because "while increasing learning of key structures, [it] can also reduce communicative stress on the part of the user" (Carter 1998: 225). Carter (1998: 225) sums up the postulates of the lexical approach in the following way:

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1 Students should be taught more base verbs rather than spending time on tense formation.
2 Content nouns should be taught in appropriate chunks which include frequent adjectival and verbal collocations.
3 Sentence heads such as *Do you mind if*, *Would you like to* should be focused on.
4 Suprasentential linking should be explicitly taught.
5 Prepositions, modal verbs and delexical verbs (such as *take a swim* and *have a rest*) should be treated as if they were lexical items.
6 Metaphors and metaphor sets should be taught on account of their centrality to a language.

Before we switch to the sections on VLS and learner autonomy, a few words should be also said about vocabulary presentation and vocabulary exercises in textbooks which fall under the category of explicit learning and teaching.

According to Tomlinson (1998: xii), Presentation, Practice, Production (PPP) is the most widely used approach in textbooks. However, many researchers consider it inefficient as it only "creates the illusion of learning" as "learning an item takes much longer than this approach suggests and that far more experience of the item in communication is necessary for any lasting learning to take place" (Tomlinson 1998: xii).

Since it is the most popular of materials presentation, criticized or not, it deserves explanation. As can be easily guessed *presentation* is the first stage when the learner is introduced to a new item to be learned. To make sure that the item is learned the learner is expected to go through the second stage, namely the *practice stage.* At this stage the learner "starts to use the new language item, at first in carefully controlled exercises, which give a good deal of help and prevent the learner from making too many mistakes" (Cunningsworth 1986: 34). Later on this control is lessened, thus leading to the third final stage of learning the item, that of *free production.* Activities done at this stage are expected to imitate real life so that learners are "prepared for using English in the world outside the classroom" (Cunningsworth 1986: 34), they are not supposed to be authentic but "they must be *representative* [original emphasis] of and *modelled* [original emphasis] on the processes that take place in real language use" (Cunningsworth 1986: 49).

If we return to the first stage of presentation, there exist various ways to present vocabulary to students:
- lists of words (also supplied with translation)
- in the form of grids (as part of semantic fields)

- in association with visuals
- in a text (as a dialogue or in a discourse) (Cunningsworth 1986: 40-48).

The above again pose a question where words are better learned in isolation (static or atomistic approach) or should be attended to in context (dynamic or context-based approach). Carter (1998: 192) similar to Cook and Singleton (2014: 45) reconcile these opposite views assuming that both approaches should be taken into consideration as both play an important role.

Finally, the other two stages will be discussed in detail. As both stages imply that learners do various exercises in order to master a new item, discussion of those stages will be simultaneous with the degree of control serving as a borderline between them. A different degree of control also means a different level of processing. Hence, Hulstijn & Laufer come up with the Involvement Load Hypothesis for L2 vocabulary learning which postulates that "[t]he greater the involvement load, the better the retention" (Hulstijn & Laufer 2001: 545). Paribakht and Wesche (Coady & Huckin 1997: 182-184) propose that all vocabulary exercises can be grouped into "five categories, representing a hypothesized hierarchy of mental processing activity", as follows:

1. Selective attention – the least demanding exercise type – which implies "noticing" (e.g. boldfacing);
2. Recognition which involves partial knowledge (e.g. matching);
3. Manipulation which entails rearranging in terms of morphology and grammar (e.g. using affixes to construct words);
4. Interpretation which presupposes analysis of meaning and use in contexts (e.g. multiple-choice cloze exercises);
5. Production – the most demanding exercise type – which means production in appropriate contexts (e.g. open cloze exercises, finding a mistake).

The term *cloze exercise* means that "[w]ords are blanked out (deleted) from a passage and a decoder has to restore them" (Carter 1998: 228). The above grouping echoes the aspects of word knowledge outlined in table 3. Gradually, there is a move from the form and meaning of a word to its appropriate use in context. To conclude on the issue of vocabulary exercises the following quotation by Cunningsworth (1986: 39-40) seems useful:

> Coursebooks should ideally contain a variety of exercises with different degrees of control, beginning for each new item taught with tightly controlled exercises

and progressing through a gradual relaxation of control until the student is given a good deal of freedom in making his individual choices.

Sometimes it may happen that motivated and industrious students still fail to progress in EFL learning. If this is the case Burns and Richards (2012: 72) hint that the "problem could be that the students are working hard, but not working smart". In this connection theory holds it that "good language learners use a variety of strategies to assist them in gaining command over new language skills" (Wenden & Rubin 1987: 133). That is, less successful learners could profit from strategy instruction. The next section shall deal with one of the aspects of such strategy training, namely VLS instruction.

3.4. Vocabulary learning strategies and VLS teaching

The third chapter begins with a Chinese proverb saying that it is more valuable to teach a person to catch fish on his/her own to ensure his/her independence and ability for self-provision. The same holds true for language learning. Having gained the ability for lifelong (self-)learning and teaching is one of the keys to success in foreign language learning (Wenden & Rubin 1987: 9).

Surely, if learners are lucky and are gifted in terms of language aptitude for EFL learning, they can solely rely on their good memory. But if the less developed is the case, memory should be supported with sufficient and efficient repetition and appropriate learning strategies to ensure remembering of words and MWU (Hedge 2000: 117). Miller (1956: 133-134) describes strategy use by means of an example about a layperson as follows:

> When a person submits himself to a psychologist who asks him to memorize some stupid and useless sequence of symbols, he probably unitizes the material in an ad hoc [original emphasis] manner that is quite tentative and transient, but is adequate for the immediate purposes. When he sets out to learn something that he is personally interested in and that he expects to have use for, however, he is probably much more careful to organize the material in a way that fits well into his established cognitive structure. Without the pressure of time, he can explore various alternative unitizations until he finds one that works best for him and promises the best recall at any later date. In either case, however, his task is to create a hierarchy of units in such a way that by recalling the few, informationally rich and suggestive units at the top of the hierarchy he can then recover the more numerous, more detailed items at the bottom.

In other words, in everyday life people tend to reorganize input information if they are interested in this information, i.e. motivated to retain it. Such motivation

stimulates them to look for the best ways to "digest" it in their WM for future use and store in the LTM. In case of EFL similar conditions should be created which would motivate learners to reorganize input vocabulary in such a way that would help them to make receptive/productive use thereof outside the learning context, i.e. in real communication. VLS are thought to be such a "filter" that could ensure better reorganization and storage.

To remind, the focus of this paper is on VLS which are "a part of language learning strategies which in turn are a part of general learning strategies" (Nation 2001: 217) Discussion of general learning/learner strategies lies outside the scope of this study[5]. It is only worth mentioning that the research on learner strategies gained momentum since the 1970s as part of the movement away from a teacher-oriented to a learner-oriented perspective (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 199).

To date, there have been various attempts at providing taxonomies of VLS (cf. Ahmed 1989; Gu & Johnson 1996; Nation 2001; Schmitt & McCarthy 1997). Comprehensive overviews of such attempts were done, for instance, by Nation (2001: 224-229) and by Barcroft (2009: 74-76). For the sake of this research only two VLS classifications will be presented, one by Nation (2001) and the other by Schmitt (1997). Nation's taxonomy is presented in table 7.

Table 7 Taxonomy of kinds of vocabulary learning strategies by Nation (2001: 218)

General class of strategies	Types of VLSs
Planning: choosing what to focus on and when to focus on	Choosing words
	Choosing the aspects of word knowledge
	Choosing strategies
	Planning repetition
Sources: finding information about words	Analysing the word
	Using the context
	Consulting a reference source in L1 or L2
	Using parallels in L1 and L2
Processes: establishing knowledge	Noticing
	Retrieving
	Generating

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[5] An exhaustive account of the research timeline on L2 learning strategies can be found in the article by Rebecca Oxford (2011).

The above structuring of VLS echoes aspects of word knowledge discussed earlier in this thesis (cf. table 3). The first part of this classification is purely organisational as it presupposes choice of "objects" to be learned and choice of "tools" to be used for this purpose. What is of crucial importance here is that it implies structuring of and awareness about the learning process. If applied to a textbook, such choices are initially made by authors while teachers are free to adapt them to particular needs of learners. In case of self-learning and teaching such planning can be expected only from an advanced learner or the one with a broad linguistic background.

The second part of the classification builds upon discovering a word's form, meaning and use. Furthermore, it is suggested to establish connections with already known material. In other words, there is a suggestion to shift from the first encounter to the first attempts to retain the word. Finally, as mentioned in the section on psychology of vocabulary learning and teaching, the three mental processes are required to take place based on the principles of spaced repetition, sufficient practice and adequate depth of processing.

The above classification of VLS appears to be very transparent and well-structured but, unfortunately, it lacks indication of specific strategies. In table 8 there is therefore another, more detailed classification of VLS suggested by Schmitt (1997: 207-208). While Nation's classification is based on aspects of word knowledge, sources and processes of forming vocabulary knowledge, Schmitt grounds his grouping of over 50 strategies on the distinction between incidental and intentional learning (Altarriba & Isurin 2013: 258) as well as uses some of the categories proposed by Oxford (1990). To be exact, according to Oxford (Burns & Richards 2012: 72), there are two major groups of strategies: direct and indirect strategies. *Direct* strategies fall into memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies. *Indirect* strategies include metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies.

Unlike Oxford, Schmitt introduces into his classification (cf. table 8) Determination strategies (DET) which "are used by an individual when faced with discovering a new word's meaning without recourse to another person's expertise" (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 205). Further subgroups include Social strategies (SOC) which imply other people's assistance, Memory strategies (MEM) which speak for themselves and imply the use of imagery or grouping, Cognitive strategies (COG) which imply reorganization of information and, finally, Metacognitive strategies (MET) which "involve a conscious overview of the learning process and making decisions about

planning, monitoring, or evaluating the best ways to study" (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 205).

At the same time all VLS in Schmitt's taxonomy are divided into two big groups – Discovery strategies and Consolidation strategies – depending on whether they are used during the first encounter with a word or later on when learners strive to remember already encountered words. However, Schmitt admits that the VLS classification is problematic as "all of the Discovery Strategies could conceivably be used as Consolidation Strategies, but only the most obvious are listed in both sections of the taxonomy, such as utilizing *Word Lists* and *Affixes and Roots*" (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 206).

Table 8 Classification of vocabulary learning strategies by Schmitt

Strategy group	VLS
STRATEGIES FOR THE DISCOVERY OF THE A NEW WORD'S MEANING	
DET	Analyse part of speech
DET	Analyse affixes and roots
DET	Check for L1 cognate
DET	Analyse any available pictures or gestures
DET	Guess meaning from textual context
DET	Bilingual dictionary
DET	Monolingual dictionary
DET	Word lists
DET	Flash cards
SOC	Ask teacher for an L1 translation
SOC	Ask teacher for paraphrase or synonym of new word
SOC	Ask teacher for a sentence including the new word
SOC	Ask classmates for meaning
SOC	Discover new meaning through group work activity
STRATEGIES FOR CONSOLIDATING A WORD ONCE IT HAS BEEN ENCOUNTERED	
SOC	Study and practice meaning in a group
SOC	Teacher checks students' flash cards or word lists for accuracy

SOC	Interact with native speakers
MEM	Study word with a pictorial representation of its meaning
MEM	Image word's meaning
MEM	Connect word to a personal experience
MEM	Associate the word with its coordinates
MEM	Connect the word to its synonyms and antonyms
MEM	Use semantic maps
MEM	Use 'scales' for gradable adjectives
MEM	Peg Method
MEM	Loci Method
MEM	Group words together to study them
MEM	Group words together spatially on a page
MEM	Use new words in sentences
MEM	Group words together with a storyline
MEM	Study the spelling of a word
MEM	Study the sound of a word
MEM	Say new word aloud when studying
MEM	Image word form
MEM	Underline initial letter of the word
MEM	Configuration
MEM	Use Keyword Method
MEM	Affixes and roots (remembering)
MEM	Part of speech (remembering)
MEM	Paraphrase the word's meaning
MEM	Use cognates in study
MEM	Learn the words of an idiom together
MEM	Use physical action when learning a word
MEM	Use semantic feature grids
COG	Verbal repetition
COG	Written repetition
COG	Word lists

COG	Flash cards
COG	Take notes in class
COG	Use the vocabulary section in your textbook
COG	Listen to tape of word lists
COG	Put English labels on physical objects
COG	Keep a vocabulary notebook
MET	Use English-language media (songs, movies, newscasts, etc.)
MET	Use spaced word practice (expanding rehearsal)
MET	Testing oneself with word tests
MET	Skip or pass new word
MET	Continue to study word over time

Some of the above-mentioned strategies speak for themselves, but some of them require clarification, for example, the Peg Method which "allows unrelated items, such as words in a word list, to be recalled by linking these items with a set of memorized "pegs" or "hooks" which can vary from rhyming words to digits" (Wenden & Rubin 1987: 44).

Then there is the Keyword Method which was developed by Atkinson (1975) and is "perhaps the best known and most researched mnemonic technique" which calls for "establishment of an acoustic and imaginal link between an L2 word to be learned and a word in L1 which sounds similar" (Wenden & Rubin 1987: 44). Though the Keyword Method is thought to be an effective technique (Cook & Singleton 2014: 46), Ellis (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 137) suggests that it has its limitations, namely

1) it does not work for abstract words,

2) it is less effective in productive vocabulary learning,

3) it does not help with spelling and pronunciation.

In other words, the Keyword Method helps to "forge L1-L2 linkages" (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 137) and is particularly favourable at the initial stages of EFL learning (Carter 1998: 195). Nevertheless, some authors warn that it "may delay the development of an autonomous L2 lexicon, whereas the context-based approach encourages the inference of genuinely L2 meanings" (Cook & Singleton 2014: 49). To avoid going to extremes, it is advisable to use this technique in combination with other

techniques (Carter 1998: 194; Coady & Huckin 1997: 220; Gu & Johnson 1996: 669; Schmitt 2000: 133).

Third, there is the ancient Loci Method which was initially created by the Romans to remember their speeches. For that purpose one "imagines a familiar location, such as a room, a house or a street [...] one mentally places the first item to be remembered in the first location, the second item in the second location, and so forth" (Wenden & Rubin 1987: 45). To recall these items, an imaginary walk should be taken to "collect" what was placed along the way.

Fourth, there is the Spatial Grouping which implies "[r]earranging words on a page to form patterns, such as triangle" (Wenden & Rubin 1987: 45). As seen, psychology postulates that input reorganization is indispensable to ensure better retention and grouping can be considered one of the possible ways of reorganization.

As can be noticed VLS are time-consuming (Schmitt 2000: 120; Carter 1998: 194) and cannot fully substitute the effort on the part of the learner. However, they can help him/her to facilitate this effort and to better consolidate word knowledge. In the end "[t]he learners' aim is to continue to increase their vocabulary" (Nation 2001: 21) which can be aided by the use of VLS. Of course, "strategies should not be considered inherently good, but they depend on the context in which they are used" (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 202). Thus, the use of VLS cannot be expected to be the same at different levels of language proficiency. Cohen and Aphek (1981 quoted in Schmitt 2000: 133) sum it up as follows:

> When considering which vocabulary learning strategies to recommend to our students, we need to consider the overall learning context. The effectiveness with which learning strategies can be taught and used will depend on a number of variables, including the proficiency level, L1 and culture of students, their motivation and purposes for learning the L2, the task and text being used, and the nature of the L2 itself. [...] Proficiency level has also been shown to be quite important, with one study showing word lists better for beginning students, and contextualized words better for more advanced students.

Such recommendation can be explained by the fact that beginners have less language material at their disposal while intermediate and advanced learners "have a much broader knowledge base at their disposal, containing more candidates (words, derivational and compositional morphemes within the L2) for potentially successful associations with new words to be learned" (Coady & Huckin 1997: 217). Hence, in the very beginning words are more effectively (rote-)learned as lists of paired items in combination with mnemonics provided that there are at least 6-7 repetitions (Carter

1998: 193). Rote-learning as a powerful learning capacity should not be shunned, especially if learners are accustomed to it (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 201). At more advanced stages, more contextualised strategies should be used and repeated exposures to a word should amount to 10-12 to ensure retention (Coady & Huckin 1997: 225; Hulstijn & Laufer 2001: 553). Needless to say, at any level the principle of sufficient practice is important.

However, even though it is claimed that advanced learners require words presentation in context rather than in isolation, "it has not been convincingly demonstrated that the information learners obtain from meeting words in a variety of contexts is more beneficial, either in terms of knowledge of forms or meanings of lexical items, than either translation or simply looking up the word in a dictionary" (Carter 1998: 212). That is, both at the initial and advanced levels strategies that "foster imagistic and picturable associations across L1 and L2 can be valuable" (Carter 1998: 240). In this respect Randall (2007: 167) considers translation as "a beneficial strategy" as "the L1 lexicon acts as a mediator between the L2 lexicon and the semantic store" (Randall 2007: 167; Altarriba & Isurin 2013: 25) and it takes time for L1 and L2 lexicons to become autonomous. Nation (Carter 1998: 197) concludes that "if vocabulary is needed for writing (=productive use) in the target language then a learning sequence of mother-tongue word → foreign word would be appropriate; but a direction of foreign word → mother-tongue word may be more appropriate if only reading skills (=comprehension) are required".

As for dictionaries, it is not difficult to guess that bilingual dictionaries are usually popular among beginners while a monolingual dictionary is a more frequent aid of advanced learners (Carter 1998: 151) as "monolingual learners' dictionaries contain much more information about each word than bilingual dictionaries do" (Nation 2001: 289).

VLS that can be successfully employed at any level of language learning comprise not only learning from lists but also with the help of word cards (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 13). Another of such techniques is to connect a word to one's personal experience which is based on the assumption that new information should be connected to the old one. Personal experience can hardly be forgotten and, hence, provides a good basis for establishing such connections and subsequent recall and consolidation (Cook & Singleton 2014: 45).

Furthermore, similarity in sound, morphology or etymology can also help to

memorize new items through "check for L1 cognates" VLS (Carter 1998: 196). The fact that words belong to the same semantic field can also be helpful to establish connections but this is more typical of higher proficiency levels (Carter 1998: 240).

A few words should be said about fixed expressions. Carter (1998: 240) insists that they can be "valuable at all levels" and VLS can be applied to teaching them. The only hindrance is that in this case teachers would have to rely on their intuitions as little research is available on the topic. The clear principle that should be kept in mind is that "the more words are analysed or are enriched by imagistic and other associations, the more likely it is that they will be retained" (Carter 1998: 195).

If the principle of depth of processing is applied to strategies, according to Oxford (2011b: 29-30), general strategies as well as VLS can be divided into *surface strategies* which "help learners memorize material in order to repeat it when necessary, but without the goal of learning" (e.g. preparation for a formal exam) and *deep processing strategies*, "which facilitate understanding, increase meaningful mental associations, and are the most useful strategies for long-term retention of information" (e.g. reading for pleasure). In the latter category belong cognitive and metacognitive strategies. To remind, cognitive strategies are similar to memory strategies, but "are not focused so specifically on manipulative mental processing; they include repetition and using mechanical means to study vocabulary, including the keeping of vocabulary notebooks" (Schmitt 2000: 136). Metacognitive strategies, on the other hand, "are used by students to control and evaluate their own learning, by having an overview of the learning process in general" (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 216). Admittedly, besides adequate depth of processing, sufficient practice, organization of one's learning process should also include the principle of spaced repetition. For example, Schmitt & McCarthy (1997: 216) propose "reviews five to ten minutes after the end of the study period; then 24 hours later; then one week later, one month later, and finally six months later". According to Hulstijn, Hollander and Greidanus (1996: 337), regular reviewing of records is typical of "good L2 learners" as they seem to know that "long periods of study are less helpful than shorter but more frequent study periods" (Wenden & Rubin 1987: 47).

Finally, it should be noted that research indicates that "patterns of strategy use can change over time as a learner either matures or becomes more proficient in the target language" (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 223). As discussed above, "high-proficiency learners use more metacognitive strategies than their low-proficiency

counterparts" (Burns & Richards 2012: 70). It is difficult to draw a line to show when learners should switch their attention from mnemonic strategies to focus more on context-based and autonomous VLS but the general advice is "to recognize that learning occurs along a cline or continuum with no clearly marked stages of transition, and that a mixture of approaches should be adopted" (Carter 1998: 213).

To raise students' awareness about the variety and possible application of VLS, they should be taught explicitly. This point of view is favourably seen by many researchers (cf. Burns and Richards 2012: 72; Carter 1998: 205; Coady & Huckin 1997: 241; Murray & Christison 2011: 157; Oxford 2011a: 176). For instance, Murray and Christison (2011: 157-158) suggest that VLS training should develop along the following lines:

- modelling,
- gradual release practice,
- independent practice,
- checking for understanding.

Such guidance can be done either by a teacher or in the absence of a teacher by a textbook. However, the topic of VLS teaching is a recent one and has not been extensively researched. This fact explains similarity of researchers' general advice. For example, Burns and Richards (2012: 73) propose the following scheme:

a. teacher modelling,

b. awareness raising,

c. guided practice,

d. review and reuse,

e. reflect and refocus.

Nation (2001: 223) comes up with a more flexible "mini-syllabus for strategy development" to be adjusted to a particular situation:

- The teacher models the strategy for the learners.
- The steps in the strategy are practiced separately.
- Learners apply the strategy in pair supporting each other.
- Learners report back on the application of the steps in the strategy.
- Learners report on their difficulties and successes in using the strategy outside class time.
- Teachers systematically test learners on strategy use and give them feedback.

- Learners consult the teacher on their use of the strategy, seeking advice where necessary.

Nonetheless, teachers and learners should be constantly reminded that "a technique once introduced and successfully applied does not necessarily become a natural habit" (Coady & Huckin 1997: 218) and requires repeated use. Undoubtedly, last but not least for success in VLS use is also "learner acceptance" (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 225).

In sum, the main aim of vocabulary and VLS instruction is "to put students in the position where they are capable of deriving and producing meanings from lexical items both *for themselves* [original emphasis] and *out* [original emphasis] of the classroom" (Carter 1998: 186). Instruction in this case functions as a "facilitator" (Ellis 1990: 193). But as mentioned, more research of VLS instruction in classroom and as part of coursebooks is required.

3.5. Learner autonomy and self-access materials

According to Tomlinson (1998: 295), "*[l]earner autonomy* [my emphasis] can be thought of as primarily a matter of taking responsibility for one's own learning" and implies acquisition of "study skills and certain attitudes towards study". Moreover, learners are invited to start reflecting on "what they are doing and why" (Tomlinson 1998: 296). However, autonomous learning does not necessarily mean studying alone. Nation (2001: 394) explains it as follows:

> It is possible to be an autonomous learner in a strongly teacher-led class - by deciding what should be given the greatest attention and effort, what should be looked at again later, how the material presented should be mentally processed and how interaction with the teacher and others in class should be carried out. No matter what the teacher does or what the course book presents, ultimately it is the learnier who does the learning. [...]. It is useful to think of autonomy relying on three factors: attitude, awareness and capability.

The interest in learner autonomy began in the 1970s, parallel with research on learner strategies, at that time a more frequent term was *self-directed learning* (Wenden & Rubin 1987: 9). The same period is marked by the rise of various methods and, as a result, of more readily available learning and teaching materials (Wenden & Rubin 1987: 15). However, "materials are not capable of making learners autonomous or making teachers develop" (Tomlinson 1998: 302). It is the desire for autonomy or development which can help to achieve these goals, provided there is awareness of

choice what and how to do. Awareness-raising can be done by teachers first under their surveillance but later on students should strive to be more independent (Tomlinson 1998: 305). In their turn, "materials can aspire to be facilitative" (Tomlinson 1998: 302). Such self-direction might imply

- fixing objectives,
- defining the contents and progression,
- selecting the methods and techniques to be used,
- monitoring the acquisition procedure,
- evaluating what has been acquired (Wenden & Rubin 1987: 11).

According to Wenden and Rubin (1987: 17), effective strategy use and, thus, VLS use, can promote autonomy as in this case students are "better able to work outside the classroom by themselves" using, for example, self-access materials[6].

The most common idea of *self-access materials* is as "exercises which enable the learners to work on what they need in their own time and at their own pace without reference to a teacher" (Tomlinson 1998: 320). Most often they serve as supplementary materials to be used for extra practice. Tomlinson (1998: 320) claims that "the main strength of self-access materials has been their main weakness too". To make sure that learners get feedback on their performance, authors of such materials supply activity that can be easily self-marked. That explains the abundance of "controlled or guided practice activities which have used cloze, multiple choice, gap-filling, matching and transformation activities to facilitate self-marking and focused feedback" (Tomlinson 1998: 320). Instead of such a focus on controlled practice, Tomlinson (1998: 321) argues that more "genuinely open activities which require learner investment of both the mind and the heart and which provide opportunities for the broadening and deepening of experience as well as for the acquisition of the target language" should be included in self-access materials. He even proposes "access-self activities" as a separate label for them (Tomlinson 1998: 321).

In the next chapter I will try to analyse and evaluate a particular category of self-access materials, namely global vocabulary textbooks.

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[6] Another model in this context is a Strategic self-regulation model (cf. Oxford 2011b).

4. Evaluation of EFL vocabulary textbooks

Most best-selling materials are global materials.

(Tomlinson 2012: 272)

This chapter IS the first in the empirical part of the thesis. It will begin with a brief discussion of global coursebooks whose strengths and weaknesses will be outlined. To check those claims as well as to try to answer the research questions specified in the introduction a research of my own on English vocabulary textbooks will be conducted. It will consist of the following steps: description of the source of data, of the methodology chosen and of the evaluation procedure. The results will be discussed in a relevant section.

4.1. Global EFl textbooks: strengths and weaknesses

The commercial boom in EFL materials publishing started in the 1970s (Gray 2010: 19). The possible explanations are the rise of the Internet and popular culture, transnational corporations and international organizations (Gray 2010: 16). The English language began to be considered as "a profit of distinction" (Bourdieu 1991: 55) and a valuable intangible asset on the international market. Thus, textbooks began to be treated "as commodities to be traded in the market place" while teachers and students were increasingly thought of as "consumers" (Gray 2010: 3). Furthermore, these consumers are no longer treated as "imperfect native speakers, but as speakers in their own right" (Gray 2010: 32) and in this respect a special term of English as a *lingua franca* was coined and gave rise to a new approach that marked "a move away from the 'native speaker' as the model for learners to approximate" (Gray 2010: 32).

In his glossary Tomlinson (1998: x) defines a *global textbook* as "a coursebook which is not written for learners from a particular culture or country but which is intended for use by **any** [my emphasis] class of learners in the specified level and age group **any**where [my emphasis] in the world". It is remarkable that the word "any" is repeated twice and implies a "one size fits all" attitude (Gray 2010: 3). Nonetheless, towards the end of the same book Tomlinson (1998: 117) says that the term *global* is "misleading" because what we are discussing "means a courseboook for a **restricted** [my emphasis] number of teaching situations in **many** [my emphasis] different countries rather than all teaching situations in all countries". In other words, "any" is

replaced by "restricted" and "many".

Another definition of the term *global textbook* was proposed by Gray (2010: 1) and "refers to that genre of textbook which is produced as part of an incremental English language course designed for the global market". What is the global market as well as globalization then? According to Gray (2010: 13), "there is no agreed definition of globalization, a cluster of factors are commonly associated with the term". In line with his proposal related to globalization, the term *global textbook* due to its ambiguity is replaced by the description of its typical characteristics as suggested by some researchers on textbooks evaluation (cf. Cunningsworth 1986; Tomlinson 1998; Gray 2010).

First of all, even a brief look through modern textbooks will prove extensive use of <u>colour and photographic artwork</u>, especially those which depict attractive-looking people or celebrities (Gray 2010: 55, 68, 126, 131). Language learners "are positioned as consumers, largely through the artwork, to identify with an imagined community of English speakers who are characterized by success, gender equality and an increasing cosmopolitanism" (Gray 2010: 174). The reason behind that is the fact that colour is associated with leisure while black-and-white is more typical of a serious newspaper or a document (Gray 2010: 58). Moreover, language is no longer the only means of materials presentation, instead, there are also images, diagrams, charts, graphs, etc. According to Berger (1972: 129), "in no other form of society in history has there been such a concentration of images, such a density of visual messages". However, if applicable to language teaching, there are two types of <u>visuals</u> to be distinguished:

- those used for teaching (e.g. for clarification purposes) and
- those used as illustrations (e.g. to attract learners' attention).

It is only when an image serves both functions, that it is most beneficial for the learning and teaching process (Cunningsworth 1986: 28). On top of that, most modern textbooks contain a variety of <u>media resources</u> "to enrich the learning-teaching environment" (Tomlinson 2008: 109) since the senses are thought to be of paramount importance in learning and teaching (Gray 2010: 43).

It is not infrequent that publishers include a <u>famous name</u> (e.g. Cambridge, Oxford, etc.) in the title or mention it on the front cover of the textbook. In this case the connotative power of those words is exploited bringing about positive associations of well-established institutions. Hence, it comes as no surprise that such textbooks privilege <u>standard British English</u> with "the RP cluster of accents" (Gray 2010: 174) or

American English as a possible alternative. As a result, the English offered in those books is very standardized to be "appropriate for all students in all contexts" (Gray 2010: 136) and rarely exposes learners to other varieties of English. Repetition of the word "all" echoes one of the proposed definitions of a global textbook.

In terms of age, according to Gray (2010: 88), among global textbooks there is an "overall <u>adult orientation</u>". It can be explained by a more and more similar nature of adult education around the word partially due to globalization (Tomlinson 1998: 119). Consequently, ELT textbooks "resemble each other" in format, methodology, and even content (Gray 2010: 53) as publishers are "cautious if they aim to sell globally" (Tomlinson 1998: 119). To be exact, publishers even provide guidelines to coursebook authors about "<u>inappropriate topics</u>" (Gray 2010: 112). Most commonly, authors are recommended to avoid topics in compliance with the acronym PARSNIP (politics, alcohol, religion, sex, narcotics, isms and pork)" (Gray 2010: 119). Instead, which topics are most frequently addressed? 33 'themes' derived from a 'minimum content' list of cultural topics which were proposed by Byram (1993: 34-35) can serve as an example. They include, among others, personality description, leisure, geography, transportation, etc.

Drawing on the characteristics outlined above the following strengths and weaknesses of global coursebooks can be summarized by means of a table as shown below.

Table 9 Strengths and weaknesses of global textbooks (Cunningsworth 1986; Tomlinson 1998; Gray 2010)

Strengths	Weaknesses
availability	high costs
modern English	privilege of British or American English
famous publishers	commercial considerations prevail
attractive artwork	design of activities does not integrate current research on language teaching methodology
media component	remarkable similarity
interesting topics	little continuity between tasks
economical PPP approach	dominance of controlled exercises
can be used for many learning and teaching situations	local needs are not catered for

The materials in question are products inspired by globalization and their strengths and weaknesses are dictated by the needs of globalization. As a result, the top priority of global textbooks is not to address individuality of local classrooms/learners' needs (and hardly any learning/teaching material can) but rather serve as a useful guide or supplementation that would add up to successful EFL learning and teaching all around the world. Logically, a balance should be found between possible strengths and weaknesses. For instance, Tomlinson (1998: 118-120) claims that a "sensible balance" or a "compromise" should be found between "innovation and conservatism, a blend of the new and different with the reassuringly familiar". To put it another way, "compromise is not only inevitable it is probably beneficial" (Tomlinson 1998: 129) when a global textbook is to be published.

4.2.   Description of the study

For the empirical study, materials specializing exclusively on English vocabulary learning and teaching were chosen as the source of data. A comprehensive description of the three series of such books is presented in table 10 with indication of the publisher, publication year, proficiency level, amount of new vocabulary per book and of corpus on which the selection is based and, finally, mentioning other materials available in or in combination with each book. The purpose of use will not be included in the table as it is the same for all the books of the three series, namely self-study and classroom use.

Table 10 Source of data

Title of the series, publisher, publication year	Proficiency level	Amount of new vocabulary, corpus	What else is available in the package
English Vocabulary in Use Cambridge University Press 2010	Elementary 2nd edition (A1-A2)	1250 words and phrases +collocations, n/a	CD-ROM with additional exercises and tests, vocabulary games, pronunciation training, dictionary function; *Test Your English Vocabulary in Use* (as a separate book)
English Vocabulary in Use	Pre-intermediate and intermediate	2500 words and phrases + collocations, n/a	None in this edition

Cambridge University Press 2001			
English Vocabulary in Use Cambridge University Press 2002	Upper-intermediate 2nd edition	N/a + collocations, based on Cambridge International Corpus of written and spoken English	Link to the website "in Use" and to Cambridge University Press's website (information about dictionaries); *Test Your English Vocabulary in Use* (as a separate book)
English Vocabulary in Use Cambridge University Press 2002	Advanced	2000 words and expressions + collocations and longer expressions	Link to Cambridge University Press's website (information about dictionaries)
Oxford Word Skills Oxford University Press 2008	Basic (A1-A2)	2000 words or phrases (emphasis on high-frequency vocabulary in everyday spoken English), based on Oxford 3000tm	CD-ROM (pronunciation models, practice exercises), cover card, link to Oxford University Press's website
Oxford Word Skills Oxford University Press 2008	Intermediate (B1-B2)	2000 words or phrases (emphasis on high-frequency vocabulary in everyday spoken English, but also vocabulary from different types of written text), based on Oxford 3000tm	CD-ROM (pronunciation models, practice exercises), cover card, link to Oxford University Press's website
Oxford Word Skills Oxford University Press 2009	Advanced (C1-C2)	2000 words or phrases, (different fields of academic English, increased focus on different styles of English), based on Oxford 3000tm	CD-ROM (pronunciation models, practice exercises), cover card, link to Oxford University Press's website
Focus on Vocabulary Pearson	1 Bridging Vocabulary	504 word families, i.e. the next 3000-4000 words after first 2000 high-	Accompanied by online Student Book Answer Key and Unit Tests, link to Lextutor website and to

Longman 2011		frequency words, based on New Longman Corpus	Pearson Longman's website
Focus on Vocabulary Pearson Longman 2011	2 Mastering the Academic Word List	504 word families (academic vocabulary) based on Coxhead's AWL (2000), as well as New Longman Corpus	Accompanied by online Student Book Answer Key and Unit Tests, link to Pearson Longman's website

In terms of methodology the evaluation of the above global EFL vocabulary textbooks will take two directions:

1) general evaluation based on a list of criteria and

2) analysis of different aspects within the framework of external evaluation and internal evaluation.

As for the list of criteria, the following ones are based on suggestions made by Cunningsworth (1986: 64) and Littlejohn (1998: 193):

1. Briefly state the objectives of the material.

2. To what extent is it successful in achieving these objectives?

3. Note particular strengths.

4. Note particular weaknesses.

5. Are there any notable omissions?

6. For what type of learning situations is the material (un)suitable?

7. What are learner roles?

8. What are teacher roles?

9. Comparisons with any other material evaluated.

10. General conclusion.

External evaluation shall entail analysis of the cover of the books, introduction, table of contents & starter units that provide VLS instruction. That is to say, judgements will be made about the structure of the books. Internal evaluation shall concentrate on the analysis of one unit per book. In sum, the research is supposed to be mostly **qualitative** (Dörnyei 2007: 24) with some quantitative procedures used for topics percentage count as well as for VLS count.

Before I proceed with the empirical part of this paper, the choice of the above methodology and evaluation terminology will be clarified based on the positions of such researchers as Rod Ellis, Brian Tomlinson, Alan Cunningsworth and Ian McGrath.

On the whole, the evaluation procedure can be termed as a **micro-evaluation** to be distinguished, in Ellis's terms (1998: 217), from a macro-evaluation (e.g. of an institution). Thus, Ellis (1998: 218) defines a *macro-evaluation* as "an evaluation carried out for accountability and/or developmental purposes by collecting information relating to various administrative and curricular aspects of the programme." In other words, information is collected about the following aspects:

1 Administrative matters (i.e. the logistical and financial underpinnings of the programme)

2 Curriculum matters, which, in turn can be broken down into a consideration of

a) **Materials** [my emphasis],

b) Teachers,

c) Learners (Ellis 1998: 218).

Respectively, a *micro-evaluation* is characterised by "a narrow-focus on some specific aspect of the curriculum or the administration of the programme" (Ellis 1998: 219) and can be subdivided into **external evaluation** and **internal evaluation** (cf. Ellis 1998: 220-221). Furthermore, in compliance with Ellis's terminology (1998: 220) the current study can also be considered *a before-programme evaluation of published coursebooks* as it is due to be carried out before the actual use of the materials.

Focusing on materials exclusively, Tomlinson (1998: xi) defines evaluation as a "systematic appraisal of the value of materials in relation to their objectives and to the objectives of the learners using them" and splits it into three types:

1) **pre-use evaluation** [my emphasis],

2) whilst-use evaluation,

3) post-use evaluation.

Hence, in Tomlinson's terms (1998: xi) the focus of this study is on *pre-use evaluation*, i.e. "focused on predictions of potential value".

Finally, McGrath distinguishes between evaluation and analysis. *Evaluation* aims to "discover whether what one is looking for is there" (McGrath 2002: 22) and textbooks are usually examined against a **checklist of evaluation criteria** (cf. Cunningsworth 1986: 74). *Analysis*[7] is aimed at reaching "general understanding of the philosophy underlying the materials" (McGrath 2002: 25). Ellis's before-programme evaluation and Tomlinson's pre-use evaluation correspond to McGrath's *armchair*

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[7] Framework for analysis can be found in Littlejohn (1998: 195).

evaluation "if neither feedback from other users not prior trialling is possible" (cf. McGrath 2002: 13-14).

To sum up, it should be made clear that within the scope of this paper the term *evaluation* shall be used to name the upper level (micro-evaluation of materials) based on the list of criteria while analysis (internal and external evaluation) shall presuppose procedures that ensure going into detail regarding each aspect of evaluation (e.g. amount and types of vocabulary, VLS, recycling, vocabulary presentation, vocabulary exercises, etc.) that would help to give objective answers to the questions posed in the list of criteria and in the end would make a valuable contribution to the possible answers to the research questions raised in the introduction.

4.3. External evaluation

The external evaluation aims at answering the following questions:

- What is the purpose of use (classroom or self-study)?
- Which vocabulary and how much of it is included in each book?
- What is the general structure of each book?
- Which topics are found in each book?
- Is adequate recycling offered?
- Is the progression of material linear or cyclical?
- Which VLS are found in the introduction/"How to learn vocabulary" section?

The first question was answered earlier, namely that all books in the three series are positioned as both for <u>classroom and self-study use</u>. Further investigation of other aspects will either confirm this position or deny it.

In terms of <u>vocabulary</u> the *English Vocabulary in Use* series include on average around 2000 new words and phrases with minor deviations per each book. In total there are four books in the series split into elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced levels. In other words, it can be assumed that the total count of vocabulary per series amounts to 8000 new words and expressions, the latter also include collocations. That is, if reference to table 2 on vocabulary size is made, 8000 words and phrases would correspond to the level that would allow the learner to read authentic texts. None of the books declares a focus on specialized vocabulary, which will be verified later in this section dealing with the topics contained in each book.

Another series, namely *Oxford Word Skills*, is more precise in the amount of vocabulary. The authors claim inclusion of 2000 words and phrases per book. There are three books in the series (basic, intermediate, advanced) which would make the vocabulary total up to 6000 words and phrases. As mentioned before, this amount of vocabulary is necessary for informal daily conversation with a 98%-coverage.

Finally, the series called *Focus on Vocabulary*, is notably different from the other two series as it consists of only two books (*Bridging vocabulary, Mastering the academic word list*) and is aimed at providing vocabulary (both non-academic and academic) that follows the basic 2000 high-frequency words, to be exact, another 3000-4000 words per book. If the first 2000 words which are expected to be already known by the learner, plus the target vocabulary of the series in the amount of 6000-8000 words are taken into consideration, the vocabulary size after studying with this series would allow learners to read authentic texts.

Collocations are presented in all of the three series but rather vaguely. Thus, the introductory parts tend to use the wording "words and phrases".

The next task here is to explore the <u>structure of the books</u> in the three series. The respective overview per series is provided in tables 11, 12 and 13.

Table 11 ENGLISH VOCABULARY IN USE, books structure

English Vocabulary in Use: Elementary 2nd edition	English Vocabulary in Use: Pre-Intermediate & Intermediate	English Vocabulary in Use: Upper-Intermediate 2nd edition	English Vocabulary in Use: Advanced
Thanks and acknowledgements			
INTRODUCTION	INTRODUCTION	INTRODUCTION	TO THE STUDENT
To the student	Who is this book for?	What is the same about the new edition?	Why was this book written?
To the teacher	How is the book organised?	What is different about the new edition?	What is special about this book?
	The left-hand page		How is the book organised?
	The right-hand page		How should I use this book?
	Using the book	USING THE BOOK	What else do I need to know in order to work with this book?
		Why was this book	

		written?	
		How is the book organised?	
		How should I use this book?	
		Key to symbols used in the margins	
		What else do I need in order to work with this book?	
		Phonetic symbols	
UNITS 1-60 subdivided into the following modules	UNITS 1-100 subdivided into the following modules	UNITS 1-100 subdivided into the following modules	UNITS i-viii and 1-100 subdivided into the following modules
People (units 1-9)	**Learning (units 1-6)**	**Effective vocabulary learning (units 1-7)**	**Aspects of vocabulary learning (units i-viii)**
At home (units 10-13)	**Word formation (units 7-12)**	**Word formation (units 8-17)**	**Word formation (units 1-6)**
School and workplace (units 14-16)	**Phrase building (units 13-26)**	**Words and pronunciation (units 18-20)**	Work and study (units 7-12)
Leisure (units 17-24)	**Parts of speech (special problems) (units 27-32)**	**Connecting and linking words (units 21-28)**	People and relationships (units 13-20)
The world (units 25-31)	**Connecting and linking (units 33-36)**	**Countables and uncountables (units 29-34)**	Leisure and lifestyle (units 21-29)
Social issues (units 32-35)	TOPICS The world around us (units 37-41)	Topics (units 35-62)	Travel (units 30-32)
Everyday verbs (units 36-47)	People (units 42-47)	Feelings and actions (units 63-68)	The environment (units 33-38)
Words and grammar (units 48-60)	Daily life (units 48-62)	Basic concepts (units 69-77)	Society and institutions (units 39-50)
	Work (units 63-68)	Idiomatic expressions (units 78-88)	The media (units 51-54)
	Leisure and entertainment (units 69-73)	Phrasal verbs and verb-based expressions (units 89-94)	Health (units 55-58)
	Communication and	Varieties of English	Technology (units 59-

	technology (units 74-77)	(units 95-100)	63)
	Social concerns (units 78-85)		Basic concepts (units 62-74)
	Tourism (units 86-89)		Functional vocabulary (units 75-87)
	Notional concepts (units 90-95)		Idioms and phrasal verbs (units 88-95)
	Varieties of English (units 96-100)		Aspects of variation (units 96-100)
ANSWER KEY	ANSWER KEY	ANSWER KEY	KEY
Phonemic symbols	Phonetic symbols	INDEX with pronunciation	List of phonetic symbols
INDEX with pronunciation	Pronunciation problems	Acknowledgements	INDEX with pronunciation
Irregular verbs	INDEX with pronunciation		Acknowledgements
How to learn vocabulary	Acknowledgements		

A quick look at the books structure in the series *English Vocabulary in Use* demonstrates that all of them tend to have a similar structure consisting of an introduction, units of uniform length in its number of pages (to be exact, two) devoted to various, predominantly everyday topics and an answer key which is followed by an index of words with phonetic symbols and acknowledgements. However, due to the fact that not all books are of the same edition and are not written by the same authors, differences are still palpable. Thus, the elementary level contains only 60 units and less vocabulary while the other three books comprise 100 units each. In addition, "How to learn vocabulary" section or units (marked in bold in the table) are placed at the very beginning of those three books while the elementary level reserves it till after the index of words at the very end of the book together with a table on irregular verbs. Moreover, the first book makes explicit reference both to the student and to the teacher while the next two books make no specific address to any and the third book seems to be addressed exclusively to a student.

In terms of <u>topics</u> covered the following data can be presented:

Table 12 Topics in the English Vocabulary in Use series

	Elementary	Pre-intermediate & Intermediate	Upper-Intermediate	Advanced
Topic	number of units (percentage from total)			
People and relations	7 (11.7%)	13 (13%)	11 (11%)	12 (12%)
Places (e.g. at home)	4 (6.7%)	8 (8%)	2 (2%)	-
Education and work	3 (5%)	8 (8%)	2 (2%)	6 (6%)
Leisure	8 (13.3%)	9 (9%)	7 (7%)	12 (12%)
The world around us	7 (11.7%)	5 (5%)	5 (5%)	6 (6%)
Social issues	4 (6.7 %)	6 (6%)	3 (3%)	12 (12%)
Technology and media	-	4 (4%)	3 (3%)	7 (7%)
Notional concepts (e.g. time, space)	-	6 (6%)	10 (10%)	13 (13%)
Grammatical aspects	16 (26.7%)	16 (16%)	27 (27%)	6 (6%)
Formulaic language	11 (18.3%)	14 (14%)	17 (17%)	15 (15%)
Vocabulary learning	- (plus appendix at the end of the book)	6 (6%)	7 (7%)	- (plus i-viii Starter units which are not included in the analyzed 100 units)
Stylistics	-	5 (5%)	6 (6%)	11 (11%)

Table 12 shows that the most popular topics in the *English Vocabulary in Use* series are people and relations, education and work, leisure and the world around us. Furthermore, it is obvious that grammatical aspects and formulaic language occupy a sizable part of those books though the grammar percentage drops down at the advanced level giving place to social issues and stylistics. The differences are quite predictable as the more advanced the learners are the more information they need on register and style as well as more complicated topics can be discussed. The first three

books of the series are aimed at the most frequent words of general English, only in the fourth book academic vocabulary can be found. It should be added that the categories above are rather arbitrary and their choice was partially dictated by the categorization already available in the books and, of course, by common sense.

Next comes recycling which is synonymous to revision, repetition or consolidation of knowledge. As it was mentioned in the theoretical overview one encounter is not sufficient for a word to be remembered it may need "to be recycled three, four, five or six times before it is learned adequately" (Cunningsworth 1986: 25). Judging from table 11 there is no proper recycling offered in the series as no review section can be found in either of the books. There is only some advice in this relation provided in each book, namely in "How to learn vocabulary" section. For instance, at the elementary level there is a suggestion "to repeat the units after a month and then again after three months" (McCarthy & O'Dell 2010: 172). The pre-intermediate and intermediate level compiled by Stuart Redman (2001: 6) provides the following advice:

> Revise for short periods but do it often. Five minutes a day is probably better than half an hour a week; but half an hour a week is probably better than two hours a month.

The third book in the series does not provide any revision timetable except for a general recommendation to ask oneself the next day: "How much can I remember?" (McCarthy & O'Dell 2002b: 14). Finally, the book meant for advance students provides advice to revise a week after the first study of the unit and further again in a month (McCarthy & O'Dell 2002a: 6).

The concept of recycling is closely related to such notions as _linear progression and cyclical progression_. If applicable to a textbook, the former implies that the textbook "deals with each item exhaustively before passing on to the next item" while a textbook with cyclical progression "moves fairly quickly from one language item to another and then progressively returns to each item, once, twice or more times, later in the course" (Cunningsworth 1986: 26). Both approaches have their advantages and disadvantages depending on the age group, learning preferences and goals of a course (cf. Cunningsworth 1986: 26), which will not be discussed here due to space limit. However, the obvious conclusion that can be made in relation to the _English Vocabulary in Use_ series is that all of them structure their material in a linear progression.

Now the same four external questions should be answered in connection with the _Oxford Word Skills_ series whose books structure is presented in table 13 below.

Table 13 OXFORD WORD SKILLS, books structure

Oxford Word Skills: Basic	Oxford Word Skills: Intermediate	Oxford Word Skills: Advanced
Acknowledgements		
INTRODUCTION	INTRODUCTION	INTRODUCTION
What is *Oxford Word Skills*?	What is *Oxford Word Skills*?	What is *Oxford Word Skills*?
How are the books organized?	How are the books organized?	How are the books organized?
What vocabulary is included?	What vocabulary is included?	What vocabulary is included?
How can teachers use the material in the classroom?	How can teachers use the material in the classroom?	How can teachers use the material in the classroom?
How can students use the material on their own?	How can students use the material on their own?	How can students use the material on their own?
STARTER UNIT	STARTER UNIT	STARTER: **vocabulary at advanced level**
A. How to use a unit	A. How to use a unit	**Six steps to a wider vocabulary**
B. How to learn new words	**B. How to learn new words**	
C. How to do the exercises	C. Abbreviations and symbols	
D. Abbreviations and symbols		Abbreviations
UNITS 1-80 with **review** after each module, namely	UNITS 1-80 with **review** after each module, namely	UNITS 1-80 with **review** after each module, namely
Basic English (units 1-7)	Learning (units 1-4)	Expanding your vocabulary (units 1-6)
People (units 8-16)	People (units 5-10)	The body (units 7-13)
Everyday life (units 17-23)	The world around us (units 11-15)	You and other people (units 14-19)
Food and drink (units 24-28)	Daily life (units 16-23)	Leisure and lifestyle (units 20-26)
Getting around (units 29-33)	Describing things (units 29-34)	A changing world (units 27-32)
Places (units 34-41)	Social and political issues (units 35-40)	Institutions (units 33-37)
Study and work (units 42-47)	Media and entertainment (units 41-48)	News and current affairs (units 38-43)
Hobbies and interests (units 48-53)	Work and study (units 49-54)	Work and finance (units 44-51)
Holidays (units 54-59)	Business (units 55-58)	Concepts (units 52-57)
Social English (units 60-69)	Social English (units 59-67)	Spoken English (units 58-66)

Language (units 70-80)	Language (units 68-76)	Written English (units 57-73)
	Styles of English (units 77-80)	Aspects of language (units 74-80)
Vocabulary building tables	Vocabulary building tables	Vocabulary building
Common irregular verbs		
ANSWER KEY	ANSWER KEY	ANSWER KEY
Answer key to review units	Answer key to review units	Answer key to review units
List of spotlight boxes	List of spotlight boxes	List of spotlight boxes
WORD LIST/INDEX with pronunciation	WORD LIST/INDEX with pronunciation	WORD LIST/INDEX with pronunciation
	Acknowledgements	
COVER CARD	COVER CARD	COVER CARD

The table shows that the three books in the *Oxford Word Skills* series are almost identical in structure. Each book begins with an introduction addressed to both teachers and students. In the next part called "Starter" clarifications are provided how to use a unit, how to do exercises and, what is important, how to learn new vocabulary (marked in bold in the table). Furthermore, each book consists of 80 units of different length (from 1 to 3 pages) with a review section after every 10 units united by the same topic. At the end of each book learners/teachers can find vocabulary building tables which are recommended to be used with a cover card to recycle words presented as different parts of speech, i.e. a column of nouns should be consulted in order to provide a respective adjective in the column covered by the card, etc. Of course, there is an indispensable answer key as well as an index of words with their transcription. Unlike the last two books in the series, the first book also contains a table of common irregular verbs.

Topics in this series can be grouped as follows:

Table 14 Topics in the Oxford Word Skills series

	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
Topic	number of units (percentage from total)		
People and relations	18 (22.5%)	14 (17.5%)	13 (16.25%)
Places (e.g. at home)	14 (17.5%)	5 (6.25%)	-
Education and	6 (7.5%)	10 (12.5%)	8 (10%)

work			
Leisure (hobbies and holidays)	10 (12.5%)	7 (8.75%)	7 (8.75%)
The world around us	4 (5%)	11 (13.75%)	5 (6.25%)
Social issues	-	6 (7.5%)	9 (11.25%)
Media and technology	1 (1.25%)	1 (1.25%)	3 (3.75%)
Notional concepts	5 (6.25%)	1 (1.25%)	6 (7.5%)
Grammatical aspects	11 (13.75%)	7 (8.75%)	7 (8.75%)
Formulaic language	11 (13.75%)	10 (12.5%)	9 (11.25%)
Vocabulary learning	- (plus a starter unit)	4 (5%) (plus a starter unit)	6 (7.5%) (plus a starter unit)
Stylistics	-	4 (5%)	7 (8.75%)

For transparency of presentation and subsequent comparison the same categories were applied to the topics in the *Oxford Word Skills* series. Table 14 reveals the same tendency in this series as in the previous one. That is, the most popular topics seem to fall into the following categories: people and relations, education and work, leisure and the world around us. Units on formulaic language are also numerous while grammatical aspects are given less space if compared with the *English Vocabulary in Use* series, though increase in the number of units devoted to social issues and stylistics through levels is identical. Academic English is encountered only at the last, namely advanced, level.

The introduction (Gairns & Redman 2008a: 9; Gairns & Redman 2008b: 6; Gairns & Redman 2009: 6) of all the three books provides teachers with the following advice on <u>revision</u>:

> After a period of time elapsed, perhaps a couple of days or a week, you can use the review exercises for further consolidation and testing.

The general recommendation of "How to learn new words" section in the basic and intermediate level books is to "repeat the words two or three times" (Gairns & Redman 2008a: 11; Gairns & Redman 2008b: 8). The book for advanced learners is

tacit on this subject. However, in contrast to the *English Vocabulary in Use* series, the *Oxford Word Skills* series provides some review exercises in all of its three books.

As mentioned above, there is a review section after on average every ten units which can let us conclude that <u>progression</u> is more cyclical than linear since students are expected to encounter words again and to do some exercises for the sake of revision.

Finally, there is the *Focus on Vocabulary* series which consists of two books whose <u>structure</u> is reflected in table 15.

Table 15 FOCUS ON VOCABULARY, books structure

Focus on Vocabulary 1: Bridging Vocabulary	Focus on Vocabulary 2: Mastering the Academic Word List
TO THE TEACHER	TO THE TEACHER
Overview	Overview
Organization of the book	Organization of the book
Answer key and unit tests	Answer key and unit tests
References	References
TO THE STUDENT	TO THE STUDENT
Why study "bridging" vocabulary?	Why study academic vocabulary?
Knowing a word	What does it mean to know a word?
Vocabulary learning strategies	**Vocabulary cards – a key vocabulary learning strategy**
ABOUT THE AUTHORS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ABOUT THE AUTHORS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
28 CHAPTERS with **every fourth chapter being a strategy practice**, consolidated into 7 UNITS, namely	28 CHAPTERS with **every fourth chapter being a strategy practice**, consolidated into 7 UNITS, namely
Unit 1 Happiness (chapters 1-4)	Unit 1 Our changing society (chapters 1-4)
Unit 2 Mind (chapters 5-8)	Unit 2 Consumer behaviour and marketing (chapters 5-8)
Unit 3 Design (chapters 9-12)	Unit 3 Workplaces and work spaces (chapters 9-12)
Unit 4 Face it (chapters 13-16)	Unit 4 Use and abuse of natural resources (chapters 13-16)
Unit 5 Technology (chapters 17-20)	Unit 5 We are what we eat (chapters 17-20)
Unit 6 Celebrity and heroes (chapters 21-24)	Unit 6 Encounters with music and sound (chapters 21-24)
Unit 7 Environment (chapters 25-28)	Unit 7 Animal nature (chapters 25-28)
INDEX OF TARGET WORDS without phonetic symbols	INDEX OF TARGET WORDS without phonetic symbols

	Credits

In terms of their structure the two books resemble each other like twins. The introductory part is aimed at both teachers and students with additional information on VLS. Unlike the other two series the introductory part of the *Focus on Vocabulary* series provides some theoretical background, references and additional information about the authors. The topics are organized in the form of 7 units with 4 chapters in each unit and with every fourth chapter being a strategy practice chapter. At the end of each book there is an index of target words, though, unlike the other two series, this series does not provide phonetic transcription which can be explained by the fact that these two books are meant for intermediate and advanced students.

Topics offered in the series seem to differ from the choice made in the other two series and include those presented in table 16.

Table 16 Topics in the Focus on Vocabulary series

	Bridging vocabulary	Mastering the Academic Word List
Topic	number of units (percentage from total)	
People and relations	3 (42.85%)	1 (14.3%)
Places	-	-
Education and work	-	1 (14.3%)
Leisure	-	1 (14.3%)
The world around us	1 (14.3%)	2 (28.6%)
Social issues	1 (14.3%)	2 (28.6%)
Media and technology	2 (28.6%)	-
Notional concepts	-	-
Grammatical aspects	-	-
Formulaic language	-	-
Vocabulary learning	- (plus the introduction)	- (plus the introduction)
Stylistics	-	-

There is little doubt that the choice of the above topics can be explained by a more advanced level of this series. In the first book there is a similar tendency for preference for such topics as people and relations, the world around us, and media and technology. The second book aimed at academic English demonstrates a switch from the topic "people and relations" to more complicated and socially oriented issues. Since there is a chapter in each of the seven units on VLS training, there are no separate units dedicated to vocabulary learning except for the guidelines provided in the introduction.

Judging from the general structure of the book there is no <u>recycling</u> offered in terms of vocabulary itself; instead, recycling is provided for VLS in every fourth chapter. The introduction contains an instruction "to remember to review each word numerous times" (Schmitt, Schmitt & Mann 2011a: xiv; Schmitt, Schmitt & Mann 2011b: xiv), but also promises that strategy practice chapters will provide "chances to recycle the target vocabulary" (Schmitt, Schmitt & Mann 2011a: vii; Schmitt, Schmitt & Mann 2011b: vii) too. Sufficient recycling in these books is predictable as Schmitt (2000: 137) writes that "[i]f recycling is neglected, many partially known words will be forgotten, wasting all the effort already put into learning them".

<u>Progression</u> can be deemed cyclical for both vocabulary items and VLS as strategy practice and vocabulary recycling are offered in every fourth chapter of both books.

The final question which was posed in this section for external evaluation was "Which VLS are found in the introduction/"How to learn vocabulary" section?". To answer it, a list of the VLS detected in relevant parts of the books in the three series was made (cf. table 17).

Table 17 VLS found in the textbooks

Series	English Vocabulary in Use				Oxford Word Skills		Focus on Vocabulary	
Level VLS	Elementary	Pre-inter-mediate & inter-mediate	Upper-inter-mediate	Advanced	Basic/ Inter-mediate	Advanced	1	2
Using a dictionary (DET)	yes, esp. bilingual	yes, bilingual and monolingual	yes, monolingual	yes, monolingual	yes	yes, monolingual	yes or a thesaurus, of America	yes, of American English

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							n English	
Inferring meaning from context (DET)		yes					yes	
Using diagrams, charts and other visual aids to organise information about words (MEM)	yes	yes			yes			
Personalising words (MEM)				yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Associate the word to its coordinates (MEM)							yes	yes
Connect the word to its synonyms and antonyms (MEM)							yes	yes
Learning associated words together (MEM)		yes					yes	yes
Grouping words (MEM)				yes				
Making notes of words in context (MEM)	yes				yes	yes	yes	yes
Study the spelling of a word (MEM)								yes
Study the sound of a word (MEM)								yes
Say new word aloud			yes		yes			

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Strategy								
when studying (MEM)								
Use Keyword method (MEM)							yes	yes
Keeping a vocabulary notebook (COG)	yes	yes	yes		yes	yes		
Different ways of recording things in a notebook (COG)	yes	yes	yes			yes		
Creating flash cards (COG)							yes	yes
Going beyond this book (MET)				yes	yes	yes	yes (e.g. extensive reading)	
Testing yourself (MET)	yes				yes	yes		
Using a cover card (MET)					yes	yes		
Regular revision (MET)	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

Table 17 presents a list of 20 VLS encountered in the books within the framework of the external evaluation. Obviously, the publishers are not using even half of the strategies discussed in the theoretical part of this thesis. However, they seem to acknowledge existence of VLS and their usefulness for vocabulary learning, though, with minor exceptions, favour different of them. Thus, all authors are unanimous in advising dictionary use, a bilingual one at the beginning and a monolingual one at a later stage. Consumerism is reflected through promotion of dictionaries by the same publisher. The same agreement is found on regular revision strategy. The two strategies appear to be two poles of Schmitt's classification (cf. table 8), other strategies seem to have to be placed on a continuum among them. For instance, the authors of the *English Vocabulary in Use* series prefer "visual" strategies such as using

visual aids and keeping a vocabulary notebook. Notably, vocabulary presentation in those books resembles this tendency in VLS use. In case of the *Oxford Word Skills* series, it was decided to unite the first two books as they are absolutely identical in their structure. This series tends to personalise words, to suggest keeping a vocabulary notebook as well as testing yourself, especially using a cover card. Finally, the *Focus on Vocabulary* series provides a more varied range of VLS which slightly differ from one book to the other. Nonetheless, both books recommend to personalize words, to study their spelling and pronunciation, to note them in context, to use the keyword method and to create vocabulary cards. Details on creation of the latter are lavishly provided in each book. They seem to echo the advice of the other series to keep a vocabulary notebook.

4.4. Internal evaluation

Internal evaluation shall unveil itself in the form of analysis of one unit per book in accordance with the following questions:

- Which topic is discussed in the unit?
- What is the general structure of the unit?
- How much new vocabulary is included in the unit?
- How is the new vocabulary presented?
- Which types of vocabulary exercises are found?
- Which VLS are found in the unit?

To begin with, in order to be able to compare the series a unit devoted to the topic of "work, job or business" was chosen for analysis. All of those books contained at least one such topic, except for the first book in the *Focus on Vocabulary* series. To fill in this gap, it was decided to analyze a chapter on strategy training instead since this series contains two types of chapters, those devoted to a certain topic and those concentrating specifically on strategy instruction. Thus, both types of chapters could and should be covered by the analysis.

To ensure transparency, units structure will be presented in the form of a table per series. As before, first will be presented units structure of the *English Vocabulary in Use* series (cf. table 18).

Table 18 ENGLISH VOCABULARY IN USE, units structure

English Vocabulary in Use			
Elementary, unit 14 "Jobs"	**Pre-intermediate-intermediate, unit 64 "Jobs"**	**Upper-intermediate, unit 44 "Work"**	**Advanced, unit 7 "At work: colleagues and routines"**
left-hand page			
3 sections A, B, C Sections A and B contain **images** accompanied by the name of a profession in bold. Section C named "Expressions" consists of a **dialogue** with more new words in bold and of five unrelated **sentences** on the topic with new words also marked in bold (in total 26 new items).	4 sections A, B, C, D Sections A and C provide new words with **definitions** while sections B and D present new vocabulary together with **pictures**. Most of the new words are marked in bold (in total 19 plus 6 unmarked but defined).	3 sections A, B, C Section A contains new words in bold with **short definitions** and rarely hints to the correct pronunciation of a word. Section B presents a **list of words** likewise marked in bold, though without any definitions. Section C is devoted to collocations and contains a few example sentences as well as a **list of possible collocations** with **paraphrasing** in square brackets to explain the meaning of those collocations (words and phrases marked in bold amount to 47)	4 sections A, B, C, D Sections A and C present **extracts** of different people talking about their jobs and colleagues with new words and phrases marked in bold and supported by **paraphrase** in square brackets. Section B contains more new words inserted in a **text** of vaguely related sentences. Section D uses the first person singular to describe types of work and just like the other sections provides **paraphrases** for words and phrases marked in bold (in total 34)
right-hand page			
5 exercises: 1) complete sentences 2) match pictures with jobs 3) crossword 4) complete a sentences 5) answer questions for yourself	5 exercises: 1) match definition with description of people 2) complete definitions 3) respond to statements 4) a list of people needed for building your own house	6 exercises: 1) match definition with job title 2) use expressions to describe a situation 3) match tools with job title 4) classify jobs 5) fill in collocations	4 exercises: 1) correct mistakes 2) give three adjective to describe job, TIP use a dictionary 3) complete sentences 4) give examples of different jobs, TIP use a dictionary

	5) name jobs done by relatives or friends, TIP to use a bilingual dictionary	6) name jobs done by relatives or friends, TIP to use a bilingual dictionary or a thesaurus	

According to Gairns and Redman (1986 quoted in Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 153), from 8 to 12 productive vocabulary units can be introduced in one lesson. However, this position is not without criticism as it is difficult to give a number without taking into consideration which words or phrases are presented in a unit. As seen earlier, some words are easier to learn than the others. That is why this number will be treated as an average which can be augmented in case more simple words are presented.

The question of <u>how much vocabulary</u> should be included per unit brings us to the discussion of the term *grading* by which "we mean the speed with which the student progresses, how much new material is introduced in a given number of hours, how close together or how far apart new grammatical structures are in relation to each other, how much new vocabulary is introduced in each unit and so on" (Cunningsworth 1986: 25). Moreover, the amount of exercises and other activities should also be taken into consideration when deciding whether a textbook or a course is *steeply or shallow graded*. If only four or five exercises are offered to practice a new item, such textbook or course can be considered as a steeply graded one. Cunningsworth (1986: 25) expresses caution in this respect saying that if a textbook is steeply graded then it is unlikely to be appropriate for beginners rather for false beginners, i.e. for "those who have previously learned English".

If we look at the initial statistics provided by the authors of the series, it can be seen that the *English Vocabulary in Use* series presents on average 20-25 items per unit (i.e. 1250/60 = 20.8 for the elementary level, 2500/100 = 25 for the pre-intermediate and intermediate level and 2000/100 = 20 for the advanced level). In case of the *Oxford Word Skills* series the declared amount of new vocabulary presented in a unit equals 25 for all of the three books (2000/80 = 25). As for the *Focus on Vocabulary* series, the authors suggest inclusion of 24 target words/word families per chapter (504/21 = 24). In other words, there seems to be a tacit agreement among the authors that amount of new vocabulary presented per unit should be equal to 20-25 units. Needless to say, all

of those series can be classified as steeply graded due to the fact that a lot of new vocabulary is presented to learners and few exercises are provided to practice new items.

To be exact, unit analysis of the four of *English Vocabulary in Use* books (cf. table 18) reveals figures of 26, 25, 47 and 34 new vocabulary items per unit against 4-6 exercises per unit.

Units analysis of the *Oxford Word Skills* series (cf. table 19) shows that 24, 22 and 32 vocabulary items are presented per unit while 5-8 exercises are available for mastering the new lexis.

Table 19 OXFORD WORD SKILLS, units structure

Oxford Word Skills		
Basic, unit 44 "I can name jobs"	**Intermediate, unit 51 "I can apply for a job"**	**Advanced, unit 46 "I can talk about the business world"**
page 1		
spotlight section about the use of the indefinite article with jobs	example of an application procedure with the company FamAid UK with new words and phrases marked in bold right in the **text**	Section A consists of a **short text** similar to a newspaper news item with new words and phrases marked in bold. The same words are also presented here in the form of a **glossary**.
job names are marked in bold and are presented together with **pictures**	**glossary** of the words and phrases from the text with meaning explanation similar to a dictionary entry (in total 22 on the page)	spotlight section clarifies specific business terms (in total 14 on this page)
some new words are presented in a form of a table supported by **examples** and **short definitions** (in total 24 words and phrases in bold)	spotlight section on difference between lexis used in formal written texts and in spoken English	2 exercises 1) complete words in sentences 2) complete dialogues TIP test yourself
page 2		
5 exercises 1) choose correct answer 2) correct spelling mistakes 3) complete sentences 4) about you, match jobs with the ones done by relatives or friends	6 exercises 1) complete table (verb-noun) 2) correct sentences 3) replace underlined words with a more formal word or phrase 4) complete sentences	Section B is taken up by a table with new words and phrases in combination with **examples** of their use and explanation of their meaning (in total 14 on the page). Notably, stylistic difference is sometimes hinted at

5) test yourself using the cover card and pictures on the first page	5) about you, write answers to questions 6) test yourself using the cover card and glossary on the first page	or a synonym is provided.
		2 exercises 1) similarity or difference of meaning 2) complete text TIP test yourself
1 exercise in review section 1) complete sentences	2 exercises in review section 1) correct spelling mistake 2) complete dialogue	1 exercise in review section 1) write word missing in sentence TIP more words to be remembered (in total 5)

The *Focus on Vocabulary* series can boast 24 new items per unit, i.e. exactly as promised in the introduction, while the amount of exercises equals 10-12 (cf. table 20). To sum up, if gradation should be established within those steeply graded books in the three series, then the *English Vocabulary in Use* books appears to be the most steeply graded out of the three, second come the *Oxford Word Skills* books and the Vocabulary in Use series occupies the third place in this ranking, being the least steeply graded.

Table 20 FOCUS ON VOCABULARY, units structure

Focus on Vocabulary	
Bridging Vocabulary, unit 1 chapter 4 "Strategy practice" (in total 8 pages)	**Mastering the Academic Word List, unit 3 chapter 9 "How office space affects behavior" (**in total 10 pages)
Getting Started (revision of previously learned target words in the unit with the help of pictures)	Getting Started (discussion about organization of the learning process)
Focusing on Skills: dictionary use - Understanding dictionary entry structure (section A – identify parts of dictionary entry, section B – check it with partner) - Understanding word meaning (sections A – match words with their multiple-choice definitions, section B – look up words in the dictionary and check its meanings and frequency, section C – compare answers	Assessing Your Vocabulary Knowledge: target words (in total 24) – words should be put on a scale from known to unknown Reading (text) - Reading comprehension (3 questions) - Reading strategy: seeing parallel organization (Section A - complete a table, section B - check your answers)

- Understanding word forms and word families (section A – use dictionary to find word family, section B – compare answers with partner) - Understanding collocations (use dictionary to find collocations and sentences with them, make sentences of your own) with partner)	
Focusing on Vocabulary Cards: model sentences that "tell" and "show" Instructions (select ten vocabulary cards for target words, add model sentences with "tell" and "show", compare sentences with partner)	Focusing on Vocabulary - Word meaning (section A – match words with their definitions, section B - cross out if not a synonym) - Word families (section A – complete a table, section B – complete sentences choosing the correct form) - Collocation (write sentences of your own)
	Expanding the topic (agreement or disagreement with statements, subsequent discussion and essay writing)

In terms of <u>vocabulary presentation</u> the *English Vocabulary in Use* series demonstrates a strong tendency to present new items in combination with a picture at the first two levels, together with a simple definition or in a sentence while later on no images can be found and new lexis is provided either with a definition/paraphrase or as a list of common collocations (at the upper-intermediate level) or as part of a larger context (at the advanced level). At all levels new vocabulary is always marked in bold.

In the *Oxford Word Skills* series at the basic level new vocabulary is presented in combination with pictures or with supporting examples and meaning clarifications, at the intermediate level preference for a more context-like presentation is evident (e.g. in a text) supported by a glossary of new words as well as by stylistic clarification. The latter seem to prepare learners for a monolingual dictionary use. At the advanced level, similar to the intermediate level, new lexis is presented in context with a glossary of new words with dominance of phrases over simple words. The meaning of phrases is explained by means of an example or a short definition presented in a table. It is remarkable that at the last level vocabulary presentation is also split into two sections where each section is followed by exercises. In the first two books of the series the obvious pattern of unit structure was first to present new vocabulary and then to

practice it in exercises. In the advanced level book change of unit structure seems to be introduced in order to avoid overload with new lexis.

The *Focus on Vocabulary* series is in sharp contrast to the other two series in all aspects being discussed here. To be exact, vocabulary presentation is not placed on a separate page instead it is presented in a form of a table. Later on, new lexis is inherent in the body of the chapter repeating itself through numerous exercises that occupy most of the chapter space. Furthermore, unlike the other series there is a rather long text for reading bearing new vocabulary items marked in bold.

Exercises in the *English Vocabulary in Use* series tend to be alike in all of the four books with strong preference for recognition exercises (e.g. matching) and interpretation exercises (e.g. completing sentences). The complete absence of manipulation exercises can be explained by the fact that each book in the series contains units devoted to grammatical aspects which, among others, include manipulation exercises. It can be hypothesized that absence of production exercises is enforced by the preference for controlled exercises which ensure transparent self-marking. As for selective attention exercises, there are none as all new vocabulary items are already presented in bold on the left-hand page of a unit.

The *Oxford Word Skills* series demonstrates more variety in the choice of exercises. Thus, most of the recognition exercises (e.g. matching) are personalized (e.g. about you), there is one manipulation exercise (e.g. complete table), for the rest there are mostly interpretation and production exercises. Absence of selective attention exercises, again, can be explained by the presentation of new vocabulary already marked in bold. In other words, the series allow a little bit more freedom which can be more challenging and consequently very motivating for students.

As mentioned above, the *Focus on Vocabulary* series provides a larger amount of exercises and at least a few of them require working with a partner which was not found in the other series. Plus, this series tends to offer both controlled exercises and less controlled exercises. The latter include few recognition and manipulation exercises, as more emphasis is laid on interpretation and production exercises. Interestingly enough, the presentation of new vocabulary is done via a selective attention exercise at the beginning of each topic chapter.

In the *English Vocabulary in Use* series only one tip for VLS use was found, namely among exercises, and that was to use a dictionary. At the pre-intermediate and intermediate as well as at the upper-intermediate levels the advice is given to use a

bilingual dictionary or a thesaurus. At the advanced level no specification is made which dictionary to use, hence, most likely the choice is left with the teacher or with the learner.

All of the three books in the *Oxford Word Skills* series promote "testing yourself with a cover card" strategy. No other VLS were found in the selected units. To conclude, the *Focus on Vocabulary* books lean heavily on a monolingual dictionary use, vocabulary cards use, working with a partner and using new words in context or as part of most frequent collocations.

To sum up, having analyzed one unit per book in the three series it can be concluded that the *English Vocabulary in Use* and the *Oxford Word Skills* tend to have similarities in terms of units structure. Both series present a lot of new lexis (single words and MWU, isolated and in context) with few controlled exercises to support it. As a result, both are considered sharply-graded. In this sense the *Focus on Vocabulary* series is deemed to be less sharply-graded as sufficient amount of practice is offered in the form of a text for reading and various exercises of less controlled character. Moreover, due to the advanced level of the books in the *Focus on Vocabulary* series more attention is paid to collocations, though initially all vocabulary is presented in isolation in the form of a table. The first two series exhibit two more features in common, namely an extensive use of pictures to present new words and a recommendation to use a dictionary. The latter finding contrasts with the insights gained during the external evaluation where at least a few VLS were found to be recommended. Consequently, the next chapter will be devoted to the discussion of the results obtained in the course of both types of evaluation, i.e. external and internal.

5. Results and discussion

*Confident teachers treat textbooks as a resource
rather than a script regardless of their design.*
(Tomlinson 2012: 272)

Chapter 5 collects insights gained through the external and internal evaluations conducted in the previous chapter and will provide answers in line with the list of pre-selected criteria that served as a basis for the general evaluation of the vocabulary textbooks.

5.1. External evaluation results

The external evaluation was performed around a list of questions answers to which were obtained by means of analyzing the table of contents, the introductory part as well as units specifically designed for VLS instruction. In other words, the focus was on the general structure of the books in the series as well as the initial recommendations regarding vocabulary learning, VLS and their instruction.

The findings reflect the general tendency of the global books to resemble each other in terms of structure, amount of vocabulary and its classification with the only difference in the focus either on general English as in the *English Vocabulary in Use* series and the *Oxford Word Skills* series or on academic English as in the *Focus on Vocabulary* books. The series also exhibit similarity in the choice of topics, thus, proving existence of certain conventions of topics choice. Due to limited space, the authors of the books try to squeeze in as much new vocabulary as possible in each unit. As a result, there is often no balance between the amount of new vocabulary and the number of exercises available in each unit. This leads to impeded recycling if students have no further opportunities to encounter the new lexis. The only exception is the *Focus on Vocabulary* series which cannot be reproached for lacking such balance. In any case all of the three series insist on regular revision of new words and phrases as "anyone knows who has tried to commit a great number of facts to memory, rehearsal at regular intervals is much more effective than massive rehearsal at infrequent intervals" (Coady & Huckin 1997: 219).

Finally, the external evaluation has revealed the fact that less than half of the

theoretically existing VLS are available for practice in the textbooks. First of all, no social strategies were found at this stage of evaluation, few determination, cognitive and metacognitive ones were present while memory strategies turned out to be among the most frequently recommended VLS. However, the incomplete representation of the first three groups of strategies should not be misleading as all of the three series cherish the same VLS from those groups, namely dictionary use, a vocabulary notebook, vocabulary cards and regular revision. It is only the *Focus on the Vocabulary* series that provides the widest range of VLS, though also with stronger preferences for dictionary use, the Keyword Method and vocabulary cards. At the same time it can be concluded that the *English Vocabulary in Use* series as well as the *Oxford Word Skills* are easier to use in case of self-study while the *Focus on Vocabulary* series is likely to be used in classroom as it might require a teacher's help due to an affluent theoretical outflow.

The close-cut selection of VLS by the authors of the three series hints at two possible conclusions. On the one hand, these are the most researched strategies which are widely used by both teachers and learners. In other words, they are the VLS that "work". On the other hand, reluctance to incorporate other VLS can be explained by absence of research on their effectiveness in real use.

5.2. Internal evaluation results

The goals of the internal evaluation were also summed up in the form of a list of questions to be answered exploring a unit per book. Many issues and observations specifically related to vocabulary presentation and practice deserve a comment. First, the results suggest that all the series chose the PPP approach, i.e. presentation, practice and free production of new vocabulary. However, differences persist, for example, the *English Vocabulary in Use* series use only two Ps from this model providing controlled exercises and ignoring free production stage. The *Oxford Word Skills* series seems to be more flexible in this sense providing exercises that are aimed at making the new lexis more personalized. The *Focus on Vocabulary* series uses exercises already at the first stage of presentation with subsequent practice and free production later in the chapter.

A second observation about vocabulary involves mostly isolated presentation of new vocabulary items in the *English Vocabulary in Use* series, more contextualized

presentation thereof in the *Oxford Word Skills* books while the *Focus on Vocabulary* series provides them both as a table of isolated items and in context as part of a text for reading. As a result, it can be assumed that the *English Vocabulary in Use* series is more appropriate for people who already have knowledge of English but it requires revision or systematization. The *Focus on Vocabulary* series is also meant for those who already left the initial stages of learning behind but in contrast to the *English Vocabulary in Use* series, it is aimed at increasing and deepening this knowledge with the ultimate target of attaining higher proficiency.

A third general observation on the internal evaluation results is directed at VLS suggested in the units in question. The *English Vocabulary in Use* series was disappointing in this case as the only recommendation provided in the units was to use a dictionary. The units for the *Oxford Word Skills* series did not provide plenty of VLS either, the only tip was to test oneself using the cover card. The chapters from the *Focus on Vocabulary* series were more promising in this sense as one concentrated specifically on the strategy use (cf. table 20) while the other promoted dictionary use, cooperation with a partner and reflection on relations between words as well as raising awareness about a better or more effective organization of one's learning process.

Finally, the *Focus on Vocabulary* series is the only one that takes into consideration the necessity to deal with various aspects of word knowledge (cf. table 3) which can be explained by the advanced level of the series. It provides sufficient information not only on the form and meaning, but also includes the aspects of use through placing new vocabulary items in context. The *English Vocabulary in Use* series provides some units to illustrate grammatical functions and includes word collocations in its units but mostly in an isolated way which entails the necessity to use other sources of vocabulary practice. As for the *Oxford Word Skills,* they are focused primarily on the aspects of form and meaning with rare stylistical comments. Like the *English Vocabulary in Use* the series lacks sufficient vocabulary practice.

5.3. Discussion of evaluation results

Besides internal and external evaluations, the study also comprised a list of criteria which can be answered at this final stage of research.

Table 21 Answers to the list of general evaluation criteria

Criterion	Answer
1. Briefly state the objectives of the material.	The main objective declared in the series under investigation is vocabulary enlargement. In addition, the *Focus on Vocabulary* series also posits a goal of VLS instruction.
2. To what extent is it successful in achieving these objectives?	The *English Vocabulary in Use* series and the *Oxford Word Skills* series seem to fulfil the main objective only partially as after presenting a lot of new items they provide very few exercises to ensure good retention. In its turn, the *Focus on Vocabulary* series can reach their goal only in case of being used in class with a teacher. Detailed theoretical background cannot be considered motivating for self-study.
3. Note particular strengths.	The first two series manifest high degree of structural transparency, attractive use of colour and images which result in user-friendliness. The third series is remarkable for its balance between amount of vocabulary and number of exercises, which provide numerous encounters with new words in various contexts.
4. Note particular weaknesses.	The *English Vocabulary in Use* series is overloaded with new lexis which is not given sufficient practice. Moreover, the new vocabulary is mainly presented as isolated items. The *Focus on Vocabulary* in Use can be less motivating for self-study.
5. Are there any notable omissions?	The *English Vocabulary in Use* and the *Focus on Vocabulary* series lack media components.
6. For what type of learning	The *English Vocabulary in Use* books are unsuitable

situations is the material (un)suitable?	for beginners or for classroom use. The *Focus on Vocabulary* series is unlikely to be favoured by autonomous learners and would be most beneficial if used in classroom. The *Oxford Word Skills* series can be considered a golden mean in terms of its use.
7. What are learner roles?	The *English Vocabulary in Use* series as well as the *Oxford Word Skills* position learners as active ones implying little help or its total absence on behalf of a teacher.
8. What are teacher roles?	The *Focus on Vocabulary* series expects that both a teacher and learners take an active role in the learning process.
9. Comparisons with any other material evaluated.	Yes, see above.
10. General conclusion.	To be drawn in the final chapter of this paper.

All in all, the aim of this Master thesis was to try to answer the following research questions:

1. Which vocabulary is presented in the vocabulary textbooks?

2. What VLS are advised/favoured in the vocabulary textbooks?

3. To what extent is there a correlation between theoretical underpinnings of vocabulary learning and practical application of vocabulary learning strategies in the vocabulary textbooks?

4. Which role is given to repetition?

5. Are these textbooks learner- or teacher-oriented?

Answering the first question, it should be noted that, according to Laufer (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 141), "though vocabulary is not a closed rule-governed system like grammar, it is nevertheless subject to certain regularities". That is why different possibilities of vocabulary classification were presented which found reflection in textbooks in terms of division of their vocabulary into general English and academic English. Furthermore, at least two of the three series (*English Vocabulary in Use* and *Oxford Word Skills*) seem to acknowledge the fact that "all words in English are

not equally valuable" (Nation 2001: 301) and are in agreement with Nation that "[h]igher frequency words are much more useful than low-frequency words" as "there is a very good return for the time and learning effort spent on high-frequency words" (Nation 2001: 301). The *Focus on Vocabulary* series postulates that students already know high-frequency vocabulary and aims at teaching mostly academic vocabulary.

However, the main problem with vocabulary classification is MWU due to inconsistency "what should be classified as a collocation" (Nation 2001: 317). The process of vocabulary learning is already complicated at the level of a word as "[t]here is no single process of learning a word ...[r]ather these processes are logically, psychologically, and pedagogically separable" (Schmitt & McCarthy 1997: 123). At the level of MWU it becomes even more tangled. On the one hand, there is "still little research on how vocabulary knowledge grows and how different kinds of encounters with words contribute to vocabulary knowledge" (Nation 2001: 4). On the other hand, it is clear that "[t]he object of vocabulary learning is to transfer the lexical information from the short-term memory, where it resides during the process of manipulating language, to the more permanent long-term memory" (Schmitt 2000: 131). But due to STM small storage capacity, chunking becomes very important as its main advantage is "reduced processing time" and, as a result, speed (Nation 2001: 320). If the view of collocational knowledge serving as "important building blocks in language use and language learning" (Nation 2001: 333) and as "the basis of language learning and use" is accepted "then all collocational sequences, both regular and idiomatic, are important for learning with the most frequent ones being the most important" (Nation 2001: 321-323). Thus, MWU cannot be ignored in English vocabulary learning and teaching but are not given particular attention in the series except for the *Focus on Vocabulary* series.

The complexity is created by the fact that in the case of MWU and chunking, the latter "can develop in two directions: memorised unanalysed chunks can be later analysed, or smaller chunks can be grouped into larger chunks" (Nation 2001: 319). That is, MWU, besides being learned as fixed expressions, can be split into separate words each of them also disposing of numerous aspects to be learned.

On the global scale of EFL, "[t]he alternative to chunking is rule based processing" (Nation 2001: 320) which is usually more applicable to grammar rules. Schmitt (2000: 127) sums it up as follows:

In language acquisition, learning seems to take place in two ways:

1. Items learning: learning individual units
2. System learning: learning the system or "rules".
Lexical chunks clearly fall into the category of item learning.

Since finding "more economical ways to package information" (Miller 1956: 132) seems to be the only alternative in case of vocabulary learning and teaching, VLS instruction can be considered a useful tool for such information reorganization. The history has illustrative examples of better information organization winning over worse information organization, for instance, "[t]he superiority of the Arabic over the Roman notation for numbers" (Miller 1956: 132), the former are easier to process compared to their Roman counterparts.

To answer the second question, it can be said that according to Schmitt (2000: 132), the most "[c]ommonly used VLS seem to be simple memorization, repetition, and taking notes on vocabulary". Of course, those findings were partially influenced by the context (Japanese university students) but this affirmation seems to correspond to the findings obtained within the scope of the current research which can also add dictionary use and vocabulary cards as other common VLS. In other words, though in theory there are a lot of tools available in the literature on vocabulary learning and teaching only few of them are suggested for use in practice. Moreover, it seems that publishers prefer to choose well-known and common ones maybe to avoid additional explanations and inclusion of new untried VLS in good-selling materials. Though the authors of the *Focus on Vocabulary* series seem to be trying to change this vector in EFL publishing and redirect it to a more willing incorporation of the current research on vocabulary acquisition.

However, it is worth keeping in mind that VLS belong to explicit or intentional learning which should always go hand in hand with implicit or incidental learning to maximize the effect (Schmitt 2000: 121). That can be explained by the fact that "some kinds of word knowledge are particularly responsive to either explicit or incidental" (Schmitt 2000: 122). Thus, collocation knowledge can be taught explicitly (as done in the *Focus on Vocabulary* series) but it requires numerous encounters with a word in different contexts (i.e. implicit learning) to develop "intuitions for collocation" (Schmitt 2000: 122). Furthermore, theory holds that "in so far as surface forms of basic concrete words are concerned, then explicit learning may be more likely to help; in so far as the semantic, discoursal and structural properties of less frequent, more abstract words are concerned, then implicit learning may be more likely to help" (Carter 1998: 204).

As we remember the research suggests that "it is preferable to think in terms of continua from explicit to implicit and from implicit to explicit, and to continue to direct research at points along such continua" (Carter 1998: 204). The analyzed textbooks were rather polar in this respect and only partially included certain theoretical findings forgetting that the use of variety of VLS "can transform the vocabulary learning task from uninspired drudgery into newfound delight" (Coady & Huckin 1997: 220).

As already discussed earlier in this paper, many researchers praise the benefits of explicit education as it is this kind of learning that most textbooks provide to their users. Explicit instruction is thought to accelerate the leaning tempo serving as a facilitator. In the context of this thesis explicit vocabulary instruction and strategy instruction are the main focus, the former Hedge (2000: 133) calls "useful" and the latter is considered as "necessary" (Oxford 2011a: 175). Psychological studies also support beneficial effect of explicit instruction as "[s]tudies of very long-term memory show that the results of deliberate learning persist over several years" (Nation 2001: 299). However, it should not be forgotten that "[l]ong-term memory has an almost unlimited storage capacity but is relatively slow" (Schmitt 2000: 131). This results in a "delayed effect of instruction" (Ellis 1990: 168) which textbook writers should bear in mind. Answering the third research question, it can be concluded that only the authors of the *Focus on Vocabulary* series seem to remember about it.

To sum up, Nation (2001: 316) claims that direct learning has the following advantages:

- Direct deliberate learning is faster and stronger than incidental learning.
- Direct learning can help incidental learning [...]
- Learners differ greatly in their skill at direct learning. Training is likely to reduce these differences.

Moreover, training should take into account that different learners opt for different learning styles and different strategies. To be specific, "at more advanced levels reading can be essential for vocabulary development; at beginning levels, strategies of rote memorization, bilingual translation and glossing can be valuable in assisting learning of, for example, the phonetic and graphological shapes and patterns of words" (Carter 1998: 2014). The necessity for explicit VLS instruction is acknowledged, again, only by the authors of the *Focus on Vocabulary* series.

For instance, Tomlinson (1998: 1) suggests that published materials should undergo systematic evaluations to consider "the potential applications of current

research into second language acquisition". Moreover, he claims that we should "make more use of what we know about language learning in the development of materials" if we think that it "can facilitate language learning" (Tomlinson 1998: 342).

It is common knowledge that repetition can facilitate language learning and has always been considered the mother of studies. Its role can hardly be underestimated because "if consolidation is not pursued, the initial learning may all be in vain" (Coady & Huckin 1997: 287). Research on effective vocabulary learning and teaching provides learners and teachers with three basic principles in relation to repetition or, alternatively, recycling: spaced repetition, sufficient practice and adequate depth of processing which were described in detail earlier in this paper.

Spaced repetition is classified as a VLS and all of the books in the series provide learners and teachers with some general guidelines in this respect. Unfortunately, sufficient practice cannot be ensured within the scope of those books as it would require more material to be included in those textbooks and will make them too bulky and inconvenient for everyday use. However, unlike the other two series the *Focus on Vocabulary* series solves this problem by providing reading activities and advice on additional practice. The research shows that "systematic vocabulary instruction in addition to learning through reading is a more successful approach than simply learning through context alone" (Coady & Huckin 1997: 288). As vocabulary acquisition is an incremental process, "it requires five to sixteen or more repetitions for a word to be learned (Schmitt 2000: 137).

Finally, the principle of adequate depth of processing can be implemented through exercises. However, in practice not all publishers seem to risk deviating from controlled exercises and most of the exercises presented in the series are of shallow processing as they do not involve the learner emotionally and are far from triggering his/her interest being mainly recognition or interpretation exercises. The most flexible in this sense proved to be the *Focus on Vocabulary* series, as the two books include a high proportion of production exercises.

The three principles are equally applicable to learning both words and collocations (Coady & Huckin 1997: 287). In case of explicit vocabulary learning "recycling has to be consciously built into the study program" (Schmitt 2000: 137). Moreover, Schmitt (2000: 137) insists that "explicit teaching is probably essential for the most frequent words of any L2, because they are prerequisites for language use" as

"learning of these basic words cannot be left to chance, but should be taught as quickly as possible, because they open to the door to further learning".

The fifth research question was aimed at deciding whether the textbooks in questions are learner- or teacher-oriented. The introductions of the three series tend to be addressed both to learners and to teachers irrespective of proficiency level. However, subsequent analysis revealed slight deviations of the series orientation from the one claimed in the introduction. Another criticism that was expressed in this thesis was the fact that teachers and students "are repeatedly positioned as customers" (Gray 2010: 191) and are expected to follow the presented guidelines from A to Z. Yet, the current study has shown that the publishers do not incorporate much of the research results obtained in the area of effective vocabulary learning and teaching. That is why, it would be sometimes sound to "widen and deepen the scope of the ELT materials literature, but also to challenge the structures within which we operate" (Gray 2010: 191). However, the theory considers almost all classifications in terms of a continuum which inevitably leads to a compromise. The same seems to hold true for the learner- and teacher-orientation of the books. Publishers no longer consider them as mutually exclusive poles but rather as an orientation placed on a continuum where the vector can change its direction both to cater for the needs of a classroom with a teacher and to meet the requirements of autonomous learners.

To be exact, it can be concluded that irrespective of the introduction addressed to both a learner and a teacher, there is a feeling that the *English Vocabulary in Use* series looks simpler to use and, hence, are more adaptable for self-learning. As the books lack sufficient recycling, it can be recommended to use them in case somebody wants to brush up on their English. For the purpose of the first-time encounter it is deemed inappropriate. In the latter case it is more advisable to use the *Oxford Word Skills* series as its three books, being very learner-friendly (e.g. "I can" wording used in the titles of the units), provide more opportunities for recycling both in the number and types of exercises as well as through the use of a cover card. As for the *Focus on Vocabulary* in Use books, they seem more useful for classroom use. Overloaded with theoretical material and explanations, they will be more welcome in class so that the teacher could explain and help to implement those theoretical positions lavishly available in the books.

At this point the discussion of the evaluation results can be deemed as finalised and a few words should be said about the limitations of the current study and

suggestions for future research.

5.4. Limitations of current study and suggestions for future research

Like any research this one is not without its limitations and further suggestions. To begin with, the study was carried out as a pre-use evaluation while the same research could also be conducted as a whilst-use evaluation, i.e. with particular learners in mind and "therefore focused on awareness and description of what the learners are actually doing whilst the materials are being used" (Tomlinson 1998: xi). The same holds true for the post-use evaluation which can be undertaken after the use of such materials and "therefore focused on awareness analysis of what happened as a result of using the materials" (Tomlinson 1998: xi). Furthermore, the research can be enriched by means of selecting more units per book as well as through checking appropriateness of the materials in question for a particular learning/teaching situation.

Thus, a group of particular learners in mind would allow to check how much their individual differences interfere in the learning and teaching process (e.g. L1, proficiency level, etc.) as few studies have been focused on such differences "in the use and application of learning strategies, and none of the research has investigated strategy training with students of English as a second language" (Wenden & Rubin 1987: 134). Nevertheless, there are points of view that "although there is a lot of individual variation across learners, teaching them vocabulary learning strategies is essential" in any case (Coady & Huckin 1997: 277).

It would also be practical to conduct a study that would explore which principles of VLS teaching are working both in relation to new words and to "reinforcing an *existing* lexical stock" (Carter 1998: 213) since little research has been done for the latter. Moreover, Hedge (2000: 125) claims that "[i]t would be useful to have information from classroom studies as to which teaching procedures seem to enhance particular learning strategies and which strategies are effective for which aspects of vocabulary learning". In this connection, it is worth enumerating the "tentative" principles that, according to Hedge (2000: 125-138), are used in everyday teaching practice:

1. Developing a variety of techniques for the teaching of meaning.
2. Encouraging the development of effective strategies.
3. Exposing learners to vocabulary through reading and training lexical inferencing.
4. Teaching the effective use of dictionaries.

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5. Evaluating the vocabulary component of coursebooks.
6. Teaching vocabulary explicitly through a range of activity types.
7. Developing resources for vocabulary teaching.

The above principles constitute only the top of a VLS iceberg. Due to "the complexities of learning the English lexicon" (Hedge 2000: 138) more research is required in the areas both of the theory of vocabulary acquisition (related to the theory of brain functioning) and on the use of VLS and their effectiveness for different types of learners (cf. table 4). In the past a lot of research attention was paid to grammar instruction, nowadays, due to increased importance of the vocabulary component in EFL learning and teaching extensive research is required in the area of vocabulary instruction as "it has not reached the level of consistency and systematicity that grammar teaching enjoys" (Hedge 2000: 138).

6. Conclusion

> *Words and phrases are essential to language learning.*
> *The only real issue is the best manner in which to acquire them.*
>
> (Coady & Huckin 1997: 287)

The current study was in line with the recent tendency of "a more extensive reinstatement of *vocabulary* as a justifiably separate domain in language teaching" (Carter 1998: 241). Admittedly, there are many factors to be taken into consideration in this case as "much depends on learning context and purposes" (Carter 1998: 240). Nevertheless, an attempt was made to draw on the theory available on L2 vocabulary acquisition and VLS instruction and to see how much of that theory and knowledge about human brain functioning and about the English lexical system is included and used in the modern textbooks on learning and teaching vocabulary as part of EFL learning and teaching.

As seen, the theoretical conclusions are not without its limitations and complexities as "the human organism was not designed for the convenience of the researchers" (Miller 1956: 136). However, most of the information that is available on the issue is often placed on a continuum to reflect the incremental nature of vocabulary acquisition. For that purpose mostly qualitative methodology was used in this research with minor inclusion of quantitative data believed to "maximise strengths and minimise weaknesses" (Dörnyei 2007: 167) of the current study. Five research questions were posed.

The source of data consisted of nine EFL textbooks belonging to three vocabulary series, the *English Vocabulary in Use* series of four books, the *Oxford Word Skills* of three books and the *Focus on Vocabulary* of two books. The evaluation procedure was split into general evaluation based on the list of pre-selected criteria and was supported by the external and internal evaluation results.

In accordance with the external evaluation results all the three series seem to show many similarities in the purpose of use (both classroom and self-study), vocabulary presentation (isolated and in context), recycling and progression (linear). However, the *Focus on Vocabulary* series, though demonstrating similarities on the face of it, tends to provide, for instance, more recycling and is more focused on VLS instruction. This impression of the *Focus in Vocabulary* series was confirmed by the

internal evaluation results. The unit analysis (one unit per book) proved more similarity between the *English Vocabulary in Use* series and the *Oxford Word Skills* than between the two series and the third one, the *Focus on Vocabulary* series. While the first two series provide a lot of new vocabulary items without sufficient exercises, the *Focus on Vocabulary* series takes time to practise the introduced lexis in various exercises taking into consideration numerous aspects of word knowledge.

The evaluation findings provided basis for answers to the five research questions. Thus, the most frequently advised VLS were found to be the use of dictionaries, memorisation, keeping a vocabulary notebook and revision of the vocabulary over time. To put it another way, the current EFL vocabulary textbooks do not incorporate much of the research on vocabulary acquisition. This might be due to the publishers' desire to avoid risks in case of good-selling global materials. That is why it can be concluded that the current vocabulary learning and teaching materials need to be evaluated on a regular basis. Moreover, it seems to be a long way to go until the publishers start using the whole spectrum of VLS. Of course, no materials (especially those aimed at the global market) can ideally match all the needs of particular learners or teachers but it can hardly be denied that "[g]ood teaching materials should [...] inspire both teacher and students" (Cunningsworth 1986: 65) and that "enthusiasm is contagious" (Lomb 2008: xx).

In the end it can be said that even though there has been a considerable progress in the development of English vocabulary learning and teaching materials, it "will continue to be limited to some extent by the scope of vocabulary-acquisition research" (Carter 1998: 239). Hence, bearing in mind that vocabulary learning is "an organic rather than linear process" (Carter; Nunan 2001: 91), more research is required in the field to answer pending questions. In the meantime Cunningsworth (1986: 33) provides the following wise advice:

> We should never hinder our students' learning by holding dogmatically and exclusively to one strategy or the other. Teaching is a pragmatic process and we should use whatever method brings the best results.

To conclude, I would like to say that L2 learners often consider a new language as a citadel which should be attacked from different sides. The vocabulary aspect can seem to be a difficult target, being part of this impregnable fortress. But if the learner is a smart warrior equipped with strategical knowledge, in the end he/she will be able to capture the fortress, thus expanding his/her domain.

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Abstract

Starting from the 1980s the topic of L2 vocabulary acquisition and instruction gained momentum in the SLA research. The goal of this Master thesis is to provide theoretical overview of such research on EFL vocabulary learning and teaching, in general, and on vocabulary learning strategies (VLS), in particular, and juxtapose its insights against practical applications thereof in the modern global textbooks. The theoretical overview has revealed the complex nature of L2 vocabulary learning and teaching due to numerous aspects to be taken into account (e.g. notion of vocabulary, aspects of word knowledge, different classifications of vocabulary and of VLS, psychological processes involved in vocabulary learning and teaching, individual differences of learners, etc.). The source of data consists of three EFL vocabulary textbook series, namely *English Vocabulary in Use* (4 books), *Oxford Word Skills* (3 books) and *Focus on Vocabulary* (2 books). In terms of methodology the current study is predominantly qualitative and is aimed at evaluating the above vocabulary series on the basis of a pre-selected checklist of evaluation criteria. Evaluation judgments have been made in accordance with the results yielded during the external evaluation of all books in the series and during the internal evaluation of one unit per book. The findings of this study demonstrate that writers of the EFL vocabulary textbooks in question seem to be aware of the current research but are cautious, though to a varying degree, to incorporate only a small part of the existing SLA research on vocabulary, VLS and teaching thereof into these textbooks.

Keywords: SLA, vocabulary, L2 vocabulary acquisition, L2 vocabulary instruction, EFL vocabulary learning, EFL vocabulary teaching, vocabulary learning strategies (VLS), global textbooks, EFL vocabulary textbooks, English Vocabulary in Use, Oxford Word Skills, Focus on Vocabulary, evaluation, external evaluation, internal evaluation

Zusammenfassung

Beginnend in den 1980er Jahren has das Thema der L2 Vokabel Akquisition und Unterricht Fahrt im Bereich SLA Forschung aufgenommen. Das Ziel dieser Masterarbeit ist es einen theoretischen Überblick über die Forschung im Bereich EFL Vokabeltraining und Unterricht im Allgemeinen und für die Strategien zum Erlernen von Vokabel (VLS) im Speziellen zu verschaffen und die Erkenntnisse daraus der praktischen Anwendung in modernen globalen Lehrbüchern gegenüberzustellen. Der theoretische Überblick beschreibt die komplexe Natur des Erlernen und der Lehre der L2 Vokabel, die sich auf das Zusammenspiel einer Vielzahl von Aspekten zurückführen lässt (wie z.B. die Auffassung der Vokabel, Aspekte der Wortkenntnis, unterschiedliche Klassifikation der Vokabel und von VLS, psychologische Prozesse, die für den Lern- und Unterrichtsprozess relevant sind, individuelle Unterschiede der SchülerInnen usw.). Die für den empirischen Teil verwendete Datensammlung besteht aus drei Lehrbuchserien zu EFL Vokabel, nämlich „English Vocabulary in Use" (4 Bücher), „Oxford Word Skills" (3 Bücher) und „Focus on Vocabulary" (2 Bücher). Die Methodik der aktuellen Studie ist hauptsächlich qualitativ. Die Auswertung der oben gennanten Vokabellehrbuchserien basiert auf einer vorausgewählten Checkliste von Evaluationskriterien und zielt auf Resultaten ab, die sich aus der externen Evaluation aller Bücher der Serien und der internen Evaluation jedes einzelnen Buches (ein Unit per Buch) ergeben. Die Erkenntnisse der Studie zeigen, dass die AutorInnen der angeführten EFL Vokabellehrbücher sich aktueller Studien bewusst sind, aber nur teilweise bzw. in Ansätzen und unterschiedlicher Ausprägung, einen kleinen Teil der bestehenden SLA Forschungsarbeit zum Thema Vokabel bzw. VLS und die Lehre davon in die Lehrbücher integrieren.

Lebenslauf

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