

**THE PATTERNS OF VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES  
EMPLOYED BY EFL LEARNERS AT JORDAN UNIVERISTY  
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA  
2013**

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**A thesis submitted to the School of Education and Modern  
Languages, College of Arts and Sciences in the fulfilment of the  
requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Applied  
Linguistics**

**UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA  
2013**

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## Abstrak

Beberapa faktor telah didapati untuk diambil kira dalam penggunaan strategi pembelajaran perbendaharaan kata. Walau bagaimanapun, kajian sebelum ini yang telah dijalankan ke atas corak strategi pembelajaran perbendaharaan kata yang digunakan oleh pelajar Jordan menunjukkan faktor ini yang mungkin menjejaskan penggunaan tersebut. Kajian ini bertujuan menyelidiki pola strategi pembelajaran yang berkaitan dengan gender, kefasihan bahasa, program akademik dan pengalaman pelajar Universiti Sains dan Teknologi di Jordan (JUST) dalam pengajaran strategi pembelajaran kosa kata. Kajian ini melibatkan penyertaan 738 orang pelajar sarjana muda JUST daripada tiga buah fakulti iaitu perubatan, kejuruteraan dan pertanian. Instrumen penyelidikan yang digunakan ialah soal selidik strategi yang diambil daripada kajian Schmitt pada tahun 1997 iaitu mengenai taksonomi pembelajaran kosa kata dan temu duga semi struktur. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa pelajar universiti Jordan menggunakan strategi pada tahap sederhana. Strategi '*determination*' merupakan strategi yang paling banyak dipilih untuk digunakan berbanding strategi kognitif yang paling kurang digunakan. Di samping itu, kajian ini meneliti hubungan kait di antara pengajaran strategi metakognitif dan pembelajaran kosa kata oleh pelajar JUST yang dijalankan selama 10 minggu dalam satu program latihan. Ujian yang dibuat oleh Nation pada tahun 1990 menggunakan soalan aneka pilihan untuk pengetahuan kosa kata adalah berdasarkan. Seramai 60 orang pelajar telah mengikuti eksperimen. Setiap kelas mempunyai 30 orang pelajar telah menerima pengajaran eksperimen mengenai strategi metakognitif dan satu kelas yang lain (*control group*) yang mempunyai jumlah pelajar yang sama telah menerima latihan konvensional. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan kumpulan eksperimen lebih menonjol pencapaiannya di dalam pascaujian latihan kosa kata berbanding kumpulan kawalan. Dapatan kajian juga memberikan implikasi pedagogi kepada guru bahasa Inggeris dan pereka kurikulum yang seterusnya memberi manfaat kepada kefahaman strategi pembelajaran bahasa dalam kalangan pelajar universiti di Jordan.

**Kata kunci:** Strategi pembelajaran kosa kata, Strategi metakognitif, Gender, Kefasihan bahasa, Program akademik

## Abstract

Several factors have been found to account for the use of vocabulary learning strategies (VLS). However, few studies have been conducted on the patterns of VLS used by Jordanian students and the factors that might affect such use. This study investigates the patterns of vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) used by students at Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) in relation to their gender, language proficiency, academic major, and previous vocabulary learning strategies instruction. The participants of this study were 738 undergraduate students from 3 faculties: Medicine, Engineering, and Agriculture at JUST. The research instruments were a strategy questionnaire adopted from Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy for vocabulary learning, and semi-structured interviews. The findings indicated that Jordanian university students used a medium range of strategies. Determination strategies were the most preferred strategies whereas cognitive strategies were the least frequently used strategies. Language proficiency and previous VLSs instruction had significant influences on the overall strategy use, while gender and academic major did not affect the overall strategy use of EFL Jordanian university students. In addition, the present study examines the relationship between metacognitive strategies instruction and vocabulary learning of JUST students through a 10 week training program. Tests based on Nation's multiple-choice test of vocabulary knowledge (1990) were used in this study. A total of 60 students participated in the experiment; one class of 30 which received metacognitive strategies instruction formed the experimental group; the other class of 30 students which received normal training comprised the control group. The results indicated that the experimental group surpassed the control group in the post-training vocabulary test. The findings of this study provide some pedagogical implications for English teachers and curriculum designers which could be beneficial to understand the VLSs currently employed by Jordanian university students.

**Keywords:** Vocabulary learning strategies, Metacognitive strategies, Gender, Language proficiency, Academic program.

## **Acknowledgments**

Praise to Allah the Almighty, Creator and Sustainer of the universe, and prayers and blessings are sent on His Prophet, the seal of all prophets and the leader of the righteous servants. First and foremost, I should thank Allah who has endowed me with all I needed to complete this work. The accomplishment of this thesis has depended on a number of people. I feel honored, hence, to be able to acknowledge and express my gratitude to them and those whom I cannot single out.

I would like to express an extensive gratitude to my supervisors: Dr. Ahmad Affendi Shabdin and Dr. Siti Jamilah Bidin. I'm grateful to them for their detailed, painstaking, and invaluable comments that made this thesis possible to be accomplished.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to Jordan University of science and technology for permission to conduct this study.

I would also like to thank my parents, my brothers, and my sister. They were always supporting and encouraging me with their best wishes.

Last but not least, heartfelt thanks to my wife "Sarah" who spent a great deal of time and effort to support and encourage me at every turn, celebrating my accomplishments with me.

## Table of Contents

<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>Permission to Use</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Abstrak</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	<b>xiii</b>
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>xvi</b>
<b>List of Appendices</b> .....	<b>xvii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction to the Chapter .....	1
1.2 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2.1 The History of English Language in Jordan .....	5
1.2.2 The Educational System in Jordan.....	7
1.2.2.1 Primary and Secondary Schools in Jordan .....	9
1.2.2.2 Higher Education in Jordan .....	10
1.2.2.3 Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) .....	12
1.3 Problem Statement .....	14
1.4 Research Purposes.....	20
1.5 Research Objectives .....	21
1.6 Research Questions .....	22
1.7 Significance of the Study .....	22
1.8 Scope of the Study .....	24
1.9 Conceptual Framework .....	25
1.10 Definition of Terms.....	27
1.11 Structure of the Thesis .....	28
<b>CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	<b>30</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	30
2.2 An Overview of English Language Learning .....	30
2.3 Theories on English Language Learning .....	32



2.3.1 Behaviorist Theory.....	33
2.3.2 Nativist Theory .....	34
2.3.3 Cognitive Development Theory.....	37
2.3.4 Emerginist Theory .....	39
2.3.5 Summary and Implications .....	41
2.4 English Language Learning Strategies (LLSs) .....	42
2.4.1 Definition of Language Learning Strategies.....	42
2.4.2 Classifications of Language Learning Strategies.....	47
2.4.3 Factors Affecting the Choice of Language Learning Strategies .....	51
2.4.3.1 Language Learning Strategies and Good Language Learners.....	53
2.4.3.2 Language Learning Strategies and Gender.....	58
2.4.3.3 Language Learning Strategies and Academic Major .....	62
2.5 English Vocabulary Learning .....	66
2.5.1 Vocabulary Learning Process .....	67
2.5.2 The Importance of Vocabulary .....	69
2.5.3 Vocabulary Learning Strategies.....	72
2.5.4 Definition of Vocabulary Learning Strategies.....	72
2.5.5 Classification of Vocabulary Learning Strategies .....	74
2.5.5.1 Cohen’s Taxonomy (1987; 1990).....	75
2.5.5.2 Rubin and Thompson’s Taxonomy (1994).....	76
2.5.5.3 Stoffer’s Taxonomy (1995) .....	78
2.5.5.4 Gu and Johnson’s Taxonomy (1996) .....	79
2.5.5.5 Lawson and Hogben’s Taxonomy (1996).....	80
2.5.5.6 Schmitt’s Taxonomy (1997).....	81
2.5.5.7 Weaver and Cohen’s Taxonomy (1997).....	86
2.5.5.8 Hedge’s Taxonomy (2000).....	88
2.5.5.9 Cook’s Taxonomy (2001).....	89
2.5.5.10 Decarrico’s Taxonomy (2001).....	90
2.5.5.11 Nation’s Taxonomy (2001, 2005) .....	91
2.5.5.12 Pemberton’s Taxonomy (2003).....	92
2.5.5.13 Intaraprasert’s Taxonomy (2004) .....	94
2.5.5.14 Summary.....	95

2.5.6 Metacognitive Strategies.....	97
2.5.6.1 Metacognitive Strategies and Vocabulary Learning .....	99
2.5.6.2 Models of Metacognitive Strategy Instruction .....	101
2.5.7 Factors Affecting the Choice of Vocabulary Learning Strategies .....	105
2.5.7.1 Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Gender .....	108
2.5.7.2 Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Academic Major .....	113
2.5.7.3 Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Previous Vocabulary Learning .....	117
2.5.7.4 Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Language Proficiency .....	119
2.5.8 Vocabulary Learning Strategies Instruction .....	125
2.5.9 Research Methods Used in Vocabulary Research .....	130
2.5.9.1 Oral Interview .....	131
2.5.9.2 Diary Studies .....	132
2.5.9.3 Think Aloud.....	133
2.5.9.4 Classroom Observation .....	134
2.5.9.5 Questionnaire.....	134
2.6 Summary .....	135
<b>CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>138</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	138
3.2 Research Design.....	139
3.3 Respondents of the Study.....	140
3.4 Research Instruments of the Study.....	141
3.5 The Pilot Study.....	142
3.5.1 Objectives of the Pilot Study .....	142
3.5.2 Respondents of the Pilot Study .....	143
3.5.3 Research Instruments of the Pilot Study .....	145
3.5.4 Research Procedures of the Pilot Study .....	147
3.5.5 Findings of the Pilot Study .....	148
3.5.6 Review of the Pilot Study .....	149
3.5.7 The Refinement of the Main Study.....	151
3.6 The Research Design for the Main Study .....	152
3.6.1 Respondents of the Main Study .....	152

3.6.2 Research Instruments of the Main Study .....	159
3.6.2.1 The Questionnaire.....	159
3.6.2.2 The Interview.....	161
3.6.2.3 Vocabulary Size Tests .....	161
3.6.3 Research Procedures of the Main Study .....	162
3.6.4 Data Analysis of the Main Study .....	167
3.7 Ethical Considerations .....	169
3.8 Summary .....	171
<b>CHAPTER FOUR FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>172</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	172
4.2 Vocabulary Learning Strategy Use Reported by all Respondents .....	173
4.2.1 Students' Overall Strategy Use .....	173
4.2.2 Students' Use of VLSs in the Five Categories .....	174
4.2.3 Interview Results of Using VLSs in the Five Categories .....	175
4.2.4 Individual Strategy Use for the Determination Category .....	176
4.2.5 Interview Results of the Individual Strategy Use for the Determination.	177
4.2.6 Individual Strategy Use for the Social Category .....	180
4.2.7 Interview Results of the Individual Strategy Use for the Social Category	
.....	181
4.2.8 Individual Strategy Use for the Memory Category.....	183
4.2.9 Interview Results of the Individual Strategy Use for the Memory Category	
.....	185
4.2.10 Individual Strategy Use for the Cognitive Category.....	188
4.2.11 Interview Results of the Individual Strategy Use for the Cognitive	
Category.....	189
4.2.12 Individual Strategy Use for the Metacognitive Category .....	190
4.2.13 Interview Results of the Individual Strategy Use for the Metacognitive	
Category.....	191
4.2.14 The 10 Most Employed Vocabulary Learning Strategies .....	193
4.2.15 The Interview Results of the 10 Most Employed VLSs .....	194
4.2.16 The 10 Least Employed Vocabulary Learning Strategies .....	195
4.2.17 The Interview Results of the 10 Least Employed VLSs.....	196

4.3 Discussion of the Findings for Questions Number One and Two .....	197
4.3.1 Students' Overall Strategy Use .....	198
4.3.2 Students' Use of VLSs in the Five Categories .....	198
4.3.3 Individual Strategy Use of Vocabulary Learning Strategies .....	201
4.3.3.1 Individual Strategy Use for the Determination Category .....	201
4.3.3.2 Individual Strategy Use for the Social Category .....	202
4.3.3.3 Individual Strategy Use for the Memory Category .....	203
4.3.3.4 Individual Strategy Use for the Cognitive Category .....	205
4.3.3.5 Individual Strategy Use for the Metacognitive Category .....	206
4.3.3.6 The 10 Most Frequently Used Vocabulary Learning Strategies .....	207
4.3.3.7 The 10 Least Frequently Used Vocabulary Learning Strategies .....	208
4.3.3.8 Discussion of the Interview Results .....	210
4.4 Variation in Students' Overall Vocabulary Learning Strategies Use .....	213
4.4.1 Variation in Students' Overall VLSs Use According to Gender .....	214
4.4.2 Interview Results of Overall VLSs Use According to Gender .....	215
4.4.3 Variation in Students' Overall VLSs According to Language Proficiency .....	216
4.4.4 Interview Results of Overall VLSs Use According to Language Proficiency .....	217
4.4.5 Variation in Students' Overall VLSs According to Academic Major .....	218
4.4.6 Interview Results of Overall VLSs Use According to Academic Major .....	219
4.4.7 Variation in Students' Overall VLSs Use According to Previous VLSs Instruction .....	219
4.4.8 Interview Results of Overall VLSs Use According to Previous VLSs Instruction .....	220
4.5. Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Categories .....	221
4.5.1 Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Main Categories According to Gender .....	222
4.5.2 Interview Results of Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Main Categories According to Gender .....	224
4.5.3 Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Main Categories According to Language Proficiency .....	225

4.5.4 Interview Results of Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Main Categories According to Language Proficiency .....	228
4.5.5 Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Main Categories According to Academic Major .....	229
4.5.6 Interview Results of Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Main Categories According to Academic Major .....	231
4.5.7 Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Main Categories According to Previous VLSs Instruction.....	232
4.5.8 Interview Results of Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Main Categories According to Previous VLSs Instruction.....	235
4.6 Variations of Individual Vocabulary Learning Strategy Use.....	236
4.6.1 Variations in Students' Individual Vocabulary Learning Strategies by Gender.....	237
4.6.2 Interview Results of the Variations in Students' Individual VLSs Use by Gender.....	238
4.6.3 Variations in Students' Individual VLSs by Language Proficiency .....	241
4.6.4 Interview Results of the Variations in Students' Individual VLSs Use by Language Proficiency .....	245
4.6.5 Variations in Students' Individual Vocabulary Learning Strategies by Academic Major .....	248
4.6.6 Interview Results of the Variations in Students' Individual VLSs Use by Academic Major .....	251
4.6.7 Variations in Students' Individual VLSs by Previous VLSs Instruction.....	255
4.6.8 Interview Results of the Variations in Students' Individual VLSs Use by Previous VLSs Instruction .....	258
4.7 Discussion of the Findings for Research Question Number Three.....	261
4.7.1 Variations in the VLSs Use and Gender .....	261
4.7.2 Variations in the VLSs Use and Language Proficiency.....	263
4.7.3 Variations in the VLSs Use and Academic Major.....	266
4.7.4 Variations in the VLSs Use and Previous VLSs Instruction .....	270
4.7.5 Discussion of the Interview Results.....	272
4.8 Results of the Metacognitive Strategies Instruction.....	273

4.9 Discussion of the Findings for Research Question Number Four.....	276
4.10 Summary .....	277
<b>CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>281</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	281
5.2 Background of the Participants .....	282
5.3 Review of the Findings .....	283
5.4 Pedagogical Implications of the Study.....	284
5.5 Strength of the Study.....	286
5.6 Limitations of the Study.....	287
5.7 Recommendations for Future Research Works .....	288
5.8 Concluding Remarks .....	290
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>292</b>

## List of Tables

Table 2.1: Summary of Some Theories of Language Learning .....	41
Table 2.2: Definitions of Language Learning Strategies .....	45
Table 2.3: Related Studies on Language Learning Strategies and Language Proficiency.....	57
Table 2.4: Related Studies on Language Learning Strategies and Gender .....	61
Table 2.5: Related Studies on Language Learning Strategies and Academic Major .....	65
Table 2.6: Definition of Vocabulary Learning Strategies .....	73
Table 2.7: Factors Affecting the Choice of Vocabulary Learning Strategies .....	106
Table 2.8: Related Studies on Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Gender .....	112
Proficiency .....	112
Table 2.9: Related Studies on Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Academic Major .....	116
Table 2.10: Related Studies on Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Previous Vocabulary Learning Strategies Instruction .....	119
Table 2.11: Related Studies on Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Language .....	123
Table 2.12: Related Studies on Vocabulary Learning Strategies Instruction .....	128
Table 3.1: Population's Background Details Summary .....	141
Table 3.2: Background of the Respondents Participated in Piloting the Questionnaire .....	143
Table 3.3: Background of the Respondents Participated in Piloting the Interview Questions .....	144
Table 3.4: Details of the Questionnaire .....	146
Table 3.5: Reliability Check of the Questionnaire.....	150
Table 3.6: Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling .....	153
Table 3.7: Background Details of the Respondents by Gender .....	154
Table 3.8: Background Details of the Respondents by Academic Major .....	154
Table 3.9: Background Details of the Respondents by Language Proficiency .....	155
Table 3.10: Background Details of the Respondents by Previous VLSs Instruction.....	155
Table 3.11: Background Details of the Interviewees by Gender .....	156
Table 3.12: Background Details of the Interviewees by Academic Major .....	156
Table 3.13: Background Details of the Interviewees by Language Proficiency .....	157
Table 3.14: Background Details of the Interviewees by Previous VLSs Instruction.....	157
Table 3.15: Advantages and Disadvantages of Quasi-Experimental Design.....	158
Table 3.16: Profile of the Students' Participated in the Quasi-Experimental Design.....	159
Table 4.1: Frequency Score of Students' Overall Use of VLSs .....	173
Table 4.2: Level of Using VLSs in the Five Categories .....	174

Table 4.3: Interview Results of the Overall Use of VLSs in the Five Categories .....	175
Table 4.4: The Level of Using Individual Determination Strategies .....	176
Table 4.5: Interview Results of the Individual Strategy Use for the Determination Category .....	177
Table 4.6: The Level of Using Individual Social Strategies .....	180
Table 4.7: Interview Results of the Individual Strategy Use for the Social Category .....	181
Table 4.8: The Level of Using Individual Memory Strategies .....	184
Table 4.9: Interview Results of the Individual Strategy Use for the Memory Category .....	185
Table 4.10: The Level of Using Individual Cognitive Strategies .....	188
Table 4.11: Interview Results of the Individual Strategy Use for the Cognitive Category .....	189
Table 4.12: The Level of Using Individual Metacognitive Strategies .....	191
Table 4.13: Interview Results of the Individual Strategy Use for the Metacognitive Category .....	191
Table 4.14: The 10 Most Employed Vocabulary Learning Strategies .....	193
Table 4.15: Interview Results of the 10 Most Employed VLSs .....	194
Table 4.16: The 10 Least Employed Vocabulary Learning Strategies .....	195
Table 4.17: Interview Results of the 10 Least Employed VLSs .....	196
Table 4.18: Overall Strategy Use According to Gender .....	214
Table 4.19: Independent Samples T -Test of Overall Strategy Use by Gender .....	215
Table 4.20: Interview Results of the Overall Strategy Use According to Gender .....	215
Table 4.21: Overall Strategy Use According to Language Proficiency .....	216
Table 4.22: Independent Samples Test of Overall Strategy Use by Language Proficiency .....	216
Table 4.23: Interview Results of the Overall Strategy Use According to Language Proficiency .....	217
Table 4.24: Overall Strategy Use According to Academic Major .....	218
Table 4.25: ANOVA Test of Overall Strategy Use by Academic Major .....	218
Table 4.26: Interview Results of the Overall Strategy Use According to Academic Major .....	219
Table 4.27: Overall Strategy Use According to Previous VLSs Instruction.....	220
Table 4.28: Independent Samples T- Test of Overall Strategy Use by Previous VLSs Instruction .....	220
Table 4.29: Interview Results of the Overall Strategy Use According to Previous VLSs Instruction .....	221
Table 4.30: Variation of Students' Use of VLSs in the Five Main Categories by Gender ..	222
Table 4.31: Independent Samples T- Test of Using VLSs in the Five Main Categories by Gender.....	223



Table 4.32: Interview Results of Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Main Categories According to Gender.....	225
Table 4.33: Variation of Students' Use of VLSs in the Five Main Categories According to Language Proficiency .....	226
Table 4.34: Independent samples T- Test of Using VLSs in the Five Main Categories by Language Proficiency .....	227
Table 4.35: Interview Results of Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Main Categories According to Language Proficiency .....	229
Table 4.36: Variation of Students' Use of VLSs in the Five Main Categories According to Academic Major.....	230
Table 4.37: Interview Results of Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Main Categories According to Academic Major.....	231
Table 4.38: Variation of Students' Use of VLSs in the Five Main Categories According to Previous Vocabulary Learning Strategies Instruction.....	233
Table 4.39: Independent Samples T- Test of Using VLSs in the Five Main Categories by Previous VLSs Instruction .....	234
Table 4.40: Interview Results of Variation in Students' Strategy Use in the Five Main Categories According to Previous VLSs Instruction .....	236
Table 4.41: Individual VLSs Used More Significantly by Male Students.....	237
Table 4.42: Individual VLSs Used More Significantly by Female Students .....	238
Table 4.43: Interview Results of the Variations in Students' Individual VLSs Use by Gender .....	239
Table 4.44: Individual VLSs Used Significantly by Language Proficiency .....	241
Table 4.45: Interview Results of the Variations in Students' Individual VLSs Use by Language Proficiency .....	245
Table 4.46: ANOVA Results of Individual VLSs Used Significantly by Academic Major	248
Table 4.47: Interview Results of the Variations in Students' Individual VLSs Use by Academic Major.....	251
Table 4.48: Individual VLSs Used Significantly by Previous VLSs Instruction.....	255
Table 4.49: Interview Results of the Variations in Students' Individual VLSs Use by Previous VLSs Instruction .....	258
Table 4.50: Means and Standard Deviation of the Vocabulary Pre-Test.....	274
Table 4.51: Results of the Independent Samples T-test in the Vocabulary Pre-Test.....	275
Table 4.52: Means and Standard Deviations of the Vocabulary Post-Test.....	275
Table 4.53: Results of the Independent Samples T-test in the Vocabulary Post-Test .....	276

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1.1: Kachru’s Taxonomy for English Status Worldwide.....	6
Figure 1.2: Conceptual Framework of the Study.....	26
Figure 2.1: Oxford’s LLS Classification (1990).....	51
Figure 2.2: Factors related to vocabulary learning strategies, and learning outcomes in past research works.....	107
Figure 3.1: Data collection stages.....	167

## **List of Appendices**

Appendix A: The VLSs Questionire (English Version).....	314
Appendix B: The VLSs Questionire (Arabic Version).....	317
Appendix C: The Interview Questions (English Version).....	321
Appendix D: The Interview Questions (Arabic Version).....	322
Appendix E: Interview Sample.....	323
Appendix F: Results of the Pilot Study.....	328
Appendix G: Nation's Vocabulary Size Test .....	332
Appendix H: Lesson Plan (Week 4).....	338
Appendix I: Lesson Plan (Weeks 5+6).....	339
Appendix J: Lesson Plan (Weeks 7+8).....	340
Appendix K: Lesson Plan (Weeks 9+10).....	341

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction to the Chapter**

This study focuses on the various patterns of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs) employed by English as a Foreign Language learners (EFL) at Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST). It also examines the influence of metacognitive strategies instruction on vocabulary learning among those students. Before proceeding to these purposes, it is worthy to present the context of this research. This chapter gives background information on the importance of VLSs, and it sheds lights on the issues related to English status and the educational system in Jordan. The statement of problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, the conceptual framework, and the definition of related terms are also discussed in this chapter. Finally, it describes the structure of the five chapters that comprise this thesis.

### **1.2 Background of the Study**

“Without grammar very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (Wilkins, 1972, p. 111). The previous statement stresses the importance of vocabulary in conveying meanings and expressing ideas. The knowledge of vocabulary is essential when using a second or foreign language due to the fact that one is unable to communicate with others without a sufficient amount of words. A

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