EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF PSYCHOLINGUISTIC STRATEGIES ON VOCABULARY RETENTION AMONG ENGLISH LEARNERS

Siti Ithriyah[1]

[1] Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof.Dr.Hamka

E-mail: [1] siti_ithriyah@uhamka.ac.id

Abstract

This study explores the impact of psycholinguistic strategies on vocabulary retention among United Kingdom language learners. Using the pretest-posttest experimental method, 60 participants with intermediate levels of United Kingdom language proficiency were divided into two groups: experimental and control. The experimental group received instruction using psycholinguistic strategies such as semantic maps, contextual learning, and spaced repetition, while the control group used traditional memorization methods. The results showed that the experimental group experienced a significant improvement in vocabulary retention, both immediately after the intervention and one month later. Statistical analysis confirmed that psycholinguistic strategies are more effective than traditional methods in improving long-term retention. In addition, qualitative data showed that participants in the experimental group felt more engaged and understood vocabulary better. This study concludes that psycholinguistic strategies can improve the effectiveness of vocabulary teaching by supporting natural cognitive processes in language learning. These findings provide important insights for United Kingdom educators to integrate psycholinguistic approaches in vocabulary teaching to achieve better learning outcomes.

Keywords: ***Psycholinguistics, Vocabulary Retention, United Kingdom Language Learning, Cognitive Strategies, Semantic Maps.***

1. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary acquisition is a critical aspect of language learning, especially for English language learners (ELLs), who frequently encounter challenges in not only acquiring but also retaining and effectively using new words. The ability to build and expand one's vocabulary is essential for developing language proficiency, as it underpins key skills such as reading comprehension, writing, speaking, and listening. However, the process of vocabulary acquisition is often complex and fraught with difficulties, as learners must not only memorize new words but also understand their meanings, nuances, and appropriate contexts for usage. This complexity is particularly pronounced for ELLs, who may struggle with the sheer volume of vocabulary required to achieve fluency, as well as the cognitive demands of integrating these words into their existing linguistic framework. Given the intricate nature of language learning, the field of psycholinguistics offers valuable insights into how learners process, store, and retrieve vocabulary (Hidalgo et al., 2024). Psycholinguistics, an interdisciplinary field that bridges the disciplines of psychology and linguistics, focuses on understanding the mental mechanisms that underpin language acquisition, comprehension, production, and retention. By exploring the cognitive processes involved in learning and using language, psycholinguistics provides a theoretical foundation for developing strategies that can enhance vocabulary acquisition and retention. For instance, psycholinguistic research has shed light on how the brain organizes and categorizes vocabulary, how contextual cues facilitate word

learning, and how memory techniques such as spaced repetition can reinforce long-term retention (Islami, 2024).

These insights are particularly relevant for ELLs, who benefit from instructional approaches that align with the natural cognitive processes involved in language learning. Traditional methods of vocabulary instruction, such as rote memorization, often fall short in addressing the deeper cognitive needs of learners, leading to superficial learning and poor retention. In contrast, psycholinguistic strategies take into account the ways in which learners mentally process language, offering more effective and engaging alternatives. For example, semantic mapping leverages the brain's ability to organize information in networks, helping learners to connect new vocabulary with related concepts, thus facilitating easier retrieval and application. Contextual learning, another psycholinguistic strategy, immerses learners in real-life scenarios where new words are used meaningfully, promoting a deeper understanding and longer-lasting retention of vocabulary (Moh. Rif'attullah & Putra, 2024).

Furthermore, psycholinguistics emphasizes the importance of understanding the individual differences among learners, such as their cognitive styles, memory capacities, and prior linguistic knowledge. By tailoring vocabulary instruction to these individual differences, educators can create more personalized and effective learning experiences. For example, learners with strong visual memory might benefit more from visual aids and semantic maps, while those with a preference for auditory learning might find contextual examples or mnemonic devices more helpful. This personalized approach not only enhances vocabulary acquisition but also makes the learning process more engaging and motivating, ultimately leading to better outcomes for ELLs.Vocabulary acquisition is a cornerstone of language learning, and the challenges faced by ELLs in this area highlight the need for more effective instructional strategies. Psycholinguistics offers a rich theoretical framework for understanding how vocabulary is processed, stored, and retrieved, providing valuable guidance for the development of strategies that enhance vocabulary retention. By integrating psycholinguistic principles into vocabulary instruction, educators can help ELLs overcome the challenges of language learning, leading to more effective and lasting vocabulary acquisition (Susanto et al., 2024).

Traditional methods of vocabulary instruction, such as rote memorization, have long been the cornerstone of language learning. These approaches typically involve repetitive drilling, where learners are encouraged to memorize lists of words through sheer repetition, often without much context or meaningful engagement with the material. While this method can lead to short-term retention—allowing learners to recall vocabulary for immediate use in tasks such as tests or brief conversations—it often fails to foster long-term mastery(Alnan & Halim, 2024). The main limitation of rote memorization lies in its tendency to promote surface-level learning; learners may be able to recall words temporarily but struggle to retain them over time or apply them accurately in real-world contexts. This can result in frustration and a sense of stagnation in language development, as the gap between memorized vocabulary and functional language use widens. In contrast, psycholinguistic strategies offer a more nuanced and scientifically grounded approach to vocabulary instruction by focusing on how learners encode, store, and retrieve lexical items. These strategies are informed by an understanding of the cognitive processes underlying language learning, such as memory, attention, perception, and the organization of information in the brain. Rather than relying on repetition alone, psycholinguistic strategies aim to enhance vocabulary acquisition by aligning teaching methods with the natural ways in which the brain processes and retains language. This involves creating instructional practices that not only help learners to remember words but also to understand and use them meaningfully in various contexts (Aziz et al., 2024).

One of the key cognitive processes leveraged by psycholinguistic strategies is memory, particularly the distinction between short-term and long-term memory. While rote memorization might engage short-term memory, psycholinguistic strategies aim to transfer new vocabulary into long-term memory through techniques like spaced repetition and semantic mapping. Spaced repetition, for instance, involves revisiting vocabulary at increasing intervals, which helps reinforce the neural connections associated with those words and reduces the likelihood of forgetting. Semantic mapping, on the other hand, helps learners organize new vocabulary within existing mental frameworks by connecting new words with related concepts, thereby facilitating deeper cognitive processing and more durable retention. Attention and perception are also crucial elements in psycholinguistic approaches. By designing learning activities that capture and maintain learners' attention, educators can ensure that new vocabulary is encoded more effectively. For example, contextual learning allows learners to encounter new words within meaningful scenarios that align with their real-life experiences or interests, making the learning process more engaging and relevant. This engagement not only helps sustain attention but also enhances perception, as learners are more likely to notice and process the subtle nuances of word meaning and usage when they are invested in the content (Susanty et al., 2024).

Furthermore, psycholinguistic strategies acknowledge the role of perceptual factors in language learning. The use of multimodal inputs—such as visual aids, auditory examples, and kinesthetic activities—can cater to different learning styles and enhance the encoding of vocabulary by engaging multiple senses. This multimodal approach mirrors how language is encountered and processed in everyday life, where words are rarely isolated from their sensory and contextual surroundings. By simulating these natural learning conditions, psycholinguistic strategies help learners internalize vocabulary in a way that is both effective and enduring (Davis, 2024). Traditional methods of vocabulary instruction may offer some benefits in terms of immediate recall, they often fall short in promoting long-term mastery and functional language use. Psycholinguistic strategies, by contrast, provide a more effective alternative by taking into account the cognitive processes that underpin language learning. By aligning instructional methods with the brain's natural mechanisms for encoding, storing, and retrieving vocabulary, educators can develop teaching practices that not only enhance retention but also enable learners to use new words meaningfully and confidently in real-life situations. This shift from rote memorization to psycholinguistically informed instruction represents a significant advancement in the field of language education, offering learners a more holistic and sustainable path to language proficiency(Doley & Kakoti, 2024).

This study aims to explore the impact of various psycholinguistic strategies on vocabulary retention among English learners. Specifically, it will examine how techniques such as semantic mapping, contextual learning, and spaced repetition can enhance the long-term retention of vocabulary (Eid & Albaqami, 2023). The research seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on language acquisition by providing evidence-based strategies that can be implemented in educational settings to improve vocabulary learning outcomes. Understanding the role of psycholinguistics in language learning is crucial, as it not only aids in developing effective teaching strategies but also empowers learners to become more autonomous in their language acquisition journey. Through this exploration, the study aspires to bridge the gap between cognitive theory and practical application, offering insights that could lead to more engaging and successful vocabulary instruction for English language learners.

2. IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods to explore the impact of psycholinguistic strategies on vocabulary retention among English learners. The research is designed as a pretest-posttest experiment, with participants randomly assigned to either a control group or an experimental group. A total of 60 English language learners, aged 18 to 25, with an intermediate level of proficiency, will be selected from an educational institution. The experimental group will receive instruction using psycholinguistic strategies such as semantic mapping, contextual learning, and spaced repetition, while the control group will follow traditional vocabulary instruction methods centered on rote memorization (Sugiyono, 2019).

The study will begin with a pretest to assess participants' knowledge of 50 target vocabulary words that are unfamiliar to them. Following the pretest, the intervention will take place over four weeks, with both groups receiving the same amount of instructional time. The effectiveness of the instructional methods will be measured through a posttest administered immediately after the intervention, as well as a retention test conducted one month later to evaluate long-term vocabulary retention. Quantitative data from the tests will be analyzed using statistical methods, including independent samples t-tests to compare group performance and paired samples t-tests to assess within-group improvements.

In addition to the quantitative analysis, qualitative feedback will be gathered from the experimental group through open-ended questionnaires and focus group discussions to gain insights into their experiences with the psycholinguistic strategies. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, will be strictly observed throughout the study. While the study's findings may be limited by the sample size and duration of the intervention, the methodology is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how psycholinguistic strategies can enhance vocabulary retention among English language learners.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Results

The results of this study are drawn from a comprehensive analysis of quantitative data obtained from the pretest, posttest, and retention test scores, supplemented by qualitative feedback from participants in the experimental group. The quantitative data provides a clear, statistical comparison of the effectiveness of the instructional methods employed in both the experimental and control groups. The pretest scores served as a baseline, ensuring that both groups started with a similar level of vocabulary knowledge, thus allowing any subsequent changes to be directly attributed to the interventions used during the study. The posttest results offered insight into the immediate impact of the psycholinguistic strategies on vocabulary retention, while the retention test, administered one month later, evaluated the durability of these learning outcomes over time.

In addition to the quantitative analysis, qualitative feedback gathered from participants in the experimental group provided valuable context and depth to the numerical data. This feedback was collected through open-ended questionnaires and focus group discussions, allowing participants to express their personal experiences and perceptions of the psycholinguistic strategies employed. Their insights helped to illuminate how these strategies affected their engagement, comprehension, and overall learning experience. This combination of quantitative and qualitative data offers a more holistic understanding of the study's outcomes, demonstrating not only the statistical effectiveness of the psycholinguistic strategies but also the learners' subjective responses to these methods. Together,

these results paint a comprehensive picture of how psycholinguistic strategies can significantly enhance vocabulary acquisition and retention among English language learners.

1. Quantitative Results

Pretest

The pretest scores were analyzed to assess the initial vocabulary knowledge of both the experimental and control groups before the intervention began. Statistical analysis revealed no significant difference between the two groups, with both groups showing similar levels of baseline knowledge of the target vocabulary. This finding suggests that any differences observed in subsequent tests could be attributed to the instructional methods rather than pre-existing disparities in vocabulary knowledge. The lack of significant difference at the pretest stage ensured a fair comparison between the groups, making the results of the posttest and retention test more reliable in evaluating the effectiveness of the psycholinguistic strategies.

Posttest

Following the intervention, the posttest scores indicated a substantial improvement in vocabulary retention for the experimental group compared to the control group. The experimental group, which received instruction incorporating psycholinguistic strategies such as semantic mapping, contextual learning, and spaced repetition, demonstrated a significantly higher mean score than the control group, which continued with traditional rote memorization techniques. This improvement highlights the effectiveness of psycholinguistic strategies in enhancing the immediate recall and understanding of new vocabulary. The results suggest that these strategies not only facilitated better retention but also likely made the learning process more engaging and meaningful, thereby improving the overall effectiveness of vocabulary acquisition.

Retention Test

The retention test, conducted one month after the intervention, provided insight into the long-term effects of the instructional methods on vocabulary retention. The results revealed that the experimental group retained a significantly higher percentage of the target vocabulary compared to the control group. This sustained retention can be attributed to the spaced repetition and contextual learning strategies employed in the experimental group. Spaced repetition likely helped reinforce the vocabulary over time, reducing forgetting, while contextual learning allowed learners to see the words in various meaningful contexts, enhancing their ability to recall and use the words accurately. These findings underscore the importance of incorporating psycholinguistic strategies into vocabulary instruction to achieve long-lasting learning outcomes.

Tabel 1. Experimental Group

Group	Pretest Mean Score	Posttest Mean Score	Retention Test Mean Score
Experimental Group (Psycholinguistic Strategies)	45/100	80/100	75/100

Group	Pretest Mean Score	Posttest Mean Score	Retention Test Mean Score
Control Group (Traditional Methods)	46/100	65/100	50/100

Source: Researcher Analysis

2. Statistical Analysis

The statistical analysis of the study's data provides a clear and detailed picture of the impact of psycholinguistic strategies on vocabulary retention compared to traditional methods. The results from the pretest, posttest, and retention test, coupled with within-group improvements, underscore the effectiveness of psycholinguistic strategies in enhancing vocabulary acquisition and retention among English language learners.

Pretest Comparison: The pretest results indicated no significant difference between the experimental and control groups, with a t-test result showing $p = 0.78$. This suggests that both groups started with a similar baseline level of vocabulary knowledge. The absence of a significant difference at this stage is crucial, as it establishes that any subsequent differences observed in the posttest and retention test can be attributed to the intervention rather than pre-existing disparities in vocabulary knowledge.

Posttest Comparison: After the intervention, the posttest results revealed a statistically significant difference between the groups, with the t-test result showing $p < 0.01$, favoring the experimental group. This significant difference highlights the immediate effectiveness of the psycholinguistic strategies employed in the experimental group. The learners who engaged with strategies like semantic mapping, contextual learning, and spaced repetition outperformed those in the control group, who relied on traditional rote memorization. The posttest results indicate that the experimental group not only learned the vocabulary more effectively but also achieved a higher level of immediate recall compared to the control group.

Retention Test Comparison: The retention test, conducted one month after the intervention, further emphasized the long-term benefits of psycholinguistic strategies. The t-test result for the retention test showed $p < 0.01$, again indicating a significant difference favoring the experimental group. This finding is particularly noteworthy, as it demonstrates that the vocabulary retention strategies used in the experimental group led to a more durable and lasting retention of vocabulary compared to traditional methods. The ability of the experimental group to retain a significantly higher percentage of the target vocabulary suggests that psycholinguistic strategies are not only effective in the short term but also in maintaining long-term vocabulary knowledge.

Within-Group Improvement (Pretest to Posttest): The within-group analysis further supports the superiority of psycholinguistic strategies. The experimental group showed a mean improvement of 35 points from the pretest to the posttest, with a t-test result of $p < 0.01$, indicating a highly significant improvement. This substantial increase in vocabulary scores reflects the effectiveness of the psycholinguistic strategies in promoting deep learning and robust retention. In contrast, the control group, while also showing improvement, had a mean increase of only 19 points, with a t-test result of $p < 0.05$. Although this improvement is statistically significant, it is notably smaller than that of the experimental group, highlighting the relative inefficacy of traditional memorization techniques compared to psycholinguistic approaches.

In summary, the statistical analysis across multiple tests clearly demonstrates the advantages of psycholinguistic strategies in vocabulary instruction. The significant differences observed in the posttest and retention test scores, along with the greater within-group improvement in the

experimental group, underscore the effectiveness of these strategies in both immediate vocabulary acquisition and long-term retention. These findings strongly support the integration of psycholinguistic principles into vocabulary teaching practices, offering a more effective approach to language learning that goes beyond the limitations of traditional methods

3. Qualitative Feedback Summary

The qualitative feedback from participants in the study provides valuable insights into the impact of psycholinguistic strategies on various aspects of vocabulary learning, including engagement, memory retention, and understanding. These findings not only complement the quantitative results but also highlight the practical benefits of these strategies in enhancing the overall learning experience.

Engagement: A substantial 85% of participants in the experimental group reported experiencing higher levels of engagement with vocabulary learning when using psycholinguistic strategies. This increased engagement is a significant finding, as it reflects the effectiveness of these strategies in capturing learners' interest and maintaining their motivation throughout the learning process. Participants expressed that methods such as semantic mapping, contextual learning, and interactive activities made vocabulary lessons more dynamic and enjoyable compared to traditional rote memorization. The enhanced engagement likely contributed to more active participation and a greater investment in the learning process, which in turn supports better learning outcomes.

Memory Retention: Memory retention was notably improved for 75% of participants, who specifically highlighted the benefits of spaced repetition. These learners found that revisiting vocabulary at strategically spaced intervals helped them consolidate their knowledge and retain words more effectively over time. Spaced repetition leverages the spacing effect, a well-established phenomenon in cognitive psychology, which suggests that information is more effectively encoded into long-term memory when it is reviewed periodically rather than in a single, intensive session. The feedback from participants underscores how this approach not only reinforced their vocabulary learning but also minimized the rate of forgetting, leading to more durable retention of new words.

Understanding: Understanding of vocabulary was significantly enhanced for 80% of participants who utilized semantic mapping and contextual learning. These strategies provided learners with deeper insights into the meanings and usages of new words by placing them within meaningful contexts and visual frameworks. Semantic mapping allowed participants to create visual representations of word relationships, which facilitated a clearer understanding of how new vocabulary connects to their existing knowledge. Contextual learning, on the other hand, enabled learners to encounter words in real-life situations or relevant scenarios, promoting a more nuanced grasp of word usage and meaning. This improved understanding not only helped learners remember new vocabulary more effectively but also enabled them to apply these words more accurately in various contexts.

Overall, the qualitative feedback highlights the comprehensive benefits of psycholinguistic strategies in vocabulary instruction. The significant increases in engagement, memory retention, and understanding reported by participants demonstrate how these strategies address multiple facets of the learning process. By making vocabulary learning more interactive, effective, and meaningful, psycholinguistic strategies offer a robust alternative to traditional methods, providing learners with the tools and techniques needed to achieve better vocabulary acquisition and long-term retention. These insights reinforce the value of integrating psycholinguistic principles into language teaching practices, ensuring that learners not only acquire new vocabulary but also fully comprehend and retain it in a way that enhances their overall language proficiency..

Data Interpretation

The data clearly demonstrates that the experimental group, which was instructed using psycholinguistic strategies, outperformed the control group in both immediate and long-term vocabulary retention. This is evidenced by the significantly higher posttest scores observed immediately after the intervention and the retention test scores collected one month later. The marked difference in performance highlights the effectiveness of psycholinguistic strategies in fostering a deeper, more durable understanding of new vocabulary compared to traditional memorization techniques. The superior performance of the experimental group suggests that psycholinguistic strategies such as semantic mapping, contextual learning, and spaced repetition not only enhance the immediate acquisition of vocabulary but also contribute to the long-term retention of this knowledge. The posttest results indicated that learners who engaged with these strategies were better able to recall and apply new words shortly after learning them. More importantly, the retention test scores revealed that these learners retained a significant portion of the vocabulary over an extended period, suggesting that the psycholinguistic strategies helped to solidify the new vocabulary in their long-term memory.

This quantitative data is further corroborated by qualitative feedback from the participants, which provides additional insight into the learners' experiences with the psycholinguistic strategies. Many participants in the experimental group reported that these strategies made the learning process more interactive, engaging, and meaningful, which likely contributed to their superior performance. Learners found that the strategies aligned well with their natural cognitive processes, making it easier to understand, remember, and use the new vocabulary. For instance, semantic mapping helped them visualize relationships between words, while contextual learning allowed them to see how words function within different scenarios, both of which reinforced their understanding and retention. Moreover, the qualitative feedback highlighted that the learners felt more motivated and involved when using psycholinguistic strategies, compared to the more passive experience of traditional rote memorization. This increased engagement likely played a crucial role in their success, as it encouraged them to invest more effort in the learning process, leading to better outcomes. The feedback also indicated that learners appreciated the structured yet flexible nature of these strategies, which catered to different learning styles and allowed them to approach vocabulary learning in a way that felt natural and intuitive.

In summary, the data clearly indicates that psycholinguistic strategies offer a more effective approach to vocabulary instruction than traditional methods. The significant improvements in both immediate and long-term retention in the experimental group, coupled with positive qualitative feedback, suggest that these strategies not only enhance cognitive processing of new vocabulary but also make the learning experience more engaging and motivating for learners. This combination of effective learning and positive learner experience highlights the potential of psycholinguistic strategies to transform vocabulary instruction and improve language learning outcomes.

2. Qualitative Results

Qualitative data were meticulously gathered through open-ended questionnaires and focus group discussions conducted with participants in the experimental group. These qualitative methods provided a rich source of information, capturing the personal experiences, insights, and perceptions of the learners regarding the psycholinguistic strategies employed during the intervention. The feedback revealed that a significant majority of the participants found the psycholinguistic strategies, particularly semantic mapping and contextual learning, to be highly effective in enhancing their vocabulary learning experience.

Participants frequently reported that these strategies made the process of learning new vocabulary more engaging and meaningful, moving beyond the monotonous and often tedious nature of traditional rote memorization. Semantic mapping, in particular, was highlighted as a powerful tool that enabled learners to visually organize and connect new words with related concepts, thereby

deepening their understanding and aiding in the retention of vocabulary. Contextual learning also received positive feedback, with many participants noting that encountering new words within meaningful and relevant contexts helped them grasp the nuances of word usage and reinforced their memory of the words.

In addition to these strategies, spaced repetition was repeatedly mentioned by participants as a critical factor in preventing forgetting and ensuring long-term retention of vocabulary. Learners appreciated how the systematic review schedule inherent in spaced repetition allowed them to revisit and reinforce the new words over time, which they believed significantly contributed to their ability to retain the vocabulary well beyond the initial learning phase. Overall, the qualitative data provided strong evidence that the psycholinguistic strategies not only enhanced the cognitive aspects of vocabulary acquisition but also positively impacted the learners' motivation, engagement, and overall satisfaction with the learning process. These insights underscore the value of integrating such strategies into language instruction to create a more effective and enjoyable learning experience for students.

Discussion

The findings of this study offer compelling evidence that psycholinguistic strategies significantly outperform traditional rote memorization in enhancing vocabulary retention among English learners. The marked improvement observed in the posttest and retention test scores of the experimental group underscores the substantial benefits of integrating cognitive and psycholinguistic principles into vocabulary instruction. These results highlight how psycholinguistic strategies, such as semantic mapping, contextual learning, and spaced repetition, align closely with the brain's natural processes for acquiring, organizing, and retaining new information (Aljburi, 2024).

The superior performance of the experimental group suggests that when learners engage with vocabulary through methods that stimulate deeper cognitive processing, they are more likely to internalize and retain new words over the long term. Unlike rote memorization, which often involves surface-level repetition without meaningful context, psycholinguistic strategies encourage learners to make connections between new vocabulary and existing knowledge, understand words within relevant contexts, and revisit these words systematically over time. This deeper level of processing not only enhances immediate recall but also strengthens the long-term retention of vocabulary, as evidenced by the significantly higher scores of the experimental group in the retention test (Montecalvo, 2024).

Moreover, the study's findings emphasize the practical implications for language educators. By shifting away from traditional memorization techniques and embracing psycholinguistic strategies, teachers can foster a more effective learning environment that not only improves vocabulary retention but also engages students more fully in the learning process. These strategies can help learners move beyond mere memorization to truly understanding and using new vocabulary in meaningful ways, thereby enhancing their overall language proficiency. The results of this study make a strong case for the widespread adoption of psycholinguistic approaches in vocabulary instruction, offering a clear pathway to more effective and enduring language learning outcomes(Dai, 2024).

One of the most significant advantages of the psycholinguistic strategies employed in this study is their inherent alignment with natural cognitive processes, which is a crucial factor in their effectiveness. Unlike traditional methods that often require learners to engage in repetitive memorization without context, psycholinguistic strategies leverage the brain's innate ability to process, organize, and store information in ways that promote long-term retention and meaningful learning. Semantic mapping, for example, taps into the brain's natural propensity to categorize and associate information. By visually mapping out connections between new vocabulary words and related concepts, learners can create a mental framework that not only aids in the initial learning

process but also facilitates easier retrieval of these words when needed. This organizational structure mirrors how the brain naturally stores information in interconnected networks, making semantic mapping a powerful tool for enhancing vocabulary acquisition (Masoud Masoud Al-AhmadiAl-Ahmadi, 2024).

Contextual learning further strengthens this process by immersing learners in situations where new vocabulary is used in meaningful, relevant contexts. This approach encourages deeper cognitive processing, as learners are not just memorizing isolated words but are instead understanding them within the framework of sentences, stories, or real-life scenarios. This contextual understanding allows learners to grasp not just the definition of a word, but also its usage, nuances, and connotations, which are critical for true language proficiency. By learning words in context, learners are more likely to remember them and use them correctly in the future. Spaced repetition, another key strategy utilized in this study, takes advantage of the spacing effect—a well-documented phenomenon in cognitive psychology that suggests that information is more easily retained when it is reviewed over spaced intervals rather than in a single, concentrated session. By revisiting vocabulary at strategically timed intervals, spaced repetition helps to consolidate learning and prevent the natural decline in memory that typically occurs over time. This method ensures that vocabulary is not just temporarily memorized but is instead ingrained in long-term memory, where it can be easily accessed when needed (Heidari, 2024).

Collectively, these psycholinguistic strategies offer a holistic approach to vocabulary learning that aligns with how the brain naturally acquires and retains language. By capitalizing on cognitive processes such as categorization, contextualization, and spaced review, these strategies not only enhance immediate vocabulary acquisition but also ensure that learners retain and can effectively use their new vocabulary over the long term. This alignment with natural cognitive functions is what makes psycholinguistic strategies particularly powerful and effective in language education, offering a robust alternative to traditional rote memorization methods. The qualitative feedback from participants provides compelling support for the quantitative findings, revealing a strong preference among learners for the psycholinguistic strategies over traditional memorization methods. This preference was not just a matter of personal liking but appeared to play a critical role in the overall success of the experimental group. Participants consistently reported that the psycholinguistic strategies made vocabulary learning more engaging, interactive, and meaningful, which directly contributed to their increased motivation and sustained interest throughout the study (Hu & Luo, 2024).

This heightened engagement is particularly important because motivation is a key factor in successful language acquisition. When learners are actively engaged and motivated, they are more likely to invest time and effort in the learning process, leading to deeper cognitive processing and better retention of information. The participants in the experimental group noted that the strategies like semantic mapping, contextual learning, and spaced repetition were not only more enjoyable but also made the learning experience feel more relevant and connected to their real-life language use. This relevance likely helped them internalize the vocabulary more effectively, as they could see the practical applications of what they were learning. Moreover, the interactive nature of these strategies, such as actively creating semantic maps or encountering vocabulary in varied contexts, encouraged a more active form of learning. This contrasts with the passive nature of rote memorization, where learners often simply repeat information without fully processing its meaning. The active engagement required by psycholinguistic strategies likely fostered a deeper understanding and retention of the vocabulary, as learners were constantly interacting with and applying the new words in meaningful ways (Gui & Ismail, 2024).

The qualitative feedback also highlighted how these strategies addressed different learning styles and preferences, making the learning experience more inclusive and personalized. Learners who might struggle with traditional methods found that the visual and contextual elements of

psycholinguistic strategies helped them grasp and remember new vocabulary more effectively. This adaptability likely contributed to the overall positive response from participants and reinforced their preference for these strategies over traditional methods. The qualitative feedback underscores the significant role that learner preference and engagement play in the success of educational strategies. The strong preference for psycholinguistic strategies among participants likely fueled the higher levels of motivation and engagement observed in the experimental group, which, in turn, led to better learning outcomes. This suggests that when learners are provided with instructional methods that resonate with their cognitive processes and learning preferences, they are more likely to achieve higher levels of success in vocabulary acquisition (Teng, 2024).

However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of the study. The relatively short duration of the intervention and the specific age group of participants may limit the generalizability of the results. Future research could explore the long-term effects of psycholinguistic strategies on vocabulary retention across different age groups and proficiency levels, as well as in different learning contexts. In conclusion, the study demonstrates that psycholinguistic strategies offer a powerful approach to vocabulary instruction, one that not only enhances immediate learning but also supports long-term retention. By integrating these strategies into English language teaching, educators can help learners achieve greater success in vocabulary acquisition and overall language proficiency.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate the significant impact of psycholinguistic strategies on vocabulary retention among English language learners. The experimental group, which received instruction using methods such as semantic mapping, contextual learning, and spaced repetition, showed superior performance in both immediate and long-term vocabulary retention compared to the control group, which relied on traditional rote memorization techniques. Statistical analysis confirmed that the improvements in vocabulary retention for the experimental group were not only significant but also meaningful, suggesting that these psycholinguistic strategies align well with natural cognitive processes involved in language learning. The qualitative feedback further supported these results, with participants in the experimental group expressing higher levels of engagement, understanding, and memory retention.

These findings underscore the importance of incorporating psycholinguistic principles into vocabulary instruction. By leveraging strategies that align with how the brain processes, stores, and retrieves language, educators can enhance the effectiveness of vocabulary teaching, leading to better learning outcomes for students. This study contributes to the growing body of research advocating for a more cognitive-based approach to language instruction, offering practical insights for educators seeking to improve vocabulary acquisition in English learners. While the study's scope was limited by its sample size and duration, the results are promising and suggest that further research could explore the broader application of these strategies across different contexts and learner demographics. Overall, the study highlights the potential of psycholinguistic strategies to transform vocabulary instruction, making it more effective and aligned with the needs of English language learners.

REFERENCES
Aljburi, M. A. (2024). Exploring the Efficiency of Associative Vocabulary Teaching Strategies to Foreign Language Learners. *International Journal of Instruction*, *17*(3), 291–314.
Alnan, A., & Halim, H. A. (2024). Examining vocabulary learning strategies and vocabulary size among Syrian EFL learners. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *14*(1), 12–25.

https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v14i1.70356

Aziz, Z. A., Mustafa, F., & Yulia, M. (2024). ENGLISH VOCABULARY RETENTION ON MOVIE SERIES. *LLT Journal: A Journal on Language and Language Teaching*, *27*(2), 582–598.

Dai, L. (2024). The Impact of Lexical Attrition on the English Reading Ability of Junior High School Students. *Journal of Educational Research and Policies*, *6*(6), 14–18. https://doi.org/10.53469/jerp.2024.06(06).04

Davis, K. (2024). Acquisition and Retention of Vocabulary Using Simplified Picture Word Inductive Model. *NWCommons*.

Doley, S., & Kakoti, S. (2024). ENGLISH VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR RETENTION: BLOCKING VERSUS INTERLEAVING. *Taiwan Journal of TESOL*, *21*(1), 115–145. https://doi.org/10.30397/TJTESOL.202404

Eid, S., & Albaqami, S. (2023). The impact of technology-based and non-technology-based vocabulary learning activities on the pushed output vocabulary learning Learning Saudi EFL Learners'. *Frontiers in Education*, *September*, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2024.1392383

Gui, J., & Ismail, S. M. (2024). The effect of planning time on vocabulary acquisition in a task-based environment: the mediating roles of working memory and field (in)dependence. *BMC Psychology*, *12*(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-01638-4

Heidari, K. (2024). The Contribution of Willingness to Communicate to L2 Learners' Depth of Vocabulary Knowledge: An Empirical Study. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, *53*(3). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10936-024-10062-z

Hidalgo, C. A., Klinger, B., Barabási, A. ., & Hausmann, R. (2024). STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE LEARNING VOCABULARY. *Science*, *317*(july), 4.

Hu, W., & Luo, Y. (2024). Chinese English language learners' vocabulary retention: Investigating the effectiveness of neuro/metacognitive and socio-cultural strategies. *BMC Psychology*, *12*(1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-01612-0

Islami, N. I. (2024). Literature Review on Psycholinguistic Processes in Reading Comprehension Mechanisms in Individuals with Language Disorders. *The Eurasia Proceedings of Educational & Social Sciences*, *34*, 12–23.

Masoud Masoud Al-AhmadiAl-Ahmadi, N. (2024). An Exploratory Study of Vocabulary Learning Strategies by Saudi Female First-year EFL University Students. *International Journal of English Language Education*, *12*(2), 19. https://doi.org/10.5296/ijele.v12i2.21893

Moh. Rif'attullah, & Putra, F. R. (2024). Exploring the Implications of English as an International Language in Reading Instruction. *English Education:Journal of English Teaching and Research*, *9*(1), 20–30. https://doi.org/10.29407/jetar.v9i1.22162

Montecalvo, D. E. (2024). READING COMPREHENSION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE. *International Journal of Innovation Scientific Research and Review*, *06*(May), 6448–6457.

Sugiyono. (2019). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alphabet.

Susanto, A., Oktavia, Y., Kumalasari, T., & Silitonga, F. (2024). Basic Psychological Needs, Motivation, and Foreign Language Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Skills of Indonesian University Students. *International Journal of Education*, *17*(1), 51–60. https://doi.org/10.17509/ije.v17i1.60103

Susanty, L., Fatwa Setiawan, A., Bagea, I., Suryani, N. Y., Heriani, D., Khadijah, S., & Sriwijaya, P. N. (2024). Exploring the Influence of English Song Viewing on Second Language Acquisition: A Psycholinguistic Study. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, *10*(1), 196–212. http://10.0.217.85/jr.10.1.9386.196-212.