VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES BETWEEN LEARNERS OF ARABIC MAJOR AND NON-ARABIC MAJOR AT A MALAYSIA PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Vocabulary is acknowledged to be central to language learning. Vocabulary learning is important in acquiring a language learning. This study aims at investigating the vocabulary learning strategies used by Arabic and non-Arabic majors at a Public University in Malaysia. A sample of 282 students from both groups answered the Vocabulary Learning Questionnaire. The questionnaire is a combined self-developed and adapted version from the categories of VLS compiled by Schmitt. The study found that both groups agreed they believed words' meanings are learned through multiple exposure of the words in different contexts through incidental learning. Significant differences were further identified in the beliefs concerning vocabulary learning. Most of AML responses showed more positive agreements on the beliefs than NAML, hence suggesting that learners with a background on the foreign language they are learning show more positive attitude towards the language compared to learners without any background in the language.

Keywords: *Vocabulary Learning Strategies, Arabic Major Learners, Non-Arabic Major Learners.*

Introduction

The importance of learning vocabulary in second and foreign language learning seems quite obvious to language learners [1]. Insufficient vocabulary knowledge of the learners will lead to difficulties in second or foreign language learning [2]. Researchers suggest that learners' language abilities rely greatly on the number of words they know, particularly in the early stages of learning a foreign language [3], [4]. It is critically important for language learners to develop a sufficient high-frequency vocabulary which enables them to be successful in other areas of language proficiency [5]–[7].

Vocabulary acquisition is seen from the perspective of foreign language learners not only as the most crucial element in foreign language acquisition, but often regarded the most difficult area [8], [9]. This is due to the fact that vocabulary acquisition involves several types of word knowledge, such as meaning, form, collocation and register [10]. There exists evidence to suggest that different target languages result in greater strategy use than others. The more complex the language is, the more strategies and approaches learners might use in learning the language [11], [12]. Stahl and Nagy [13] explain, it is the multiple dimensions of word knowledge, which accounts for complexity of a word. The complexity of vocabulary has resulted in the view that it is impractical to learn an enormous amount of vocabulary in a structured and explicit way due to the time constraints of the second or foreign language classroom [14]–[16]. Hence, in the case of learning the vocabulary in second language or foreign language learning, introducing students to vocabulary learning strategies (VLS), is essential to develop learner's ability in language learning. Learning strategies are tools for active and self-directed involvement in learning and using appropriate learning strategies result in improved proficiency and greater self-confidence in many

instances. Therefore, learners need to be introduced to a variety of VLS, to support them in comprehending and memorizing new vocabularies in the target language. Besides, learning strategies can be taught, changed, adapted and adopted by other learners [16], [17].

Several studies have been carried out to identify the VLS used by learners in learning new vocabulary in the second or foreign language [1], [2], [18]. Among them, only a few studies on the VLS related to learning of the Arabic language can be referred to. For instant, Al-Shuwairekh [1] investigated VLS used among successful and less successful learners in Saudi Arabia. This study found major differences in all types of VLS categories. Al-Hashimi's [9] study on first year Arabic students in a Malaysian university found that using a dictionary to learn vocabulary was the most frequently used strategy among them. Mufidah [19] examined the effectiveness of the keyword method on the learners' acquisition of Arabic vocabulary in a national secondary school in Malaysia. The study found the keyword method to be effective with beginners but has less impact than direct instruction to the experienced learners. Sueraya [20], on the other hand, examines learners' perception on requirements in becoming a good Arabic speaker. The study revealed that learners agreed that vocabulary knowledge is among the fundamental requirements to become a good Arabic speaker apart from knowledge of Arabic grammar. Meanwhile, Rabiatul et al., [21] investigated the vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) based on three dimension that are used by Arabic majors and non-Arabic majors in learning Arabic vocabulary. The three different dimensions are formal strategies, self-initiated strategies and spontaneous strategies. The study found that there is no significant difference between the Arabic and non-Arabic majors on their usage of the VLS except for spontaneous strategies.

The present study attempts to draw information about learners' beliefs on vocabulary learning and to seek information on significant differences on VLS used by Arabic majoring learners (AML) and non-Arabic majoring learners (NAML). Thus, the present study will answer the following questions:

1. What are the Arabic majoring learners (AML) and non-Arabic majoring learners (NAML) beliefs in vocabulary learning?
2. Are there any significant differences between AML and NAML belief in vocabulary learning?

Vocabulary Learning

Vocabulary is an essential part to language learning, specifically in foreign language learning. A good store of words is crucial for understanding and communication and insufficient vocabulary knowledge of learners may lead to difficulties in foreign language learning [2], while vocabulary deficiencies will consequently hinder comprehension and effective communication [22].

Although little attention has been given to the learning of vocabulary in the past, it has become a focus of much research, and studies in this field have increased over the past decades [1], [9], [22]–[30]. Significant research has reflected the importance of learning vocabulary and its challenges in second and foreign language learning. These studies usually focus on searching for the strategies that produce the best results and report the patterns characteristic among learners and the factors that affect their use of particular strategies. In order to support and enhance second and foreign language vocabulary learning, it is important to understand learners' approaches, the strategies they use, the effectiveness of these strategies and factors that lead them to use particular strategies [31].

Vocabulary Acquisition

Early research findings of first language vocabulary acquisition lead to the perception of a more implicit and incidental approach to vocabulary acquisition through extensive reading. The study observed that learners of a first language expanded their vocabulary knowledge increasingly through repeated exposures in various discourse contexts [32].

However, Krashen [33] argued that it is impractical to learn an enormous amount of vocabulary explicitly due to the time constraints of second or foreign language classrooms. This is

due to the fact that vocabulary involves several types of word knowledge, such as meaning, form, collocation and register [10], [34]–[36]. Moreover, the nature of first language acquisition is rather distinct from second language and foreign language acquisition, where first language learners are relished with rich and varied input, in addition to the exposure to samples of language around them, the same as second language learners. Foreign language learners on the other hand, are only exposed to highly structured, selected and sequenced input of the target language for the lesser opportunity to encounter and use the target language in natural communication situations [7].

Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS)

Teaching and learning is a process that requires active student involvement in the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Benson [37] and Cohen [17] pointed out that successful language learners employ a variety of learning strategies to facilitate language acquisition. Students are encouraged to be more self-reliant in the language-learning process and become less dependent on the classroom lecture. Therefore, learners need to be aware of the role and importance of various strategies and approaches in language learning and be assisted through exposure and guidance from their teacher on effective learning strategies to set their individual learning strategies.

The importance of vocabulary for expansion of second and foreign language has been highlighted and acknowledged by many researchers and scholars. Vocabulary insufficiencies will consequently hamper comprehension and effective communication. However, one aspect of vocabulary learning in second and foreign language learning that separate it from other aspects is that the amount of vocabulary the student needs will often be very large, and it is viewed as impractical for teachers to teach students all the vocabulary they will need. Thus, the student is expected to be responsible for his/her learning, including employing various conscious strategies. It is assumed that once learners use a range of VLS, they will be able to comprehend, memorize and retain more new words in the target language [16], [22], [35].

In addition, vocabulary knowledge is one of the main aspects of second language learning that can be learnt and expanded by the individual independently. This individual nature of vocabulary learning highlights the importance of learners' strategies. Identification of strategies adopted by learners for vocabulary learning is presumably crucial in understanding the acquisition of words because these strategies contribute to a better understanding of approaches and strategies used by second language learners to learn the vocabulary of the target language [15]. Consideration of learning strategies employed by learners will provide a complete view of learners' vocabulary skill development [4].

Research in Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS)

Rubin [38] and Stern [39] are two of the earliest researches who shifted their focus from teaching methods and materials to a more learner-centered aspect, maintaining that successful language learners employ a variety of learning strategies in their study to facilitate language acquisition. In addition, different individuals and learning environment contribute to a different choice of vocabulary learning strategies [6], [40]. In an analysis of the researches on vocabulary instruction, the National Reading Panel (2000) found that there is no best method for vocabulary instruction, and vocabulary should be taught both directly and indirectly [41].

The body of research in vocabulary learning was mainly focused on investigating students' strategies in relation to one particular aspect of vocabulary learning studies [42], [43] or on exploring learners' strategies according to several aspects of vocabulary learning [17], [44]. Nevertheless the languages that were studied and researched on by most of the researches are mainly English [3], [7], [12], [24], [45]–[47]. The studies done in relation to the Arabic language in vocabulary learning were limited. The Arabic language is very distinguished compared to other languages for some features specific to Arabic. As a result they may have some effect on types of strategy employed by learners and deserve proper attention [1], [9], [23]. There are a number of studies emerged in recent years focusing on the vocabulary learning strategies learners employed in vocabulary learning.

Learners' Belief in Foreign Language Learning

Individuals' decisions about their attempts to any of the VLS are likely to depend on their needs and beliefs about the kind of words which must be learned. The previous studies investigating learners' beliefs about language learning strategies have made it clear that belief is an important factor affecting the choice of strategy used [48]. The present study focuses on learners' beliefs on the role of memorization in vocabulary learning, learners' beliefs in incidental and intentional vocabulary learning.

Learners' Beliefs in Memorization in Vocabulary Learning

Memorizing a massive amount of target language vocabulary is one of the first obstacles language learners encounter. Learners regard memorization as an important strategy in vocabulary learning. Duong's [49] study on Vietnamese EFL learners' and teachers beliefs on memorization indicated that the majority of learners agreed on the essential role of memorization in learning vocabulary. Moreover, the teachers claimed that memorization is needed for learning vocabulary, grammar structures, learning idioms and phrases, especially in an environment where natural engagement of the target language is scarce.

In contrast, Gu & Johnson [45] used a vocabulary learning questionnaire (VLQ) to elicit 850 Chinese students' beliefs about vocabulary learning and their self-reported vocabulary learning strategies. Gu & Johnson's study revealed the participants believed that they generally described using more meaning-oriented strategies than rote strategies in learning vocabulary. They mainly believed that vocabulary should be sensibly studied and put to use and they further illuminate their beliefs that words can be acquired in context.

Rashidi's [50] survey on Iranian EFL learners' beliefs on the role of rote memorization in learning vocabulary and its effect on vocabulary achievement revealed that the learners believe memorization is an effective way of learning EFL vocabulary, but not the best way.

Learners' Beliefs in Incidental and Intentional Vocabulary Learning

Incidental and intentional vocabulary learning has been controversially discussed over the beliefs whether vocabulary is learnt explicitly or implicitly, intentional or incidental, through explicit or implicit instruction, or incidental. Researchers in favor of implicit vocabulary learning maintain that second language vocabulary is acquired incidentally when learners focus on comprehending the text without explicit instruction, as is the case in first language vocabulary acquisition [31], [51]. Krashen [33], based on a review of 144 studies on vocabulary learning, discussed that incidental acquisition of vocabulary occurs with reading, which provides the understandable learning input that leads naturally to acquisition. Such vocabulary learning is considered "incidental" because it occurs when learners focus on understanding the text as a whole rather than word learning itself [16]. The nature of incidental vocabulary learning is ongoing and incremental, requiring frequent exposure to the same words in numerous contexts.

The term "incidental" has been defined in various ways by studies. Coady and Huckin [52] operationally described it as a "by-product, not the target, of the main cognitive activity, reading." Ellis (1994) reveals incidental vocabulary learning as learning without the intention to learn. As the learner's attention is concentrated in understanding the passage in general, and memory for the new word comes as a natural consequence of the process. Coady and Huckin [52] further added that the attention to learn a certain word can be motivated by teachers, materials, or by the learners themselves. Gass [16] argued that these definitions, oversee the learner's active role in vocabulary learning. Even though the focus of teaching in class is on comprehending text, it is undeniable that learners pay attention to the words they encounter and to their meaning in the text, adding that incidental vocabulary learning could only take place when:

a) there are cognates between L1 and L2,
b) substantial exposures to L2, or
c) knowledge of sufficient L2 words related to the L2 target vocabulary.

A substantial group of studies showed the positive effect of reading on incidental vocabulary learning in second language learning [33], [53]–[59]. However, although incidental learning is one of the most important ways second language learners developed vocabulary acquisition, it is not the case in foreign language learning. Reading ability for a second language learner involves a beginning level of vocabulary that is beyond the first few thousand most-common words [4], [15]. While a reading ability that a beginner foreign language learners possess is limited only to a certain end, and it is determined largely by the variety type of text a learners is being exposed to [59].

Evidence from recent vocabulary learning research suggests that a complementary approach between incidental and intentional vocabulary learning provides a better outcome than incidental vocabulary learning alone. Paribakht and Weshe (1997) indicated that extensive reading supported with explicit instruction resulted in better feedback over a period. Ahmad [60] pointed out that successful vocabulary learners used both incidental strategies, such as guessing, and intentional strategies such as looking up new words and making glosses. Furthermore, Laufer and Hulstijin [15] recommend that incidental learning should include different levels of task involvement to make vocabulary learning more interesting to learners.

Consequently, in effective vocabulary learning, both incidental and intentional approaches are needed. Although incidental learning improves vocabulary learning, it should be complemented by learners' intentional strategies and approaches to move beyond incidental learning by guessing in context to a thoughtful focus on the word itself, by looking up new words, making notes, and memorizing new words.

Research Methods

Population

The population of this study is the Arabic language learners of Public University in Malaysia during semester 3 of session 2014/2015. The population of students studying Arabic courses in semester 3 was one thousand three hundred eighty six (1386). The population comprises students who studied Arabic language and specialization in Arabic language field (AML)[1] and students who studied Arabic but they are not specialized in Arabic language (NAML)[2]. The number of AML is one hundred ninety six (196) students, roughly fourteen percent (14%) of the population, while the number of NAML is one thousand one hundred and ninety (1190) students, making up the remaining eighty-six percent (86%) of the population.

Sample

The suggested sample size for the present study as described by the Raosoft sample size calculator is three hundred and one (301), while according to the Krejcie & Morgan's table [61], the recommended sample size for a population between one thousand and three hundred (1300) and one thousand and four hundred (1400) is two hundred and ninety seven (297). Therefore, the sample size decided for the present study is three hundred and one (301) as the size has already exceed the sample size recommended by Krejcie & Morgan.

From the total of sample size the distribution of the two groups is as follows: forty-two (42) students from the AML and two hundred fifty-nine (259) students from NAML were selected as the sample for this study. The sample size from each group is determined by the percentage each group forms the total population, as each selected number represents the percentage of each stratum of the population irrespectively.

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[1]   AML = Arabic Majoring Learners
[2]   NAML = Non-Arabic Majoring Learners

Instrumentation

The study uses a questionnaire as an instrument to gather the data and answer the questions of the study. The questionnaire is widely used in the social sciences and education to collect and gather information about a particular issue of interest [62].

The questionnaire in this study is a combined self-developed and adapted version from the categories of VLS compiled by Schmitt [28], questionnaires from previous literatures such as Al-Shuwairekh [1] and Kim [31], questionnaires on beliefs on vocabulary learning. Section A asks for general demographic background information of respondents, which include gender, number of years learning Arabic and learners' exposure to vocabulary learning strategies. While Section B consists of seven categories representing VLS in a second or foreign language. Each category contains numbers of questions on each VLS category. The questionnaire was originally from Al-Shuwairekh [1] which studied VLS used by AFL in Saudi Arabia. It has been adopted and adapted according to the present study need. Each item in Section B is given a 4-point Likert scale for respondents to evaluate in terms of how true each statement is for them. The 4-point Likert scale is categorized into six degrees as follows: 1 = never true of me, 2 = sometimes true of me, 3 = usually true of me and 4 = always true of me.

Findings

Respondents' Background

The respondents of this study comprised 282 Arabic language learners majoring in different courses of study and background. Based on the 282 returned questionnaires, there were four types of information gained; the students' courses between AML and NAML, Arabic language background, years of learning Arabic language and previous experience on vocabulary learning strategy.

The majority of respondents of this study were from the NAML group, with 227 respondents (80.5%). While from the AML group, feedback from 55 respondents was collected for this study. They represent (19.5%) from the sample size of this study. With regard to the learning Arabic background 147 students had previously learned Arabic before their admission to this institution, while 135 students had not learned Arabic language. The dissimilar results were due to the fact that some of them previously learnt Arabic language during their secondary education, whether in Islamic religious schools or schools with a religious stream. The respondents further indicated that some of them have been taught with VLS previously either during their secondary level or from previous semesters when they were completing the previous Arabic course.

Majority of AML responded that they have learned the Arabic language for more than 6 years, while only 8 of them indicated that they have learned Arabic between 1 to 5 years. The NAML on the other hand pointed out only 46 students had learned the Arabic language more than 6 years, while the majority of NAML had less than 5 years' experience in learning Arabic language.

AML General Beliefs on Vocabulary Learning.

Table 1: Total Means and Standard Deviations for AML Beliefs in Vocabulary Learning

Strategy Categories	N	M	SD	No. in Rank
Beliefs on memorization in vocabulary learning	55	4.85	0.480	3
Beliefs on incidental vocabulary learning	55	5.01	0.230	1
Beliefs on intentional vocabulary learning	55	5.00	0.180	2
		4.95	0.297	

In summary, AML generally believed that vocabulary should be learnt incidentally rather than focusing on memorization and intentional vocabulary learning as described in Table 1 above. The total mean from items related to beliefs on incidental vocabulary learning recorded the highest mean score at 5.01. While the uncommon beliefs among AML are that Arabic vocabulary is learned by focusing on memorization.

AML Beliefs on Memorization in Vocabulary Learning

Table 2: AML Beliefs on Memorization in Vocabulary Learning

Item No.	Statement	1 %s	2 %s	3 %s	4 %s	5 %s	6 %s	M
1	Word should be memorized.	- -	3.62 (2)	3.62 (2)	16.3 (9)	36.2 (20)	39.8 (22)	5.05
2	The best way to memorized words is to memorize word lists or dictionaries.	1.8 (1)	1.8 (1)	10.7 (6)	23.5 (13)	45.2 (25)	16.3 (9)	4.58
3	Remembering the meaning of a word is an end in itself.	- -	1.81 (1)	5.43 (3)	9.0 (5)	38 (21)	45.2 (25)	5.2
4	It is only necessary to remember one dictionary definition.	5.4 (3)	9.0 (5)	12.7 (7)	30.1 (17)	32.6 (18)	9.0 (5)	4.04
5	A good memory is all you need to learn a foreign language well.	- -	1.81 (1)	1.81 (1)	30.8 (17)	39.8 (22)	25.3 (14)	4.85
6	Repetition is the best way to remember words.	- -	- -	3.6 (2)	3.6 (2)	45.2 (25)	47.1 (26)	5.36

Table 2 illustrates the majority of AML's widely believed that repetition is the best way to remember words (item 6), with 92.3% positively agreeing on the belief (47.1% = absolutely agree, 45.2% usually agree, mean = 5.36). In addition, the AML also believed that in learning the Arabic language, words should be memorized (item 1) as agreed by 76% (39.8% = absolutely agree, 36.2% usually agree, mean = 5.05) of AML. The infrequent belief on memorization in vocabulary learning by AML is the necessity to remember one dictionary definition (item 4) as highlighted by only 41.6% of AML (9.0% = absolutely agree, 32.6% usually agree, mean = 4.04).

AML Beliefs on Incidental Vocabulary Learning

Table 3: AML Beliefs on Incidental Vocabulary Learning

Item No.	Statement	1 %s	2 %s	3 %s	4 %s	5 %s	6 %s	M
7	Words should be acquired in context.	- -	- -	9.0 (5)	12.7 (7)	47.1 (26)	30.1 (17)	5.0
8	The meanings of a considerable member of words can be picked up through reading.	- -	- -	3.6 (2)	18.1 (10)	39.8 (22)	38.0 (21)	5.13
9	One can expand his vocabulary simply through reading a lot.	- -	1.8 (1)	1.8 (1)	16.3 (9)	45.2 (25)	34.4 (19)	5.09
10	Guessing words in context is one of the best ways to learn	1.8 (1)	- -	7.2 (4)	30.1 (17)	45.2 (25)	34.4 (19)	4.62

	vocabulary.						
11	When you come across a word several times in different contexts, you will know what it means.	- -	- -	3.6 (2)	12.7 (7)	41.6 (23)	41.6 (23)	5.22

As shown in Table 3, 83.2% of AML agreed with the belief (41.6% = absolutely agree, 41.6% usually agree, mean = 5.22) that in incidental vocabulary learning, a word is learnt through multiple encounters in various contexts (item 11). Moreover 77.8% of AML (38% = absolutely agree, 39.8% usually agree, mean = 5.13) believed that reading enables learners to pick up the meanings of a considerable member of words (item 9). The latter seems to be confirming the AML previous belief related to learning vocabulary through multiple encounters. However, only 79.6% (34.4% = absolutely agree, 45.2% usually agree, mean = 4.62) of AML agree that guessing words in context is one of the best ways to learn vocabulary (item 10).

AML Beliefs on Intentional Vocabulary Learning

Table 4: AML Beliefs on Intentional Vocabulary Learning

Item No.	Statement	1 % s	2 % s	3 % s	4 % s	5 % s	6 % s	M
12	Words should be studied and put to use.	- -	- -	3.6 (2)	12.7 (7)	41.6 (23)	41.6 (23)	5.22
13	Words studied should be put to use before they are finally learned.	- -	1.8 (1)	10.9 (6)	16.3 (9)	50.7 (28)	19.9 (11)	4.76
14	Using the language (listening, speaking, reading & writing) is more important than memorizing words.	- -	1.8 (1)	3.6 (2)	18.1 (10)	38.0 (21)	38.0 (21)	5.07
15	The least a learner should know about a word is its form, its meaning, and its basic usage.	- -	- -	- -	19.9 (11)	43.4 (24)	36.2 (20)	5.16
16	Words are learned after you use them.	- -	1.8 (1)	10.9 (6)	10.9 (6)	52.5 (29)	23.5 (13)	4.85
17	One should pay attention to set phrases and collocations that go with a word.	- -	- -	- -	27.1 (15)	50.7 (28)	21.7 (12)	4.95

Table 4 above shows that 83.2% of AML's (41.6% = absolutely agree, 41.6% = usually agree, mean = 5.22) regularly believed that words should be studied and put to use (item 12). Furthermore, 79.6% of AML (36.2% = absolutely agree, 43.4% = usually agree, mean = 5.16) believed that the least a learner should know about a word is its form, its meaning, and its basic usage (item 15). They believe that words studied should be put to use before they are finally learned (item 13), agreed by 70.6% of AML (19.9% = absolutely agree, 50.7% = usually agree, mean = 4.76).

NAML General Beliefs in Vocabulary Learning

Table 5: Total Means and Standard Deviations for NAML Beliefs on Vocabulary Learning

Strategy Categories	N	M	SD	No. in Rank
Beliefs on memorization in vocabulary learning	227	4.46	0.557	3
Beliefs on incidental vocabulary learning	227	4.70	0.190	2
Beliefs on intentional vocabulary learning	227	4.71	0.180	1
		4.55	0.309	

Table 5 above summarizes the NAML belief on vocabulary learning. They specified that they have the common belief that Arabic vocabulary is learnt intentionally rather than incidentally or by memorization. Items related to beliefs on the intentional vocabulary learning dimension obtained a slightly higher mean score than belief on incidental vocabulary learning, at 4.71 of total mean score. On the other hand, beliefs on the role of memorization in vocabulary learning appear to be the least commonly believed by NAML, which is similar to the AML.

NAML Beliefs on Memorization in Vocabulary Learning

Table 6: NAML Beliefs on Memorization in Vocabulary Learning

Item no	Statement	1 % s	2 % s	3 % s	4 % s	5 % s	6 % s	M
1	Word should be memorized.	1.3 (3)	2.2 (5)	5.3 (12)	23.8 (54)	33 (75)	34.3 (78)	4.88
2	The best way to memorized words is to memorize word lists or dictionaries.	4.4 (10)	6.2 (14)	11.4 (26)	33.9 (77)	26.8 (61)	17.2 (39)	4.24
3	Remembering the meaning of a word is an end in itself.	0.4 (1)	2.6 (6)	11.4 (26)	23.5 (54)	39.2 (89)	22.4 (51)	4.66
4	It is only necessary to remember one dictionary definition.	7.9 (18)	10.6 (24)	26.8 (61)	31.2 (71)	18 (40)	5.7 (13)	3.57
5	A good memory is all you need to learn a foreign language well.	3.5 (8)	6.6 (15)	14.5 (33)	29 (65)	26.8 (61)	19.8 (45)	4.28
6	Repetition is the best way to remember words.	0.4 (1)	3.52 (3)	4.4 (10)	12.3 (28)	41.0 (93)	40.5 (92)	5.14

Almost 82% (40.5% = absolutely agree, 41% = usually agree, mean = 5.14) of NAML agreed on the belief that words are best memorized by repetition (item 6). They further established that in vocabulary learning, words should be memorized (item 1) as agreed by 67.3% of NAML (34.3% = absolutely agree, 33% usually agree, mean = 4.88); while 43% of NAMCS (17.2% = absolutely agree, 26.8% usually agree, mean = 4.24) disagreed with the belief that the best way to memorize words is to memorize word lists or dictionaries (item 2).

NAML Beliefs on Incidental Vocabulary Learning

Table 7: NAML Beliefs on Incidental Vocabulary Learning

Item no	Statement	1 % s	2 % s	3 % S	4 % s	5 % s	6 % s	M
7	Words should be acquired in context.	0.4 (1)	0.9 (2)	5.3 (12)	31.2 (71)	42.7 (97)	19.4 (44)	4.73
8	The meanings of a considerable member of words can be picked up through reading.	- -	0.9 (2)	5.7 (13)	29.0 (65)	45.8 (104)	19.4 (44)	4.76
9	One can expand his vocabulary simply through reading a lot.	0.4 (1)	2.2 (5)	12.8 (29)	16.7 (38)	40.0 (91)	27.7 (63)	4.77
10	Guessing words in context is one of the best ways to learn vocabulary.	0.88 (2)	3.5 (8)	15.4 (35)	7.0 (16)	30.4 (69)	16.3 (37)	4.38
11	When you come across a word several times in different	- -	1.3 (3)	7.9 (18)	15.2 (46)	42.2 (96)	28.2 (64)	4.88

contexts, you will know what it
means.

With regard to the beliefs on incidental vocabulary learning, 70.4% of NAML (28.2% = absolutely agree, 42.2% = usually agree, mean = 4.88) believed that word meaning is discovered when we come across a word several times in different contexts (item 11). In addition, they also believed that vocabulary knowledge expands simply through extensive reading (item 9) as highlighted by 67.7% of NAML (27.7% = absolutely agree, 40% = usually agree, mean = 4.77). The uncommon belief by NAML was on guessing words in context as one of the best ways to learn vocabulary (item 10) with only 46.7% of NAML agreeing (16.3% = absolutely agree, 30.4% = usually agree, mean = 4.38).

NAML Beliefs on Intentional Vocabulary Learning

Table 8: NAML Beliefs on Intentional Vocabulary Learning

Item no	Statement	1 %s	2 %s	3 %s	4 %s	5 %s	6 %s	M
12	Words should be studied and put to use.	0.4 (1)	0.4 (1)	3.5 (8)	23.8 (54)	38.8 (88)	33 (75)	4.99
13	Words studied should be put to use before they are finally learned.	0.9 (2)	1.8 (4)	17.2 (39)	26.8 (61)	33.4 (76)	19.8 (45)	4.50
14	Using the language (listening, speaking, reading & writing) is more important than memorizing words.	0.9 (2)	1.8 (4)	10.1 (23)	25.1 (57)	29.9 (68)	32.1 (73)	4.78
15	The least a learner should know about a word is its form, its meaning, and its basic usage.	1.8 (4)	2.2 (5)	7.5 (17)	22.9 (52)	35.6 (81)	29.9 (68)	4.78
16	Words are learned after you use them.	0.9 (2)	3.1 (7)	13.6 (31)	23.8 (54)	37.0 (84)	21.6 (49)	4.58
17	One should pay attention to set phrases and collocations that go with a word.	0.4 (1)	0.9 (2)	9.7 (22)	32.6 (74)	37.8 (86)	18.5 (42)	4.62

As indicated in table 4.26, 71.8% of NAML (33% = absolutely agree, 38.8% = usually agree, mean = 4.99) generally believed that in vocabulary learning words should be intentionally studied and put to use (item 12); while 66.5% (29.9% = absolutely agree, 35.6% = usually agree, mean = 4.78) of NAML mostly believed that the least a learner should know about a word is its form, its meaning, and its basic usage (item 15), followed by 62% of NAML that believed (absolutely agree = 32.1%, usually agree = 29.9%, mean = 4.78) using the language (listening, speaking, reading & writing) is more important than memorizing words (item 14). NAML were found to disagree that words studied should be put to use before they are finally learned (item 13) with only53.2% of NAML agreeing (absolutely agree = 19.8%, usually agree = 33.4%, mean = 4.50).

The Differences in Respondents Beliefs in Vocabulary Learning

Table 9: Differences in Respondents' Beliefs in Vocabulary Learning

Item no.	Statement		M	Sig.
5	A good memory is all you need to learn a foreign language well.	AML	4.85	.001
		NAML	4.28	
9	The meanings of a considerable member of words can be picked up through reading.	AML	5.09	.014
		NAML	4.77	
13	Words studied should be put to use before they are finally learned	AML	4.76	.026
		NAML	4.50	
14	Using the language (listening, speaking, reading & writing) is more important than memorizing words.	AML	5.07	.026
		NAML	4.78	
15	The least a learner should know about a word is its form, its meaning, and its basic usage	AML	5.16	.005
		NAML	4.78	
16	Words are learned after you use them.	AML	4.85	.014
		NAML	4.58	
17	One should pay attention to set phrases and collocations that go with a word.	AML	4.95	.000
		NAML	4.62	

The independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the beliefs on vocabulary learning between the AML and NAML. Levene's test of equality variances shows that there are significant differences (p = > .05) in the variance of beliefs on vocabulary learning between AML and NAML as shown in table 4.34 above. Among the seventeen items compared in both groups, seven (7) beliefs were found with values less than (p = > .05). The lowest values obtained was .000 while the highest is .026. Since the probability values obtained from SPSS 16.0 for Windows are between .000 and .026, less than the predetermined alpha value, (a/2 = .025), at the significance level, a = 0.5 (%) or confidence level (95%). The lowest obtained value was found on the belief that learners should pay attention to set phrases and collocation that go with a word in learning vocabulary (item 17) at .000 (AML = 4.92 mean score, NAML = 4.62 mean score) while the highest was from the belief that words studied should be put to use before they are finally learned (item 13) (AML = 4.76 mean score, NAML = 4.5 mean score) and the importance of using the words (listening, speaking, reading and writing) than memorizing them (item 14) (AML = 5.07 mean score, NAML = 4.78 mean score) with the obtained values from the both VLS being at .026.

In the beliefs about memorization in vocabulary learning, the identified belief with significant difference (item 5) revealed a more positive response from AML compared to NAML. The similarity was also found in the belief on incidental vocabulary learning (item 9), where AML repeatedly showed a more positive response compared to NAML.

However, in the beliefs on intentional vocabulary learning, one (1) belief identified with positive response from NAML compared to AML. NAML positively believed that the least a learner should know about a word is its form, meaning, and the basic usage. While the remaining beliefs identified with significant difference highlighted more positive responses from AML compared to NAML.

Therefore, the results suggested evidence to conclude that there exist statistically significant differences on the beliefs about vocabulary learning among AML and NAML.

Discussion of the Main Findings
General View on Beliefs in Vocabulary Learning by AML and NAML
The present study found that Arabic language learners in general agreed that incidental and conscious vocabulary learning are required for learning Arabic vocabulary. The findings are in

general agreement with Kim's [31] study on South Korean EFL beliefs about vocabulary learning. The study highlighted the importance of incidental and conscious or intentional vocabulary learning as believed by learners. Learners in Kim [31] assumed both incidental and conscious vocabulary learning are required for second language vocabulary learning. Moreover, the participants believe conscious vocabulary learning is more efficient for learners with limited access to the target language input, although they also maintain that incidental vocabulary acquisition would be ideal. They think foreign language learners are to learn vocabulary up to a certain point that learners must cross in order for incidental learning to happen. The participants also think that identified and consciously studied vocabulary items should be put to use in order to compensate for deficient production opportunities. As Alhashmi [9] highlighted in his study previously, Malaysian Arabic as foreign language learners agreed generally the use of different approaches in manipulating and learning Arabic vocabulary.

AML generally believed Arabic vocabulary is learned incidentally, over intentional and memorization. As AML are mostly students with previous background on Arabic language, they believed that incidental vocabulary learning is more efficient for learners with Arabic background. As for NAML, they are mostly students without or with lesser Arabic language background compared to AML. They generally believed Arabic vocabulary is ideally learned intentionally, over incidental and memorization. The result from NAML shows a consistency with Khoury's (2008) finding which highlighted on intentional learning of Arabic vocabulary through the use of root words system and practicing them in listening, speaking, reading and writing paying and attention to set of phrases and collocations that go with a word; while on the beliefs about memorization in vocabulary learning, it is the least commonly believed by AML and NAML compared to their beliefs about incidental and intentional learning.

Similarity on the Beliefs in Vocabulary Learning

Although AML and NAML believed in general that memorization is the least effective in vocabulary learning, the majority of them agreed on the importance of repetition to commit words to memory, and the insufficiency of remembering one dictionary definition in vocabulary learning. The finding suggests it could probably be the reason behind NAML heavy dependence on VLS related to memorization in consolidating new words they learned, as identified earlier in the present study.

Additionally, the present study revealed AML and NAML generally agreed that they believed words' meanings are learned through multiple exposure of the words in different contexts through incidental learning. This suggests AMCS preference for incidental learning compared to learning vocabulary intentionally. They further affirmed that they believed words should be intentionally studied and the least a learner should know about a word is its form, its meaning, and its basic usage. Both AML and NAML reiterated that using the newly learnt words in listening, speaking, reading and writing is more essential than memorizing them. The findings further explain the respondents' previous disbelief that remembering one dictionary definition is the only need in vocabulary learning [15], [17].

Significant Differences on the Beliefs in Vocabulary Learning

Significant differences were further identified in the beliefs concerning vocabulary learning. AML beliefs on vocabulary learning are significantly different from NAML. Most of AML responses showed more positive agreements on the beliefs than NAML, hence suggesting that learners with a background on the foreign language they are learning show more positive attitude towards the language compared to learners without any background in the language. In could be added that, students course of study could possibly affect their belief in vocabulary learning as it affected the strategies learners choose to use [37], [63], [64].

Recommendation For Further Research

i. Extensive studies have focused on the use of VLS in English language learning, but only a few have been conducted in the field of Arabic language learning. Therefore, more research about the use of VLS in Arabic vocabulary learning is needed, especially in relation to other learner variables, e.g. gender, cultural background, learning styles, or motivation, or in other learning institutions or schools or universities, in order to improve more effectiveness of teaching and learning of Arabic language that seems to be relevant to current needs of foreign language teaching practices.

ii. One of the limitations of this study is the inability to classify students according to their proficiency level, due to some complexities. Consequently, further studies on this area, should categorize the respondents according to their language proficiency strength before the commencement of this study.

iii. It is recommended to adapt the Al-Shuwairekh [1] concept of vocabulary learning since it is a relatively new system which provides a comprehensive and detailed view on the stages and process of vocabulary learning the learner usually takes, as well as the fact that it comprise other systems conducted by other researchers.

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