Independent Learning Strategies and Improvement of the Vocabulary Skills of Grade 8 Students

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ABSTRACT: This study focused in determining relationship between independent learning strategies and improvement of vocabulary skills of Grade 8 students in English. This study utilized descriptive-correlational research. Eighty Grade 8 students from Sto. Angel National High School was chosen as the respondents of the study using the purposive sampling. The researcher-made instrument, consisting of two parts: frequency on the use of four independent strategies namely, goal setting, attention control, self-monitoring and evaluation, and help seeking and a 40-item test on the vocabulary skills particularly context clues, synonyms, antonyms and affixes, was used as the main data-gathering instrument. Preparatory measures were conducted before the implementation of the study; permission letters were also prepared and secured. The instrument have been validated and corrected by external and internal experts. The result of the variables showed independent learning strategies such as attention control, self-monitoring and evaluation and help seeking were found to be significantly correlated to vocabulary skills in English of the respondents in terms of context clues, synonyms, antonyms and affixes. However, the result also revealed that goal setting as independent learning strategies found to have no significant relationship with the respondents' vocabulary skills in English.

KEYWORDS: independent, skills, strategies, vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

Independent learning style becomes a trend in the new normal after Covid-19 pandemic has emerged. COVID-19 really causes a lot of changes to the traditional learning environment. Instead of being surrounded by peers in classroom, learners have had to learn remotely and independently from home. Modules are distributed to students at home and web becomes the classroom. Performance tasks are done online through videos. Parents become teachers and teachers only assess students based on their works in modules. Teaching learners to develop independence is essential while learning remotely in order to achieve success on all subjects.

The philosophy of self-learning has developed since the 1970s and early 1980s and become one of the main features in education in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Self-learning goes by numerous other labels including self-access learning and self-directed learning (Ranabahu and Tamala, 2006).

Independent learning also known as self-learning has a fundamental philosophy. It is based on the idea students need to learn how to learn. The level of responsibility is the most commonly noted distinction between high school and college learning (Appleby, 2016). At the same time, they need to learn how to be critical thinkers and learners, thus making them active and productive global citizens (Saleem, 2009).

Learning vocabulary is one of the biggest challenges foreign language learners face in the learning process. One way to alley the burden is to aid students in getting independent learners during the process of L2 vocabulary learning (Ghazal 2007).Hedge (2000) points out that the idea of how vocabulary mastered is mainly related to strategies used by learners as well as approaches to teaching vocabulary. One of the leading controversial issues in vocabulary learning and teaching in the field is how to distinguish significant approaches and strategies to learning and teaching vocabularies, which result in longer and easier retrieval of the vocabularies. One of the considered approaches to vocabulary teaching is independent strategy development (Hunt and Beglar, 1998; cited in Richards and Renandya, 2002).

Since Covid-19 has emerged, all schools have been embracing the new learning environment. Schools encourage students to have an active role in the learning process and believe on their learners by establishing independent learning.

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OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to identify the independent learning strategies and improvement of the vocabulary skills of Grade 8 students in English. Specifically, this aimed to:

1. Find out the extent of the respondents' practice in the independent learning strategies in terms of goal setting, attention control, self-monitoring and evaluation and help seeking.

2. Find out the vocabulary skill of the respondents in terms of context clues, synonyms, antonyms, and affixes.

3. Find out if there is a significant relationship between independent learning strategies and vocabulary skills of Grade 8 students in English.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design. Descriptive research is a study designed to depict the participants in an accurate way. Descriptive research is all about describing people who take part in the study. Moreover, a descriptive correlational design is a study in which the researcher is primarily concerned in describing relationships among variables rather than attempting to establish a causal connection. The purpose of this design is to find out the relationship between independent learning strategies and the vocabulary skills of students in English. The study used the selected eighty Grade 8 students from Sto. Angel National High School for the school year 2022-2023.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the selected Grade 8 students of academic year 2022 – 2023 at Sto. Angel National High School located at Brgy. Sto. Angel San Pablo City. A total of eighty students from different sections were respondents of the study at hand. They were chosen using purposive sampling technique based on their knowledge when it comes to vocabulary skills.

Sampling Technique

The study involved the Grade 8 students who were enrolled in the school year 2022-2023 as the respondents of the study—among these respondents were from the five different sections with the same Grade level. A total of eighty students with least mastered competencies in English were chosen purposively based on the result of students first quarterly grades recorded in Mean Percentage Score (MPS) report. The researcher used purposive sampling technique where respondents are heterogeneous in nature. Purposive sampling, according to Arikunto (2010:183), is the method of choosing a sample by picking a subject that is selected based on the particular objective rather than the level or area.

Research Procedure

The research presented was carried out according to the following steps: The researcher identified the key issues and concepts on independent learning strategies in connection to the development of vocabulary skills. With the input from previous studies and literature, the survey questionnaire was constructed. The researcher-made questionnaire was validated by internal and external experts.

Before the conduct of the study, the researcher sought permission first and secured letters from the authorities of the school where students were to be used in the study. The researcher stated the purpose of the study, relevance of the respondents' participation and guarantee of the confidentiality of the response. Upon the approval of request, the researcher asked permission from the principal of the locale of the study with a letter of endorsement to conduct the study. During the conduct of the study, the researcher distributed the questionnaires to the respondents during the given schedule. Respondents were given two weeks to accomplish the survey questionnaire. The data gathering started from December 2022 until January 2023.

After conducting the study, the researcher retrieved the survey questionnaire, checked it and made a data matrix for the study given by her statistician. After revisions and checking of the statistician, the researcher submitted it to the statistic center. It was then encoded by the researcher and tabulated for statistical analysis of the data. Results were given by the statistician and the researcher analyzed and interpreted the gathered results. It was then submitted to the adviser for final comments and suggestions before it has undergone oral final defense.

Research Instrument

The study utilized the researcher-made survey questionnaire in order to gather relevant data. Part I of the survey questionnaire is a Likert Scale that measured the frequency of the respondents in engaging in independent learning strategies. Part II measured the vocabulary skill of the respondents in terms of context clues, synonyms, antonyms and affixes. The test was constructed based on the levels of the study which was anchored in the lessons of Grade 8 students as well as its most essential learning competencies. In terms of reliability and validity, the researcher-made survey questionnaires had undergone pilot testing and item analysis for the refinement of the activities.

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Statistical Treatment of Data

The data gathered after the retrieval of the questions were subjected to descriptive statistics to describe the respondents profile using frequency, mean and standard deviation. For the perception of the respondents on independent learning strategies and vocabulary skills in English, frequency distribution and standard deviation were utilized with corresponding descriptive interpretations of the results. To test if significant effects and/or relationships existed, Pearson Moment Correlation was used at .01 and .05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
PART I. EXTENT OF THE RESPONDENTS' PRACTICE IN INDEPENDENT LEARNING STRATEGIES

Table 1. Extent of the Respondents' Practice in Independent Learning Strategies in terms of Goal Setting

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
I…			
1. manage to answer my modules from Monday to Friday.	3.97	0.84	Practiced
2. read English stories once a week.	3.23	1.13	Moderately practiced
3. always write down unfamiliar words I found when reading passages.	3.28	0.93	Moderately practiced
4. achieve high scores during quizzes.	3.47	0.80	Moderately practiced
5. use context clues in determining the meaning of a given word in our activity.	3.42	0.94	Moderately practiced
6. make a list of unfamiliar words and try to look for its synonyms.	3.24	1.11	Moderately practiced
7. use prefixes and suffixes in writing sentences.	3.08	1.12	Moderately practiced
8. can identify affixes in an essay.	3.02	1.08	Moderately practiced
9. use dictionary to look for the synonyms of a word given by my teacher.	3.54	1.06	Practiced
10.can write five examples of prefixes and five examples of suffixes a day.	3.09	1.16	Moderately practiced
Mean	3.34	0.63	Moderately practiced

Legend: 1.00 -1.49(Not practiced) 1.50 – 2.49 (Less practiced) 2.50 – 3.49 (Moderately practiced) 3.50 - 4.49(Practiced) 4.50 - 5.00(Highly practiced)

Table 1 presents the extent of practice among the respondents in independent learning strategies in terms of goal setting. Based on the data above, the study found out that managing to answer the modules from Monday to Friday had the greatest mean of 3.97 with a standard deviation of 0.84 interpreted as "Practiced". This result indicates that the students goal are more focused on this indicator due to the implementation of modular distance learning at the school when face-to-face interaction was not possible. It also means that students are used to it since this was what they used to do every day in modular class during the pandemic in the absence of face to face classes.

However, the item with the least weighted mean of 3.02 and has a standard deviation of 1.08 states that the respondents can identify affixes in an essay and found as "moderately practiced". It indicates that most of the students in English are not aware of using affixes in a proper way, thus the teacher should enlighten the students with rules that govern the use of the affixes. According to earlier study by Kim (2013), having a basic understanding of how to use affixes would typically help students acquire English vocabulary considerably more quickly and eliminate the need to continuously look up terms.

An overall mean of 3.34 implies that the respondents rated most of the indicators as "moderately practiced". It indicates that respondents are able to set their goals, short or long-term, using independent learning strategies. Goal setting practices have a significant positive influence on student outcomes when implemented well (Leithwood& Sun, 2018; Moeller, Theiler, & Wu, 2012).

Table 2. Extent of the Respondents' Practice in Independent Learning Strategies in terms of Attention Control

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
I…			
1. read the module instructions carefully to avoid confusion and distraction in doing the activities.	4.09	1.05	Practiced
2. focus on easy activities on my modules to maintain my motivation while answering.	4.20	0.82	Practiced
3. turn off and keep my cellphone out of my sight when answering my activities.	3.68	1.23	Practiced
4. pay attention when reading a textbook or listening podcast.	3.63	1.22	Practiced
5. pay attention to the definition of words used in a sentence.	3.61	1.19	Practiced

6. read the sentence twice to understand the words used and its meaning.	4.04	1.06	Practiced
7. choose reading aloud than silent reading to comprehend.	3.28	1.10	Moderately practiced
8. answer following questions right after reading the given story.	3.85	1.04	Practiced
9. list down synonyms and antonyms of unfamiliar words as many as I can.	3.08	1.11	Moderately practiced
10. take down notes of some possible answers in our activity.	3.80	1.27	Practiced
Mean	3.69	0.69	Practiced

Legend: 1.00 -1.49(Not practiced) 1.50 – 2.49 (Less practiced) 2.50 – 3.49 (Moderately practiced) 3.50 - 4.49(Practiced) 4.50 - 5.00(Highly practiced)

Table 2 shows the extent of practice among the respondents in independent learning strategies in terms of attention control. It can be gleaned on the results that most of the indicators rated by the respondents as "Practiced". Focus on easy activities on the modules to maintain motivation while answering got the highest mean of 4.20 and standard deviation of 0.82.

It is simply means that students are more motivated when answering the easy part of the modules first than the difficult part. On the other hand, the item with the least weighted mean of 3.08 and has a standard deviation of 1.11 states that the respondents "Moderately practiced" listing down synonyms and antonyms of unfamiliar words. It implies that the students had lack interest in taking down notes of unfamiliar words encountered in a specific reading material or text. Likewise, students are not well- motivated. Moreover, the use learning materials provided to students must be strengthened to bring back the interest and motivation of the students.

Thus, the teacher must offer another engaging task that allows the students to practice listing unfamiliar words and learning their synonyms, antonyms and definitions. An overall mean of 3.69 and a standard deviation of 0.69 indicate that the respondents declared independent learning strategy in terms of attention control as "Practiced". It means that students are able to control their attention which is the first step towards learning whether they are in a classroom, reading a textbook, listening to a podcast, or honing a skill for work. All of these activities entail some level of education. Attention control refers to an individual's capacity to choose what they pay attention to and what they ignore (Posner and Petersen, 2010).

Table 3. Extent of the Respondents' Practice in Independent Learning Strategies in terms of Self - Monitoring and Evaluation

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
I…			
1. reflect after answering my modules if I have understood all the activities I have answered.	3.80	1.00	Practiced
2. make sure to finish my modules assigned on each day.	4.09	1.05	Practiced
3. set in mind that I should finish my module before the scheduled submission	4.08	0.94	Practiced
4. review the answers on my module after each activity.	3.76	1.06	Practiced
5. track my score during quizzes.	3.41	0.98	Moderately practiced
6. achieve high scores in all the quizzes every week.	3.21	1.05	Moderately Practiced
7. try to finish activities on each subject by following its scheduled time.	3.84	1.18	Practiced
8. seek my teachers' feedback to better improve my skills and outputs.	3.43	1.11	Moderately practiced
9. challenge myself to get a higher score on quizzes until I get a perfect score.	4.05	0.95	Practiced
10. regularly scan over my notes to ensure that I grasped the lesson for the day.	3.50	0.90	Practiced
Mean	3.72	0.58	Practiced

Legend: 1.00 -1.49(Not practiced) 1.50 – 2.49 (Less practiced) 2.50 – 3.49 (Moderately practiced) 3.50 - 4.49(Practiced) 4.50 - 5.00(Highly practiced)

The Table 3 illustrates the extent of practice among the respondents in Independent Learning Strategies in terms of Self - Monitoring and Evaluation. As shown in the data, make sure to finish the modules assigned on each day in indicator 2 had the highest mean of 4.09 and a standard deviation of 1.05 among the ten items. The findings demonstrate that students are increasingly becoming responsible, particularly when it comes to accomplishing their modules within the allotted time.

Meanwhile, achieving high scores in all quizzes every week had the least weighted mean of 3.21 and has a standard deviation of 1.05 interpreted as "Moderately practiced". The findings show that, rather than aiming for a higher grade, students' major focus is to pass the tests or quizzes given by the teacher and to receive a passing grade.

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An overall mean of 3.72 and a standard deviation of 0.58 suggests that the respondents practiced self-monitoring and evaluation as an independent learning strategy. The result shows that the respondents take responsibility in finishing every task independently. Furthermore, it can be implied that respondents can keep track of their progress through self-monitoring.

Through self-monitoring, students may visualize success towards a learning objective. According to Rowe and Rafferty (2013), students must embrace responsibility for their learning and accomplishment outcomes in order to become autonomous learners. Schraw, Crippen, and Hartley (2016), students who can assess their own learning without the help of teachers or summative exams are more likely to develop into independent learners.

Table 4. Extent of the Respondents' Practice in Independent Learning Strategies in terms of Help Seeking

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
I…			
1. seek my teachers' feedback and observations on my performance in class.	3.59	1.08	Practiced
2. seek help from my parents or siblings if I don't understand a task on my modules.	3.58	1.19	Practiced
3. reach out to my teacher if I am a bit confused of the activity's instructions and content.	3.53	1.11	Practiced
4. use online dictionaries and thesaurus in finding definition of unfamiliar words I found on context and passages.	3.75	1.19	Practiced
5. search for other meaning of a word if I still don't get it after searching the net.	3.84	1.07	Practiced
6. use the internet to check about topics on my modules that I don't understand.	3.68	1.10	Practiced
7. check any previous notes I have if I am unsure about any topic.	3.54	1.25	Practiced
8. check examples, on the internet, of a specific topic that I find difficult to understand.	3.86	1.08	Practiced
9. ask the help of my parents or siblings to recheck my modules, just to make sure that I did everything correctly.	3.29	1.31	Moderately Practiced
10. message my teacher to explain the topic that is hard for me.	2.88	1.31	Moderately Practiced
Mean	3.55	0.70	Practiced

Legend: 1.00 -1.49(Not practiced) 1.50 – 2.49 (Less practiced) 2.50 – 3.49 (Moderately practiced) 3.50 - 4.49(Practiced) 4.50 - 5.00(Highly practiced)

The Table 4 displays the extent of practice among the respondents in independent learning strategies in terms of help seeking. The result shows that most of the indicators rated as "Practiced" such as checking examples on the internet of a specific topic that students find difficult to understand which had a highest mean of 3.86 and standard deviation of 1.08. It implies that students nowadays view the internet as a tool or resource to aid them in completing a task or module. This is due to how simple it is today to access the internet to obtain the solutions to each lesson.

On the other hand, the result shows that messaging the teacher to explain the hard topic had a lowest mean score of 2.88 and standard deviation of 1.31 and interpreted as "Moderately practiced". It indicates that there are some students who would rather answer on their own even if they are unsure of the material being studied than approach the teacher to clarify what is unclear to them.

An overall mean of 3.55 and standard deviation of 0.70 implies that the respondents rated most of the indicators as "Practiced". The result suggests that the students seek help from others if necessary. Students do not rely on pure stock knowledge and accomplish their tasks with a support system to achieve learning development. It is supported by the study of Schunk and Zimmerman (2017) articulated that independent learners do not try to accomplish every task on their own, but rather frequently seek help from others when necessary. Indeed, one of the authors concedes help-seeking may be one of the most useful learning strategies students' use (McKeachie, 2016).

PART II. LEVEL OF VOCABULARY SKILLS OF THE RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF CONTEXT CLUES, SYNONYMS, ANTONYMS AND AFFIXES

Table 5. Level of Vocabulary Skills In Terms Of Context Clues

Range of Scores	Frequency	Percentage	Interpretation
10	0	0.00	Proficient
7 – 9	6	7.50	Approaching Proficiency
4 – 6	37	46.25	Satisfactory

1 - 3	36	45.00	Needs Improvement
0	1	1.25	Poor

Looking at the data, the results in Table 5 shows that there are 6 respondents (7.50 %) who belong to Approaching Proficiency level when it comes to vocabulary skills in terms of context clues. The result also shows that there are 37 respondents (46.25%) who belong to Satisfactory level and 36 (45.00%) who need improvement.

Out of 80 respondents, no one got a perfect score and there is 1 respondent who got zero out of ten items. This means that context clues are not so easy topic to enhance vocabulary skills. Struggling middle grades readers need to be learning to use context clues when encountering unknown words to infer those words' meanings and to understand the content being presented more effectively (Harmon, 2000).

Accordingly, direct instruction in the use of context clues to infer meaning from context might assist students who have difficulty building their vocabularies, understanding the meaning of words, and recognizing these words while reading (Baumann, Kame'enui, & Ash, 2003; Graves, 2006).

Table 6. Level of Vocabulary Skills In Terms Of Synonyms

Range of Scores	Frequency	Percentage	Interpretation
10	1	1.25	Proficient
7 – 9	28	35.00	Approaching Proficiency
4 – 6	42	52.50	Satisfactory
1 - 3	7	8.75	Needs Improvement
0	2	2.50	Poor

The results in table 6 illustrates that most of the respondents' vocabulary skills in terms of synonyms are on satisfactory level with 42 respondents(52.50%).The result indicates that students are more familiar in the use of synonyms and frequently look for words or meanings that were similar. This implies that identifying synonyms, as a learning strategy, is an effective way on enhancing vocabulary skills. It is supported by the study of Zalisman (2011) where majority of the respondents were interested about synonym material, chose practice in writing and speaking about synonym material and answered that synonym can enrich their vocabulary. In addition, Nation's (2001) discussion of "learning burden" also suggests that learning a synonym for a word that is already known may be easier than learning a non-synonym. He argued that the amount of effort required learning a word is different for different words and for different learners. On the other hand, the result shows that there are two respondents who got zero in the test.This implies that there are some students who needs more time to comprehend in their lesson about synonyms since they are in modular distance learning. With this, Higa (1963) found that pairs of synonyms took longer to learn than pairs of unrelated words. The results suggested that learners are more likely to confuse words that are similar in meaning than words that do not have close semantic links.

Table 7. Level of Vocabulary Skills In Terms Of Antonyms

Range of Scores	Frequency	Percentage	Interpretation
10	7	8.75	Proficient
7 – 9	18	22.50	Approaching Proficiency
4 – 6	22	27.50	Satisfactory
1 - 3	30	37.50	Needs Improvement
0	3	3.75	Poor

As revealed by the data in Table 7, majority of the respondents' vocabulary skills in terms of antonyms fall under "needs improvement" level with 37.50 percent of the total population, 22 (27,50%) are under satisfactory and 3 respondents (3.75 %) are still in the poor level. The result indicates that more than half of the respondents are not yet familiar with the use of antonyms and are still in need of teacher's assistance.

As stated by Caniego et al. (2017), most of the students had problems in understanding vocabulary in using antonyms. Moreover, the difficulties of learning vocabulary cannot be ignored, both in the early years or at a tertiary level. Different aspects of word knowledge and a variety of vocabulary learning strategies should be systematically introduced and practiced throughout the instructed second language learning process and in a self-directed learning process (Tang et al., 2016).

However, the table also shows that 7 (8.75%) out of 80 students got a perfect score in antonyms and considered as Proficient. This implies that even some students have difficulties in learning antonyms alone there are still students who have the capability to perform well even without the supervision of a teacher. In the study of Wulundari (2020) he found out that to improve student's vocabulary they must encourage and motivate themselves and other friends to practice, listen to conversations, discuss with friends,

and use antonym words. He also concludes that each student has his own strategy and has various ways to overcome his difficulties in building English vocabulary.

Table 8. Level of Vocabulary Skills In Terms Of Affixes

Range of Scores	Frequency	Percentage	Interpretation
10	7	8.75	Proficient
7 – 9	32	40.00	Approaching Proficiency
4 – 6	24	30.00	Satisfactory
1 - 3	15	18.75	Needs Improvement
0	2	2.50	Poor

Table 8 presents that there are 7 respondents (8.75%) who belong to Proficient level, 32 respondents (40%) to Approaching Proficiency level and 24 respondents (30%) to Satisfactory level when it comes to Vocabulary skills in terms of affixes. This means that most of the respondents are familiar with affixes. It also implies that exercises with affixes will be effective ways to enhance vocabulary skills, since students already has knowledge about it.

Sudana (2006) provides one good example of this derivational affixation. Sudana says that the implementation of morphological competence in derivational affixation learning improves students' vocabulary acquisition. Yet, the table also reveals that there are students who are considered "Need Improvement" and "Poor" with 15 (18.75%) and 2 (2.50%) respondents respectively. It indicates that there are remaining students who experienced challenges in the development of their vocabulary skills in terms of affixes when studying on their own.

According to Buddingh (2005), teaching affixes is beneficial for students, it gives students a strategy for decoding the meanings of unknown words and it is important to learn because learning vocabulary is necessary throughout all subjects. In addition, Kim (2013) indicated in his study that in affixation, teacher's role is important because the teacher's interest and teaching style affects students' learning. It is important that teachers utilize methods that suit the students' level and needs. Before deciding whether the learners need explicit morphological analysis to boost their vocabulary knowledge.

Table 9. Correlations of Independent Learning Strategies and Vocabulary Skills in English

Independent Learning Strategy	Vocabulary Skills			
	Context Clues	Synonyms	Antonyms	Affixes
Goal Setting	0.200	0.194	0.177	0.071
Attention Control	0.216	.365**	0.212	0.110
Self-monitoring and Evaluation	.254*	.427**	0.209	.241*
Help Seeking	.289**	.358**	.228*	0.188

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 9 presents that there are significant relationships between attention control and synonyms. The Pearson r- value of .365 indicates that there is significant correlation between attention control and synonyms at 0.01 level of significance. It implies that the extent of practice among the respondents in independent learning in terms of attention control is sufficient to familiarize themselves in the use of synonyms. Students start to demonstrate understanding of the key meanings and applications of synonyms since it is already common to them. Moreover, students focus their attention more on the lessons involving synonyms as their level of vocabulary rises to satisfactory. Furthermore, attention is a major component of learning. It has been suggested that attention aids the learning process because attending to lessons has a huge impact on students' immediate response (Kruschke, 2000). Similarly, it can also be gleaned in the table that there are significant relationships between self- monitoring and evaluation and vocabulary skills particularly context clues along synonyms and affixes. Furthermore, the Pearson r- value of .254 indicates that the self-monitoring and evaluation and context clues are significantly correlated at 0.05 level of significance, while .427 Pearson r-value shows that self-monitoring and evaluation is significantly correlated to synonyms at 0.01 level of significance. On the other hand, the Pearson r- value of .241 indicates that the self-monitoring and evaluation and affixes are significantly correlated at 0.05 level of significance. Moreover, the Pearson r-value of 0.237 also indicates that there is significant correlation between self- monitoring and evaluation and vocabulary skills total score at 0.05 level of significance. It implies that students are positively motivated to monitor their progress when it comes to their interest with the lessons. The findings indicate that students are increasingly becoming responsible when they are familiar with the lesson, particularly when it comes to accomplishing their tasks within the allotted time. To be

successful self-monitors, students need to learn to keep track of what they are doing and how they are thinking so they can adjust their behaviors and thoughts in order to meet goals or complete tasks (Porter, 2012; Smith, 2012).On the other hand, the table shows that there are significant relationships between help seeking and indicators of vocabulary skills in terms of context clues, synonyms and affixes at 0.01 and 0.05 level of significance. It implies that students are highly motivated to accomplish their task in a collaborative learning set up. Students are able to understand the lessons when they seek help from their peers and teachers. Independent learners are "able to set up a favorable climate of learning for themselves by collaborating with peers, instructors and resource persons." (Thomson, 1999 as cited in Usuki, 2010, p. 4). However, the table also shows that there is no significant relationship between goal setting and indicators of vocabulary skills. It implies that when students achieve specific goals, they evaluate their performance positively. On the other hand, when goals are too difficult, students cannot attain them and evaluate their performance negatively, which may weaken self-efficacy. Goals are critical for academic achievement. Planning can help students to ensure their educational objectives which are achieved. Refer to Zimmerman (2008) planning and goal setting are complementary processes, as planning can help learners establish well thought out goals and strategies to be successful. Thus, plan is good method for promoting independent learning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the study, it was found that independent learning strategies such as attention control, self-monitoring and evaluation and help seeking are significantly related to vocabulary skills while goal setting has no significant relationship to vocabulary skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are hereby presented.

1. Independent learning strategies may be taught to students for them to continue learning specially when face to face classes are not possible and the guidance of teachers is limited.

2. The various independent learning strategies may be considered in providing activities and assessments to students to provide a context in which learners learn how to study on their own.

3. The practice and development of students' English vocabulary skills may also be given emphasis in teaching language for it is a vital life skill along with other competencies

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