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“English as a Second Language Learners’ Size of Receptive Vocabulary Knowledge
and the Listening Comprehension Skill”

Informe final de Seminario para optar al grado de Licenciado en Lingüística y Literatura
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ABSTRACT

The present quantitative research work aims at exploring the relationship between the receptive size of vocabulary knowledge, and the listening comprehension skill of intermediate Chilean university students of English as a foreign language. The specific objectives were to measure the participants' receptive size of vocabulary knowledge and to assess their listening comprehension skill, in order to identify relationships between these two variables. The data was collected by using two instruments, form B of the updated Vocabulary Levels Test (Webb, Sasao & Ballance, 2017), and an IELTS listening comprehension test adapted by the research group from the "Cambridge IELTS Academic 17 Book" published by Cambridge University Press & Assessment (2022). The participants of the study were 34 intermediate second-year students of the four-year programme of English Linguistics and Literature offered at Universidad de Chile. The data analysis was processed, on the one hand, by using descriptive statistics and, on the other hand, by means of two statistical methodologies, Spearman's and Pearson's correlation coefficients. The results of the study reveal that the students' listening comprehension skills presented a moderate positive correlation with the 3,000, 4,000 and 5,000 word frequency levels test. The findings of the present research work indicate that the students' exposure to the English language during three semesters in the academic programme could have had a positive impact on their lexical knowledge and listening comprehension skill development.

Key words: size of vocabulary knowledge, listening comprehension skill, second language acquisition, proficiency.

1. INTRODUCTION

Second language acquisition is a global phenomenon since currently most of the people in the world speak more than one language (Macaro, 2010). In spite of being an everyday situation, SLA is highly complex in nature (Saville-Troike & Barto, 2016). According to this author, this complexity may give rise to different questions which are difficult to be fully answered. The three elementary questions she poses are related to learners' second language knowledge, the L2 learning process itself and the reasons why some learners succeed more than others when acquiring a second language. Concerning L2 knowledge, vocabulary knowledge has been considered an important topic in the field of second language acquisition studies. Diverse authors have highlighted the central role lexical knowledge has when learning a second language (Nation, 2020, Schmitt, 2010, Qian & Lin, 2020). In that regard, researchers have also underscored the multidimensional nature of vocabulary knowledge since it involves numerous and diverse aspects. Authors like Nation (2013) contributed with a comprehensive proposal which intended to describe what word knowledge comprises. In such a proposal, he suggests that the development of lexical knowledge involves three main aspects: word form, word meaning and word use, and three kinds of knowledge associated with each one of these aspects. Some other authors like Read (2020), Webb, Sasao & Ballance (2017), Harrington (2018) and Stæhr (2008) have been focused on the topic of second language learners' word knowledge assessment. In that regard, two primary dimensions of vocabulary knowledge have been

distinguished, vocabulary size that refers to the amount of words a learner knows, and vocabulary depth that refers to diverse word features a learner knows (Milton & Fitzpatrick, 2014).

As mentioned above, vocabulary knowledge has been considered as a salient factor in SLA. In fact, Milton (2013) claims that vocabulary knowledge is a strong predictor of learners' language proficiency. Hence, the four macro skills in language proficiency either productive (speaking and writing) or receptive ones (reading and listening) are closely related to lexical knowledge (Qian & Lin, 2020). These authors state that there is robust research that highlights the fact that receptive vocabulary knowledge is inextricably linked to receptive skills, especially to reading comprehension. As far as the relationship between listening comprehension and lexical knowledge is concerned, it seems to be clear, however, that the number of studies that prove such relationship are scarce. According to Qian and Lin (2020), one possible reason for this phenomenon may be the complex nature of the listening skill. Moreover, research on listening comprehension may be especially difficult to analyse since it is a challenging skill (Webb, 2020).

Considering the importance that the listening comprehension skill has in second language proficiency, and the limited research that focuses on the relationship size of vocabulary knowledge and the listening comprehension skill, the present study intends to relate both variables in the context of formal second language learning (Saville-Troike

& Barto, 2016). For this purpose, a cross-sectional, quantitative research study was proposed, designed, and conducted. Subsequently, two instruments were applied to intermediate English as a second language learners enrolled in the English Linguistics and Literature Programme, Universidad de Chile. The updated Vocabulary Knowledge Test (Webb, Sasao & Ballance, 2017) was used to measure their receptive vocabulary knowledge, and a modified IELTS listening comprehension test was applied to assess their listening comprehension skill.

The present research report has been organised into six chapters. The first Chapter includes the introduction to the study. The second Chapter contains the objectives and research questions. In Chapter 3, the theoretical framework is presented, where approaches and proposals provided by various authors are regarded as the foundations of the study. The fourth Chapter describes details about the participants, the instruments used, together with the data collection procedures and data processing. Chapter 5 displays the presentation and analysis of the results. Finally, in Chapter 6 the conclusions of the study are presented.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

2.1. General objective:

To measure the receptive size of vocabulary knowledge of intermediate Chilean university students of English as a foreign language and their listening comprehension skill with the aim of identifying relationships between these two variables.

2.2. Specific objectives:

- 1.1.1. To measure the participants' receptive size of vocabulary knowledge.
- 1.1.2. To assess the participants' listening comprehension skill.
- 1.1.3. To identify relationships between the participants' receptive vocabulary knowledge and their listening comprehension skill.

2.3. Research questions:

1. What is the intermediate level students' receptive size of vocabulary knowledge?
2. What is the intermediate students' listening comprehension skill like?
3. Are there any relationships between the intermediate students' receptive size of vocabulary knowledge and their listening comprehension skill?

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Research into second language vocabulary acquisition has gone through an exponential growth during the past two decades. Applied linguistics experts have become interested in the role of vocabulary in the second language acquisition process. The development of a research area related to vocabulary knowledge has allowed second language researchers, teachers, and students gain an insight into different vocabulary-related processes that occur in the learning and acquisition of a second language, such as the development of proficiency related to language skills like listening comprehension which is the second variable of the present study. Several applied linguists have helped develop this area with very important contributions regarding theoretical issues and language acquisition research. At this point, experts such as Meara, Nation, Schmitt, Laufer, Milton, Poulisse, and Webb, among many other applied linguists, can be mentioned.

This section of the research report will deal with contributions concerning vocabulary knowledge and the listening comprehension skill in second language acquisition.

3.1. Vocabulary Knowledge

3.1.1. Some key issues in researching vocabulary

Schmitt (2010) suggests that when planning research into vocabulary knowledge and the second language acquisition process, it is crucial to have a sound basis of the

previously established knowledge in the field. Thus, Schmitt (2010) deals with some issues that need to be considered because they will be encountered in vocabulary research. Some of these that have been identified by Schmitt will be described at this point.

The first issue identified by Schmitt (2010) is that vocabulary learning is an important component of language use; and he claims that researchers, students, and teachers would “agree ... that learning vocabulary is an essential part of mastering a second language” (p. 4). This claim is supported by empirical evidence provided by research findings which have shown that there is a positive correlation between vocabulary and different measures of language proficiency.

The second issue proposed is that a large vocabulary is required for language use. In relation to this idea, Schmitt discusses research into native speakers’ vocabulary size or quantity. In addition, he refers to the fact that English language learners will not need to acquire native-like vocabulary size. Instead, they will require a reasonable amount of vocabulary to fulfil their communicative aims and needs.

Regarding the third issue, Schmitt states that vocabulary knowledge is a rich and complex construct. Thus, a person needs to have a large size of vocabulary knowledge. The notion of vocabulary ‘size’, also called ‘breadth’ or ‘quantity’ of vocabulary, refers to the number of words somebody has learnt “for which the person knows at least some of the significant aspects of meaning” (Anderson & Freebody, 1981, cited in Schmitt, 2010,

p. 15). In addition, a person needs to acquire knowledge about individual lexical items which will allow learners to understand their various meanings and their possible combinations in order to appropriately use them in different contexts. This kind of knowledge is called 'quality' or 'depth' of vocabulary. It should be mentioned that both kinds of vocabulary knowledge, i.e., size and depth, are equally important. Besides, Schmitt states that depth of knowledge can be conceptualised in different ways. One of these is "overall proficiency with a word, ranging from no knowledge at all to complete mastery" (Read, 2000, cited in Schmitt, 2010, p. 16). This is a 'developmental' conceptualization of depth, which requires the use of scales to measure it. Another way of conceptualising vocabulary knowledge is by examining its separate elements. This conceptualization has been called a 'component' or 'dimensions' approach. Schmitt mentions that the origin of this approach is usually considered to be an article written by Richards (1967) in which he discusses notions about vocabulary knowledge. Schmitt adds that this article interested Nation and led him to specify the kinds of knowledge a person needs about a word to use it appropriately (Nation, 1990). In 2001, Nation proposed a new revised version of the original proposal concerning various types of word knowledge, which, according to Schmitt (2010, p. 16), "is the best specification of the range of 'word knowledge' aspects to date". This proposal can be observed in the following table (Table 1).

Table 1. What is involved in knowing a word? (Nation, 2013, p. 49)

Form	spoken	R	What does the word sound like?
		P	How is the word pronounced?
	written	R	What does the word look like?
		P	How is the word written and spelled?
	word parts	R	What parts are recognisable in this word?
		P	What word parts are needed to express the meaning?
Meaning	form and meaning	R	What meaning does this word form signal?
		P	What word form can be used to express this meaning?
	concept and referents	R	What is included in the concept?
		P	What items can the concept refer to?
	associations	R	What other words does this make us think of?
		P	What other words could we use instead of this one?
Use	grammatical functions	R	In what patterns does the word occur?
		P	In what patterns must we use this word?
	collocations	R	What words or types of words occur with this one?
		P	What words or types of words must we use with this one?
	constraints on use (register, frequency ...)	R	Where, when, and how often would we expect to meet this word?
		P	Where, when, and how often can we use this word?

Note: R = receptive knowledge, P = productive knowledge

In his revised proposal, Nation (2013) distinguishes between receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge and between spoken and written form. In addition, he includes elements such as grammatical patterns, collocations, frequency, appropriateness, meaning and associations. These various components of word knowledge have been useful in the teaching of vocabulary and in doing research on vocabulary. Thus, some word knowledge components could be easier to approach in teaching; such may be the case with word meaning and word form. On the contrary, more contextualised components, such as collocation and frequency intuitions are more complicated to teach. Therefore, these elements will probably be acquired through a significant exposure to the second language than through teaching them explicitly. Similarly, in research some word knowledge components are relatively easy to measure, e.g., written form, meaning, whereas others, e.g., collocation, are extremely

complicated to measure. Additionally, Schmitt states that some aspects of word knowledge are learned before others, which implies that different vocabulary measures might be suitable at different stages of acquisition.

Besides, Schmitt (2010) states that lexical items can also be mastered through the automaticity in which they are recognized and produced. Measures of automaticity are often used in psycholinguistic experiments, e.g., the influence of the L1 on L2 processing, and where vocabulary is only a linguistic element to measure. Automaticity measures have been used in general vocabulary research, e.g., Siyanova and Schmitt (2008). Furthermore, as vocabulary mastery is “the ability to use it fluently in communication ... measures which tap into fluent and accurate usage are crucial” (Schmitt 2010, p. 17-18). Finally, Barcroft (2002, in Schmitt 2010, p. 18) writes that it has to be borne in mind that the mind has limited cognitive resources; therefore, the “more automatic some word knowledge aspects are, the more resources can be given to other aspects” (Schmitt, 2010, p. 18).

The fourth issue discussed by Schmitt is that vocabulary learning is incremental in nature, both in terms of vocabulary size and aspects of individual lexical items, i.e., depth of vocabulary knowledge. Thus, vocabulary acquisition is incremental in various ways. First, lexical knowledge is composed of diverse types of word knowledge, which cannot be acquired simultaneously but gradually. Second, each word knowledge aspect of a word is also acquired incrementally. Third, each word knowledge component varies

according to the level of receptive and productive mastery. Consequently, Schmitt (2010, p. 22) concludes this issue by stating that the aspects that have just been discussed show that “word learning is a complicated, but gradual process”.

Finally, another issue described by Schmitt (2010) is that vocabulary form is important. Learning a lexical item, as discussed above, is usually conceived as learning its meaning. This is a relevant initial step, but learning meaning necessarily involves the development of a link between form and meaning; this link is described by Schmitt as “the minimum specification for knowing a word” (Schmitt, 2010, p. 24). Therefore, if a lexical form is recognized, but its meaning is not known, the word does not have any communicative use. Similarly, if a certain meaning is known, but the knowledge of its form is unknown, the lexical item will not be recognized or produced. Thus, Schmitt mentions that, apart from being able to understand the meaning of a word, attention should be paid to its respective form. For these reasons, the formal aspects of vocabulary need to be taken into account when planning vocabulary research.

3.1.2. The relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language proficiency

Qian and Lin (2020) discuss the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language proficiency by focusing on recent research done by several applied linguists. Thus, Qian and Lin state that one of the reasons for considering vocabulary knowledge important in language learning is “the inextricably intertwined relationship between lexis

and grammar (2020, p. 66). However, when comparing lexis and grammar in the context of second language acquisition, lexical competence has been usually regarded as more important than syntactic knowledge in accomplishing successful communication. The authors add that several second language acquisition studies have confirmed the importance of lexical knowledge because lexical errors have proved to be the most common type of error in language learners' production (Llach, 2011, cited in Qian & Lin, 2020, p. 66). Besides, they comment that even though vocabulary knowledge is important for learners' first and second language, researchers think that inappropriate use of vocabulary produces greater communication problems in the second language learners' production than in the first language. This phenomenon occurs because of the difference in the lexical development processes of the learners. Hence, "the lexical development of an L1 child is relatively fast due to his/her extensive and highly contextual exposure to the language" (Qian & Lin, 2020, p. 67). This exposure enables the child to develop the semantic, syntactic, and morphological knowledge of a word. Such process is crucial for an appropriate use of a word in specific contexts. In contrast, L2 learners, especially those that acquire the language in classroom settings, encounter two problems. These are: (i) insufficient contextual exposure to the target language, which may result in difficulties in the extraction of the semantic, syntactic, and morphological knowledge about a word; and (ii) the presence of an established L1 lexical system that could affect learners while acquiring new L2 words.

Qian and Lin (2020) deal with quantitative and qualitative aspects of vocabulary knowledge. Hence, the quantity, i.e., size, of lexical knowledge represents the existing number of words in a learner's lexicon. This knowledge is understood as the learner's ability to recall both the form and meaning of a word. In turn, the qualitative aspect regards the “learners’ deep and extensive lexical knowledge and ability to use the word appropriately and efficiently” (Qian & Lin, 2020, p. 67). Learning a word signifies that the learner is able to think of the form and retrieve the meaning while also successfully using it for genuine communication aims.

In addition, Qian and Lin (2020) mention that researchers divide word knowledge into two facets, receptive and productive vocabulary. The receptive aspect shapes the size of learners' vocabulary in the mental lexicon. The receptive facet needs “to be further developed into productive knowledge in order to be used in a communication context.” (Qian & Lin, 2020). Thus, the development from receptive to productive vocabulary begins with superficial familiarity with the word and finishes with the capacity to accurately use that word in free production.

Furthermore, Qian and Lin emphasise the need to study both depth and size of vocabulary knowledge. However, they mention that research has focused on size rather than depth, probably because of the difficulties researchers face when trying to develop tests to assess the quality dimension of vocabulary knowledge. Thus, there are various tests that have been developed in order to assess size of vocabulary knowledge.

Research studies on “vocabulary size tests reportedly play an important role in predicting success in learners’ proficiency.” (Zareva, Schwanenflugel, & Nikolova, 2005, cited in Qian & Lin, 2020, p. 68). Hence, vocabulary size measures have been found to correlate positively with proficiency test scores on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

Regarding vocabulary knowledge and language skills, Qian and Lin (2020, p. 69) state that “vocabulary knowledge is at the heart” of the receptive skills, i.e., listening and reading. More specifically, size of vocabulary knowledge is linked with the receptive skills (Laufer & Ravenhorst-Kalavski, 2010, cited in Qian & Lin). On the contrary, some researchers have found that it is depth of vocabulary knowledge the dimension that better predicts receptive skills, e.g., Han, 2017; Qian, 2002, (cited in Qian & Lin, p. 69). The characteristics of these two modalities, i.e., receptive and productive, have enabled experts to investigate the number of words necessary to comprehend a piece of spoken or written discourse. Hence, it is possible to estimate the number of words required to achieve a specific comprehension level (Nation, 2006, cited in Qian & Lin, p. 69).

In addition, Qian and Lin (2020) comment on the limited amount of research into the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and listening competence, compared to studies on vocabulary knowledge and reading proficiency. Some reasons for this fact are the different processes that occur in both skills because of the nature of the input,

e.g., bottom-up, top-down, and integrative processes. Additionally, because the spoken language has a temporary nature, the activation of short-term working memory is needed and also a different role of vocabulary knowledge in the listening skill is needed. These processes could account for the significant difference in the listening comprehension level of learners with similar vocabulary sizes since the overall language competence levels may differ. Moreover, the spoken language is accompanied by nonverbal communicative devices that can reduce lexical processing difficulties, generally making the vocabulary less challenging than in written language. Qian and Lin (2020) finally add that listening comprehension tends to be predicted by vocabulary size rather than vocabulary depth, with the possibility that the existent correlation between vocabulary knowledge and listening proficiency could change along with the proficiency level development (Han, 2017, cited in Qian & Lin 2020). Since some findings in this research area which focuses on vocabulary knowledge and the language skills diverge, both authors highlight the need for more research to reach a deeper understanding of the issues discussed.

3.2. The Listening Comprehension skill

Goh and Vandergrift (2022) provide a thorough theoretical account of the listening skill. Thus, they describe the processes through which L2 listeners comprehend listening input. In addition, they deal with the concept of listening

competence by focusing on three aspects of listening: cognitive processes in listening; knowledge sources used in listening; and skills used for listening.

Concerning the cognitive processes that play a role during the process of L2 listening comprehension, Goh and Vandergrift (2022) discuss: (i) top-down and bottom-up processing; (ii) controlled and automatic processing; (iii) perception, parsing, and utilization; and (iv) metacognition. These processes “describe what listeners do during the act of listening, how they can do this efficiently, and how they regulate these processes”. (Goh & Vandergrift, 2022, p. 18).

Then, the authors deal with the crucial distinction between top-down and bottom-up processing, stating that they rarely operate separately in the comprehension process. In bottom-up processing, listeners segment the stream of sound into meaningful units and construct meaning based on linguistic knowledge, including phonological, lexical, and syntactic knowledge. Gradually, “listeners build meaning from phonemes to words to increasingly larger units of meaning (full sentences and larger chunks of discourse). (Goh & Vandergrift, 2022, p. 18) Conversely, in top-down processing listeners rely on context and their prior knowledge to understand the message, using sources such as pragmatic, cultural, and discourse knowledge. Both processes are essential, with bottom-up serving as a decoding process and top-down as an interpretation process. Although they usually work in cooperation, listeners may use one process over the other depending on their purpose for listening. For instance,

listeners may use bottom-up processing for checking details, and top-down processing for getting an overview of a certain topic. The authors mention that, on the basis of research into these cognitive processes, L2 listeners should learn how to use these processes according to their listening aims, their characteristics such as proficiency levels, and their working memory capacity.

In relation to controlled and automatic processing, when L1 speakers use their listening abilities, cognitive processing is very fast, requiring almost no effort to move back and forth between internal processes such as top-down and bottom-up, which are needed to acquire proper understanding. However, L2 listeners are usually unable to process everything they hear in an automatic way, because their L2 proficiency level tends to be more limited in comparison to their L1 proficiency. As a result, L2 listeners have to pay more attention to certain aspects of the input or consciously select some basic elements of meaning depending on their level of proficiency. “Whatever listeners cannot process automatically is subject to controlled processing, time permitting”. (Goh & Vandergrift 2022, p. 20). In contrast to automatic processing, controlled processing requires listeners to pay attention to and process the elements present in the speech stream. Cognitive skills like listening require practice to become automatic. However, before reaching mastery, the use of controlled processes is needed due to the limitations of working memory and speed of the input. Controlled processing ends up being inefficient because of the input continues to come in. This problem may force

listeners to use compensatory strategies, contextual factors, and other available information in order to guess what they were not able to understand.

The authors state that memory plays an important role in comprehension processing. As a concept, memory has been traditionally divided into two different components: long-term memory (LTM) and working memory (WM, previously known as short-term memory). Long-term memory is “the bank of information that listeners access to interpret what they are trying to understand.” (Goh & Vandergrift, 2022, p. 21). This bank of information, which is reserved in the mind, consists of accumulated prior knowledge and life experiences organised as schemata; and it is activated during instances of listening to a related topic. In this sense, long-term memory serves as the foundation of how the listener interprets what he hears. In contrast, working memory is more limited in relation to the capacity to hold knowledge; The information fades and new information needs to be processed. Listeners retain units of information temporarily, which are then processed into meaningful speech through links with long-term memory. As learners’ level of proficiency increases, they are capable to hold and process increasingly larger pieces of meaningful speech.

Cognitive activity in working memory is managed by an executive control that is in charge of high-level activities, such as planning, coordinating flow of information, and recovering knowledge from long-term memory. (Baddeley, 2022, cited in Goh & Vandergrift, 2022, p. 21). “The more familiar the units are to listeners, the more quickly

LTM can supply previously acquired linguistic and prior knowledge for listeners to process.” (Goh & Vandergrift, 2022, p. 21). This phenomenon can be exemplified by comparing the difference in the processing of a new telephone number in contrast to processing a sentence, both with the same number of units. A sentence is processed more efficiently because the units of meaning are linked meaningfully, due to the linguistic knowledge stored in the long-term memory. On the contrary, the digits of a telephone number are processed individually because the numbers are new information to the long-term memory as a single unit. Later, through repetition and a relation to a certain experience, the number can be stored as one single unity. Then, Goh and Vandergrift (2022) state that “the link between WM and LTM plays a critical role in successful listening comprehension” (p. 21). If listeners are able to process information automatically, they will have more space in their limited working memory to process new knowledge. Therefore, more working memory space will allow listeners to extract knowledge from long-term memory; and thus, they will be able to form more efficient interpretations of listening materials.

Next, Goh and Vandergrift (2022) discuss Anderson’s (1995, cited on p. 22) proposals concerning another perspective on cognitive processes. This perspective provides information about the way listeners construct meaning. This author divides listening comprehension into three interconnected phases: perceptual processing, parsing, and utilisation. Each one of these phases has a reciprocal relationship that shows the interconnected nature of top-down and bottom-up processes. During the

perception phase, listeners employ bottom-up processing to identify the different sound categories (phonemes), pauses, and acoustic emphases to retain these in their memory. This is the initial stage in the word segmentation process. A phonetic representation of what is retained is passed on for parsing. Mastering word segmentation is a remarkable challenge for L2 listeners. This occurs because, in comparison to readers, “listeners do not have the luxury of spaces to help them determine word boundaries”. (Goh & Vandergrift, 2022, p. 22). For L2 listeners, word boundaries are difficult to recognize because of reduced forms, elisions, and stress patterns, nevertheless, listeners must parse the sound stream into meaningful units. Moreover, word segmentation skills are specific to the L1 and acquired early in childhood. When the L2 learners listen to the target language, they automatically employ the L1 segmentation mechanisms because these are deeply rooted in their processing system.

Next, the authors describe that during “the parsing stage, listeners parse the phonetic representation of what was retained in memory and begin to activate potential word candidates” (Goh & Vandergrift, 2022, p. 22) from long term memory, taking into account cues such as word onset, perceptual salience, or rules related to the sequencing of phonemes. In order to maintain a meaning-based representation of these words in WM as new input is processed, listeners generate propositions, i.e., abstract representations of an idea, in order to hold a meaning-based representation of these words in working memory. Meaning is the main clue in segmentation. As listeners’

language skills advance, they will be able to retain meaning in longer chunks of propositional content and more immediately activate successful word candidates related to the topic or context.

Metacognition involves the awareness and capacity of the L2 learner to control the cognitive processes that occur in listening comprehension at different levels very fast. Related to this ability, the listener also uses knowledge about the task, person, and strategies that can be applied during activities that require cognitive processes. Among these cognitive processes, by means of which listening comprehension can be efficiently controlled, planning, monitoring, problem-solving, and evaluating can be mentioned.

Competent listeners adjust the manner they listen for different purposes and in various contexts by using different skills. The authors propose the conceptualization of listening skills “as core skills that listeners require in order to engage with listening input in ways that are relevant to their communicative purposes.” (Goh & Vandergrift, 2022, p. 24). Hence, depending on the purpose of listening and the length of the input, listeners will use one or more of the following six listening skills: “listening for detail, listening to infer, listening for global understanding, listening for main ideas, listening to predict, and listening selectively”. (Goh & Vandergrift, 2022, p. 24).

When listeners become involved in the cognitive processes described, listeners use different knowledge sources: linguistic knowledge, pragmatic knowledge, prior

knowledge, and discourse knowledge. The quality and direction of cognitive processing will be influenced by the information obtained from these "data banks". The different roles played by these sources in the listening process will be briefly described. In Figure 1 below, the cognitive processes and knowledge sources in listening comprehension can be observed.

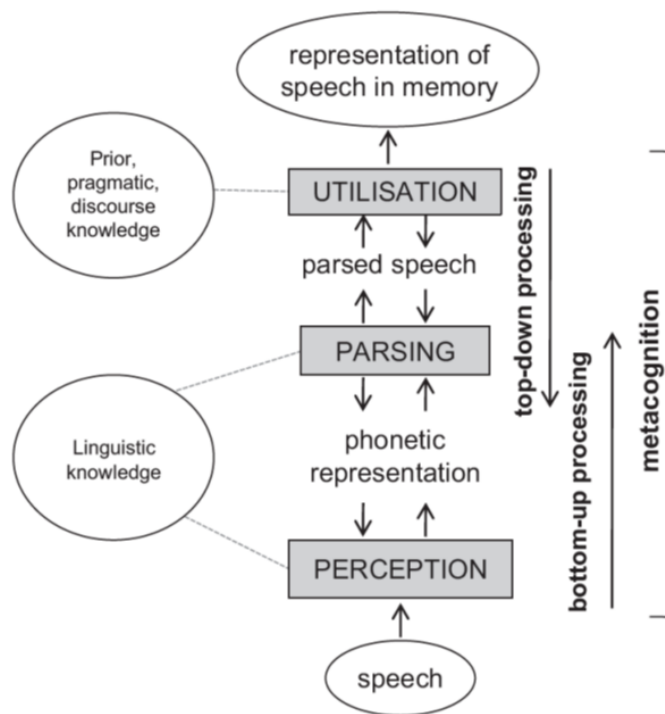


Figure 1. Cognitive Processes and Knowledge Sources in Listening Comprehension.

Goh and Vandergrift (2022, p. 25)

First, the authors think that “linguistic knowledge is fundamental to listening comprehension; vocabulary knowledge is a strong predictor of L2 listening success”. (p. 26). Besides, linguistic knowledge includes not only vocabulary but also phonological knowledge (phonemes, stress, intonation, assimilation, and elision) and syntactic knowledge (grammar). Phonological and grammatical knowledge help listeners parse the sounds to find meaningful units and relate words at the discourse level. Second, listeners use pragmatic knowledge when they are able to use information beyond the literal meaning of a word, message or text that is meant to be understood. Pragmatic knowledge is frequently related to culture, meaning that it is heavily associated with socio-cultural and socio-linguistic knowledge, e.g., formal and informal registers, idioms, which listeners use to interpret utterances. Third, regarding prior knowledge, Goh and Vandergrift (2022) compare listening comprehension to "problem-solving" activities. Therefore, they state that “listeners match the information they hear (the linguistic input) with what they know about how things work in the world (their prior knowledge).” (p. 27). Prior knowledge, also called world or encyclopaedic knowledge, is considered to play a crucial role in the listening process; hence, listeners should be given with the context of a text before they start to listen. This contextual information will help listeners process the linguistic input in a more efficient way. Fourth, Goh and Vandergrift (2022) state that discourse (textual) knowledge involves understanding of the text structure. Being conscious of this type of information and how the textual information is structured will facilitate the listener’s skill to process the linguistic input.

To sum up, the different types of knowledge described above function together with the cognitive processes in order to make listeners achieve an appropriate interpretation of a listening text. When second language listeners reach higher proficiency levels, they will be capable of processing information in a more efficient way and of using the knowledge sources faster.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Participants

The sample in the study is constituted by a group of 34 intermediate students of the undergraduate programme of English Linguistics and Literature offered at Universidad de Chile. The students are at present in their second year of a four-year programme which comprises theoretical and applied linguistics, general literature, English and American literature, and English language studies. The students' level of proficiency, as stated in the English language syllabus, is B1 according to The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The participants volunteered to take the tests used in the data collection and they were asked to sign a consent letter prior to the administration of the tests (See Appendix A).

4.2. Data collection

Regarding the receptive size of vocabulary knowledge, it was assessed by using form B of the updated Vocabulary Levels Test (Webb, Sasao & Ballance, 2017). This test includes five levels of word frequency, 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, 4,000 and 5,000, and it was developed on the basis of the Vocabulary Knowledge Levels Test (VKLTS) by Nation (1983), Laufer and Nation, (1999) and Schmitt, Schmitt and Clapham (2001). Concerning the listening comprehension skill, it was assessed by an IELTS listening comprehension test. This test was adapted from the “Cambridge IELTS Academic 17 Book” published by Cambridge University Press & Assessment (2022).

4.2.1. Instruments

4.2.1.1. The updated Vocabulary Levels Test (Webb, Sasao & Ballance, 2017)

This test assesses receptive vocabulary knowledge and it comprises items from 1,000 to 5,000 word frequency levels. The authors developed two new equivalent forms of the test (A and B). These forms have a matching format with 10 3-item clusters for each level. The clusters include the same number of nouns, verbs, and adjectives. This format consists of lexical items presented horizontally across the page and the definitions for them are shown below the words vertically. Students have to check the correct item box for each definition (Appendix B). Some examples are presented below:

1,000 Word Level

	choice	computer	garden	photograph	price	week
cost						
picture						
place where things grow outside						

3,000 Word Level

	angle	apology	behavior	bible	celebration	portion
actions						
happy occasion						
statement saying you are sorry						

4.2.1.2. Listening Comprehension Test

The regular IELTS listening test section includes four parts, and each one has 10 questions. The first part is a conversation between two speakers; the second part is a monologue; the third one is a conversation between up to four people, and the fourth part is a monologue as stated in IELTS 17 Academic (2022: 5). The four IELTS listening tests in this book were analysed by the research group and one test was chosen on the basis of the participants' familiarity with the topics. From this test, parts one, two and four were selected without any change. Thus, the listening comprehension test involves note completion, multiple choice and matching, and note completion tasks (Appendix C). Concerning the audio material of the test, the research group decided to omit the general instructions in order to reduce the test time. Next, the research group conducted a twenty-minute pilot test with some intermediate students who were not going to be included as participants in the study. Afterwards, some members of the research group

asked for feedback regarding the test format, instructions, timing, and item difficulties. Taking the participants' opinions into consideration, more time was given to the reading task.

4.3. Data collection procedure

The vocabulary knowledge and the listening comprehension tests were administered by the members of the seminar group under the supervision of a teacher. Concerning the vocabulary knowledge test, it took the students approximately 20 minutes to complete it. In turn, the listening comprehension test took participants 20 minutes. The time participants needed to complete both tests was the same that the research group had previously estimated. It should be mentioned that each listening section was heard only once following IELTS procedures. The data collection period was extended from the original plan as the research group decided to include a higher number of participants in the research work in order to find more robust results. Therefore, the data collection period was extended to three months.

4.4. Data processing

4.4.1. Scoring criteria

4.4.1.1. Vocabulary Knowledge Receptive Test

Regarding the vocabulary knowledge test, the research group decided to apply the suggestions provided by the authors of the test used. Therefore, each correct answer was given one point.

4.4.1.2. Listening Comprehension Test

The listening comprehension test was marked according to the following criteria. The answers were considered correct in the following instances: (i) when the word provided by the students was a singular or a plural form of a noun, and this change did not affect the grammatical agreement in a sentence or phrase; (ii) when the students used words or numerals if the exercise involved writing a number; and (iii) when the participants wrote a phrase that included the target answer.

4.4.2. Data Analysis Procedure

The following procedures were followed in order to process the data.

4.4.2.1. Vocabulary Knowledge Receptive Test

1. The 34 vocabulary knowledge receptive tests were corrected in pairs by the members of the group and by the two supervisors.
2. Two sessions were held to discuss the marking process and all scores were revised by the supervisors.
3. The members of the research team tabulated the results of each participant and each vocabulary frequency test in the software Microsoft Excel.
4. The five tests' means and standard deviations were calculated.
5. Spearman's and Pearson's methods were applied to identify possible correlations between the participants' vocabulary knowledge and their listening comprehension skills.

4.4.2.2. Listening Comprehension Test

1. The 34 listening comprehension tests were corrected in pairs by the members of the group and by the two supervisors.
2. Two sessions were held to discuss the marking process and all scores were revised by the supervisors.
3. The members of the research team tabulated the results of each participant in the software Microsoft Excel.
4. The listening comprehension tests' means and standard deviations were calculated.

5. Spearman's and Pearson's methods were applied to identify possible correlations between the participants' vocabulary knowledge and their listening comprehension skills.

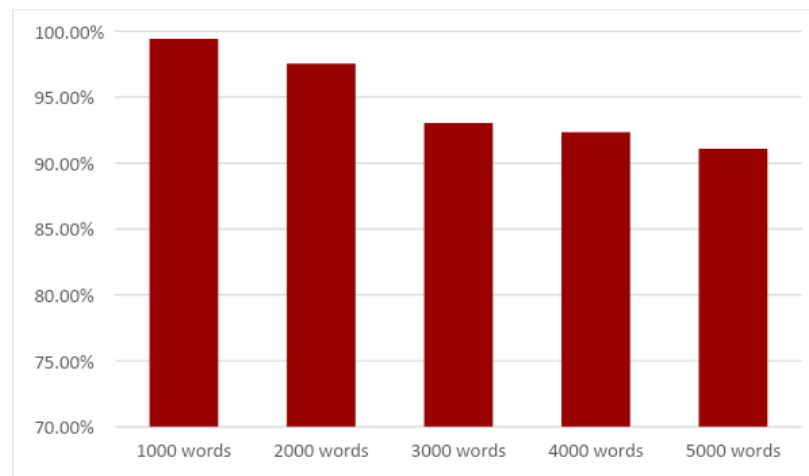
5. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The presentation and discussion of results have been organised according to each research question.

5.1. Research question 1: What is the intermediate level students' receptive size of vocabulary knowledge?

The first research question aims to determine the participants' receptive size of vocabulary knowledge. The following graph shows the means of the five written tests, corresponding to 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, 4,000 and 5,000 word frequency levels of vocabulary knowledge.

Graph 1: Receptive size of vocabulary knowledge means for 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, 4,000 and 5,000 word frequency levels tests



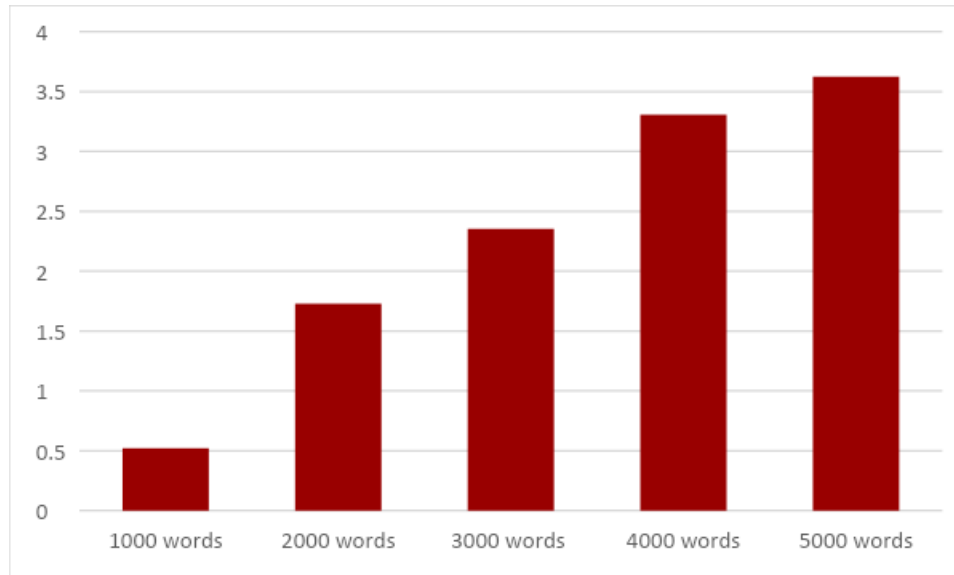
As shown in Graph 1, the means of each of the five tests is over 90%. Thus, the means are 99.41% for the 1,000 word frequency test; 97.55% for the 2,000 test; 93.04% for the 3,000 test; 92.35% for the 4,000 test, and 91.08% for the 5,000 test.

Webb, Sasao and Ballance (2017) suggest that the scores obtained at each level are more meaningful than the total score because the most frequent words have greater importance in spoken and written English. Thus, they suggest that “the score for mastery of each level should depend on the level” (p.56). Therefore, they propose a cutting point of 29/30 for the 1,000, 2,000, and 3,000 whereas, the cutting point for the 4,000 and 5,000 levels is 24/30. The authors state that the reason for the higher cutting point for the 1,000, 2,000 and 3,000 is that they give “the foundation for further lexical and language development” (p.56) Moreover, when taking the test online on Webb’s website, in the feedback given to the test takers the authors suggest that 86 % is the minimum score required to go to the next level.

Concerning the results obtained by the participants of the study, the percentages show that their vocabulary knowledge in each word frequency is higher than the 86% proposed by the authors. Taking these suggestions in mind, the students' performance shows, on the one hand, that they are able to move on to lower frequency word levels, e.g. 10,000, 15,000 and academic word levels; on the other hand, they have the foundations to develop their vocabulary and language knowledge.

A possible explanation for the results commented above, which give evidence of similar performance among the students, is the fact that they have already passed about three semesters of the academic programme, which comprises specific modules that are included in the English Language course, such as Vocabulary, Applied Phonetics, Applied Grammar, and Language Practice. Moreover, they have already taken theoretical subjects concerning Linguistics and Literature that are taught in English, for example, Research Methods Workshop, English Morphosyntax, Segmental and Contrastive Phonology of English, and British Medieval and Renaissance Literature for about two semesters. It is worth mentioning that, in this programme, an entrance English proficiency test is not required by the University; therefore, the student's language knowledge is heterogeneous in the first year of their studies. The students' abilities developed in the first, second and third semesters enable them to achieve similar linguistic knowledge.

Graph 2: Standard deviation of 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, 4,000 and 5,000 word frequency levels tests



Regarding the vocabulary levels test standard deviations, i.e. the dispersion of the scores with relation to the means, it can be observed in Graph 2 that the standard deviation becomes larger as the test difficulty increases. For example, in the 1,000 word frequency test, the scores are clustered (0.5) while in the 3,000 and 5,000 tests, the deviations are about 2.5 and 3.5 respectively.

5.2. Research question 2: What is the intermediate students' listening comprehension skill like?

The second research question aims to assess the students' listening comprehension skill. As shown in Table 2, the means or average score is 81.37%, the highest score being 100% and the lowest 56.67%. It is important to highlight that the

average score obtained in this test is high considering the passing percentage of 60% in the standard mark system for Chilean schools and universities. It is important to bear in mind that the results of the vocabulary knowledge test and the listening comprehension test differ vastly in nature to be comparable. Regarding the first variable, it implies knowledge of the word form, meaning and use (Nation, 2020), while listening comprehension skill comprises various aspects such as cognitive processes, knowledge sources and skills used for listening (Goh & Vandergrift, 2022). As described in the theoretical-descriptive framework, these authors include top-down and bottom-up processing; controlled and automatic processing; perception, parsing and utilisation; and metacognition as cognitive processes involved in listening. In relation to knowledge sources, listeners use diverse knowledge sources: linguistic knowledge, pragmatic knowledge, prior knowledge, and discourse knowledge. Concerning skills, listeners use various sub-skills depending on the objective of the listening task; among them, the following can be mentioned: listening for details, listening to infer, listening for global understanding, listening for main ideas, listening to predict, and listening selectively.

Table 2. Listening comprehension test: average percentage of achievement and standard deviation.

Average Percentage of Achievement	Standard Deviation	Maximum	Minimum
81.37%	3.67	100%	56.67%

The high means obtained by the students (81.37%) can be accounted for by the nature of the programme which attempts to provide a kind of immersion into the English language, as mentioned in the analysis of results of research question 1. Moreover, the programme includes specific modules that develop listening abilities, specifically, Ear Training and Listening and Speaking skills.

5.3. Research question 3: Are there any relationships between the intermediate students' receptive size of vocabulary knowledge and their listening comprehension skill?

In order to identify the relationship between the students' receptive size of vocabulary knowledge and their listening comprehension skill two methodologies were applied, Spearman's and Pearson's. Table 3 displays the correlation coefficients between the two variables.

Table 3. Spearman's and Pearson's correlations between receptive size of vocabulary knowledge test and listening comprehension test.

Correlations	Spearman	Pearson
Listening – 1,000 words	0.329*	0.261
Listening – 2,000 words	0.288*	0.279
Listening – 3,000 words	0.625***	0.601***
Listening – 4,000 words	0.609***	0.545***

Listening – 5,000 words	0.630***	0.605***
Listening – Total	0.647***	0.591***

Note. *** shows that the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; ** shows that the correlation is significant at the 0.05 level, and * shows that the correlation is significant at the 0.1 level.

It can be observed in Table 3 that the 1,000 and 2,000 word frequency levels do not correlate with the listening comprehension test using Spearman’s and Pearson’s methodology (>0.5). It is worth mentioning that Pearson's correlation coefficient is not significant while Spearman’s correlation is statistically significant at 10%. These results confirm that the two variables do not correlate.

In contrast, the correlations between the 3,000, 4,000, and 5,000 word frequency levels and the listening comprehension test are positive and moderate. It should be highlighted that these correlations are statistically significant at 1%. Thus, the higher the students’ vocabulary knowledge test scores, the higher the listening comprehension test scores, and the lower the students’ vocabulary knowledge test scores, the lower the listening comprehension test scores.

Concerning the weak correlations for the 1,000 and 2,000 word frequency levels, an explanation is the small variance between scores for both Spearman’s and Pearson’s methodology. However, the participants’ vocabulary knowledge for those tests shows they have mastered the two first word frequency levels of the test that are considered the most frequent words in the language (Webb, Sasao & Ballance, 2017).

In addition, the results obtained in the 5 word frequency levels test were added up; therefore, they were considered as one 150-score test and it was correlated with the listening comprehension test. In Table 3 above, a moderate positive correlation was found for both Spearman's and Pearson's methodologies, and such a correlation coefficient is statistically significant at 1%. Thus, the higher the vocabulary knowledge test score, the higher the listening comprehension test score; and the lower the students' vocabulary knowledge test score, the lower the listening comprehension test score.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The present research study aimed to assess the receptive size of vocabulary knowledge of intermediate Chilean university students of English as a foreign language and their listening comprehension skill with the objective of identifying relationships between these two variables. In order to meet these objectives two tests were applied, the updated Vocabulary Levels Test (Webb, Sasao & Ballance, 2017), and a Listening Comprehension Test adapted from the “Cambridge IELTS Academic 17 Book” published by Cambridge University Press & Assessment (2022). The results obtained were statistically processed using, on the one hand, descriptive statistics, and on the other hand, Spearman’s and Pearson’s correlations were calculated. The results in the present study show that the participants’ vocabulary knowledge reached an average of over 90% of accuracy in the five word frequency levels tests. Such a percentage may be considered to be highly satisfactory, bearing in mind that the passing mark in the Chilean education system corresponds to 60% of accuracy. Regarding the 1,000 and 2,000 word frequency vocabulary tests, it should be underscored that the participants achieved high score percentages, 99.41% and 97.55% respectively. These percentages can be regarded as positive in terms of the students’ language learning and their lexical knowledge considering that they have completed only three semesters of the academic programme, which comprises eight semesters. Furthermore, the authors of the test state that the minimum score required to move to the next word frequency level is 86%. In turn, the participants reached gradually decreasing percentages in the 3,000, 4,000,

and 5,000 word frequency levels tests: 93.04%, 92.35%, and 91.08%, respectively. It is worth mentioning that there was a significant percentage decrease in the 3,000 when compared to the previous two word frequency levels. Thus, the participants' vocabulary knowledge in the two first word frequency levels enables them to engage in different daily life communicative situations. On the other hand, the slight decrease in the percentages achieved in the 3,000, 4,000, and 5,000 vocabulary frequency levels is predictable since the words included in these three levels are less frequently used.

Concerning the listening comprehension test results, participants obtained an average score of 81.37%, the highest score being 100% and the lowest one 56.67%. The average score can be considered as high taking into account that the passing mark in most Chilean schools and universities corresponds to reaching 60% of accuracy on a test.

The nature of the academic programme, which provides a high exposure to English language input, can account for the high average score obtained. Another possible explanation for the high average percentage in the listening test is that the programme also comprises specific modules which aim at helping students develop their listening comprehension skills.

As far as relationships between the receptive size of vocabulary knowledge and listening comprehension are concerned, the results of the 1,000 and 2,000 word frequency levels test did not show correlations, since the scores obtained were

homogeneous. This can be explained by the fact that participants' vocabulary knowledge enables them to engage in daily life communicative contexts. Thus, no correlation coefficients were found between the two variables. Nevertheless, correlations were found for the 3,000, 4,000 and 5,000 word frequency levels tests and the coefficients were moderately positive for both Spearman's and Pearson's methodologies.

Such correlations were found since the students' scores in the three tests mentioned showed variations. The findings of the study suggest that there is a relationship between vocabulary knowledge and listening comprehension skill. Similar results have been reported by experts who have studied both variables and have tried to find correlations, for example, Stæhr (2009), Qian and Lin (2020) and Goh and Vandergrift (2022). In fact, Qian and Lin (2020, p. 70) report that, based on a study conducted by Stæhr (2009), "(...) the variable of vocabulary size was a better predictor of listening comprehension than vocabulary depth". Likewise, Goh and Vandergrift (2022) assert that "Linguistic knowledge is fundamental to listening comprehension; vocabulary knowledge is a strong predictor of L2 listening success." (p.26). Consequently, lexical competence is considered an important factor in the second language acquisition process. In that regard, it is important to mention some pedagogical implications that the results of the present study may have. On the one hand, the updated Vocabulary Levels Test (Webb, Sasao & Ballance, 2017) that was applied to assess the participants' lexical knowledge included a 1,000 word frequency

level test. According to the authors, this level contains the most frequent words that may be encountered in daily life communication. As the participants of the present study obtained highly satisfactory results in this test, it can be inferred that the programme emphasises different components of word knowledge. Likewise, students should be exposed to less frequent words in order to understand, for example, specific types of discourse. If students develop vocabulary knowledge, they will probably improve their listening skill. This specific skill requires special attention in formal language learning since it involves diverse components that should be explicitly taught. Consequently, higher L2 proficiency levels may be attained.

In the present study, lexical knowledge was assessed by using The updated Vocabulary Levels Test (Webb, Sasao & Ballance, 2017), which proved to be useful for collecting the data. This instrument is innovative since it includes tests for 1,000 and 2,000 word frequency levels and it provides cutting points for each frequency. These characteristics of the test were useful for the data collection, some stages of the data processing, and some findings of the study.

The theoretical framework used in this study comprised various researchers who have either done research into the two variables analysed or have also intended to find relationships between them. These studies have provided an important insight into the research conducted and the corresponding findings.

Regarding the limitations of the present study, one of them was data collection since it had to be extended for three months since the research group aimed at having a large sample size. It is worth mentioning that this process was carried out in some participants' classes and in some extra sessions. This process demanded time and effort for the members of the research group that actively participated in the administration of the tests. Although the research group was able to elicit data from 34 participants, the findings of the study cannot be generalised.

As far as future research is concerned, it would be enriching to conduct more research studies on the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and listening comprehension since there is scarce research work on these two variables. Likewise, it would also be interesting to analyse data from participants of different proficiency levels to have a more complete account of students' lexical knowledge and their listening comprehension skill. In addition, some of the listening comprehension sub-skills such as listening for details, listening to infer, listening for global understanding, and listening for main ideas could be isolated and correlated with lexical knowledge. Future research studies should also try to include a larger sample size in order to be able to generalise the results obtained. Finally, the findings of the further studies suggested would undoubtedly enable teachers and students to have a better insight into second language acquisition processes.

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8. APPENDIXES

Appendix A. Consent Letter

CARTA DE CONSENTIMIENTO

Para: Estudiantes de inglés como segunda Lengua

De: Grupo de investigación de Seminario de Grado

El proyecto de investigación al que se le invita a participar de manera voluntaria estudia el proceso de adquisición de segundas lenguas. Las tareas propuestas son las siguientes:

- 1) Una tarea de conocimiento de vocabulario en inglés como L2

Esta primera tarea consiste en elegir palabras relacionadas.

La duración de esta tarea es de un tiempo aproximado de 15 a 20 minutos.

- 2) Una tarea de comprensión auditiva en inglés como L2

Esta segunda tarea consiste en contestar preguntas a partir de textos auditivos.

La duración de esta tarea es de un tiempo aproximado de 25 a 30 minutos

Por otra parte, para poder organizar la información que recogeremos en la realización de las tareas, necesitamos que escriba su nombre. Nos comprometemos a respetar la confidencialidad de los nombres de los participantes.

Agradecemos su buena voluntad y se despiden atentamente,

El grupo de investigación

Yo acepto participar en la investigación del Seminario de adquisición de segundas lenguas.

Santiago, junio de 2023

Appendix B. The updated Vocabulary Levels Test (Webb, Sasao & Ballance, 2017)

The updated Vocabulary Levels Test

Webb, S., Sasao, Y., & Ballance, O. (2017). The updated Vocabulary Levels Test: Developing and validating two new forms of the VLT. *ITL - International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 168(1), 34-70.

This is test that looks at how well you know useful English words. Put a check under the word that goes with each meaning. Here is an example.

	game	island	mouth	movie	song	yard
land with water all around it						
part of your body used for eating and talking						
piece of music						

It should be answered in the following way.

	game	island	mouth	movie	song	yard
land with water all around it		✓				
part of your body used for eating and talking			✓			
piece of music					✓	

1,000 Word Level

	choice	computer	garden	photograph	price	week
cost						
picture						
place where things grow outside						

	eye	father	night	van	voice	year
body part that sees						
parent who is a man						
part of the day with no sun						

	center	note	state	tomorrow	uncle	winter
brother of your mother or father						
middle						
short piece of writing						

	box	brother	horse	hour	house	plan
family member						
sixty minutes						
way of doing things						

	animal	bath	crime	grass	law	shoulder
green leaves that cover the ground						
place to wash						
top end of your arm						

	drink	educate	forget	laugh	prepare	suit
get ready						
make a happy sound						
not remember						

	check	fight	return	tell	work	write
do things to get money						
go back again						
make sure						

	bring	can	reply	stare	understand	wish
say or write an answer to somebody						
carry to another place						
look at for a long time						

	alone	bad	cold	green	loud	main
most important						
not good						
not hot						

	awful	definite	exciting	general	mad	sweet
certain						
usual						
very bad						

2,000 Word Level

	coach	customer	feature	pie	vehicle	weed
important part of something						
person who trains members of sports teams						
unwanted plant						

	average	discipline	knowledge	pocket	trap	vegetable
food grown in gardens						
information which a person has						
middle number						

	circle	justice	knife	onion	partner	pension
round shape						
something used to cut food						
using laws fairly						

	cable	section	sheet	site	staff	tank
part						
place						
something to cover a bed						

	apartment	cap	envelope	lawyer	speed	union
cover for letters						
kind of hat						
place to live inside a tall building						

	argue	contribute	quit	seek	vote	wrap
cover tightly and completely						
give to						
look for						

	avoid	contain	murder	search	switch	trade
have something inside						
look for						
try not to do						

	bump	complicate	include	organize	receive	warn
get something						
hit gently						
have as part of something						

	available	constant	electrical	medical	proud	super
feeling good about what you have done						
great						
happening all the time						

	environmental	junior	pure	rotten	smooth	wise
bad						
not rough						
younger in position						

3,000 Word Level

	angle	apology	behavior	bible	celebration	portion
actions						
happy occasion						
statement saying you are sorry						

	anxiety	athlete	counsel	foundation	phrase	wealth
combination of words						
guidance						
large amount of money						

	agriculture	conference	frequency	liquid	regime	volunteer
farming						
government						
person who helps without payment						

	asset	heritage	novel	poverty	prosecution	suburb
having little money						
history						
useful thing						

	audience	crystal	intelligence	outcome	pit	welfare
ability to learn						
deep place						
people who watch and listen						

	consent	enforce	exhibit	retain	specify	target
agree						
say clearly						
show in public						

	accomplish	capture	debate	impose	proceed	prohibit
catch						
go on						
talk about what is correct						

	absorb	decline	exceed	link	nod	persist
continue to happen						
goes beyond the limit						
take in						

	approximate	frequent	graphic	pale	prior	vital
almost exact						
earlier						
happening often						

	consistent	enthusiastic	former	logical	marginal	mutual
not changing						
occurring earlier in time						
shared						

4,000 Word Level

	cave	scenario	sergeant	stitch	vitamin	wax
healthy supplement						
opening in the ground or in the side of a hill						
situation						

	candle	diamond	gulf	salmon	soap	tutor
something used for cleaning						
teacher						
valuable stone						

	agony	kilogram	orchestra	scrap	slot	soccer
group of people who play music						
long, thin opening						
small unwanted piece						

	crust	incidence	ram	senator	venue	verdict
hard outside part						
judgment						
place						

	alley	embassy	hardware	nutrition	threshold	tobacco
government building						
plant that is smoked in cigarettes						
small street between buildings						

	fling	forbid	harvest	shrink	simulate	vibrate
do not allow						
make smaller						
throw						

	activate	disclose	hug	intimidate	plunge	weep
cry						
tell						
turn on						

	diminish	exaggerate	explode	penetrate	transplant	verify
break into pieces violently						
get smaller						
move something to another place						

	adjacent	crude	fond	sane	spherical	swift
beside						
not crazy						
quick						

	abnormal	bulky	credible	greasy	magnificent	optical
believable						
oily						
unusual						

5,000 Word Level

	gown	maid	mustache	paradise	pastry	vinegar
hair on your upper lip						
perfect place						
small baked food						

	asthma	chord	jockey	monk	rectangle	vase
container for cut flowers						
group of musical notes that are played at the same time						
shape with two long and two short sides						

	batch	dentist	hum	lime	pork	scripture
green fruit						
low, constant sound						
meat from pigs						

	amnesty	claw	earthquake	perfume	sanctuary	wizard
liquid that is made to smell nice						
man who has magical powers						
safe place						

	altitude	diversion	hemisphere	pirate	robe	socket
height						
kind of clothing						
person who attacks ships						

	applaud	erase	jog	intrude	notify	wrestle
announce						
enter without permission						
remove						

	bribe	expire	immerse	meditate	persecute	shred
cut or tear into small pieces						
end						
think deeply						

	commemorate	growl	ignite	pierce	renovate	swap
catch fire						
exchange						
go into or through something						

	bald	eternal	imperative	lavish	moist	tranquil
calm and quiet						
having no hair						
slightly wet						

	diesel	incidental	mandatory	prudent	superficial	tame
not dangerous						
required						
using good judgment						

Appendix C. Listening Comprehension Test

Name:

Section:

Listening Task

PART 1 Questions 1–10

Complete the notes below.

Write **ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

Advice on surfing holidays

Jack's advice

- Recommends surfing for **1** holidays in the summer
- Need to be quite **2**

Irish surfing locations

- County Clare
 - Lahinch has some good quality **3** and surf schools
 - There are famous cliffs nearby
- County Mayo
 - Good surf school at **4** beach
 - Surf camp lasts for one **5**
 - Can also explore the local **6** by kayak

Weather

- Best month to go: **7**
- Average temperature in summer: approx. **8** degrees

Costs

- Equipment
 - Wetsuit and surfboard: **9** euros per day
 - Also advisable to hire **10** for warmth

PART 2 Questions 11–20

Questions 11 and 12

Choose **TWO** letters, **A–E**.

Which **TWO** facts are given about the school's extended hours childcare service?

- A.** It started recently.
- B.** More children attend after school than before school.
- C.** An average of 50 children attend in the mornings.
- D.** A child cannot attend both the before and after school sessions.
- E.** The maximum number of children who can attend is 70.

Questions 13–15

Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B** or **C**.

13 How much does childcare cost for a complete afternoon session per child?

- A.** £3.50
- B.** £5.70
- C.** £7.20

14 What does the manager say about food?

- A.** Children with allergies should bring their own food.
- B.** Children may bring healthy snacks with them.
- C.** Children are given a proper meal at 5 p.m.

15 What is different about arrangements in the school holidays?

- A.** Children from other schools can attend.
- B.** Older children can attend.
- C.** A greater number of children can attend.

Questions 16–20

What information is given about each of the following activities on offer?

Choose **FIVE** answers from the box and write the correct letter, **A–G**, next to Questions 16–20.

Information

- A. has limited availability
- B. is no longer available
- C. is for over 8s only
- D. requires help from parents
- E. involves an additional fee
- F. is a new activity
- G. was requested by children

Activities

- 16 Spanish
- 17 Music
- 18 Painting
- 19 Yoga
- 20 Cooking

PART 3 Questions 21–30

Complete the notes below.

*Write **ONE WORD ONLY** for each answer.*

Bird Migration Theory

Most birds are believed to migrate seasonally.

Hibernation theory

- It was believed that birds hibernated underwater or buried themselves in **21**
- This theory was later disproved by experiments on caged birds.

Transmutation theory

- Aristotle believed birds changed from one species into another in summer and winter.
 - In autumn he observed that redstarts experience the loss of **22** and thought they then turned into robins.
 - Aristotle's assumptions were logical because the two species of birds had a similar **23**

17th century

- Charles Morton popularised the idea that birds fly to the **24** in winter.

Scientific developments

- In 1822, a stork was killed in Germany which had an African spear in its **25**
 - previously there had been no **26** that storks migrate to Africa
- Little was known about the **27** and journeys of migrating birds until the practice of ringing was established.
 - It was thought large birds carried small birds on some journeys because they were considered incapable of travelling across huge **28**

- Ringing depended on what is called the 29 '.....' of dead birds.
- In 1931, the first **30** to show the migration of European birds was printed.