This essay is an attempt to study and discuss if the result of the research of vocabulary learning has spread into the modern language classroom. The background of the research showed that for long, the emphasis was rather on how to teach than how to learn a foreign language. Not until the 1970s did the focus change from teaching to learning in the matter of how a learner acquire a foreign language. We have looked at some of the important aspects of the scientific findings and results and compared these to the views and methods of two teachers of English.

(Language: English)
1. Introduction

This essay will focus on students’ learning of vocabulary. Despite the fact that vocabulary is one of the fundamental pillars when learning a foreign language, it is something that until recently has been neglected in the field of linguistic science. When reading literature on this topic, we found that studies carried out on the subject of vocabulary also often included grammar. However, this essay will not focus on the grammar aspect but rather on vocabulary alone.

We feel that this was something that was also neglected in our education at the teacher academy in Malmö. Since the curriculum stresses meta-cognition and learner centred activities it would be of interest to study how students of English study and learn vocabulary. If we had had more time we would have extended our research to take in also the student’s view but due to lack of time, we could only study it from the teacher’s perspective.

1.1 Aim and Method

Our aim of this essay was to find out what the research says about efficient learning of vocabulary and then to compare this view with what is actually taught in school. In order to investigate this we ask ourselves;

*How do you work efficiently with vocabulary according to science and does that view correspond to what is being used in school?*

We are aware of the fact that the research includes much more than what we present in this essay and that those interviewed are not to be seen as representatives for all teachers. Nonetheless, it might be interesting to see if what the research says is in some way used in practise. In order to answer this question we will first start by giving a brief summary of the earlier studies of language acquisition. This is then followed by a presentation of different aspects and findings of modern research on efficient learning strategies. Learning strategies means those strategies that contribute to learning. These strategies should not be confused with the term learner strategies, which refers to strategies used by the learner and which may or may not be effective. This theoretical part of the essay is followed by two interviews carried out during our practise period at the X-school in Malmö and the Y-
school in Lund. The final part includes our own reflections on and thoughts of the results of
the interviews, compared with the theoretical part of the essay.

2. From teaching to learning
It might be of interest to look at the background to the study of how learners adopt new
words when learning a new language. In order to present such a picture of how the study of
learning new words has evolved, one has to look at the study concerned with language
acquisition or language learning. Initially it is important to state the difference between the
terms first, second and foreign language. The first one refers to a language that any
speaker considers being his/her native language, the second language means a language
that has an official status in a given country whereas the third has no real official status but
is nonetheless taught at schools.

The study of second and foreign language acquisition has drawn many conclusions from
the study of first language acquisition. It started in the 1950s with the ideas of Skinner and
other behaviourists concerned with how a child attains its language. He stated that a child
imitates adults when learning how to communicate and Skinner named this process “habit-
formation” (Littlewood p 5). He concluded that language is not a mental phenomenon but
rather a behaviour. This view was later challenged by Noam Chomsky and others who
claimed that language cannot be seen merely as a behaviour but rather that there,
underneath this behaviour, lie a complex system of rules that enable speakers to create
and understand utterances and sentences. The knowledge of these rules is what today is
called our “linguistic competence”.

Not until the 1970s did the interest of language acquisition spread to language teaching
circles. However, the focus was for many years on how to teach a language rather than
how learners learn a second language. This area was not yet researched and among the
pioneers were Claus Faerch and Gabriele Kasper together with H. H Stern. They argued
that it was time that the research should concentrate on the learning rather than the
teaching since the knowledge of how the process of language learning functions was very
poor. In his book Fundamental concepts of language teaching Dr. H. H Stern gives a
distinction between teaching and learning. He defines language teaching as “the activities
which are intended to bring about language learning” (Stern p 21). The teaching activity is
not constrained to the classroom but can occur by the use of computers and perhaps first and foremost via the use of media such as radio and television. When talking about the term language learning he states that “[t]he psychological concept of learning goes far beyond the learning directly from a teacher or learning through study or practise […] It refers also to learning to learn and learning to think” (Stern p 18). He continues by saying that we “cannot afford to ignore all such ‘natural’, ‘undirected’, or ‘informal’ language learning” (Stern p 19). However, Stern argues that it is important to bear in mind that theories of teaching do not exclude those of learning. A good theory of language teaching would be carried out to meet the needs and conditions of the learners and that the failure of such a teaching has lead to demands of concentrating the study to the area of learning alone. That view is according to Stern, an overstatement and one should understand that the two terms are two sides of the same coin, so to speak (Stern p 21).

He specifically mentions six different areas that he considers needs to be researched. One of these is “the language learner and language learning process”. He believes that the knowledge of the acquisition of a second or foreign language is very incomplete and one way of gaining knowledge of the learning process would be by “behavioural observations of learners, subjective reports of learners’ experience, and psycholinguistic experimentation” (Stern p 410).

In the introduction to the book Strategies in interlanguage communication Faerch and Kasper state that “[d]uring the seventies, the area of interlanguage studies, as it has come to be known, expanded rapidly, and different types of interlanguage (IL) were investigated” (p xv). These different types are interlanguage as a linguistic system, a learning process or as a communication process. For this essay the second type is the one of interest since it deals with “discovering the underlying mechanisms which lead to a certain IL behaviour” (p xvi).

In his book Foreign and second language learning William Littlewood states that “in most of the considerable literature that exists about classroom methods and techniques, the focus of attention is clearly on the activity of teaching, as if learning were merely a straightforward reflection of the teacher’s actions” (Littlewood p 1).
He also has an interesting theory on why the focus of attention changed from teaching to learning. He claims that there has been a growing tendency in teaching a foreign language to be more of a learner-centred activity and thus leading to realising that each student is responsible for his/her learning. He continues by saying that "our methods and techniques have often failed to produce effective learning [...] to discover why, we must study the learner" (Littlewood p 1).

For a teacher this implies that the main task when teaching a foreign language is to equip students with a capacity to learn on their own, i.e. show them how to learn to learn. This is emphasised today by many scholars when they stress the importance of learner autonomy. As we have to regard the students as individuals with individual needs we cannot provide an absolute model of teaching them new words. We have rather to show them how to learn themselves, provide them with strategies to attain a new vocabulary. This should be one of our main tasks as teachers. It were ideas like the ones presented by Littlewood and Stern that paved the way for a project in Sweden that was concerned with how students acquire a new language.

3. Aspects and findings of modern research

3.1 The STRIMS-project
As stated above, one of Littlewood's concerns is that somehow, students do not seem to learn what the teachers are teaching. This issue was also raised in Sweden and gave birth to a project called STRIMS carried out between 1989 and 1994. The members of the project saw the need of teachers gaining insight in the processes involved when acquiring a new language. The project did not only include the English language but also German, Spanish and French were to be included. This to be able to investigate whether learner strategies were universal and independent of a specific language. The learner strategies within the project comprised a wide range of language activities: speaking, listening, reading, writing as well as vocabulary and grammar learning.

One of the methods used in this project was to record the students using a video camera so that later on one could analyse the students' work. This was mainly used when studying the strategies behind speaking a foreign language. When investigating the processes when
writing, the students were recorded by using a microphone. The students were encouraged to think aloud when they were given a specific assignment in order for the researchers to reveal the students’ thoughts and feelings when writing in e.g. English.

Since this essay will focus around vocabulary it might be interesting to look into how the STRIMS-project studied students’ work with words. This was done not only by observing exercises dealing explicitly with vocabulary but also by listening to students when they talked about how they thought when stumbling onto an unknown word. What became clear was that most of the students concentrated their main work with words to the glossaries in the back of their English books. The result of this survey showed that the most common strategy used was that of trying to put the unknown word into a sentence to try to explain its meaning. According to STRIMS this is important. Already in the early stages of the study of a foreign language it is crucial to teach the students to see the combinations and interactions possible between a given word and its context. (I huvudet på en elev p 79).

Still, today one can hear many students, especially in the adult education who complain that they lack a vocabulary or simply cannot find the right words when they try to communicate in a foreign language. Many scholars claim that vocabulary work has been neglected or subordinated to other areas of language teaching in school (Fox). As stated above, the importance of understanding the interaction between a word and its context is according to Roy Fox something that has been forsaken in predominately the higher levels of foreign language teaching. He believes that in the higher levels of foreign language teaching there seems to be a tendency not to work with words in any kind of system but rather to deal with them as they appear in texts. He thinks that by creating a structure and grouping words into different fields of e.g. semantic origin, it will increase the learning (Fox in Texts: Vocabulary and grammar p 13). He wants a methodology that makes the students aware of the possible lexical combinations for a given word instead of regarding words as isolated units.

3.2 Knowing a word
There are several aspects involved in knowing a word. In Learning Vocabulary in Another Language, I.S.P Nation points out that since words cannot be seen as isolated units of language there are many items to know about a word. What does it mean to know a word? Nation focuses on the following aspects:
To know the **spoken form** of an English word means to be able to **recognise** it when heard and furthermore to be able to **produce** the spoken form when wishing to express its specific meaning. The production of a word includes several parts such as pronunciation, knowing the degrees of stress of the word’s syllables. The pronounceability of words has proven to be an important factor influencing students learning of vocabulary. Suggested activities for learning the spoken word form could be reading aloud and be given feedback by the teacher. Another way of learning the spoken form is by writing previously met words on the board. The teacher pronounces the words and the students repeat. Afterwards the learners take turns saying the words and are given feedback on their pronunciations (p 44, 98).

The **written form** is also part of knowing a word. The irregularities of spelling in the English language cause problems both to native speakers and second language learners. However, it appears that training in categorising words according to their sounds and matching these to letters have shown strong long lasting effects on native speakers of English. 40 ten-minute training sessions resulted in positive effects lasting for years, in one of the studies carried out by linguistic researchers (p 45). In order to exercise this aspect of vocabulary learning, Nation suggests learners to work in groups with a list of words trying to find different spelling rules (p100).

**Word parts** or affixes and stems, are included in the knowledge of a word. Nation argues that it is important to direct learners’ attention towards word parts, as they are part of a vital learning strategy using prefixes and suffixes to help remember the meaning of words (p 47). A useful exercise is completing word part tables where students are asked to fill in for example the noun, verb, adjective or adverb of one and the same word (p100).

*Strengthening the form-meaning connection* is another aspect of knowing a word. It simply involves being able to recall a meaning when noticing a word, or being able to recall a spoken or written word when wishing to express a particular meaning. This ability is strengthened by exercises such as matching words and definitions or peer teaching. Peer teaching is where learners work in pairs and one student has to teach the vocabulary in his list to the other student. In order to facilitate the “teacher’s” task, he or she additionally has pictures illustrating the meaning of the words.
**Concepts and referents** concern knowing the core meaning of a word and its range of meanings and uses. This enables the learner to understand a word when used in a new situation and to use a word in creative ways. A useful technique is by finding common meanings of a word's different uses. Nation exemplifies (p 102):

A) He was expelled from school.
B) They were expelled from their villages
C) The breath was expelled from her body

A variety of **associations** for a word helps understanding its full use. Additionally, it facilitates the process of recalling the word form or meaning in correct contexts.

Activities on associations could for example deal with synonyms, antonyms or family members of the same headword (p 104).

Matching sentence halves, in order to make sensible complete sentences, exercises the **grammar** of the word. I.S.P Nation includes also the grammatical function of words into knowing a word. He claims that “it is necessary to know what part of speech a word is and what grammatical patterns it can fit into” (p 55).

It is also important to know what word particular items of vocabulary normally occur with, for example, “fast food” or “deep breath”. Looking in dictionaries, and using parallels with learners’ first language are two ways of working with **collocates** (p 106).

The last aspect of knowing a word includes **constraints on use**. It is important to be aware of sociolinguistic features such as the use of formal or informal words, British or American vocabulary, polite or impolite usage etc. since they clearly affect the interpretation of the communication. Word lists, where learners are to classify the vocabulary items according to a certain constraint on use, is a recommendable exercise according to Nation (p 107).

**3.3 Repetition and memory**

Several studies have shown the importance of repetition as a factor in vocabulary learning. However, it is not only the repetition of a word that is important but the repeated opportunity to retrieve the item to be learned. Each retrieval strengthens the connection between word form and word meaning and makes subsequent retrieval easier.
Research has found that spaced repetition is a more secure learning strategy than, what is defined massed repetition. “Massed repetition involves spending a continuous period of time, say fifteen minutes giving repeated attention to a word. Spaced repetition involves spreading the repetitions across a long period of time, but not spending more time in total on the study of the words” (p 76). Unlike massed repetition, spaced repetition results in learning that will be remembered for a long period of time.

Linguistic scientists agree that most forgetting occur soon after the first encounter with new vocabulary. However, as time passes the rate of forgetting slows down. In a study carried out by Anderson and Jordan (1928) recall immediately after learning, after one week, after three weeks and after eight weeks, were measured. The percentages of retained material were 66%, 48%, 39% and 37% respectively. Consequently, repetition of new items should take place soon after the initial meeting with the new vocabulary. Further repetition can be spaced at increasingly larger intervals. Also more recent researches, among others Griffin (1992), have come to the conclusion that most forgetting appears to occur soon after learning (p76).

Pimsleur proposes an interesting memory schedule indicating the size of the spaces between the repetitions. The scale should be seen as a rough guide to the spacing of repetitions. Based on research evidence Pimsleur suggests the following time schedule (p 78):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repetition</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>5 secs</td>
<td>25 secs</td>
<td>2 mins</td>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>25 days</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It has been speculated that the superiority of spaced over massed practice is related to the functioning of the brain. Long-term learning depends on physical changes in the brain, where neuro-chemical substances are regenerated. Spaced repetition allows the brain enough time for these substances to regenerate and can thus continue to make the physical changes needed for learning (p77).

Several studies have been carried out on the number of repetitions for effective vocabulary learning. During the sixties researchers seemed to be convinced that approximately six or seven repetitions were enough for learning new words. Today, researchers have found that
learners differ greatly in the number of repetitions and amount of time required for learning. Some learners require more than twenty repetitions where as most learners require five to seven repetitions (p 81).

Repetition does not only involve repeating the same material. It can additionally extend and enrich previous meetings. The type of repetition depends on the goal of learning. If the aim is simple definitional learning then more repetitions were to be preferred rather than fewer. If making use of the new words was the goal, then the previous word teaching had to allow the learners to meet the new words being used in several different ways so that the meaning of the word was enriched, not just repeated, by each meeting.

Stahl and Fairbanks(1986) found that repetition of the same forms, meanings, and contexts had strong effects on measures of meaning recall. Nevertheless it appeared that more elaborate repetition (extending the meaning of the word and meeting some of its collocations) had stronger effects on passage comprehension.

3.4 How to remember
It has been argued whether direct learning of vocabulary is to be preferred to incidental vocabulary learning. Nation argues that critics of this kind of learning “need to take a broader view of what is involved in knowing a word and how vocabulary can be learned” (p 302). According to Nation, the advantages of direct learning are:

- Efficiency concerning time and effort.
- Learners are allowed to consciously concentrate on an aspect of word knowledge, not easily gained from for example dictionary use or context.
- Learners can control the repetition and processing of the words in order to make learning secure.

An important aspect of direct learning of vocabulary is the strengthening of the link between form and its meaning. Nation presents the key word technique as a useful means to achieving this goal.

The technique can be seen as a four-part process. 1) the learner meets the unknown word and its meaning. 2) the learner thinks of the key word i.e. a first language word sounding like the beginning or all of the unknown word. 3) the learner thinks of a visual image combining the meaning of the unknown word and the meaning of the key word. 4) The learner “knows” the meaning of the new word.
4. Interviews with two teachers
In order to find out whether the findings of linguistic science are accounted for in the language classroom we interviewed two teachers. The interviews focused on the following questions:

- How do you work with vocabulary learning in the classroom?
- What do you think is the ideal teaching method of new vocabulary?
- Positive and negative aspects of such a method?
- Do you teach your students any learning strategies?
- What do you think is most important when selecting new vocabulary to be learnt?
- How do you think your students study/learn new words?

4.1 Interview I
It appears that in X’s English classes, consisting of students from the theoretical programmes at the X-school in Malmoe, they usually work with texts and vocabulary lists. The vocabulary items are usually chosen by the teacher and students are asked to find the correct meaning of the words by using bilingual dictionaries. Sometimes, for example, when working with longer texts the teacher does not go through the glossary. It is the students’ responsibility to find the correct meaning. When the whole book has been read by the class, students should, in groups, agree on what words to learn from the word list handed out by the teacher. She prepares different glossary tests for each group.

The ideal teaching of new vocabulary according to X is to read as much literature as possible and to look specifically at new words that occur frequently in the text. Afterwards the student should be able to use the word, for example by having a group discussion on, or a presentation of the book where the student should try to use a number of words from the individual glossary list. A lot of reading gives the reader a good language. However, there are negative aspects of such a method. It is above all, time consuming and the
teacher has to activate the rest of the class, which does not take part in the group discussion. Additionally, the teacher should preferably have read the books chosen by the students.

X says that she teaches students learning strategies since she emphasises the value of using dictionaries. This makes the students aware of the fact that a word can take on multiple meanings. She also helps the students with mnemonic (memory) strategies by using rhymes et cetera. Learning strategies were not part of her education, but the above mentioned strategies are based on her own personal way of learning.

When selecting new words to be learnt by her students, X stresses the importance that the words are relevant for the student’s everyday language and can be found in e.g. newspaper articles. She also considers it to be important to learn synonyms so that the student may express himself in a varied way. This means that she excludes “professional vocabulary”. She also avoids words that are difficult to pronounce or have odd spellings. She believes that students lose interest if the words are too complicated. Still, the difficulty of the words should be on a level just above the students’ in order to challenge and motivate the learners to improve their vocabulary skills.

X thinks that her students are used to the ordinary glossaries and she believes that it is very difficult to change their studying habits. However, she tries to influence them by forming word tests in a way that does not encourage such a learning method. Since students often neglect the text and focus solely on the glossaries she uses cloze tests; i.e. incomplete sentences taken from the text to be filled in by the student. She also tries to avoid the traditional translation exercises because these encourage students to only concentrate on the glossary. The advantage of using sentences from the text, she thinks, is that the students learn to see the words in a meaningful context.

### 4.2 Interview II

At the Y-school in Lund, teacher Y has an idea of the ideal way of working with vocabulary in the classroom that she tries to strive for. Her students are all from the theoretical programmes. She thinks that it is important to let the student meet the word in various ways e.g. by fast reading, by the teacher writing new words on the blackboard, or by the teacher
reading the words out aloud. This in order to concentrate on the form of the words. Then she lets the students read the given text slowly trying to find information that will lead to a general understanding of the new words. In order to avoid the mechanical studying of glossaries regrettably used by many students, learning a word should be seen as a process that demands time. The next step in this process is to let the students use the words by themselves. According to Y, one way of doing this is to let them write their own short stories where they are encouraged to use as many of the new words as possible. What she finds difficult though, is to get an overall view of the individual student’s process. There are both students who are aware of different ways of learning new words and have a notion of metacognition and those unaware of this knowledge and thus only memorise and do not reflect over their learning. It is the latter group that is hard to spot and may therefore lose interest.

When it comes to learning strategies Y tries to make the students aware of their ways of learning at an early stage. Already when she first meets them in the A-course they discuss different ways that the students themselves have used so far and their advantages and disadvantages. She lets them fill in a form on how students assess their English skills (see appendix) in order to make them reflect on their own individual way of learning. The students’ answers additionally provide Y with ideas of what material students would be interested in working with and also if the students have preferences regarding any special methods. She emphasises the importance of adjusting the level of her teaching to the needs and expectations of the students since no group is alike. Some groups actually have a stronger need of structure and fixed glossaries. The lack of strategies becomes visible primarily when it comes to speaking English. Some students do not posses the ability to communicate when not knowing a specific word; hence they are hindered in their language fluency.

The most important aspect of vocabulary learning is, according to Y, to ensue that the students, when leaving school, are equipped with the necessary “tools” for a life long learning. It is therefore utterly important for the teacher to teach the students how to learn. She considers words to be the foundation of both speech and writing. It is necessary to let the students write as much as possible since it activates and stimulates their own internal vocabulary. Writing exercises are important, especially since there are students who are
afraid of speaking in class or even in groups. Writing does not require the same fluency as speaking; it allows students time to choose or find the correct word.

If students are to be able to reflect over their own learning later on, she claims that it is vital to make sure that they are aware of the fact that they are working with vocabulary learning. When asked how she thinks her students learn new vocabulary, she says that she has noticed that some students e.g. when reading a novel, go about it the wrong way. They tend to read it in search of new and difficult words and therefore concentrate their reading on finding and translating these words rather than having the context explaining the word in question. For students who translate a text word by word, instead of guessing the meaning based on the context, new vocabulary becomes a time consuming obstacle. She also believes that many students are trapped in the traditional studying of bilingual glossaries.

4.3 Discussing the results
When comparing the views of these two teachers it appears that they both agree on the fact that most students tend to concentrate their work with vocabulary primarily on bilingual glossaries provided in the back of their English books. They also believe that these studying habits stem from earlier stages in the education system. Providing learners with strategies at an early stage could eliminate the problem of later on changing the students' traditional way of learning in favour of more efficient methods of acquiring new vocabulary.

Both teachers seem to be aware of the necessity of providing students with useful methods to facilitate their learning but that these methods are something that the teachers themselves have been forced to invent or find out on their own initiatives. They both would have liked more information of learning strategies in their professional education. X and Y try to point out to their students that the traditional way of learning new vocabulary, i.e. by repetitively studying the words in the glossary does not benefit the life long learning. Neither does it widen the horizon of a word’s different possible meanings and collocations. I.S.P Nation mentions that knowing a word involves many different aspects and by using e.g. dictionaries, one covers several of these aspects.
Nation and others stress the use of repetition in order to benefit the long-term memory. Despite neither of the interviewed teachers mentioned this per se, one can spot some sort of repetitive exercises since they encourage the students to use newly learnt vocabulary in follow up activities such as writing a story or give an oral presentation. In his book, Nation suggests that repetition should take place over a longer period of time and one can perhaps ask how this could be done practically.

It is interesting to see that what the researchers focused on in the 1970s, i.e. that one should concentrate on the learning process as much as the teaching process, seems to be a natural part of today’s language classroom. One good example of this is the form Y uses when she first meets the students in the A-course which serves to bring the students’ attention to, and reflection over their own learning.

We believe that one can never get away from the use of glossaries when dealing with vocabulary learning. Though, it is crucial how the glossaries are dealt with and the following tests. In order to avoid the traditional bilingual glossaries in the back of the English books, other material can be chosen such as articles or short stories where the students are asked to write their own glossaries. These should preferably be monolingual where words can be defined by, for example, the use of synonyms, antonyms or by the student’s own definition. This way of working with vocabulary activates the learners which is a prerequisite for the learning process. It puts the student in focus and he is in charge of his own learning rather than being a passive recipient which is the case when only memorising bilingual glossaries.

One aspect of the curriculum, that the students should take part in planning the content of the course serves as a motivator. However, we argue that it is the teacher who in the end should be in charge of selecting appropriate and useful vocabulary because the students do not have the competence to choose themselves. The possibility of choosing oneself and thereby becoming more motivated is something that Roy Fox mentions as one of the most important factors in vocabulary learning. Besides motivation he lists the following factors as a prerequisite for efficient learning; activity, context, association, and repetition. He believes that in order to get as much as possible out of exercises built up around vocabulary learning, the teacher must make sure that he;
• composes exercises, which contain an active co-operation between students.
• makes the students use words and expressions in a meaningful way.
• motivates the students to read the text by making them curious of the content.
(Fox in Texts: Vocabulary and grammar p 11-12).

Another thing mentioned in the curriculum is that one of the main goals of the English teaching in Swedish schools is to provide the student with a technique that will enable them to learn on their own, i.e. learner autonomy. It is our obligation as teachers to teach our students to learn how to learn and this can only be achieved by giving them strategies useful enough for a life after school. X emphasises the use of dictionaries, which prepares the students for university studies. How to use a dictionary may seem obvious to advanced learners but it is a fact that many students in upper secondary school find them difficult. Y also stresses that it is important to make the students aware of that there are more efficient ways of learning than to simply work with bilingual glossaries.

During our practise period we asked the students how they worked with vocabulary. Despite the form they filled in when in the A-course, the majority said that they only worked with the bilingual glossaries in their textbooks. Therefore, it is our belief that in order to change this way of working with words one must continuously remind them of alternative methods. It is also our opinion that the time consuming activities of changing these habits could be diminished if learning strategies were introduced early on in the teaching of a foreign language. Still, we feel that this is something that could have been given more attention at the teacher academy.
5. Conclusion
As we have stated in the introduction, this essay is an attempt to study and discuss if the result of the research has spread into the modern language classroom. The background of the research showed that for long, the emphasis was rather of how to teach than how to learn a foreign language. Not until the 1970s did the focus change from teaching to learning in the matter of how a learner acquire a foreign language. We have looked at some of the important aspects of the scientific findings and results. Of these can be mentioned various aspects of knowing a word and the importance of repetition. We have also given an example of a mnemonic technique in order to facilitate the learning of new words. The interviews showed that scientific results are used in some fashion in the classroom. One must bear in mind that no two teachers are alike but we believe that all teachers are in some way aware of the inefficiency of students’ learning methods and try to provide them with other alternatives. However, one can wonder if not more education would provide teachers with adequate methods for changing the students’ vocabulary acquisition. Why not bring these issues into focus already at the teacher academy? Hence helping newly educated teachers, and first and foremost, helping students to achieve the goals of the curriculum.
6. References


7. Appendix