Adopting a Learner-Centered Approach to Improve Seafarers' Vocabulary Skills

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Abstract: This study focuses on adopting a learner-centered approach to improve seafarers' vocabulary skills. The participants of the study were 94 marine students from Southern Academy of Maritime Studies, Panapakkam. The objective of the study is to teach the vocabulary skills of the marine students. The research questions of the study are i) I How do students feel about learning new words ii) What are the sources that students utilize to acquire new words? iii) In L2 acquisition, what strategies do students employ to learn, keep track of, and store new words? On-line survey was administered in this study using a questionnaire to collect data from samples. Five-point Likert scale: (1- Never, 2 - Rarely, 3 - Sometimes, 4 - Often, and 5- Always) was incorporated in this study to collect data from the samples.

1. INTRODUCTION

For maritime safety, security, secure navigation, and maritime business, effective communication is essential. Seafarers require communication on board ships, and this communication is primarily conducted in English because maritime professionals hail from a variety of nations and speak a variety of languages. Because the seafarers come from a diverse background, they require a common language for communication, which is English. Because marine personnel must travel to all corners of the globe, they must have strong communication abilities. Furthermore, seafarers must communicate between ships and between ships and shore. An endangered ship, for example, may request the assistance of a pilot to come to the ship and rescue the crew. The majority of the communication takes place in English. As a result, for safe navigation, for mariners, learning English is essential. Furthermore, being an international nautical language, seamen can use English. In truth, using a common language (English) gives sailors certain advantages. They can, for starters, strengthen their communication skills. Second, English can help to promote social peace.

Finally, English can be used to reinforce teamwork in the classroom. According to Winbow (2002), "communication is a fundamental part of human interaction; the advantages of effective communication are numerous and recognizable as they develop qualities of our lives. Ineffective communications in our personal lives could rise to problems or embarrassment but in our professional lives the results of misunderstandings could cause much more life-threatening consequences. In the world of international shipping, including many countries seafarers sailing on ships trading with all the world, effective communication among them on board and between ship and shore has enormously importance." (Winbow, et al., 2002, pp.1)

Standard Marine Navigational Vocabulary (SMNV)

SMNV was adopted by IMO (International Marine Organization). This was developed for the use of seafarers. The purpose of this SMNV is to avoid language barriers at sea and also to avoid misunderstandings. Misunderstanding may cause accidents at sea. This SMNV also helps to learn a basic knowledge about English language. It is given in a simplified form of marine English. The phrases used here is about daily routine in the ship. For example: berthing and ship-to-ship and on-board communications

Literature Review

Zimmerman (1997) states that **"Vocabulary is central to language and of critical importance to the typical language learner. Nevertheless, the teaching and learning of vocabulary have been undervalued in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) throughout its varying stages and up to the present day"**.

Raluca Apostol-Mates, Alina Barbu, (2015), "**Is maritime English the key in solving communication problems within multinational crews?** Vol. XXI No 2 2015. International Conference knowledge-based organization.

Miguel Enrique Clements (1996), **"On board [onboard] communication problems due to the lack of a common language".** World Maritime University The Maritime Commons: Digital Repository of the World Maritime University.

Prashant Kumar (2018), **"Communication among multi-national and multi-cultural crew onboard a ship".**

A Learner-centered Approach

A learner-centered approach helps learners to engage with their own learning journey by incorporating interests. It encourages the learner to know about what they are learning and how they are learning. It is also known as Student-centric approach. In this approach students take responsibility for their own learning.

University lecturer Martha Kennedy defined it as: *"...a classroom dynamic in which the students participate actively while the teacher might take a (seemingly) more passive role. It boils down to group work, one-on-one tutoring in the classroom between student and teacher, student presentations…To learn a skill, students must be directly involved. No teacher can stand there and tell the students how to do something and expect the students to leave the classroom able to do it."*

Learner-centered approach helps students to solve problems, answer questions, frame

questions of their own, discuss, explain, debate, or brainstorm during class. It also includes active learning and co-operative learning. In this study self-correction and peer-correction strategies are employed.

Problem Statement

Marine students fail at sea revealing that lack of vocabulary skills to use a common language English could make ship a high-risk work environment. Crews in the ship coming from different parts of world, have different first language, their body language, gestures, cultures may interpret things differently. Vocabulary skills bring a big barrier to effective communication. As a result, even persons who speak the same language can misinterpret each other. Misunderstandings, on the other hand, can be catastrophic onboard vessels, especially in emergency situations when time is short and individuals tend to retreat to their native tongue.

Research Questions

i)   How do students feel about learning new words?
ii) What are the sources that students utilize to acquire new words?
iii) In L2 acquisition, what strategies do students employ to learn, keep track of, and store new words?

Hypothesis

Adopting a learner-centered approach to improve seafarers' vocabulary skills. Self-correction and Peer-correction was utilized in this study.

Objectives

1.   To learn about a learner-centered approach
2.   To create an interest to learn new words
3.   To encourage them to be responsible for their own learning.

2. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this section is to detail the study's methodology, from sampling procedure to data analysis. It also explains why the questionnaire and mixed-method technique were chosen for this study. The researcher employed a mixed methodology technique for this study, which combines a qualitative approach with a literature evaluation; this is an area where no previous research has been conducted in the Iraq environment. As a result, the underlying elements are hazy and difficult to forecast. To obtain information, a questionnaire was sent out.

"Qualitative researchers seek to preserve and analyze the situated form, content, and experience of social action, rather than subject it to mathematical or other formal transformations. Actual talks, gesture, and so on are the raw materials of analysis." (Lindlof & Taylor et al., 2002, pp. 4/5/6)

Participants: The participants of this study were ninety four **Southern Academy of Maritime Studies** from Panapakkam.

Sampling Method: Simple Random Sampling method was employed in this study.
Sampling Size: Ninety Four students (94) responded for this online Google form survey. 95.7% are male students. The branches were B.E. Marine Engineering, B.Sc. Nautical Science, Diploma Nautical Science, General Purpose Rating and TME.
Instrumental Tools: Online Google form survey questionnaire was administered in this study to understand about their interest in learning vocabulary skills. The details of the questionnaire as follows. The questionnaire used for the main study. Five-point Likert scale: 1- Never, 2 - Rarely, 3 - Sometimes, 4 - Often, and 5- Always was administered in this study. The questions of the questionnaire as follows.

PART – 1
1. Name :
2. Name of the College -------------
3. Degree: B.E (Marine Engineering) / B.Sc. Nautical Science / Diploma Nautical Science/General Purpose Rating.
4. Age: --------
5. Gender: M/F
6. Medium of instruction at school: English/Tamil/Telugu/Hindi/Malayalam
7. Board of Instructions: CBSE/Matriculation/State/BSEB/ICSE/SSC
8. Residence: City/ Village / Town

PART – 2
Close-ended questions: The numbers from 1 to 5 represent your responses for the statements. Their meanings are given below:
 1 - Never (Not at all)
 2 - Rarely (Not frequently)
 3 - Sometimes (Not always but at times)
 4 - Often (Frequently)
 5 - Always (All the time)

S. No	Importance of Vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
1	Even a grammatically incorrect sentence makes sense to me.					
2	I do not utilize correct terms. So most of the times my speech is not clear to others.					
3	I utilize an improper word. To express my views.					
4	I don't know enough English vocabulary, speaking in English is challenging for me.					
5	I don't know enough English vocabulary, writing in English is challenging for me.					
6	I am unable to comprehend what I am reading. Because the words are unfamiliar to me.					
7	I am unable to understand what the other person is saying. Because the words used are unfamiliar to me.					

PART – 3

S. No	Words are learned via listening.	1	2	3	4	5
1	I communicate with native English speakers. To learn new terms,					
2	I seek advice from my teachers on simple methods to expand my vocabulary.					
3	I learn terms from all subjects' textbooks					
4	If an unknown term appears in the definition of another word,					
5	I consult a dictionary to decipher the unknown word.					
6	I jot down unfamiliar words that my teacher uses so that I can					

PART – 4

S. No	Words are learned by pronouncing them out loud.	1	2	3	4	5
1	I absorb new vocabularies when I read novels, newspapers, brochures, prospectuses, notices, magazines, comics, and other materials outside of the classroom.					
2	Many of the features on my phone, laptop, and the Internet are also sources of new words for me.					
3	I learn new words When i prepare for writing assignments.					
4	I learn new terms when i send or receive SMS.					
5	I grasp new words when i communicate with my friends through whatsapp, instagram and twitter.					
6	I acquire new vocabularies when i send or receive letters and e-mails.					
	learn them later.					
7	I learn words by listening to English lectures.					
8	I learn words through listening to English news, movie dialogues, and English songs, outside of the classroom.					

PART – 5

S. No	Reading is an excellent way to learn new words.	1	2	3	4	5
1	It's easier to guess a word's meaning than it is to look it up in a dictionary.					
2	I continue to read and try to deduce the meaning from the context later.					
3	I deduced the meaning of the word from the text's illustrations.					
4	I look for any word pieces that I recognize (e.g.: in words such as impossible, possibility, possibly, etc., I look for the word possible) To figure out the meaning.					
5	I deduce the meaning of a new word based on its context.					
6	I always make educated guesses about the correct meaning of new words.					
7	I consider the many prefixes and suffixes that could be applied to the new term.					
8	I tell my friends and family about the new words.					
9	It helps me remember new words if I share them with my friends and family.					
10	In ordinary speech and when writing in English, I employ new words (e.g. talking to classmates, teachers, writing letters, diaries, etc.).					

PART – 6

Sr. No	Writing is a great way to learn vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
1	I use a multilingual dictionary that converts English to Tamil or any other regional language.					
2	I use a monolingual (English-to-English) dictionary.to acquire new vocabularies					
3	I use the programme (e-dictionary) on my PC/laptop or mobile phone to study the meaning of words					
4	I use the Internet. To pick up new words, (e.g. on-line dictionaries).					
5	I ask my English teachers to clarify the meaning of a word I don't understand.					
6	To understand a word, I ask my teacher for an example sentence.					
7	I figure out what a word means. After talking with my friends.					
8	I ask my buddies to clarify the meaning of an unfamiliar English word to me.					
9	I ask my friends or teachers to explain the meanings of unfamiliar phrases in my own tongue.					

PART – 7

S. No	Making a list of the new words	1	2	3	4	5
1	I absorb a new word's definition.					
2	I study a new word's portion of the speech.					
3	I study the new word's prefixes and suffixes.					
4	I practice pronouncing the new terms.					
5	I examine how a word is employed in a variety of contexts.					
6	I learn how to use new word, to comprehend the meaning in a sentence.					
7	I pay special attention to unfamiliar words while reading.					

PART- 8

S. No	Learning New Vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
1	I categories new words by textbook unit or lesson.					
2	I keep a notepad in which I record new words terms that I hear in and out of the classroom.					
3	I write down how to pronounce the new word. In my mother tongue,					
4	In my mother tongue, I put down the definition of the new word.					
5	I jot down the definition, part of speech, and an example phrase for each term.					
6	I keep track of new terms on wall charts, posters, and small pieces of paper that I stick about the house or on things.					
7	To learn words, I employ the mind mapping technique. (A mind map is a diagram that looks like a map and serves as a visual outline. It continues to exist.					
8	I keep a computer or other electronic device where I keep my vocabulary notes.					
9	I keep word cards to keep track of new terms I've learned and to revise them.					

PART – 9

S. No	Steps to help you remember words	1	2	3	4	5
1	Prefixes, suffixes, and roots are all that I memorize.					
2	I silently repeat the word.in my head.					
3	Orally, I repeat the words with perfect spelling and pronunciation.					
4	I keep a running list of new terms, with their spelling and an example.					
5	I regularly put my freshly learnt vocabularies to the test.					
6	A term conjures up a mental image for me.					
7	I associate new terms with words I've learned in another foreign language.					
8	I substitute the new word with a brief definition. In the sample sentence.					
9	I organize words into groups based on their meaning (for example, kitchen, school, and so on).					
10	I strive to employ the terms in fictional settings or conversations.					

Analysis and Interpretation
This session is about data analysis, which was done using the combination approach outlined in the Methodology chapter, as well as the quantitative and qualitative method. Five point likert scale was used for collecting data.

Demographic Details
Part 1. Personal Details of the respondents

1.   **Degree**
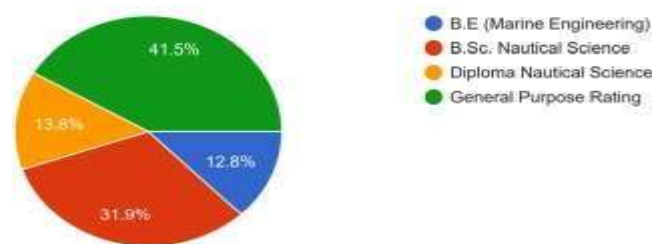
2. Gender
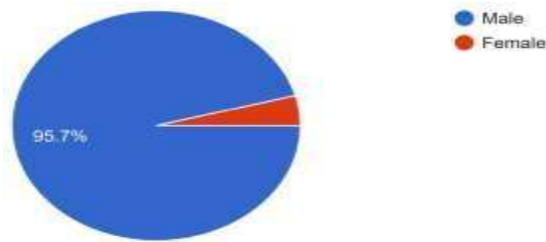
3.Age
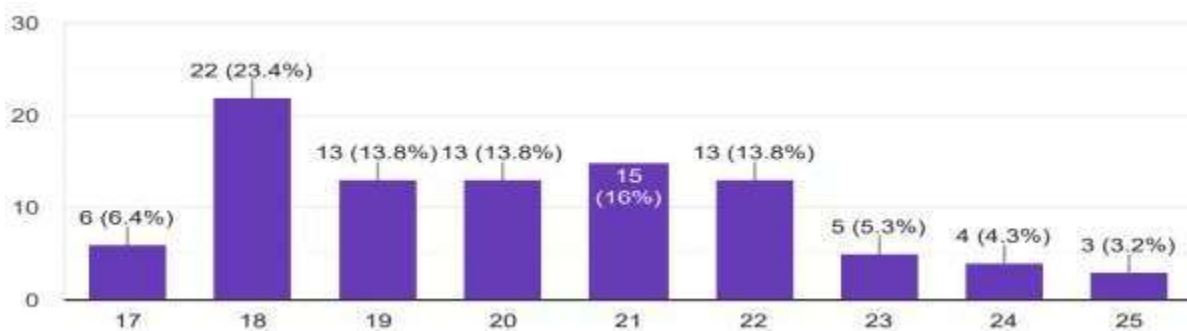
4.   Medium of Instruction at school
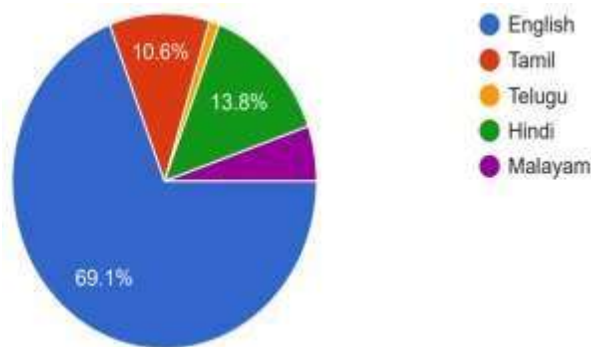
5.   Board of Instructions
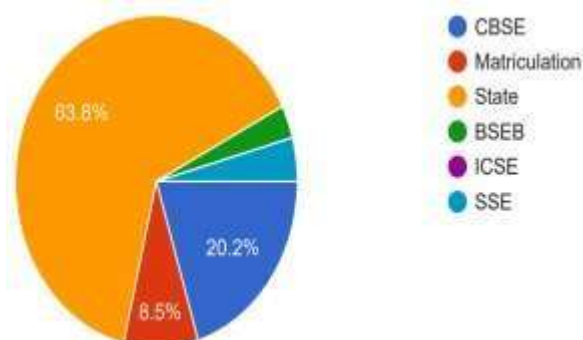
6.   Residence
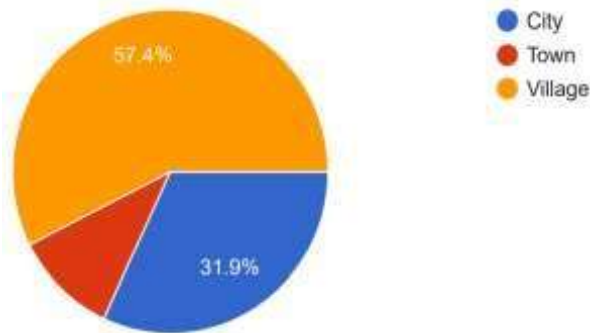
Part – 2 Importance of Vocabulary

i)   Even a grammatically incorrect sentence makes sense to me.
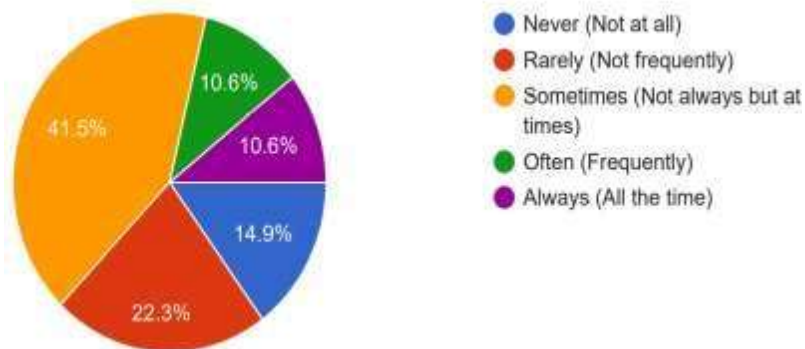
ii)   I do not utilize correct terms. So most of the times my speech is not clear to others.
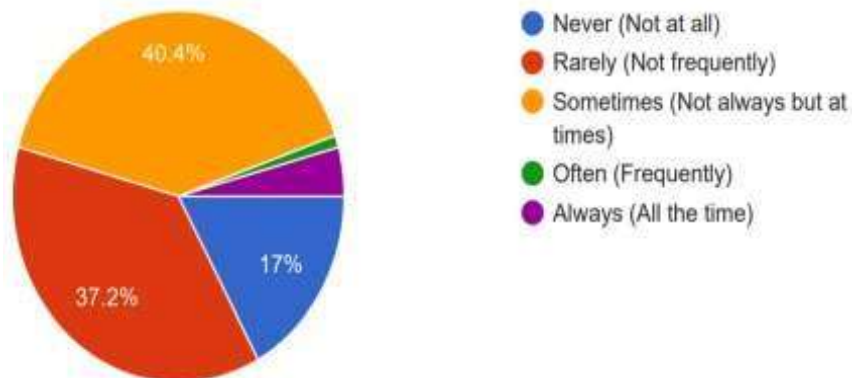
iii) I utilize an improper word. To express my views.
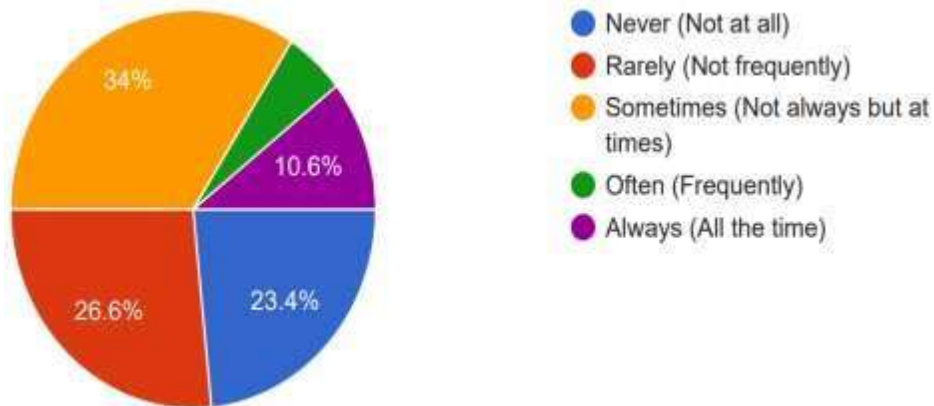
iv) I don't know enough English vocabulary, speaking in English is challenging for me.
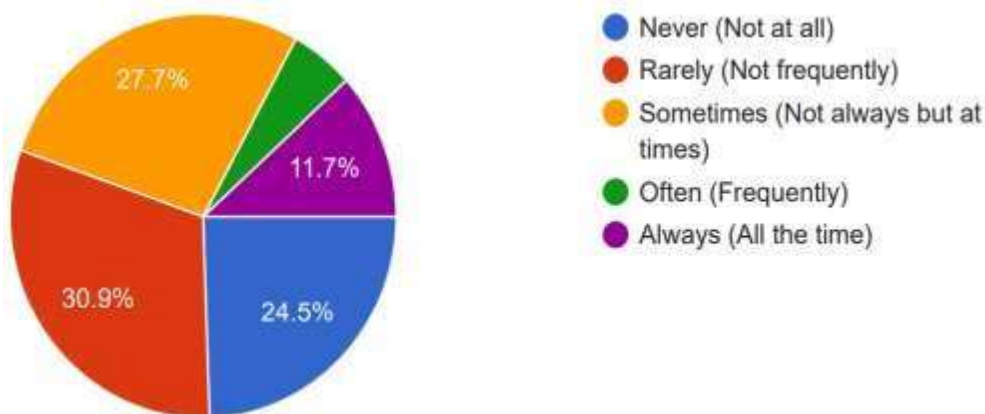
v) I don't know enough English vocabulary, writing in English is challenging for me.
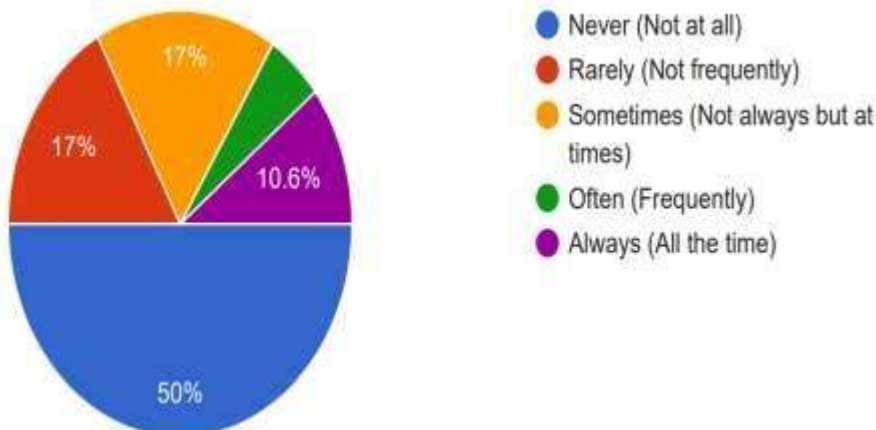
vi) I am unable to comprehend what I am reading. Because the words are unfamiliar to me.
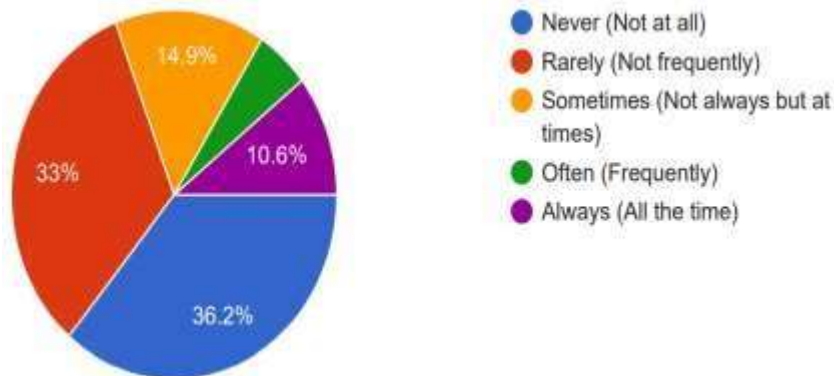
vii) I am unable to understand what the other person is saying. Because the words used are unfamiliar to me.
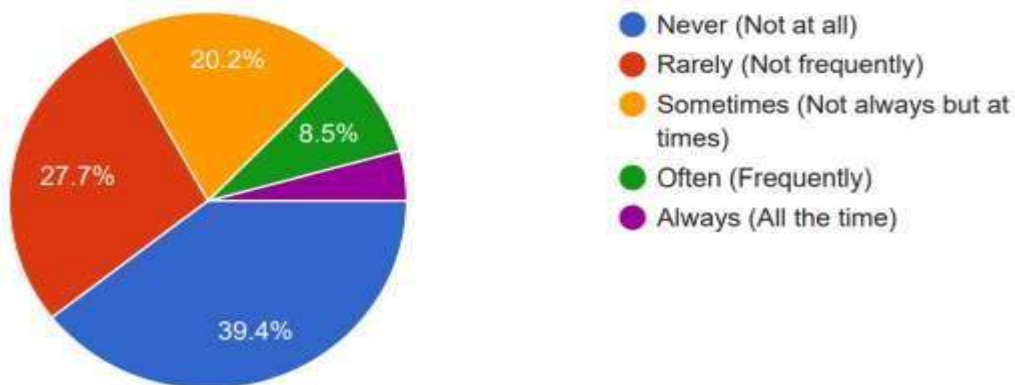
Part – 3 Words are learned via listening

i)   I communicate with native English speakers. To learn new terms
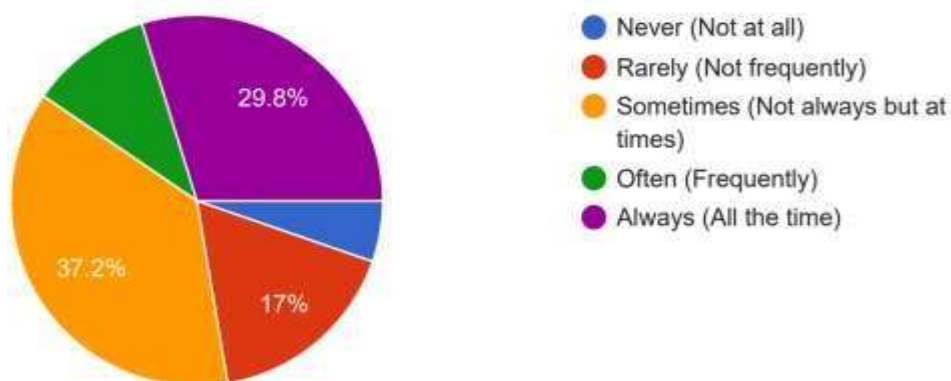
ii)   I seek advice from my teachers on simple methods to expand my vocabulary.
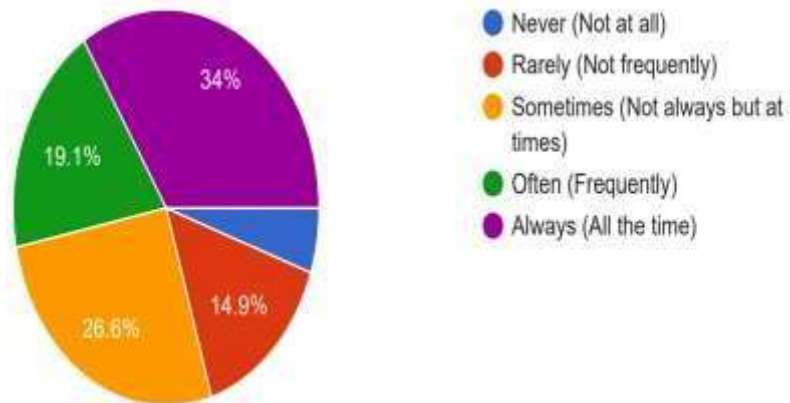
iii)   I learn terms from all subjects' textbooks
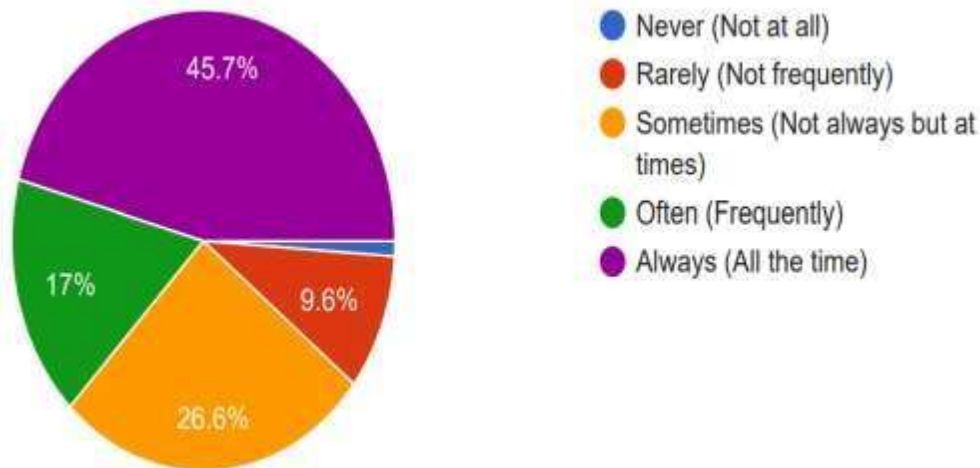
iv)   an unknown term appears in the definition of another word,
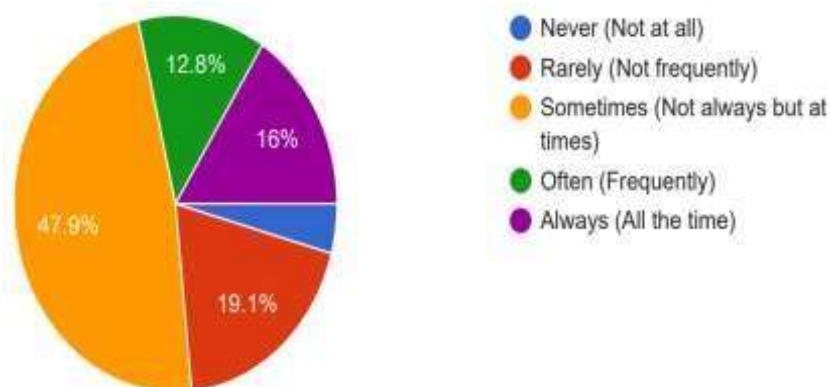
v) I consult a dictionary to decipher the unknown word.
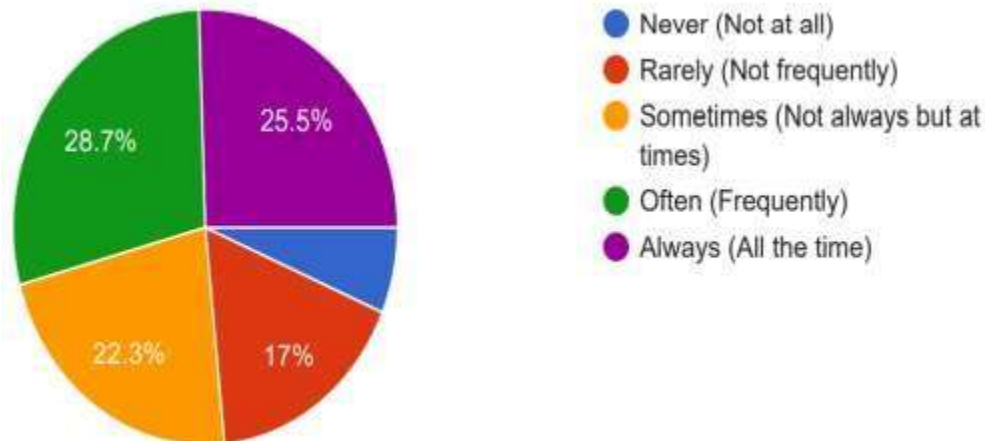
vi) I jot down unfamiliar words that my teacher uses so that I can learn them later.
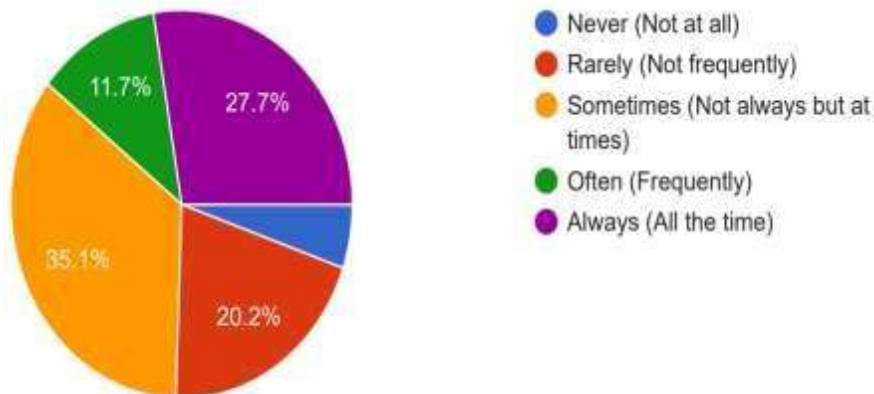
vii) I learn words by listening to English lectures.
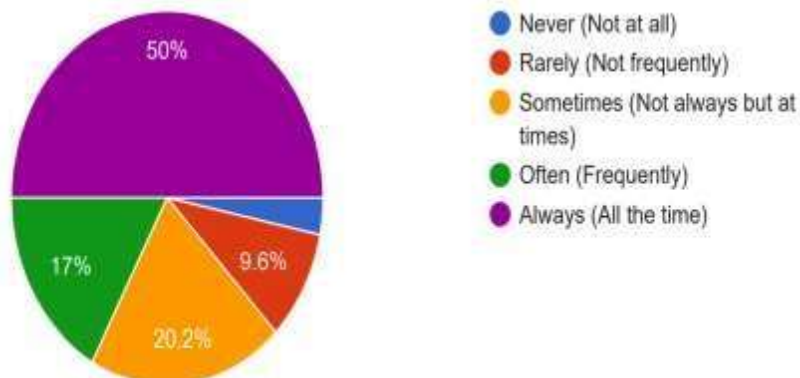
viii) I learn words through listening to English news, movie dialogues, and English songs, outside of the classroom.
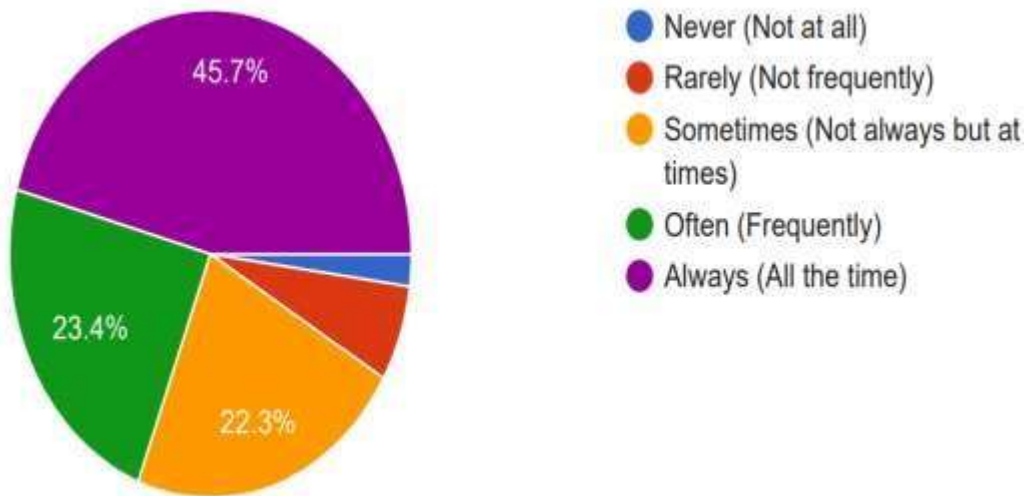
Part – 4 Words are learned by pronouncing them out loud

i) I absorb new vocabularies when I read novels, newspapers, brochures, prospectuses, notices, magazines, comics, and other materials outside of the classroom.
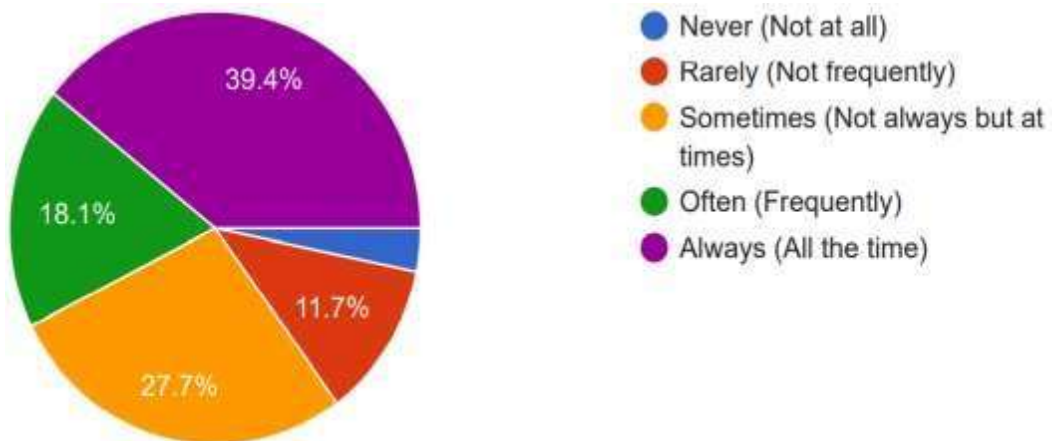
ii) Many of the features on my phone, laptop, and the Internet are also sources of new words for me.
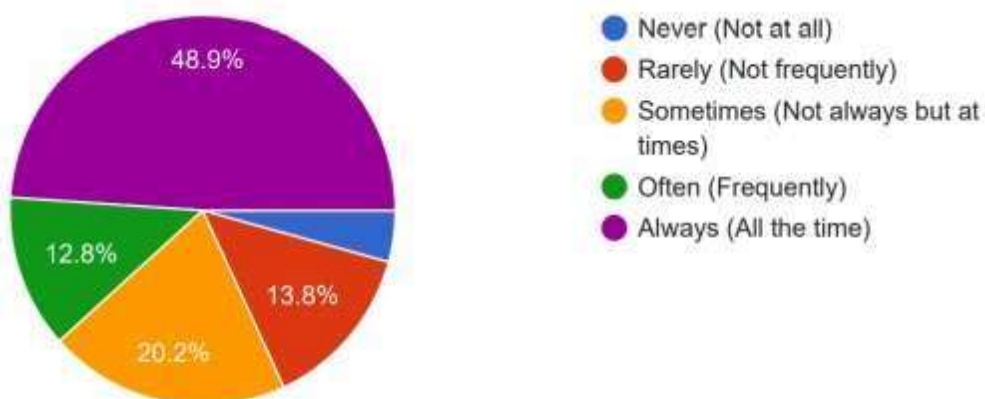
iii)   I learn new words when i prepare for writing assignments.
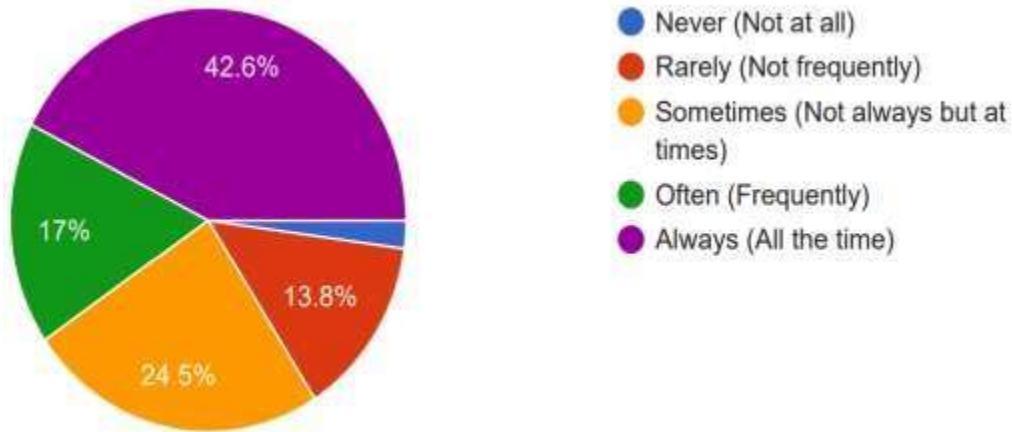
iv)   I learn new terms when i send or receive SMS.
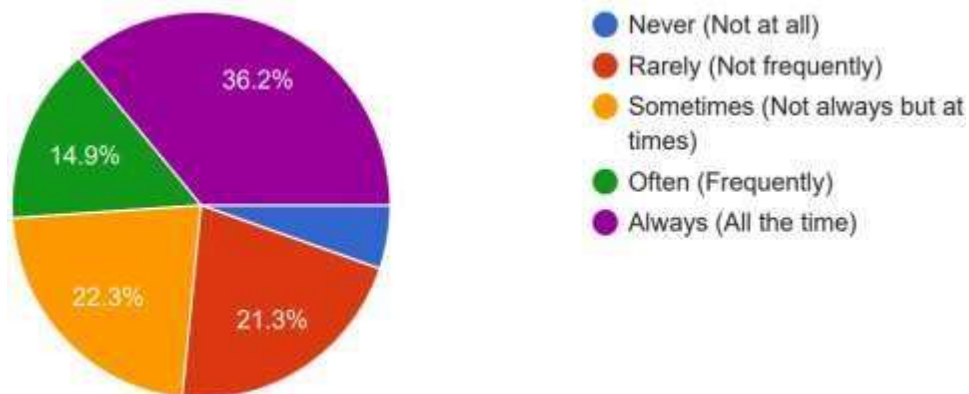
v)   I grasp new words when i communicate with my friends through whatsapp, instagram and twitter.
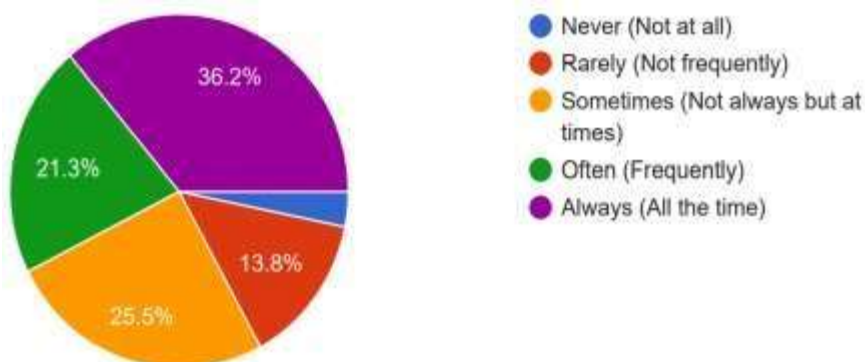
vi) I acquire new vocabularies when i send or receive letters and e-mails.
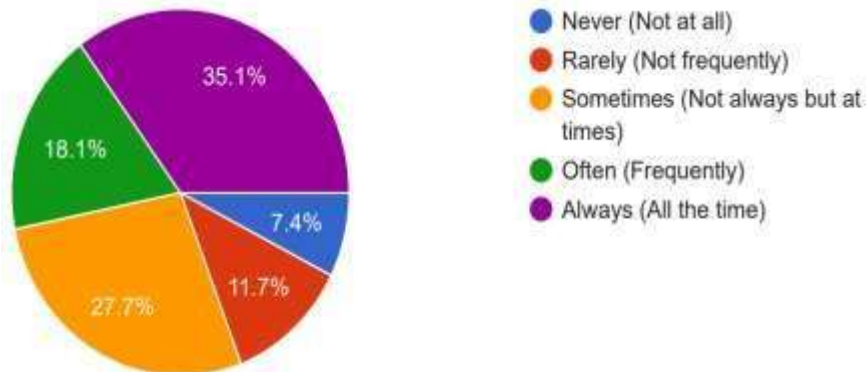
Part – 5 Reading is an excellent way to learn new words

i) It's easier to guess a word's meaning than it is to look it up in a dictionary.
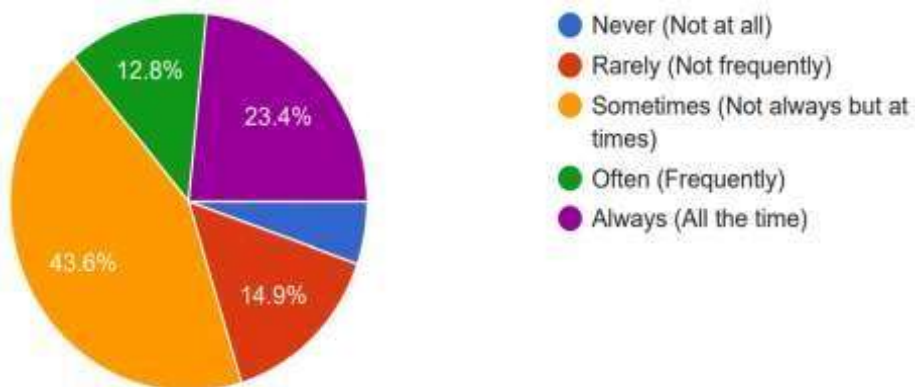
ii) I continue to read and try to deduce the meaning from the context later.
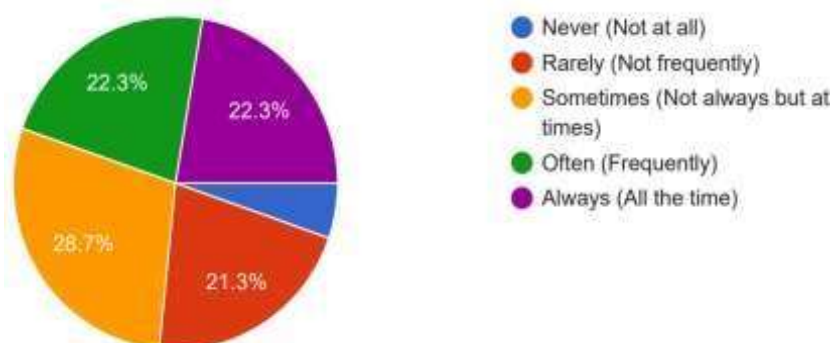
iii)   I deduced the meaning of the word from the text's illustrations.
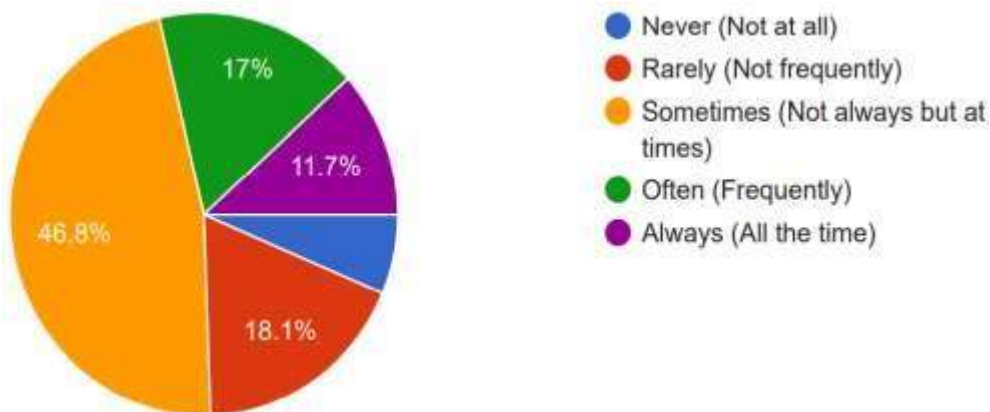
iv)   I look for any word pieces that I recognize (e.g.: in words such as impossible, possibility, possibly, etc., I look for the word possible) To figure out the meaning.
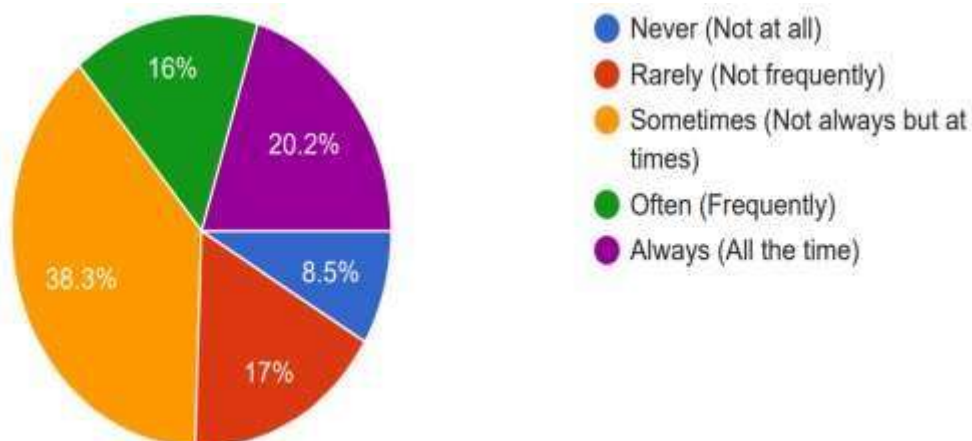
v)   I always make educated guesses about the correct meaning of new words.
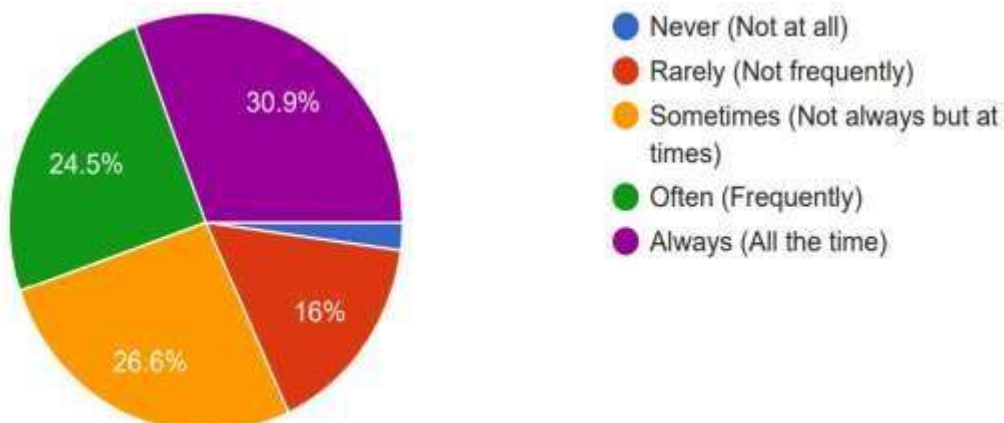
vi)   I consider the many prefixes and suffixes that could be applied to the new term.
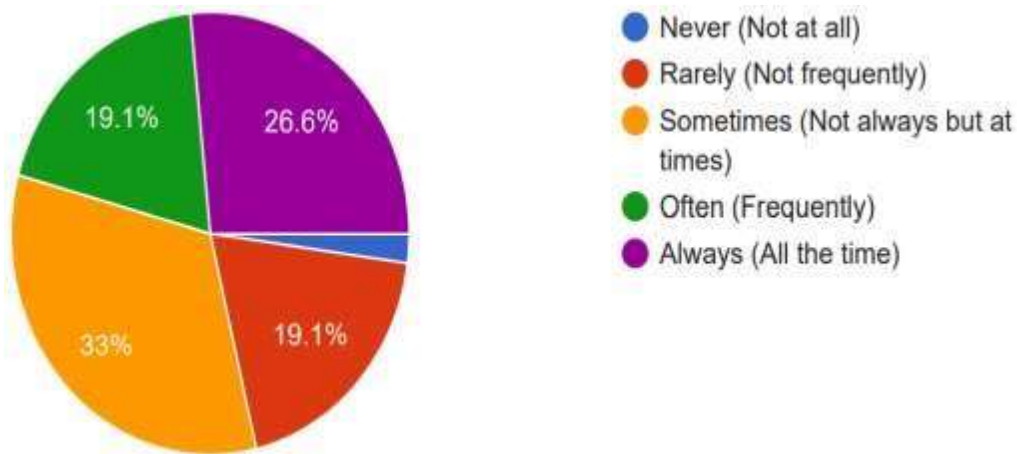
vii)   It helps me remember new words if I share them with my friends and family.
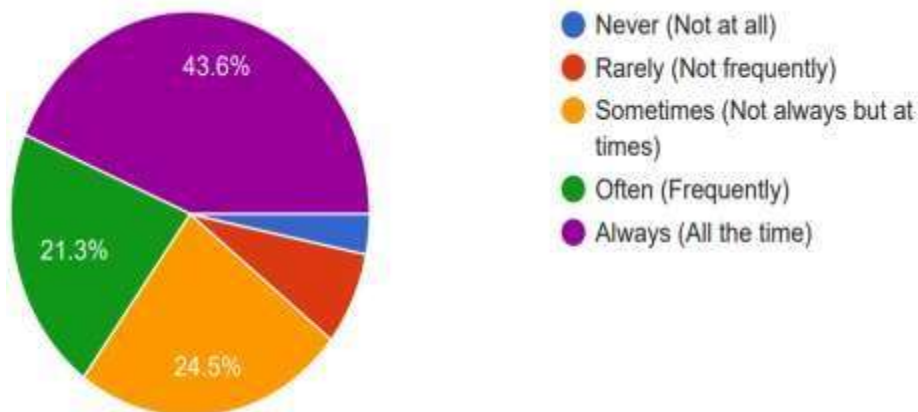
viii)   In ordinary speech and when writing in English, I employ new words (e.g. talking to classmates, teachers, writing letters, diaries, etc.).
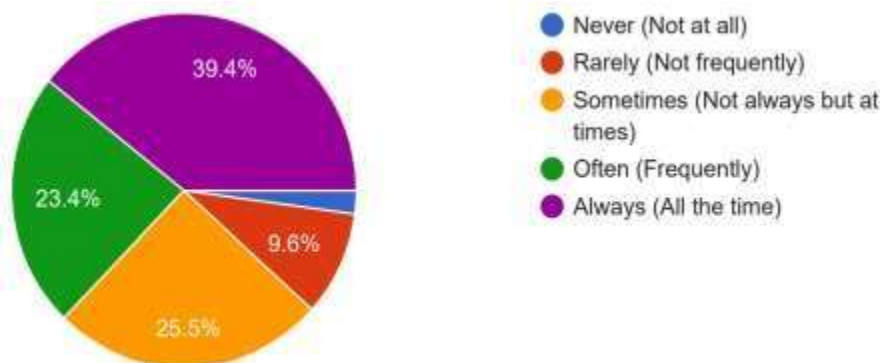
Part – 6 Writing is a great way to learn vocabulary

i)   I use a multilingual dictionary that converts English to Tamil or any other regional language.
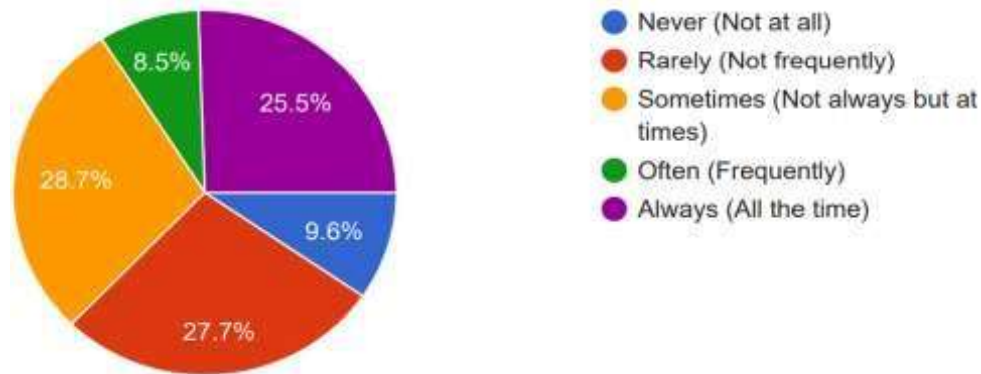
ii)   I use a monolingual (English-to-English) dictionary.to acquire new vocabularies
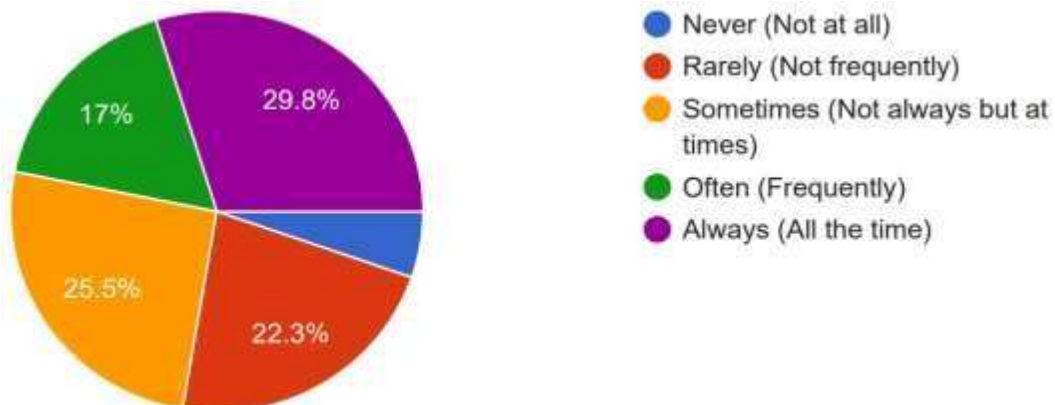
iii)   I use the programme (e-dictionary) on my PC/laptop or mobile phone to study the meaning of words
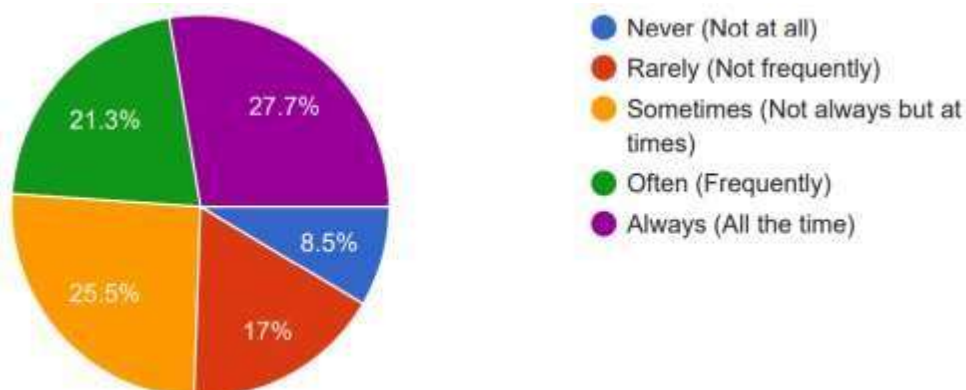
iv)   I use the Internet. To pick up new words, (e.g. on-line dictionaries).
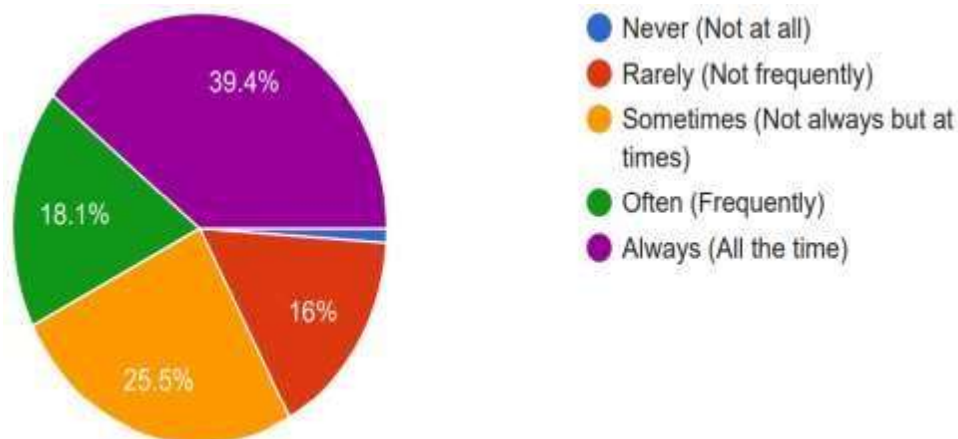
v)   I ask my English teachers to clarify the meaning of a word I don't understand.
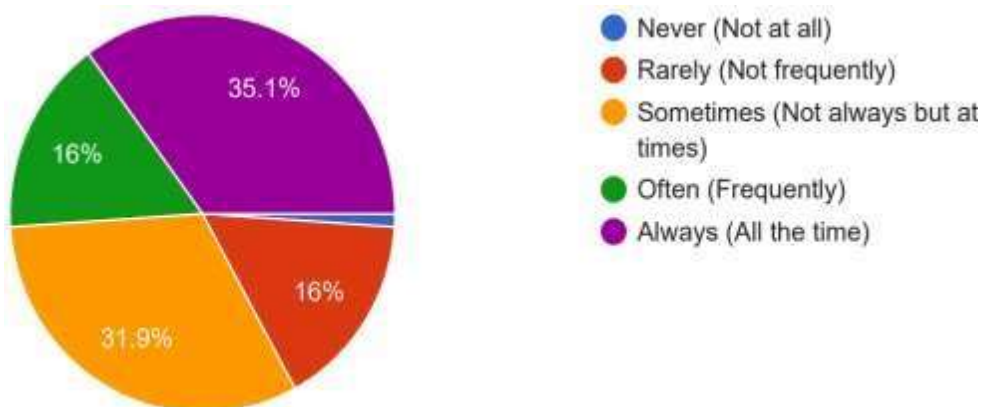
vi)   To understand a word, I ask my teacher for an example sentence.

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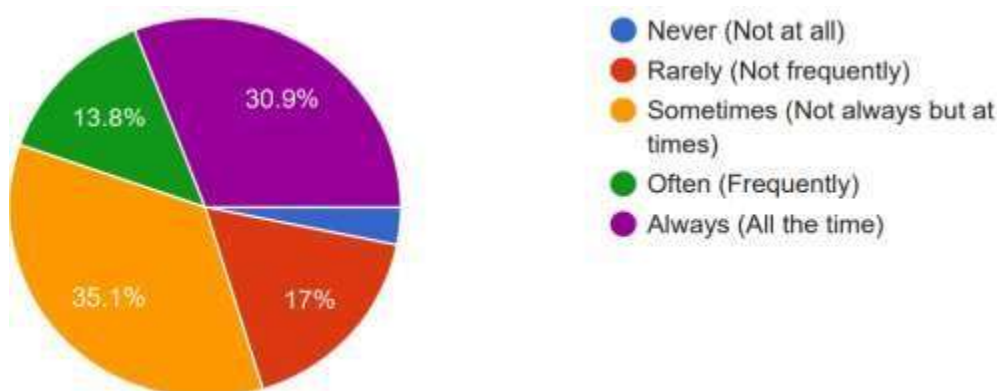
vii)   I figure out what a word means. After talking with my friends.
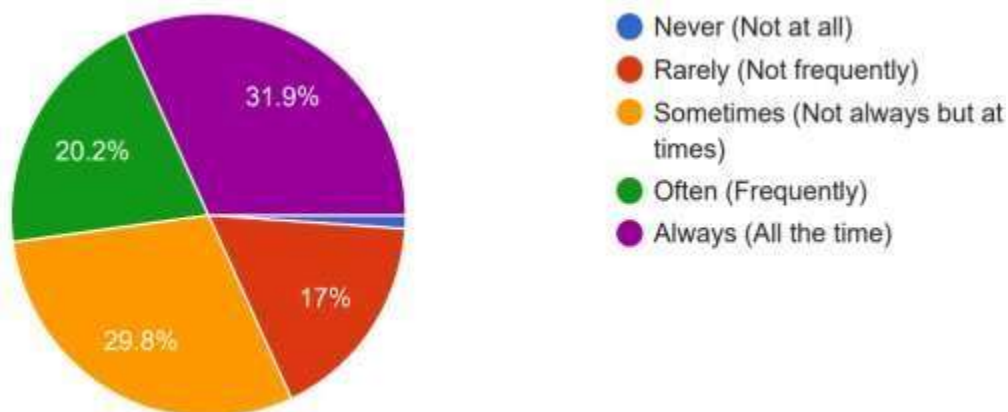
viii)   I ask my buddies to clarify the meaning of an unfamiliar English word to me.
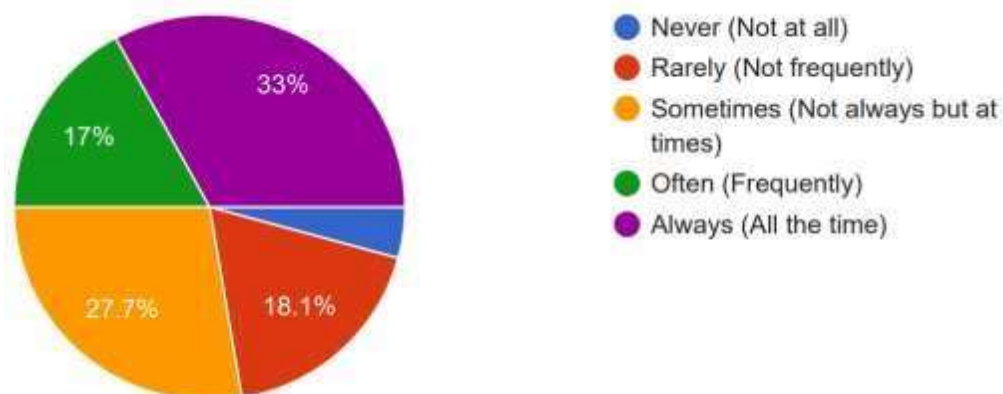
ix)   I ask my friends or teachers to explain the meanings of unfamiliar phrases in my own tongue.
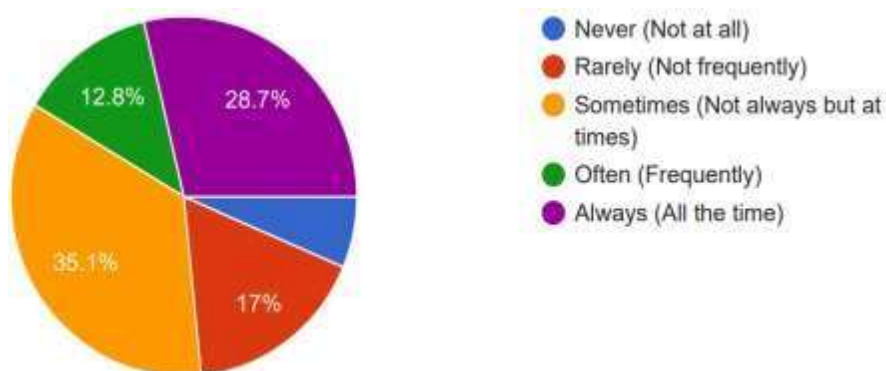
Part – 7 Making a list of the new words

i) I absorb a new word's definition.
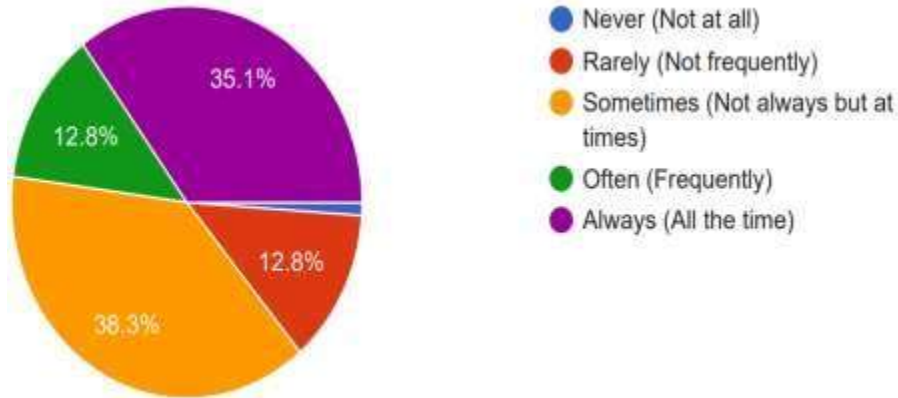
ii) I study a new word's portion of the speech.
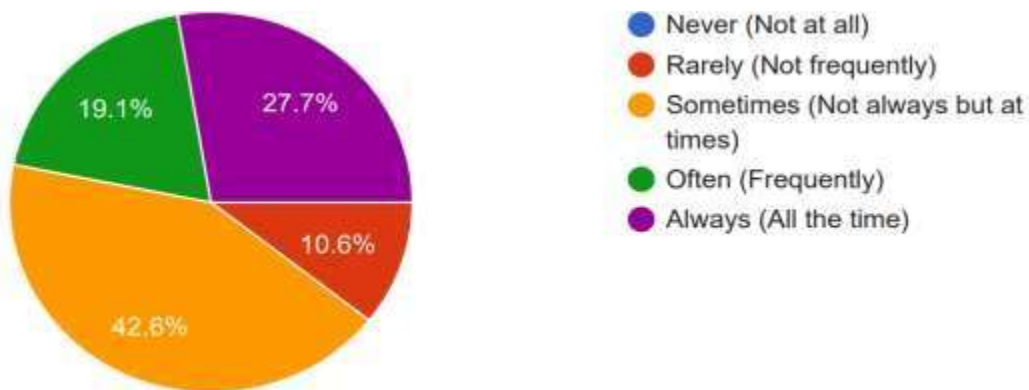
iii) I study the new word's prefixes and suffixes.
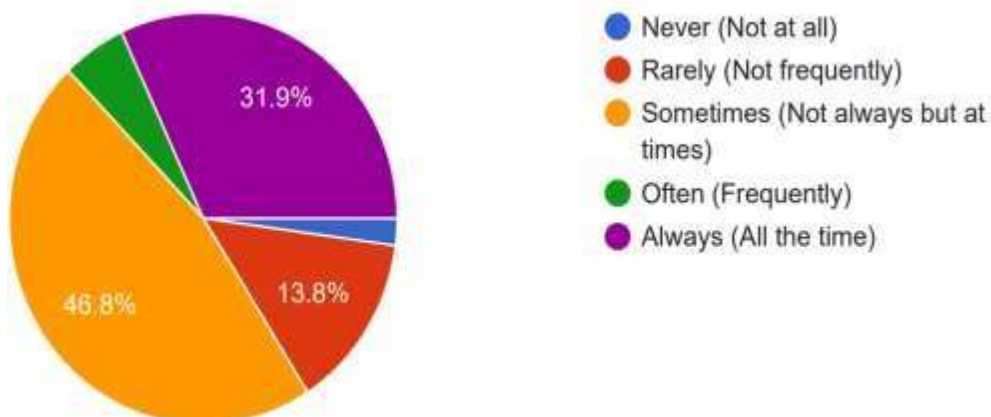
iv)   I practice pronouncing the new terms.
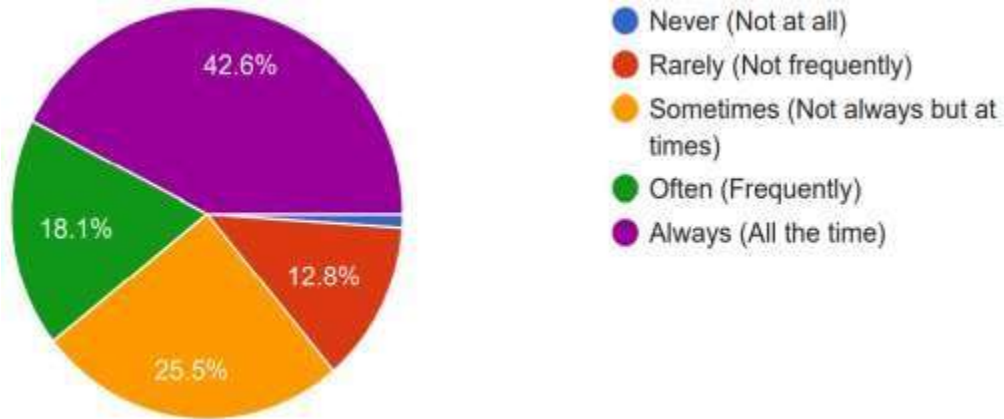
v)   I examine how a word is employed in a variety of contexts.
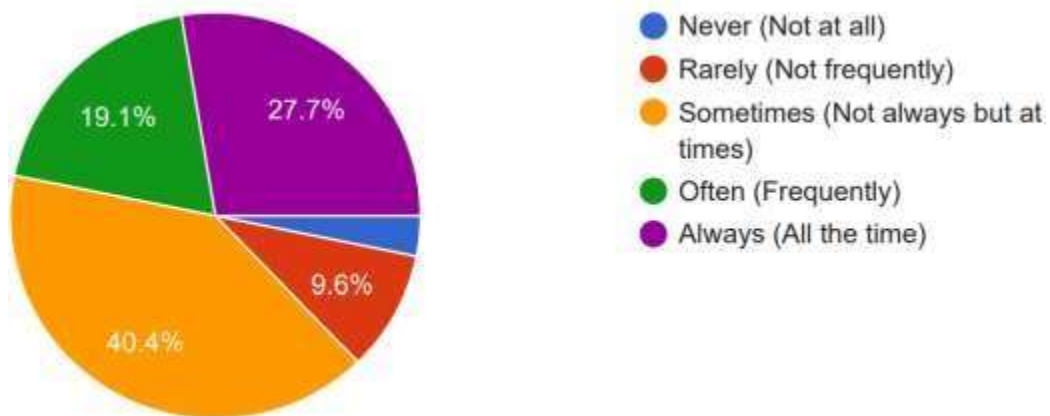
vi)   I learn how to use new word, to comprehend the meaning in a sentence.
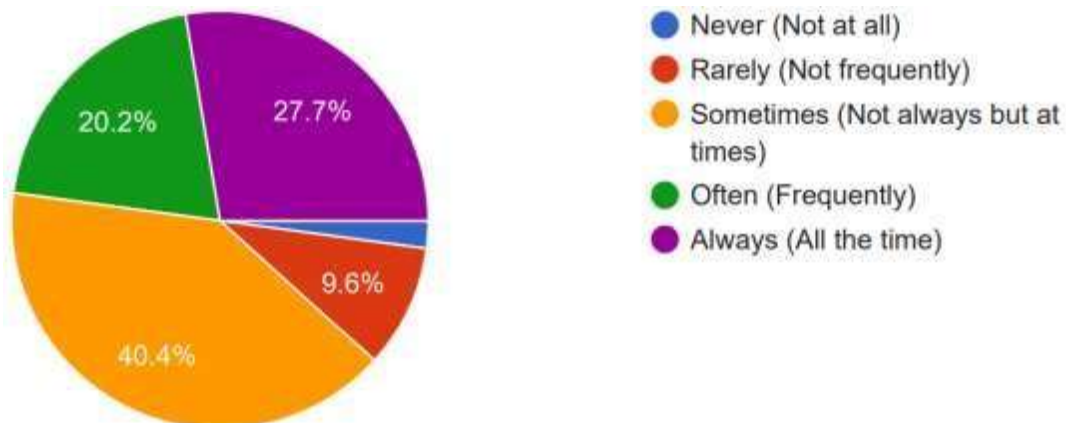
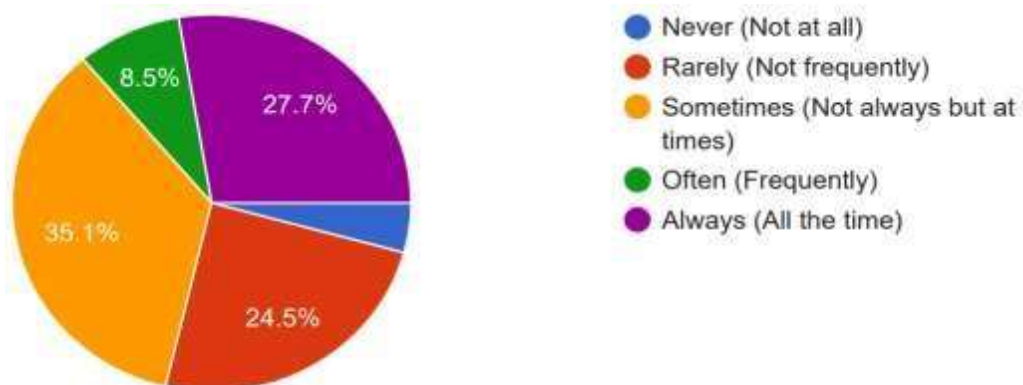**vii)**   I pay special attention to unfamiliar words while reading.
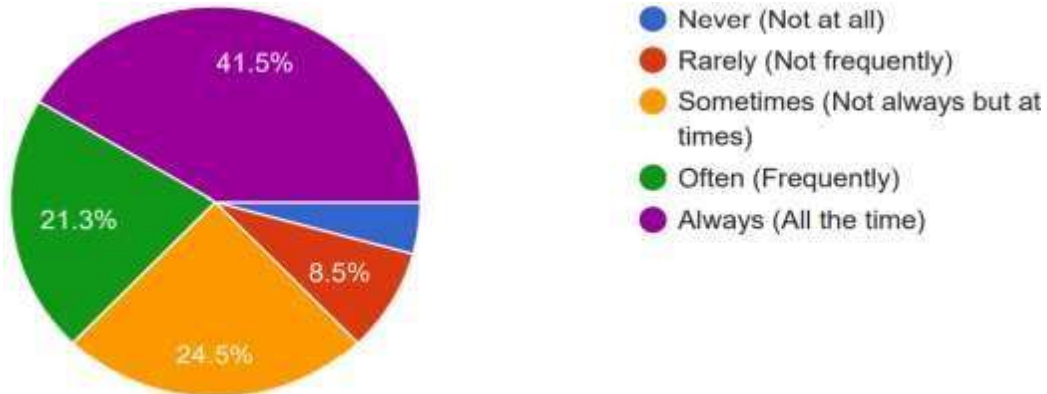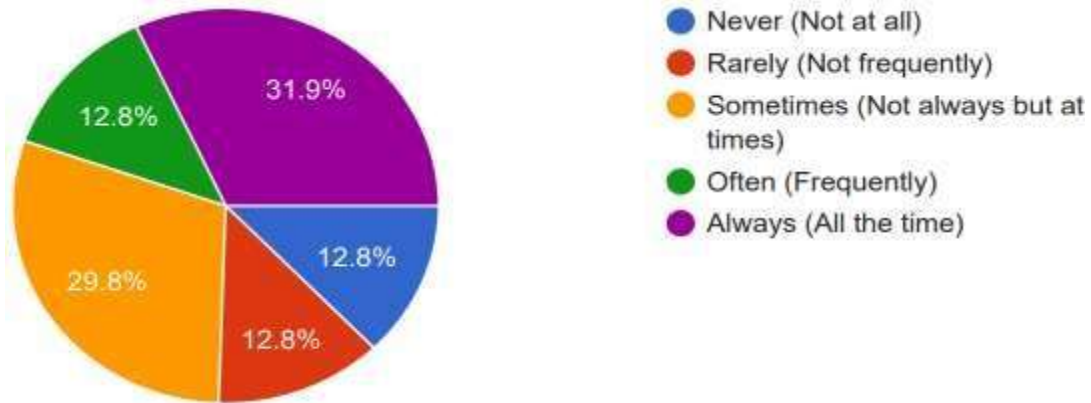

Part – 8 Learning New Vocabulary

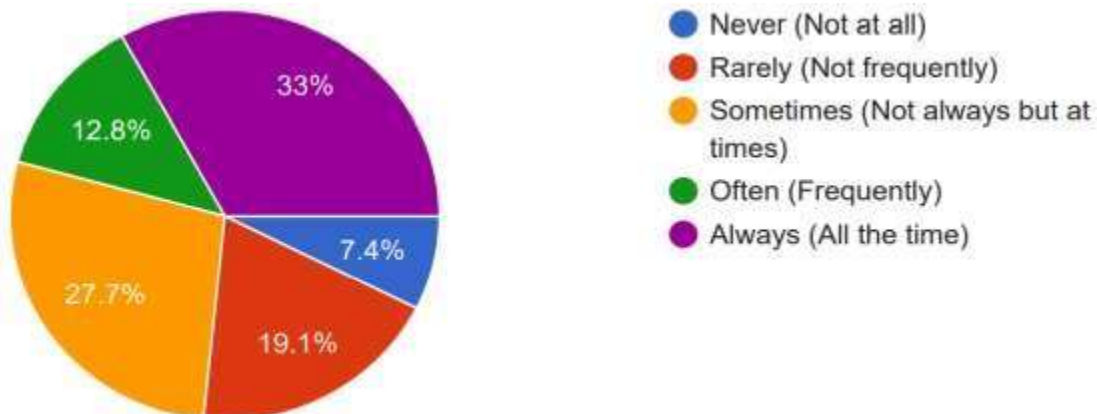**i)**   I categories new words by textbook unit or lesson.
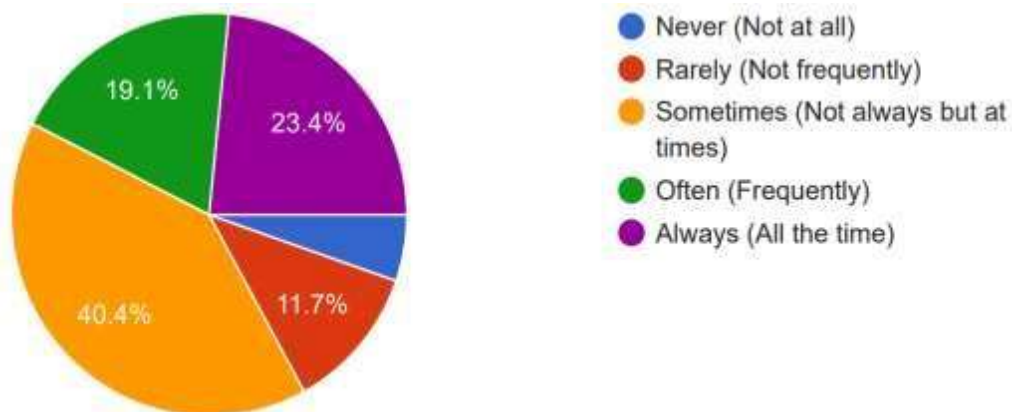
ii)   I keep a notepad in which I record new words terms that I hear in and out of the classroom.
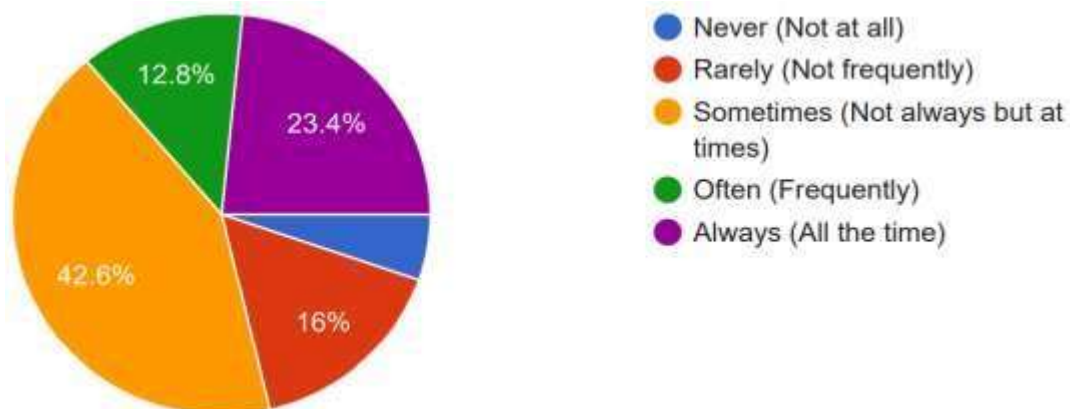
iii) I write down how to pronounce the new word. In my mother tongue.
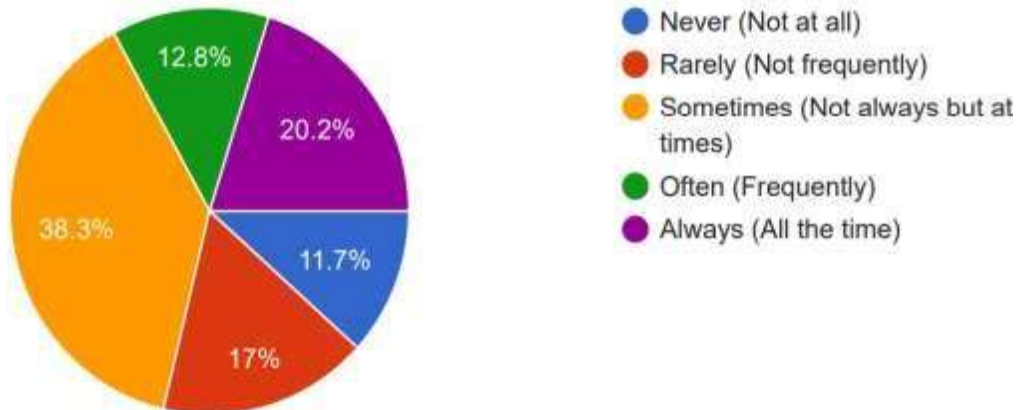

**iv)** In my mother tongue, I put down the definition of the new word.

v) I jot down the definition, part of speech, and an example phrase for each term.
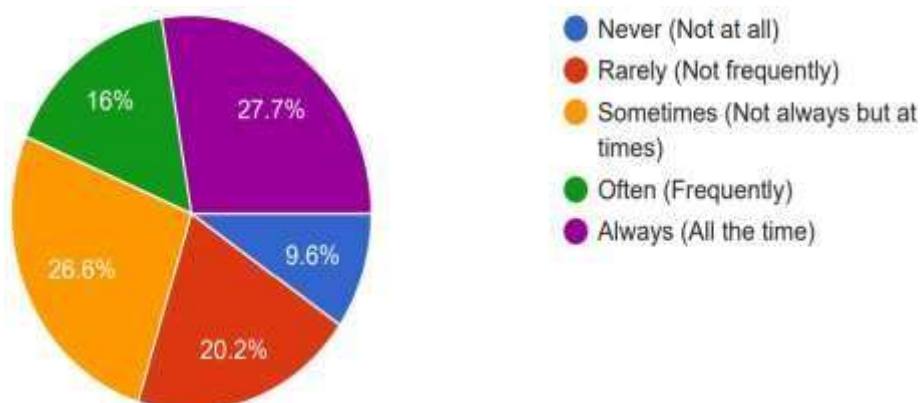
vi)   I keep track of new terms on wall charts, posters, and small pieces of paper that I stick about the house or on things.
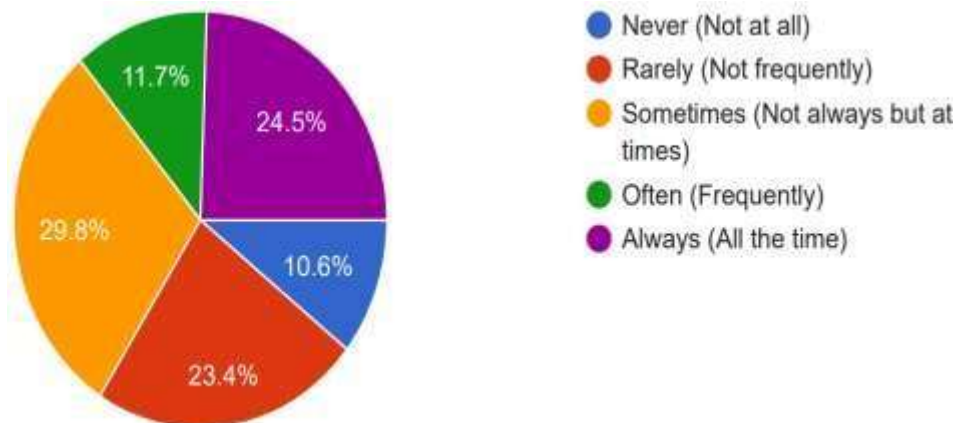

vii)   To learn words, I employ the mind mapping technique. (A mind map is a diagram that looks like a map and serves as a visual outline. It continues to exist.
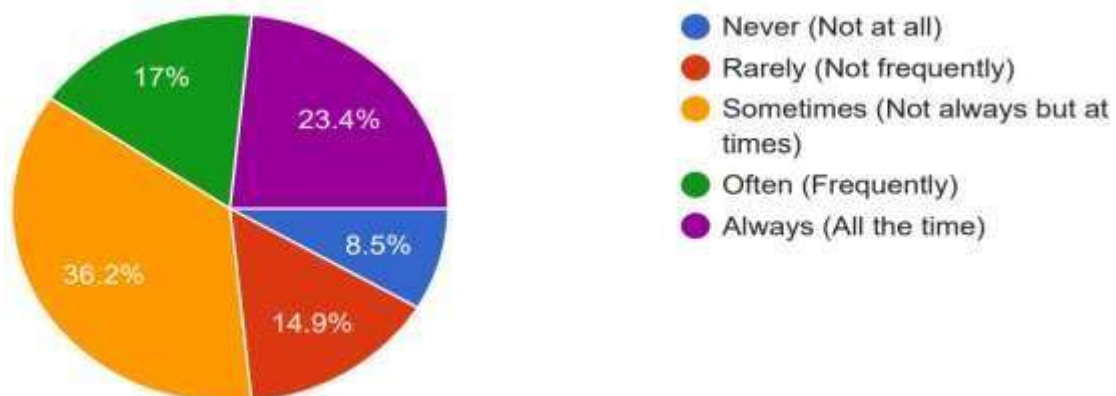
viii)   I keep a computer or other electronic device where I keep my vocabulary notes.
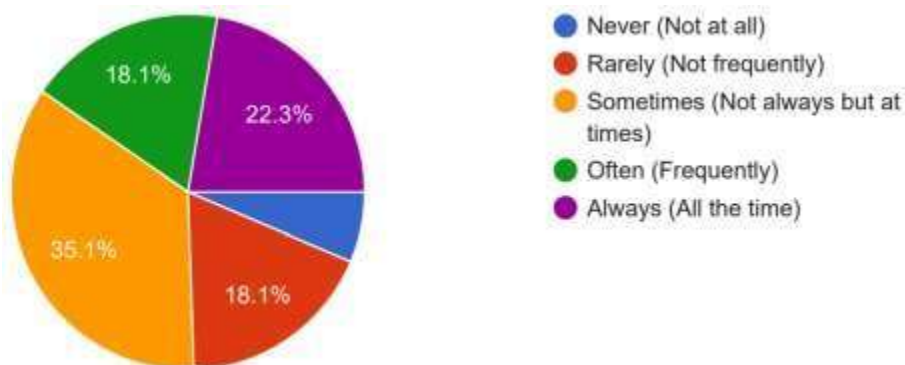
ix) I keep word cards to keep track of new terms I've learned and to revise them.
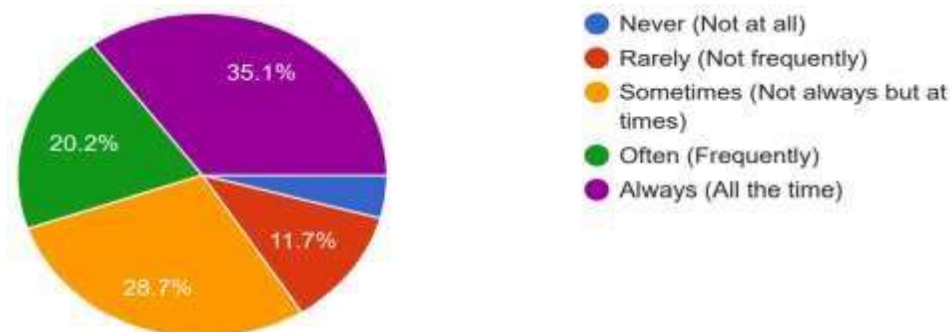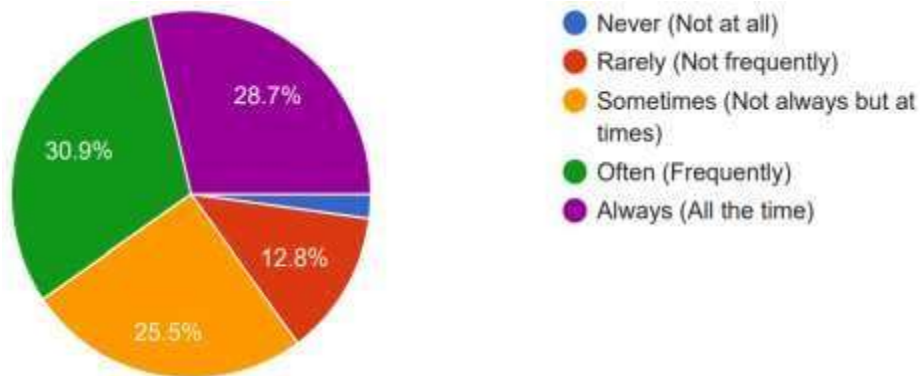

Part – 9 Steps to help you remember words

i) Prefixes, suffixes, and roots are all that I memorize.
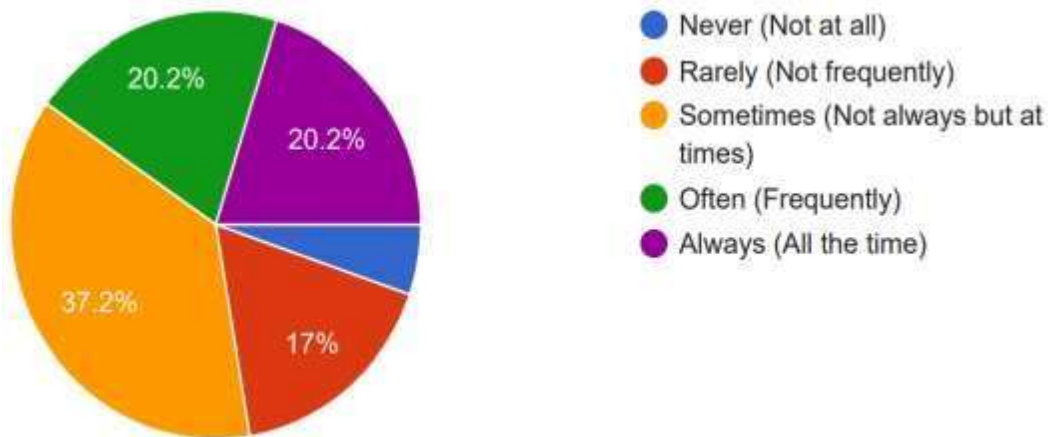

ii) I silently repeat the word.in my head.

iii) Orally, I repeat the words with perfect spelling and pronunciation.

iv)   I keep a running list of new terms, with their spelling and an example.

v)   I regularly put my freshly learnt vocabularies to the test.
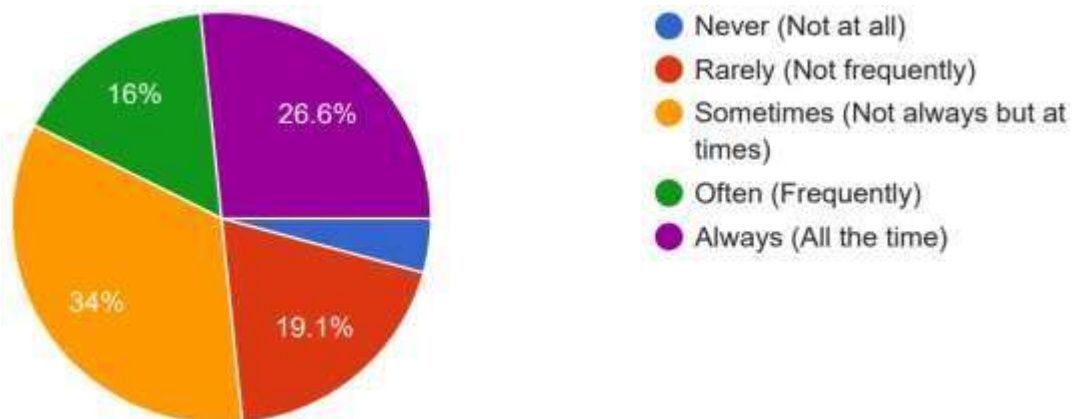
vi)   A term conjures up a mental image for me.

vii)   I associate new terms with words I've learned in another foreign language.

viii)   I substitute the new word with a brief definition. In the sample sentence.

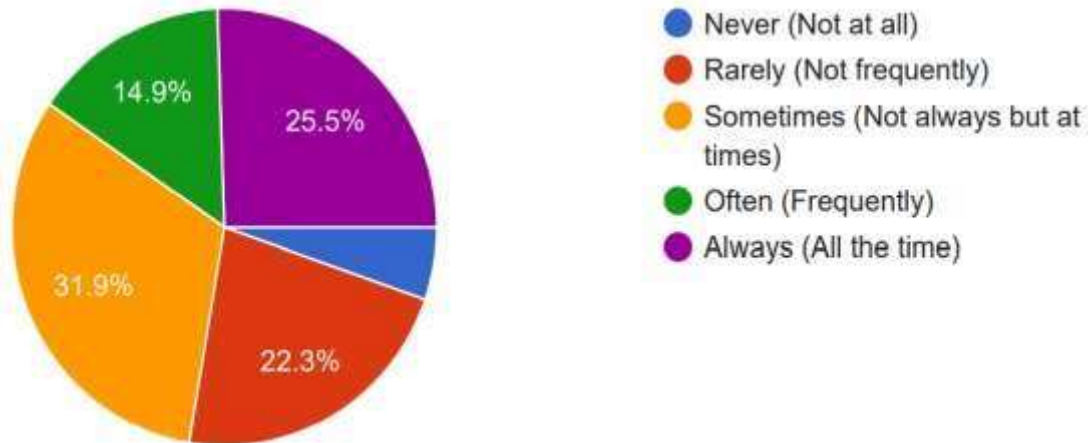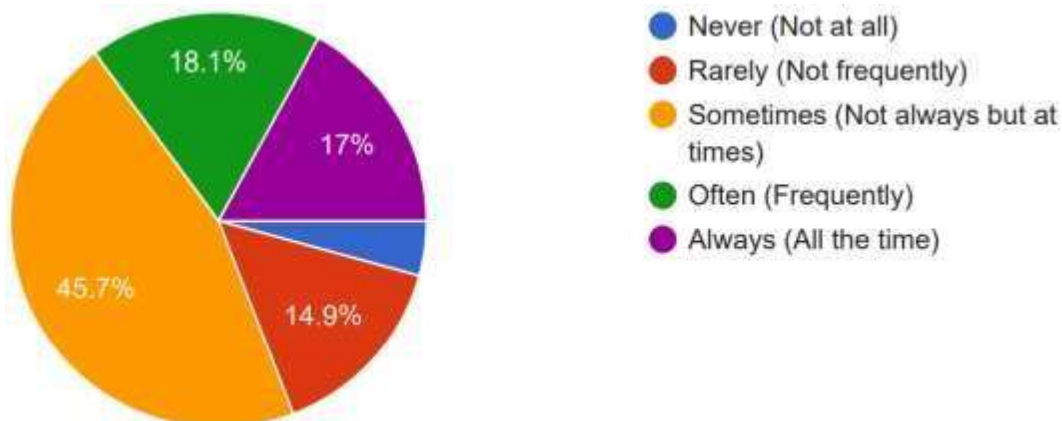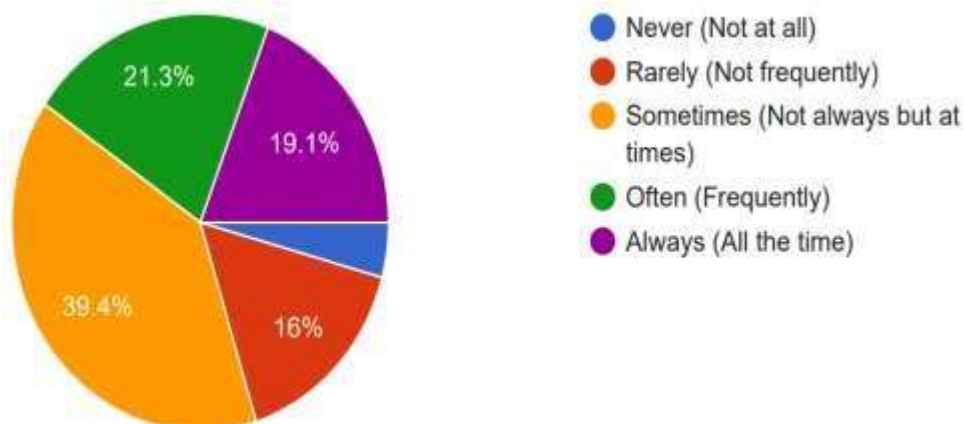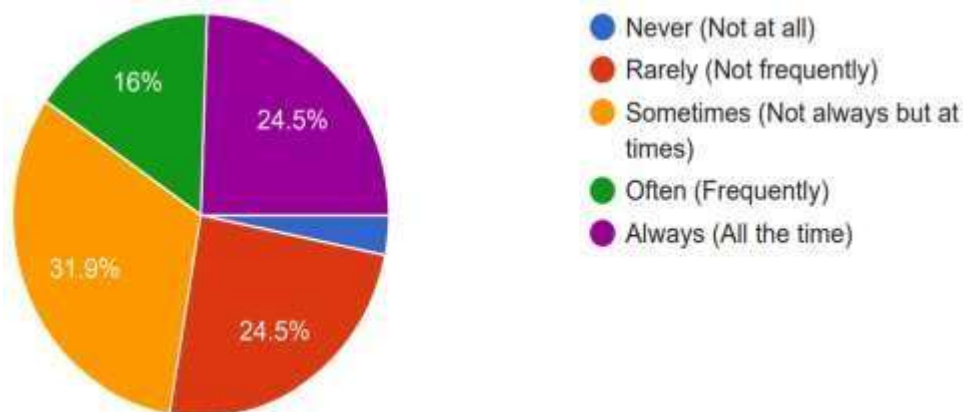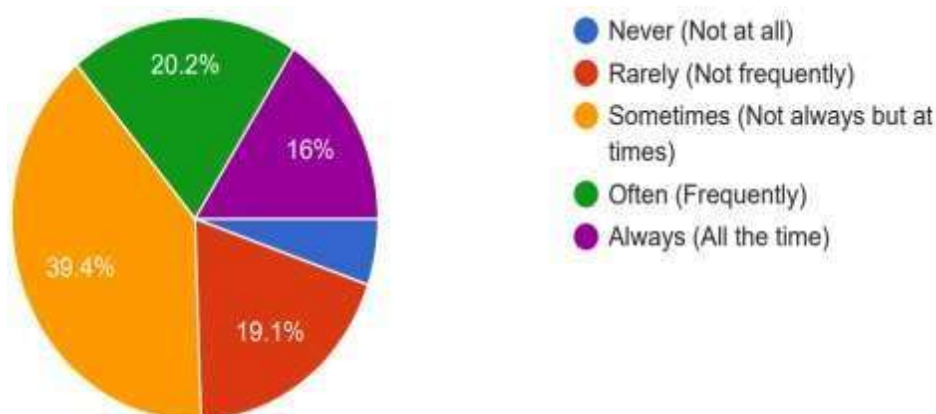**ix)**   I organize words into groups based on their meaning (for example, kitchen, school, and so on).

x)   I strive to employ the terms in fictional settings or conversations.

2. CONCLUSION

The curriculum for maritime English must be developed and connected with technical disciplines. On the other hand, teachers should avoid committing to a specific curriculum. Teachers should have access to the IMO library and stay up to date on IMO news. They should consult the IMO website, www.imo.org, on a frequent basis because it is beneficial to both trainers and trainees. Teachers of maritime English from all around the world can join together and discuss their teaching approaches and practices on occasion. This may allow them to benefit from one another's experiences. The findings revealed that the students realized the importance of using the proper vocabulary in their writings. Moreover a learner-centered approach teaches them how to take responsible for their own writing.

3.   REFERENCES

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4.   analysis of maritime English language skills for Bangladeshi seafarers to workon-
5.   board ships. Marine Policy, 119, 104041. doi:10.1016/j.marpol.2020.104041
6.   Ahmmed, R., Sinha, B. S., Khan, D. R., & Islam, D. M. (2020). A needs
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9.   Ahmmed, R., Sinha, B. S., Khan, D. R., & Islam, D. M. (2020). A needs
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