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Graduation paper

AN INVESTIGATION INTO ENGLISH VOCABUALRY LEANRING STRATEGIES USED BY 11TH GRADE STUDENTS AT MINH KHAI HIGH SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the vocabulary learning strategy used by 11th grade students at Minh Khai High School and reported the results of gender differences in the use of vocabulary learning strategy. In the current study, the strategies are studied through a survey including questionnaire administered to 253 students at 11th grade in Minh Khai High School and interviews among 8 students picked out from the participants. It was followed by calculating the descriptive statistics on Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software (SPSS) and running a T-test, the study tried to examine if there is any difference in the male and female use of these strategies or not. In addition, the results revealed the most and least frequent used vocabulary learning strategies by the respondents. The study observed " taking notes in class" and "studying sounds of words" were the strategies which language learners most often use to find the meanings of new

vocabulary items and "underlining initial letter" and "using semantic map" were the least frequently-used vocabulary learning strategies. Furthermore, the results showed that there are few strategies shared by male and female students compared with other previous studies. More importantly, considerable distinction between the way two genders use vocabulary learning strategy was demonstrated after a close analysis.

Key words: Vocabulary learning strategies, gender

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

1. English second language   ESL

2. English foreign language   EFL

3. Language learning strategies   LLS

4. Vocabulary learning strategies   VLS

5. Second language   L2

6. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software   SPSS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Statement of the problem and the rationale for the research

English is considered as an international language, which is spoken by millions of people all over the world nowadays. Most of the educational systems in English non-speaking countries have decided the worldwide language as the second language being taught and learned. It is widely known that a person has to learn a large amount of knowledge relating to linguistic aspects such as grammar, vocabulary or simply four major skills to master a language. Among mentioned aspects, vocabulary plays a fundamental role in language and is of great significant to second language (L2) learners. Words are the main part of the language since their function is to label the things, the actions or ideas. The researchers pointed that words are the basic building blocks of language and it is the units of meaning from which larger structures such as sentences, paragraphs and whole texts are formed (Read, 2000; Schmitt, 2000). Without words, people cannot express their feelings, ideas, messages and intended meaning as well. Being a crucial role in learning vocabulary in second language learning context, vocabulary acquisition strategy could be made aware of its important. In the past, there was a little concern about vocabulary teaching and learning in terms of research or study. However, the situation has changed into a positive way. There has been an improved awareness in the nature of vocabulary recently. More specifically, some studies have shown lexical problems of language learners indicating that lexical problems frequently interfere with communication. Allen (1993) reveals that not using appropriate words can cause a breakdown in communication.

In addition, it is evident proven by some researchers and language teachers during previous decades that regardless what types of teaching

methods or the quality of teachers, it exists the students who seem to be successful in second or foreign language and its role in learning and teaching. Consequently, there are a number of researchers sliding their focuses from teaching methods or techniques to language learning strategy use. The literal meaning of the word "strategy" is the branch of military science dealing with military command and the planning and conduct of a war. In the aspect of education, "strategy" is explained in other words which are specific actions or techniques that learners use to assist their progress in developing second or foreign language skills (Oxford, 1990). According to Bialystok (1979), it is believed that language learning strategy plays a paramount importance in learning second language since they may help learner master the forms and functions required for production in linguistic matter. A good language learner is the one who can take advantage of vocabulary leaning strategies and can apply them well in their studying. In fact, strategies of successful language learners can provide a basis for aiding language learners (Rubin, 1975; Reiss, 1983). Therefore, a teacher should notice and consider the effective strategies his/her students use, he or she can adjust and apply those effective strategies on less proficient learners so that they can improve skills in language mastering.

More importantly, some researchers have shown that there are significant differences in vocabulary acquisition between genders. Traditionally, gender has been studied as a factor of variation in sociolinguistic. Nevertheless, gender as a variable has received little attention in the fields of language learning and teaching. An example of this gap is clearly pointed out by Catalan (2000), which is gender barely considered an individual factor of learning, and when it is included, only a few lines mentioned in this issue.

For all above reasons, the researcher chooses *"An investigation into English vocabulary learning strategies used by 11th grade students at Minh*

Khai High School" as the title of this thesis with the hope to address the issue in the context of Vietnam, with the specific participants at Minh Khai High School and different methodology.

1.2. Background of study

It can be denied that the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary is essential for successful second language use, and plays an important role in the formation of complete spoken and written texts. In English second language or English foreign language (ESL/EFL), vocabulary plays a vital in all four major skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing); consequently, a number of researchers have been turned their attentions to investigate deeply vocabulary. Regarding the topics, that is, vocabulary learning strategy, a variety of researches have been done, leading significant findings obtained. Different researchers have different views and approaches to this matter. In spite of their strong points and weak ones, the researches carried out have brought useful results to enhance the student's competence of vocabulary. Among these different studies, the following ones are mentioned; because they are more related to the purpose which is to be achieved in the present study. According to Cohen (1996) and Schmitt (2002), vocabulary learning strategies assist acquisition of new lexis in the second or foreign languages by aiding in discovering the meaning of a new word and in consolidating a word once it has been encountered. Of course, many attempts have been made to develop taxonomy of vocabulary strategies mostly as part of a piece of research into learners' strategy use. Schmitt (1997) developed taxonomy of VLS based on the LLS taxonomy created by Oxford (1990). His taxonomy could be considered a typical taxonomy for vocabulary learning strategies popularly adapted or adopted in doing many researches. Kudo (1999) developed a VLS taxonomy which was fundamentally based on Schmitt's t taxonomy of VLS. Kudo (1999) combined memory and cognitive strategies into psycholinguistic strategy, meta-cognitive and social strategies into meta-cognitive strategy as a result of exploratory factor analyses.

In terms of gender in this matter, there has been a quantity of studies investigated how the vocabulary learning strategies vary based on the genders. However, studies specially designed to study gender as a variable in second language are few compared with research on other factors such as motivation, age or learning style. Furthermore, the findings in the researches on this issue seem not to be satisfactory enough to prove gender as a main variable influencing the vocabulary acquisition.

1.3. Aims and objectives of the research

The research aims at investigating vocabulary learning strategies used by 11th grade students at Minh Khai High School. The specific objectives of the research are:

➢ To investigate the frequency of using vocabulary learning strategies in 11th grade students at Minh Khai high school.

➢ To identify whether there are significant differences in the vocabulary learning strategies between genders.

In order to achieve the objectives of the research, the thesis is designed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the most and the least common vocabulary learning strategies used by 11th grade students at Minh Khai High School to acquire vocabulary?

2. Does Minh Khai High School 11th grade students' use of vocabulary learning strategies vary based on gender?

1.4. Significance of the research

This study aims to shed light on the process of learning vocabulary in a high school in Vietnam context. Based on many research studies carried out through years, the researcher believes that students' genders have important impact on the way students choose and adapt VLSs.

Furthermore, after considering the result of this study, teachers and students at Minh Khai high school in particular and students learning EFL in general are able to adjust their strategies to bring out fully potentials in

learning and support students to recognize the way how to learn EFL most effectively.

Last but not least, the study is a useful reference for teachers and educators to consider in designing materials including syllabus and curriculums, activities and amending the way of teaching vocabulary in high school in Vietnam to assist students to improve their lexical competence.

1.5. Scope of the research

Due to the limitation of time and the requirement of a BA thesis, the research only focuses on a small number of participants and in small scale of context which is Minh Khai high school. It involves the participation of 253 students at 11th grades in Minh Khai. The findings most appropriately apply to those students.

1.6. Organization

The thesis is organized into 5 chapters as follow:

Chapter 1: Introduction present statement of the problem and the rationale for the research, aims and objectives, significance, scope and organization of the research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review discusses related research on the importance of vocabulary learning strategy and the influence of genders on the way of using vocabulary learning strategy.

Chapter 3: Methodology mentions research informants, sampling strategy, data collection instruments as well as data analysis procedure.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion analyzes and discusses the research results.

Chapter 5: Conclusion summarizes the research and suggests some ideas for further research.

Development

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The present chapter is a review of literature related to the study the researcher is carrying out. The importance of vocabulary in learning English and the competence of lexical items are presented in the beginning of the literature review. This is followed by the understanding of language learning strategies regarding definition and classification. Afterwards, the chapter review vocabulary learning strategies proposed by many previous researchers. Last but not least, findings from some studies in differences in vocabulary learning strategies by gender are brought into discussion.

2.1. Vocabulary

2.1.1 Vocabulary and its role in learning English

The role of vocabulary in learning English has been recognized through years and its recognition has grown continuously and strongly presented in many previous studies. Vocabulary plays inevitably an integral part of language system and an important role in language competence, acquisition as well as production. Putri (2010) points out that listing of the words used in some enterprise, a language user's knowledge of words and the system of techniques or symbols serving as a means of expression (as in arts or crafts) is one of characteristics contributing to the importance of

vocabulary in language system. Nandy (1994) states that "When we speak of a person's vocabulary, we mean the words he or she knows and is able to use". No one can deny the importance of vocabulary in mastering English as foreign language. Three researchers Hall (2000), Schmitt (2000) and Hill (1997) all enters into agreement that without knowing words whether in spoken or written form the language acquisition could be unfeasible.

2.1.2 Vocabulary competence

According to Nation (2001), the vocabulary competence does not only involve in meaning, spelling and pronunciation like the conception of vocabulary competence in conventional approach. He divided vocabulary competence into 3 categories which are form, meaning and use.

Table 1: What is involved in knowing a word?

Form	Spoken
	Written
	Word part
Meaning	Form and meaning
	Concept and references
	Associations
Use	Grammatical function
	Collocations
	Constrain in use (register, frequencies)

(Nation, 2001, p.27)

Competence of word form includes competences of spoken form, written form and part of that word. This means students are required to recognize and produce the target sound and orthography, identify stems, affixes and their meaning. In competence of meaning, students are able to match between word form and meaning and vice verse, understand the word

concept in many fields and understand the denotation, connotation, synonym and antonym of the word. The last knowledge of the word students acquire is the use of the word. Learners know deeply what kind of word is, which words go together and whether the word is used in formal or informal way. Another researcher, Schmitt (2000) claimed that vocabulary competence cannot be measured by only the size of the known words (the breadth of knowledge). It requires learners to learn all the aspects involving in knowing each word (the depth of knowledge). When hearing or seeing words, learners have to recognize meaning of the word and link the meaning to the form in order to express a particular meaning. In addition, word does not merely exist in isolated way. They have strong connection with other items of the sentence. Therefore, learning vocabulary needs competence of detonation (conceptual meaning and referential meaning), connotation (the meaning based on context) and the cultural differences between mother tongue and target language.

2.2. Language learning strategies (LLS)

2.2.1 Definition of LLS

There is no description of language learning strategies which is considered the best notion of LLS. Each researcher has defined the term in their own way. For instance, O'Malley & Chamot (1990, p.1) defines LLS as "the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information". Meanwhile, Oxford (1990, p.166) regards LLS as "operations employed by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval and use of information, specific actions taken

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by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-

directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations"

2.2.2 Classification of LLS

Out of all the classifications, the Oxford's taxonomy is one of the

most outstanding classifications. It classified LLS into 5 categories which

are:

i. Systems related to successful language learners
ii. Systems based on psychological functions, namely, cognitive, meta-

cognitive and affective
iii. Linguistically based systems dealing with guessing, language monitoring,

formal and functional practice.
iv. Systems related to separate language skills, such as vocabulary learning

(Cohen, 1998).
v. Systems based on different styles or types or learners (Sutter, 1989)

Table 2: Language Learning Strategies taxonomy

Study	Strategies	Description
Rubin (1975)	Direct strategies	Clarifying, memorizing, guessing, inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning.
	Indirect strategies	Creating opportunities for practice, using production tricks, using synonyms
Bialystok (1978)	Formal practicing	Gaining knowledge about language by practicing with language rules.
	Functional practicing	Using the language for authentic communication purposes.
	Monitoring strategies	Examining and modifying or correcting linguistic output.
	Inferencing strategies	Guessing a previously unknown meaning or form.
Fillmore, W. (1979)	Social strategies	Interacting with peers in learning, asking for help.
	Cognitive strategies	Assuming what people say, looking for patterns of the target language.
O'Malley and Chamot Stewner-Manzanares, Russo,	Cognitive strategies Metacognitive Strategies	Performing information processing. Regulating language learning and including high order. Executive

and Küpper (1985a)	Socio-affective Strategies	skills or function. Interacting with others in learning and using. Mental control to reduce learning anxiety
Wenden (1987)	Cognitive strategies Self-management strategies	Selecting, comprehending, storing and retrieving input. Planning, monitoring and evaluating.
Oxford (1990)	Memory Cognitive Compensation Metacognitive Affective Social	Storing and retrieving new information. Manipulating and transforming the target language. Filling in the gaps or missing knowledge of the target language. Controlling cognitive process in learning, managing, or regulating language learning. Controlling emotions and feelings to lower learning anxiety. Interacting and cooperating with others in learning.

(Hong, 2006, p.31)

2.3. Vocabulary learning strategies (VLS)
2.3.1 Definition of VLS

The notions of vocabulary learning strategies are proposed differently from many researchers. According to Nation (2001), vocabulary learning strategies are a part of language learning strategies which in turn are a part of general learning strategies. . Cameron (2001, p. 92) regards vocabulary learning strategies as "the actions that learners take to help themselves understand and remember vocabulary items". Another interpretation of VLS by Catalan (2003) adopted from the definition of Rubin (1987); Wenden (1987); Oxford (1990); and Schmitt (1997) is "knowledge about the mechanisms (processes, strategies) used in order to learn vocabulary as well as steps or actions taken by students (a) to find out the meaning of unknown words, (b) to retain them in long-term memory, (c) to recall them at will, and (d) to use them in oral or written mode".
2.3.2 Taxonomy of VLS

Vocabulary learning strategies have attracted a numerous researchers carrying out studies on. There is no agreement of a perfect classification for VLS.

For example, According to Cook (2001), he identifies vocabulary learning strategies into 2 main categories which are strategies for getting meaning and strategies for acquiring words. The former includes strategies such as guessing from situation or context, using dictionary, making deduction from the word-form and linking to cognates. The latter includes repetition, organizing words in the mind and linking to existing knowledge.

Table 3: Cook's taxonomy of VLS

Strategies for getting meaning	• Guessing from situation or context • Using a dictionary • Making deductions from the word-form • Linking to cognates
Strategies for acquiring words:	• Repetition and rote learning; • Organizing words in the mind; • Linking to existing knowledge

(Cook, 2001, p.66-73)

Another classification of VLS proposed in previous studies is the one defined by Gu and Johnson (1996). They made up the classification to carry out the survey of Chinese advanced learners' use of English vocabulary learning strategies. Subcategories are presented following:

Table 4: Gu & Johnson's taxonomy of VLS

Beliefs about vocabulary learning	Words should be memorized Words should be acquired in context: bottom up Words should be studied and put to use: top down
Metacognition regulation	Self initiation strategies

	Selective attention
Guessing Strategies	Use background knowledge Using linguistic clues
Dictionary Strategies	
Note Taking Strategies	
Memory/ Repetition Strategies	
Activation Strategies	

(Gu & Johnson, 1996)

Six types of strategies - guessing, dictionary, note-taking, rehearsal, encoding, and activation - together with two other factors: beliefs about vocabulary learning and meta-cognitive regulation are identified by Gu & Johnson (1996). Meta-cognitive regulation consists of strategies for selective attention which allows learners to know which words are important for them to learn and are essential for adequate comprehension of a passage and self-initiation which make the meaning of vocabulary items clear through the use of a variety of means. Guessing strategies, skillful use of dictionaries and note-taking strategies are classified under cognitive strategies. Rehearsal and encoding categories are instances of memory strategies. Word lists and repetition are labeled as rehearsal strategies. Encoding strategies include strategies such as association, imagery, visual, auditory, semantic, and contextual encoding as well as word-structure. Activation strategies include those strategies through which learners actually use new words in different contexts.

The classification decided to use as a basis of this study is the categorization adopted by Schmitt (1997). There are two main groups of

strategies: discovery strategies and consolidation strategies. In discovery strategies, he subcategories into 2 types which are determination and social strategies otherwise consolidation strategies consist of memory, cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies.

According to Schmitt (1997), discovery strategies are strategies learners use to discover learning of words and consolidation strategies are ones to cope up with a word which is consolidated once it has been encountered. The former helps learners to find out the meaning of new words when encountered for the first time, and the latter allows them to memorize, practice and retain the word after it has been introduced.

He categorized vocabulary learning strategies into 5 sub-categories which are:

Table 5: Schmitt's taxonomy of VLSs

Determination strategies	They are individual learning strategies
Social strategies	They are learners learn new words through interaction with others
Memory strategies	They are strategies, whereby learners link their learning of new words to mental processing by associating their existing or background knowledge with the new words
Cognitive strategies	They are strategies that do not engage learners in mental processing but is more mechanical means
Meta-cognitive strategies	They are strategies related to processes involved in monitoring, decision-making, and evaluation of one's progress

(Schmitt, 2002)

The components of each strategy are described in the table below:

Table 6: Schmitt's taxonomy of VLSs – Discovery strategies

Determination strategies	- Analyze part of speech - Analyze suffixes and roots

	- Check for L1 cognate
	- Analyze any available pictures or gestures
	- Guess from textual context
	- Bilingual dictionary
	- Monolingual dictionary
	- Word lists
	- Flash cards
Social strategies	- Ask teacher for an L1 translation Study and practice meaning in a group
	- Ask teacher for paraphrase or synonym of new word
	- Teacher checks students' flash cards or word lists for accuracy
	- Ask teacher for a sentence including the new word
	- Interact with native-speakers
	- Ask classmates for meaning
	- Discover new meaning through group work activity

(Schmitt, 2002)

Table 7: Schmitt's taxonomy of VLSs – consolidation strategies

Memory strategies	- Study word with a pictorial representation of its meaning
	- Image word's meaning
	- Connect word to a personal experience
	- Associate the word with its coordinates
	- Connect the word to its synonyms and antonyms
	- Use semantic maps
	- Use 'scales' for gradable adjectives
	- Group words together to study them
	- Group words together spatially on a page
	- Use new word in sentences
	- Group words together within a storyline
	- Study the spelling of a word
	- Study sound of word
	- Say word aloud
	- Image of word form
	- Underline initial letter
	- Configuration
	- Use keyword method
	- Affixes and roots/parts of speech,
	- Paraphrase word meaning,
	- Use cognates in study
	- Learn words of an idiom together
	- Use physical action
	- Use semantic feature grids
Cognitive strategies	- Verbal repetition
	- Written repetition
	- Word lists

		- Flash cards - Take notes in class - Use the vocabulary section in your textbook - Listen to tape of word lists - Put English labels on physical objects - Keep a vocabulary notebook
Meta-cognitive strategies		- Use English-language media (songs, movies, newscasts, etc.) - Testing oneself with word tests - Use spaced word practice - Skip or pass new word - Continue to study word over time

(Schmitt, 2002)

Schmitt developed taxonomy of VLS based on the LLS taxonomy created by Oxford (1990). Due to the fact that he applied this taxonomy in investigating VLSs used by Japanese L2 learners, Schmitt's five major categories maintained their application in an ESL environment. This present study used Vietnamese language learners' samples – which is representative for an ESL enviroment. Additionally, the classifications of strategies are the most wide-ranging in vocabulary learning strategies commonly used in many researches carried out to investigate the application of VLSs.

2.4. Gender differences and vocabulary learning strategies.

Few researches carried out to investigate gender as a predicator of variation in the knowledge and use of language learning strategies. Although gender is claimed as one of the most influencing factors affecting the use of LLS, the results of the previous studies seem not to prove that influence clearly. Practically, greater use of LLS by female compared with male is only significant result in all the investigations. Going further details, because each study use difference taxonomies in investigate how impact gender has on the use of LLS, the conclusion has not been come out. For example, according to Fan (2003), females usually employ social strategies which promote communicative competence whereas males prefer to use translation

strategies more often than females. In addition, male and female students normally use the same strategies and females use wilder range of LLS than males. Meanwhile, Ehrman & Oxford (1989) reveal that female students use more study strategies and formal rule-related strategies; or Bacon (1992) proves that females prefer rehearsing and planning strategies. Regarding the male side, they are reported to use visual and tactile learning strategies (Reid, 1987) and use opportunities to interact to produce output. Another research carried out by Seddghi (2012) reveals that both genders most frequently employed guessing and dictionary strategies and they least frequently used study preferences but the order of other strategies changed with gender. Although the similarities in the use of LLS between female and male is quite large, the differences can be identified. The results obtained by Ehrman and Oxford (1989), Oxford and Nykios (1989) and Graham (1997) show that the number of strategies female students report that they use is significant greater than that in male students. It could be said that the study carried out by Oxford and Nykios is rather reliable because of large size of samples and the variety of languages investigated such as French, Italian, German or Russian. Nevertheless, these studies only show the results, but not provide the ranking order of ten most and least common strategies used by males and females, which prevents us from comparing results and concluding the existence of similar and different patterns between males and females. In study " Sex difference in L2 vocabulary learning strategies" conducted by Jimener Catalan (2003), she found out that 8 out of the 10 most frequent strategies are

shared by male and female students regarding the number of strategies. The difference she investigated in the way of using strategies by two genders is while females prefer formal rule, elicitation, and rehearsal and planning strategies, males on the other hand favor image vocabulary learning strategies. In addition, her result provides the list of rank the ten most and least frequent strategies used by male and female learners, which is source for us to compare the findings. The ten most frequently used vocabulary learning strategies (by Catalán, J., 2003) can be seen in table 8 below.

Table 8: Ten most frequently used vocabulary learning strategies

Males	Females
1. Bilingual dictionary	1. Bilingual dictionary
2. Taking notes in class	2. Taking notes in class
3. Guess from context	3. Guess from context
4. Ask teacher for L1 translation	4. Ask classmates for meaning
5. Ask classmates for meaning	5. Ask teacher for L1 translation
6. Analyze part of speech	6. Say word aloud
7. Connect the word to cognates	7. Connect the word to cognates
8. Use English-language media	8. Analyze part of speech
9. Say word aloud	9. Use English-language media
10. Form image of word's meaning	10. Use vocabulary section in textbook

(Catalan, J., 2003)

All in all, sex gender differences in vocabulary learning strategies has not been investigated thoroughly and given clear evidence of influence of gender on the way learner use vocabulary learning strategies. Thus, this research is in need to be done to examine first if there is any significant difference between males and females in their use of the strategies and

secondly, to contribute significantly in gaining much more effective knowledge on better learning, teaching, and use of the strategies.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Participants

The study is carried out with the targeted population which is the students at 11th grade in Minh Khai High School. They all have 5 years of leaning English as a foreign language and are educated under the same curriculum of Minh Khai high school. The total population of students at 11th grade in Minh Khai is 497. Based on the sample size table conducted by Miaoulis and Michener in 1976, the formulae suggest that the study need 217 students responding to ensure the representativeness. Cluster sampling is selected to decide the targeted sample for the study. Because the population is large and widely dispersed, it would be completely impractical to select students randomly to get them involved in the survey for amount of time. In the study, six 11th grade classes which are 11A1, 11A2, 11A3, 11A6, 11A7, 11A9 were sampled. Those clusters were selected basing on the availability of approaching to them for the researcher. The researcher could ask them for permission to carry out the survey during the practicum she worked at Minh Khai high school. There are total 253 students (117 males and 136 females) in the whole six classes. Based on the ethical consideration, all participants' personal data are kept anonymous in current study.

In terms of interview, this part play the role as an addition to confirm the results collected, calculated and analyzed in survey questionnaire as well. Therefore, the researcher decided to interview 8 students (5 males and females) out of 253 participants in survey.

3.2 Critical review of methodologies used in previous VLS studies.

The table below will show methodologies used in previous VLS studies to provide background for methodology in current study. Each

research will be summarized regarding its research title, participants, method, instruments and data analysis.

Table 9: Methodologies used in previous VLS studies

No	Research title	Participants	Method	Instruments	Data analysis
1	Sex differences in L2 learning strategies. Rosa, M. (2003)	581 Spanish-speaking students learning English as L2 (279 males and 302 females)	Quantitative	The **questionnaire** on vocabulary learning strategies designed from information reported by Schmitt (1997) was given to participants.	By means of Dbase IV relational database.
2	Gender-oriented use of vocabulary strategies: a comparative study. Kamal, H.,S. (2011)	110 language learners (50 males and 60 females) Features: - aged from 17 to 23 and all taking high intermediate courses in two of language institutes in Shahrekord, Iran	Quantitative	**A frequently used vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire** adapted from Schmitt (2000) was used. - Questionnaire includes 3 parts + 1st part: background information + 2nd part: contains 16 kinds of vocabulary learning strategies and select maximally 3 of them students use the most. + 3rd part: write down any strategies not mentioned in 2nd part.	Version 16 SSPS in general and Independent t-test were run.
3	Does applying vocabulary learning strategies vary based on gender? The case of Turkish EFL learners. Bahar, P. & Ali, A. (2012)	91 female and 34 male students at the Department of ELT of Education Faculty of Eastern Mediterranean University in North Cyprus	Quantitative	**A VLS Likert scale questionnaire** adapted from Kudo (1999) used. - The total number of individual items assessing the two VLSs was 44.	Descriptive statistics (minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation) were determined
4	A study of language learning strategies used by college EFL learners in Taiwan Chang, C.& Liu, S.∗& Lee, Y. (2007)	A total of 1993 students at Taiwanese colleges were invited to participate in this survey research	Quantitative	The instruments of this study involved two **sets of questionnaires**: (a) Background Characteristics, (b) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). - SILL 50 items are evaluated on a five-	- Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, standard deviations and percentages, were implemented

				point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5.	- t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the Scheffe post-hoc test were used
5	Vocabulary learning strategies used by upper secondary school students studying English as a second language. Marttinen, M. (2008)	There were 50 students (31 males, 19 females) randomly chosen to participate in the present study. - Features: between 16 and 24 years of age and all in the middle of their first or second year of studies in upper secondary school.	Quantitative	The data was collected by using a **questionnaire.** - The questionnaire consisted of five sets of open questions	
6	Vocabulary learning strategies used by students at SEEU in terms of gender and teachers' attitudes towards teaching vocabulary. Arta, T. & Suzana, R. & Luiza, Z, (2008)	The total sample of students involved in the study is 100 and were chosen randomly from students at SEEU.	Quantitative method	- a ten-item background **questionnaire** in order to get some background information - **a student survey** which includes thirty vocabulary learning strategies, and four more strategies should have been added by the participants: + The respondents were asked to circle numbers next to each strategy. For example, to circle 1 for never or almost never used this strategy, 2 for occasionally used the strategy, 3 for sometimes used this strategy, 4 for usually use this strategy and 5 for always used this strategy	All data from 100 participants are reported in percentage.
7	The type of	10 students at the	Qualitative research	The method of conducting is an **open-**	Content analysis

	vocabulary learning strategies used by ESL students in university Putra Malaysia Azadeh, A. (2011)	Faculty of Education Studies in UPM	design	**ended interview** that was conducted individually with ten students at the Faculty of Education Studies in UPM.	
8	Vocabulary Discovery Strategy Used by Saudi EFL Students in an Intensive English Language Learning Context Maha, A. (2012)	A sample of 746 male and female students participated in the study	Quantitative research design	The data collection was carried out through a questionnaire	The collected data were computed and analyzed via descriptive statistics, t-test, and one-way repeated measure ANOVA
9	Vocabulary learning strategies and vocabulary size of ELT students at EMU in Northern Cyprus Kalajahi, S. (2012)	125 undergraduate English Language Teaching students at Eastern Mediterranean University	A correlation survey study of descriptive nature.	Two instruments were used for collecting data in this research study: A vocabulary learning strategy questionnaire and a vocabulary Levels Test + A 6-point Likert Scale VLS questionnaire + the first version of Schmitt's (2000) VLT consisting of five sub-tests, specifically, a 2,000-word level, 3,000-word level, 5,000-word level, 10,000-word level, and Academic-word level tests, respectively	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software (version 17). To answer the first and second research questions, descriptive statistics (minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation) were determined for the participants.
10	The vocabulary learning strategies of university EFL learners. Alfredo, M. (2006)	185 students enrolled in a five-year English major at the university of Veracruz	Quantitative	Two instruments were used for collecting data in this research: + an open VLS questionnaire with three general questions + semi-structured interview	Content analysis

Ten studies presented in the table above were carried out to investigate the frequency in using vocabulary learning strategies in L2 learners. It can be easily seen that in those previous studies, researchers all used and exploited the most common instrument in research – which is survey questionnaire. According to Brown (2001, p.6): "questionnaires are written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers." Questionnaire is the only practical approach when researcher needs to deal with many respondents. The main attraction of questionnaires is their unprecedented efficiency in terms of researcher time, researcher effort and financial resources. As Gillham (2000) said, if the questionnaire is well constructed, processing the data can also be fast and relatively straightforward, especially by using some modern computer software. These cost benefit considerations are very important, particularly for all those who are doing research in addition to having a full-time job. In addition, questionnaires are very versatile, which means that they can be used successfully with a variety of people in a variety of situations targeting a variety of topics.

Despite the fact that questionnaire brings a lot of advantages and convenience to researchers, those investigations have several limitations.

Data of vocabulary learning strategies are behavioral ones while questionnaire can be best exploited to collect attitudinal data or background information. Normally, behavioral data if collected from the instrument like a questionnaire would not be reliable. Most people are not very thorough in a research sense, and this all the more true about dealing with questionnaires – an activity which typically they do not enjoy or benefit from it anyway. Thus, the result may vary greatly from one individual to another, depending on time and care they choose or are able to give (Hopkins, Stanley, and Hopkins, 1990). Respondents are also prone to leave out some questions, either by mistakes or because they did not like them, and Low (1999) presents empirical evidence that respondents also often simply misread or misinterpret questions. As Rosa had

mentioned in her study "Sex differences in L2 learning strategies", she had not studied students' vocabulary learning behaviors, but rather their perception of their learning behaviors.

In addition, there is one more point in those studies needed improving. That is questionnaire design. Apart from 2 studies using Likert scale questionnaire for students to choose their response ranging from 1 to 5 as the level of frequency, the rest only asks students to mark from the list those strategies they normally use. The problem is that researchers did not go further to assess what students understood by the word "normally" or how frequently students use them.

3.3 Data collection method.

Based on what lack in previous studies, when discussing data collection of the study in order to find out the frequency of use of VLSs, two different methods, a questionnaire and interviewing were considered to be used.

According to Cohen and Dorney (2002, pp.144-149), for second language research, questionnaires may be utilized to deal with the following topics:

• Language attitudes	• Biographic background	• Class observation
• Computer familiarity	• Feedback	• Group cohesiveness
• Immigrants settlement	• Language anxiety	• Language contact
• L2 course evaluation	• L2 learner beliefs	• L2 learning motivation
• L2 learning strategies	• L2 learner styles	• Linguistic self-confidence
• Needs analysis	• Self evaluation	• Teacher anxiety
• Teacher beliefs	• Teacher evaluation	• Teacher motivation
• Teacher self-evaluation	• Preferences for instructional activites	
• Willingness to communicate		

Figure 1: Topics using questionnaire in researches

As it can be seen from the listing-out topics, an L2 learning strategy is one of those which could use questionnaire to collect data. In addition, questionnaire can yield three types of data about respondents which are factual, behavioral and attitudinal. Among three types, behavioral questions are used to find out what the respondents are doing or have done in the past. In printed material "Research design" published by University of Language and International Studies, Vietnam, it is proved that the most well-known questions of the behavioral data in L2 studies are the items in language learning strategy inventories that ask about the frequency one has used a particularly strategy in the past. The purpose of this study is to measure the frequency of vocabulary leaning strategies used by grade 11th students. Therefore, questionnaire could be a useful tool to collect data in my research. However, in order to increase the reliability in result collected, semi-structured interview is exploited in the study. As Cannel and Kahn (1986) said, "interview have been defined as a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information, and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation. An interview enables the researcher to ask respondent to clarify unclear answer and follow upon an interesting answers. Furthermore, in interview, questions can be modified to be compatible with respondents' answers or probe them for further information. This is the reason why the study adopted this type of data collection method. There are various ways of

leaning vocabulary. Different people have different ways to learn new words, making their own learning styles. The items included in questionnaire could not be adequate for them to choose or in other words, they may have other ways to learn vocabulary except the ones mentioned in questionnaire.

3.3.1 Questionnaire.

The questionnaire adapted from Schmitt's taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies because he divided strategies into 5 sub-divisions clearly and adequately. The questionnaire involves two sets of questionnaires: background characteristics and Schmitt's taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies. The use of Schmitt's taxonomy as instrument for gathering the data has several advantages. Firstly, it is technologically simple and easy to code, classify and manage data in computer programs. Secondly, it can be used to collect answers from participants easily. Furthermore, it allows comparison with other studies, among them Schmitt's own survey. Last but not least, it is based on the theories of learning strategies as well as theories of memory.

In background characteristic set, the author designed a question to gather information regarding gender.

In VLSs set, there are 2 sections. The first section consists of 56 items to which participants have to responds on a 5- point Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5. The number indicates how often learners use vocabulary learning strategies:

Never	1
Seldom	2
Often	3
Usually	4
Always	5

A range of 3.5-5 is thought to reflect high frequency of use of VLSs, 2.5-3.5 medium use and below 2.5 low use (Oxford, 1990). The Cronbach-αreliability coefficient for the VLT questionnaire was estimated to be 0.96 in this present study, which can be considered very high. The second section includes open question in order that participant feel free to give the answer of strategies they often use not mentioned in items presented above.

In general, the questionnaire was completed by 253 students at 11th grade in Minh Khai High School. In advance, the researcher was assigned to accomplish internship at Minh Khai High School. Visits to all the 11th grade classes were made in break time. In the classroom, the researcher introduced herself, got the permission and cooperation from students and talked about the study and explained the procedures of completing the questionnaire.

3.3.2 Semi-structured interview

The semi-structured interview basically follows the same sub-divisions of strategies as in questionnaire. In interview, participants are allowed to describe more in detail what they claim in questionnaire.

For example,

Section 1: Discovering the meaning of English word you do not know

When you meet new word in English, how do you figure out its meaning?

- Do you ever guess? How? (from the context, the picture, the suffixes and roots)
- Do you look up in dictionary? Monolingual or bilingual dictionary?
- Do you ask someone else to explain that new word for you? Who? What information do you ask (part of speech, translation into Vietnamese or synonyms, etc.)

8 students from the participants doing questionnaire were invited to do the interview. During the interview, the participants were encouraged to talk about what they actually did to learn the vocabulary, not the items mentioned in questionnaire.

3.4 Data analysis procedure

In order to process and analyse data, The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) was used. The data was analysed in descriptive statistics (including minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation) to identify the strategies used. T-test and p value were used to determine whether any significant relationships exist among participants in the use of language learning strategies regarding their gender.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Findings

In this section, the objectives in the study are briefly reported. Once the questionnaire and interview were collected from the respondents, an attempt was made to use them to provide a picture of the vocabulary learning situation at Minh Khai High School. The questionnaire was analysed statistically by The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 16 to mainly answer two research questions in the study. The result of interview was re-analyzed the content to give more specific information about learning strategies and strengthen the answers of respondent in results of questionnaire. In sum, 224 learners at Minh Khai High School took part in survey, however, there were only qualified 224 questionnaires returned (93 males and 131 females). The respond rate is 88.5 % which is a reliable figure to consider the chosen sample in the current study as the representative of population.

Question 1: What are the most and the least common vocabulary learning strategies used by 11th grade students at Minh Khai High School to acquire vocabulary?

To answer this question, figures among 224 respondents collected from questionnaire was fed into SSPS. The mean and the standard deviation were calculated on the basis of the number of learners who reported using vocabulary learning strategies. Table 10 shows ten most frequently used vocabulary learning strategies regardless of such variables as proficiency level or gender.

Table 10: Ten most frequently used vocabulary learning strategies

No.	Strategy name	Means	SD
43	Take notes in class	3.88	1.10
27	Study the sound of a word	3.58	1.08
26	Study spelling of a word	3.32	1.12
28	Say the word aloud	3.29	1.18
6	Bilingual dictionary	3.25	1.25
39	Verbal repetition	3.24	1.08
48	Use English-language media (songs, movies, newscasts.etc.)	3.15	1.16
4	Analyze any available pictures or gestures	3.12	1.04
50	Used spaced word practice	3.11	1.24
14	Ask classmates for meaning	3.01	0.99

As it can be seen, taking notes in class is the most used strategy, with M= 3.88, SD= 1.10. That is almost all learners said during the interview that they used such a strategies. This trend may be attributed to following factors suggested by 8 out of 8 interviewees in current study: 1) the words taught in class are the ones

with high frequency in use chosen selectively and carefully by teacher and educators, 2) those words are taught and practiced along when students do the task because the words appear in the given materials. Moreover, the strategies relating to the sound of the words are popular among vocabulary learning ones. For example, out of top ten most frequently used strategies, there are three strategies practicing the sound of a word. They are 1) study the sound of a word with M= 3.58, 2) say the word aloud with M= 3.29 and 3) verbal repetition with M= 3.24. Another of the most commonly used strategies is that learners use English-language media such as songs, movies which are available on Internet or media tools. In the interview, learners report that nowadays they cannot listen to an English song without searching its lyrics. They are motivated to explore the meaning of the song or the other reason is that they simply sing along with the song. Similarly, used space practice and asking classmates for meanings were reported with high frequency used (M= 3.11 and 3.01 respectively). The interviewees respond to those kinds strategies as if they are inevitable choices. They said whenever they met new words; they unconditionally asked their friends even without looking up in dictionary. More importantly, bilingual dictionary took an important role in learning vocabulary (M=3.25). This can be resulted from the fact that the participants the study chose to carry out the survey were not the ones majored in English and they would rather to know the meaning of word immediately to do the tasks given by teachers. If they look up in a mono-language, they sometimes still do not catch the meaning of the word, even the definition in

very basic words. They are not yet level efficient to use monolingual dictionary.

Finally, saying the word aloud was a common strategy in that learners maintain

using, though some admitted that it was not good one.

Overall, if the ten most used strategies in this study are compared with

those in Schmitt's (2000), some similarities can be pointed out. The "bilingual

dictionary" and "asking classmates for meaning of new words" are also appeared

in Schmitt's results in discovery strategies. Regarding the consolidation strategies,

other common ones were found in two studies, that is, "take note in class"

combined with "verbal repetition" and "say word aloud". Likewise, Rosa (2003)

obtained consistent results with those of this study. Out of top ten most frequently

used strategies, four strategies are mentioned in both results. Therefore, it seemed

that some vocabulary learning strategies appear to be universal, though this

conclusion should be treated with caution in this study because the number of

participants is only 64.

As to the least frequently used strategies, table 11 shows ten strategies with

means of frequency below 2 (below the medium level).

Table 11: Ten least frequently used vocabulary learning strategies

No.	Strategy name	Mean	SD
2	Analyze suffixes and roots	2.00	0.98
9	Flash cards	1.99	1.05
22	Group words together to study them	1.98	1.04
13	Interact with native speakers	1.87	0.92
25	Group words together within a storyline	1.79	1.03
12	Ask teacher a sentence including the new word	1.78	0.81
32	Use keyword method	1.77	0.95

37	Use physical action	1.76	0.91
30	Underline initial letter	1.58	0.96
20	Use semantic maps	1.55	0.68

More specifically, if close attention is paid to the table above, it can be noticed that there are four strategies about making association are among the least used strategies, that is, "analyse suffixes and roots" (M=2.00) combined with "Group words together to study them" (M=1.98), "Use keyword method" (M = 1.77) and "use semantic map" (M= 1.55). This result can indicate that students have been not trained in these kinds of deeper strategies. They reported that they have never heard those phrases like "sematic" or they only met the word "keyword" in reading skill, however, they did not practice that skill frequently. Likewise, "Flashcards" and "Underline the initial letter" seem to be not highly reported with M= 1.99 and 1.58 respectively. More importantly, there is no chance as well as environment for learners to interact with native speakers so this strategy consequently is lowly applied. Interestingly, "asking teacher a sentence including the new word" is not commonly favoured by learners because teacher always make sentences with new words without request. Finally, other least-used strategy is "Group words within a storyline". In fact, the interviewee said that they found difficulty in making a new story including new words because their proficiency level is not actually high. Compared with the results collected in the study "Sex difference in L2 vocabulary strategies" by Rosa (2003), the results found in this study have a great amount of strategies in common. They are "underline the initial letter", "Use flashcards", "Group words within a storyline", "Use physical action" and "Use semantic maps" as well.

Table 12: Summary of Descriptive Statistics for Vocabulary Learning Strategy Use

Strategy	N	M	SD

Determination	224	2.53	0.961
Social	224	2.28	0.822
Memory	224	2.32	0.936
Cognitive	224	2.67	0.991
Meta-cognitive	224	2.82	0.972
Overall	224	2.52	0.936
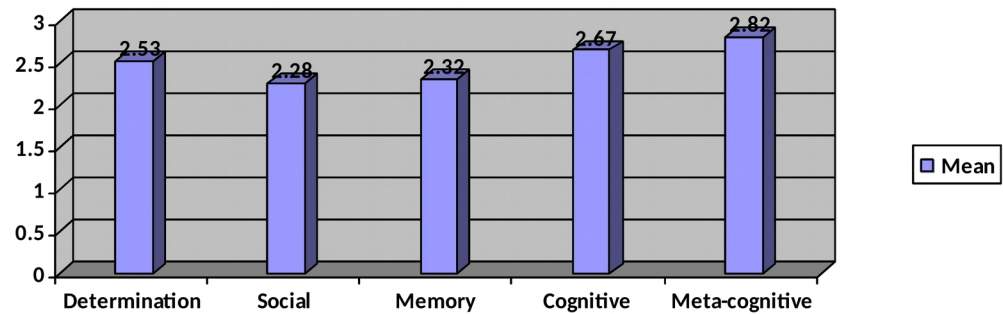
Chart 1: Mean of Vocabulary Learning Strategy Use

Table 13 illustrates that the mean of frequency of overall strategy use was 2.52, which was approximately at a medium (with a range from 1 to 5). According to the results of Table 12, the most frequently used strategy was meta-cognitive strategies (M=2.82) and followed by cognitive strategies (M =2.67), determination strategies (M =2.53), social strategies (M=2.28), and memory strategies (M =2.32). There was not a big difference among the frequency of each strategy that EFL learners at Minh Khai High School reported using.

Question 2: Does Minh Khai High School 11th grade students' use of vocabulary learning strategies vary based on gender?

In relation to differences in using vocabulary learning strategies between male and female learners at Minh Khai high school, table 13 shows ten most frequently used VLS reported by two genders, ranking from the largest to smallest based on the mean of frequency.

Table 13: Ten most frequently used vocabulary learning strategies between males and females.

Males	Females
1. Take notes in class	1. Analyze any available pictures or gestures
2. Use scale for gradable adjectives	2. Monolingual dictionary
3. Study the sound of a word	3. Use English-language media (songs, movies, etc.)
4. Bilingual dictionary	4. Take notes in class
5. Say the word aloud	5. Study the sound of a word
6. Study the spelling of a word	6. Verbal repetition
7. Use spaced word practice	7. Study the spelling of a word
8. Verbal repetition	8. Ask classmates for meanings
9. Use the vocabulary section in your textbook	9. Say the word aloud
10. Check for L1 cognates	10. Written repetition

As seen from the table above, it looks as if there were more differences than similarities since the ten most frequently used VLS reported by males and females are not alike at all. Out of ten ranks, there are only three strategies used by two genders in common, that is, "Verbal repetition", "Study the sound of a word" and

"Take notes in class". Other seven ranks in the two groups are completely different. For example, the type of dictionary they use is not the same. Interestingly, while male learners prefer to use bilingual dictionary, females favor monolingual dictionary.

Compared with the findings in Rosa's study (2003), the one in this study seems to be unexpected. Although Rosa confirmed that vocabulary learning strategies vary based on gender after conducting the research, the results she analyzed does not support her points. As to the question "whether male and female students differ in the range of vocabulary learning strategies they claim to use", the results shows a very small difference between the sexes if only the rank order of ten most frequently VLS used by males and females is taken into account. It shows that there is more similarity than difference between the two groups. The similarity is even more evident when the rankings of the strategies are considered: four strategies hold the same positions in males' and females' rankings.

Table 14: Ten most frequently used vocabulary learning strategies by Catalan, J. (2003)

Males	Females
1. Bilingual dictionary	1. Bilingual dictionary
2. Taking notes in class	2. Taking notes in class
3. Guess from context	3. Guess from context
4. Ask teacher for L1 translation	4. Ask classmates for meaning
5. Ask classmates for meaning	5. Ask teacher for L1 translation
6. Analyze part of speech	6. Say word aloud
7. Connect the word to cognates	7. Connect the word to cognates
8. Use English-language media	8. Analyze part of speech
9. Say word aloud	9. Use English-language media
10. Form image of word's meaning	10. Use vocabulary section in textbook

However, this is the result based on the orders ranked by mean of frequency. In order to increase the reliability of the study, a closer analysis by calculating T Test and P value to illustrate significant difference between the strategies used by males and females is presented in table 15 later.

Table 15: Summary of Variation in Language Learning Strategy Used by Gender

Strategy	N		Mean		SD		t test	p*
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females		
Determination	93	131	2.38	2.71	1.007	1.179	-3.58	0.006
Social	93	131	2.25	2.30	0.93	0.962	-2.85	0.023
Memory	93	131	2.33	2.24	1.002	1.076	-2.35	0.022
Cognitive	93	131	2.72	2.72	1.119	1.236	-2.11	0.057
Meta-cognitive	93	131	2.88	2.84	0.975	1.029	-1.94	0.071
Overall use	93	131	2.51	2.56	1.006	1.096	-2.82	0.038

Figure 2 below presents the mean of frequently used strategies divided into 5 sub-categories by genders.
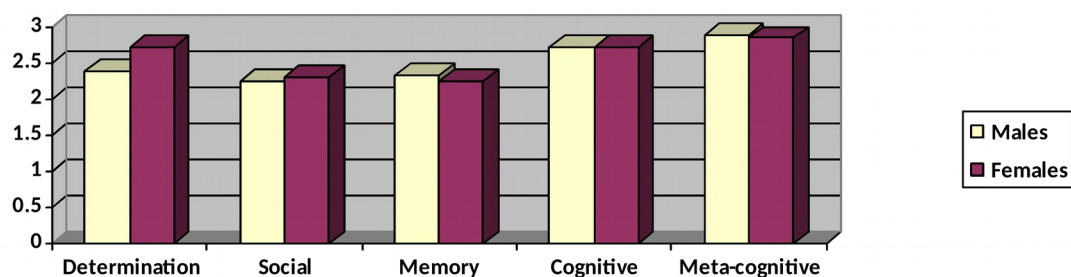

Figure 2: Variation in Language Learning Strategy Used by Gender

T-test of equality of means was performed to examine the relationship between gender difference and the use if vocabulary leaning strategies. The result of this t-test is illustrated in table 9 above. Based on this t-test analysis, significant

differences were found between males and females in overall strategy use (t = -2.82, p* = 0.038) since the safe zone of similarity between two groups in t-test analysis for 60 participants ranges from -2.00 to 2.00 and p value lowers than 0.05. The mean of frequency of male learners in overall strategy use was 2.51, and the mean of frequency of female learners was 2.56; therefore, male learners presented less frequently in using overall strategy than did female learners. According to the results of five subcategories of language learning strategies respectively, significant differences did not exist in the use of cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies by gender (t =-2.11, -1.94, p>.05). However, significant differences existed in the use of determination strategies, social strategies and memory strategy (t =-3.58, -2.85, -2. 35, p<.05). The means of frequency of male learners in using determination strategies, social strategies, and memory strategies were 2.38, 2.25, and 2.33; the means of frequency of female learners in using determination strategies, social strategies, and memory strategies were 2.71, 2.30, and 2.24. Consequently, female learners reported using determination strategies and social strategies, and social strategies more often than did male learners. Meanwhile, the males use memory strategy more often than females did.

4. 2 Discussion

This section aims to discuss the findings of the current research study. It is pointed out in finding section that the current study is consistent with the other findings in the literature, despite some minor differences.

The findings are partially in line with Hamzah et al (2009) finding as they are medium users of strategies. However, there might be several reasons to hinder the learners to use VLSs. First and foremost, the education system might have trained them to be a moderate user of VLSs. Another cause can be curriculum design that cannot promote VLSs, or it can somewhat but fails to consider learning styles or student's needs. In addition, compared the results with other findings, it

can be seen that students at Minh Khai High School in particular and L2 learners in general share some common strategies. Otherwise, there are some strategies rarely used. Those strategies are the ones with deep investigation in linguistics such as "key word method" or "semantic map". In the interview, some of the students said that they even had not heard those strategies.

In terms of genders, the results suggest that male and female students normally use different strategies. They only use four out of ten most strategies in common, which cannot confirm the results obtained by Schmitt (2002) with English learners in Japan and findings collected by Catalan (2003). However, the similarities in findings lead to several interpretations. Firstly, both genders use consolidation strategies more frequently than discovery strategies. That means students do not focus solving intermediate problems of finding out the meaning of unknown words, instead they usually go further towards its consolidation. Secondly, learning through sound strategies are universal strategies for people from different cultures, such as Japanese and Spanish.

When it comes to the variations in using vocabulary learning strategies based on genders, the result of the current study brings the lights to the existence of clear different patterns in two groups. Unfortunately, when comparing with results obtained by previous studies, most studies either fail to explore the variable or to report its effect on the use of strategies. Therefore, it is extremely difficult to compare these results with other findings. Besides, comparison between the current findings and previous results is not easier because the previous studies

applied different numbers of subjects, different taxonomy used to define and classify strategies, research designs and statistical tests.

As presented in table 15, it is interesting noted that female learners use discovery strategies more frequently than male learners. The higher frequency in using VLSs in females could be explained due to a higher degree of motivation towards language learning in general and vocabulary learning in particular. It is widely known that motivation is a complex set of interrelated factors including the desire to achieve the goal of learning, the effort and investment devoted to learning and the attitude towards learning. Oxford et al. (1993) carrying out a study with Japansese learners had revealed that there is relation between the greater use of vocabulary learning strategies and the higher degree of motivation.

Conclusion
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CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

1 Major findings

The research scrutinizes in detail the vocabulary learning strategies used by 11th grade female and male students at Minh Khai high school. It presents the techniques students use to discover the meaning of new words when encountering the lexical items and to consolidate the meanings after knowing the words. The results compared with the results in previous studies shows that in context of Minh Khai High School, students choose the strategies to learn new words somehow similar to earlier findings by Schimtt (2002) or Rosa (2003). The most frequently used strategy is "taking notes in the class" and "studing the sound of a word", whereas, the strategy "use semantic map" is the least used one. Surprisingly, unlike the results by Rosa (2003), there was not a big difference among the frequency of each strategy that EFL learners at Minh Khai High School reported using. More importantly, the research proved that there have been significant differences in vocabulary learning strategies reported to be used by males and females in terms of the range and the number of strategies. Despite the fact that both genders use consolidation strategies more frequently than discovery strategies, female learners use discovery strategies more frequently than male learners.

2 Contributions and Implications

After considering the result of this study, teachers and students at Minh Khai High School in particular and students learning EFL in general are able to adjust their strategies to bring out fully potentials in learning and support students to recognize the way how to learn EFL most effectively. In order to amend VLS

use, strategy training has been proved to be very useful in broadening students' strategic knowledge. The goal of strategy training is to promote learner autonomy. In order to achieve this goal, teachers require knowledge of comprehensive strategy repertoire to train their student both for instructional context and independent study.

Furthermore, the study is a useful reference for teachers and educators to consider in designing materials including syllabus and curriculums, activities and amending the way of teaching vocabulary in high school in Vietnam to assist students to improve their lexical competence. Students were clearly aware that VLSs were a part of their language learning process, although all five categories of VLSs were initially reported at a medium use level. This may be due to the English courses these students had in high school. These courses do not prepare the students to be familiar with different vocabulary learning strategies. Hence, textbook designers should be aware that students lack certain vocabulary learning strategies; thus, vocabulary learning strategy instruction could be provided in the future.

3 Limitations

Since the participants investigated are on a small scale, this was an empirical study. A larger sample from different institutions would definitely yield more generalizing findings. As other studies, the data were collected by using only two instruments which do not reflect a reality because students could have not read the questions carefully but only ticked. In the interview section, the number

of interviewee is inconsiderable because of the shortage of time; therefore even though those interviews are face to face ones, they seemed not to markedly contribute to reliability of the study.

4 Suggestion for further study

Since there are some limitations in the current research, it is recommended that future research should take into consideration more reliable qualitative data collection instead of interviewing to triangulate the data. It may show whether the students reported responses in the questionnaire are consistent with what they actually do. To achieve this purpose qualitative data collection technique such as test taking, journal writing, diaries, and classroom observations might be undertaken.

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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONAIRE FOR STUDENTS (VALIDATED VERSION)

My name is Nguyen Hong Hanh, forth year student at University of Language and international Studies. This survey is designed on the purpose of getting necessary data for my study on "**An investigation of English vocabulary learning strategies used by 11th grade students at Minh Khai high school**". Your personal information will be kept strictly confidential. Please give your answers truthfully for a guaranteed success of the research.

Thank you so much for your participation.

1. Background information

Name: ……………………   Class: ……   Age: ………………Sex: Male/ Female

You have been learning English for: ………………… years

Your email: …………………………………………………………………..

Your phone number: …………………………………………………………….

2. Vocabulary learning strategies

For each of the items below, please tick or circle the number that reflects your viewpoint/ habits on a five-point scale. If you have any further explanation, please write at the end of the form.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Seldom	Often	Usually	Always

A. what do you do to discover the meaning of English word that you do not know:

	Never	**Seldom**	**Often**	**Usually**	**Always**
1. Analyze part of speech					
2. Analyze suffixes and roots					
3. Check for L1 cognate					
4. Analyze any available pictures or gestures					
5. Guess from textual context					
6. Bilingual dictionary					
7. Monolingual dictionary					
8. Word lists					
9. Flash cards					
	Never	**Seldom**	**Often**	**Usually**	**Always**
10. Ask teacher for an L1 translation Study and practice meaning in a group.					
11. Ask teacher for paraphrase or synonym of new word					
12. Ask teacher for a sentence including the new word					
13. Interact with native-speakers					
14. Ask classmates for meaning					
15. Discover new meaning through group work activity					

B. **What do you do to consolidate the learning of the word after discovering its meaning?**

	Never	**Seldom**	**Often**	**Usually**	**Always**
16. Study word with a pictorial representation of					

	Never	Seldom	Often	Usually	Always
its meaning					
17. Connect word to a personal experience					
18. Associate the word with its coordinates					
19. Connect the word to its synonyms and antonyms					
20. Use semantic maps					
21. Use 'scales' for gradable adjectives					
22. Group words together to study them					
23. Group words together spatially on a page					
24. Use new word in sentences					
25. Group words together within a storyline					
26. Study the spelling of a word					
27. Study sound of word					
28. Say word aloud					
29. Image of word form					
30. Underline initial letter					
31. Configuration					
32. Use keyword method					
33. Affixes and roots/parts of speech					
	Never	**Seldom**	**Often**	**Usually**	**Always**
34. Paraphrase word meaning					
35. Use cognates in study					
36. Learn words of an idiom together					
37. Use physical action					
38. Use semantic feature grids					
39. Verbal repetition					
40. Written repetition					
41. Word lists					
42. Flash cards					
43. Take notes in class					
44. Use the vocabulary section in your textbook					
45. Listen to tape of word lists					
46. Put English labels on physical objects					
47. Keep a vocabulary notebook					
48. Use English-language media (songs, movies, newscasts, etc.)					
49. Testing oneself with word tests					
50. Use spaced word practice					
51. Skip or pass new word					
52. Continue to study word over time					

Thank for you cooperation! Have a nice day.

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Tên tôi là Nguyễn Hồng Hạnh, sinh viên năm thứ tư trường đại học Ngoại Ngữ - ĐH Quốc Gia Hà Nội. Cuộc khảo sát này được thiết kế nhằm mục đích thu thập dữ liệu cần thiết cho bài nghiên cứu của tôi " Tìm hiểu phương pháp học từ mới Tiếng Anh được học sinh lớp 11 trường THPT Minh Khai sử dụng". Những thông tin cá nhân của người tham gia cuộc khảo sát sẽ được giữu bí mật tuyệt đối. Xin bạn vui lòng trả lời một cách thành thật để đảm bảo chất lượng nghiên cứu.

Chân thành cảm ơn sự đóng góp của các bạn

1. Thông tin cá nhân.

Họ và Tên: Lớp :   Age: Sex: Male/ Female

Bạn học tiếng anh được: ………………… năm

Email: …………………………Số điện thoại: ……………………………

2. Phương pháp học từ vựng.

Với mỗi lựa chọn bên dưới, xin bạn hãy tick **(√)** vào ô phản ánh ý kiến/ thói quen của bạn trên thang điểm 5.

1	2	3	4	5
Không bao giờ	Hiếm khi	Thường xuyên	Thường thường	Luôn luôn

A. Bạn làm gì khi bạn muốn biết nghĩa của từ mới Tiếng Anh:

	Không bao giờ	Hiếm khi	Thường xuyên	Thường Thường	Luôn luôn
1. Phân tích từ loại (danh từ, tính từ, …)					
2. Phân tích phụ tố và từ gốc (un-, dis-,-ion, ...)					
3. Tra nghĩa tiếng việt					
4. Phân tích từ tranh ảnh hoặc hành động					
5. Đoán từ ngữ cảnh					
6. Từ điển Anh-Việt					
7. Từ điển Anh-Anh					
	Không bao giờ	Hiếm khi	Thường xuyên	Thường Thường	Luôn luôn
8. List từ					
9. Flash cards (thẻ học từ mới)					
10. Nhờ giáo viên dịch sang tiếng việt					
11. Hỏi giáo viên từ đồng nghĩa của từ đó					
12. Nhờ giáo viên đặt câu với từ mới đó.					
13. Giao tiếp với người bản xứ					
14. Hỏi bạn cùng lớp nghĩa từ đó.					
15. biết nghĩa từ mới qua việc làm nhóm.					

B. **Bạn làm gì để củng cố kiến thức sau khi biết được nghĩa của từ mới?**

	Không bao giờ	Hiếm khi	Thường xuyên	Thường Thường	Luôn luôn
16. Học từ có tranh minh họa.					
17. Liên hệ từ với trải nghiệm bản thân					
18. Liên hệ từ đó với những phụ tố liên quan					
19. Học từ đó cùng từ đồng nghĩa trái nghĩa					
20. Sử dụng hệ thống ngữ nghĩa học					
21. Sử dụng hệ thống cấp bậc so sánh (hồng- đỏ- đỏ tươi- đỏ thắm- đỏ đậm)					
22. Tạo những từ liên quan thành một nhóm					
23. Nhóm từ lên một trang giấy					
24. Đặt câu với từ mới.					
25. Nhóm từ thành một câu chuyện					
26. Học cách đánh vần từ mới					
27. Học cách phát âm từ mới					
28. Đọc to từ mới.					
29. Tưởng tượng form của từ mới					
30. Gạch chân chữ cái đầu của từ mới					
31. Học qua hình dạng, vật cụ thể					
32. Sử dụng phương pháp từ khóa					
33. Học phụ tố và từ gốc					

	Không bao giờ	Hiếm khi	Thường xuyên	Thường Thường	Luôn luôn
34. Paraphrase word meaning					
35. Sử dụng từ cùng gốc					
36. Học từ trong thành ngữ					
37. Dùng động tác để học					
38. Dùng hệ thống ngữ nghĩa					
39. Đọc đi đọc lại					
40. Viết đi viết lại					
41. List từ					
42. Flash cards					
43. Ghi chép trên lớp					
44. Sử dụng phần từ vựng có trong sách					
45. Nghe từ mới trong đĩa					
46. Dán giấy nhớ có từ tiếng Anh lên đồ vật					
47. Có một quyển sổ tay từ vựng					
48. Sử dụng phương tiện như bài hát, phim, báo chí bằng tiếng anh					
49. Kiểm tra bản thân bằng một bài test từ					
50. Làm bài tập điền từ					
51. Bỏ qua khi gặp từ mới					
52. Học đi học lại từ mới trong một khoảng thời gian					

Cám ơn sự giúp đỡ của các bạn.

APPENDIX 3

Interview questions

Section 1: Discovering the meaning of English word you do not know

When you meet new word in English, how do you figure out its meaning?
- Do you ever guess? How? (from the context, the picture, the suffixes and roots)
- Do you look up in dictionary? Monolingual or bilingual dictionary?

- Do you ask someone else to explain that new word for you? Who? What information do you ask (part of speech, translation into Vietnamese or synonyms, etc.)

Section 2: consolidating the meaning of the word you have figured out their meaning

After discovering the meaning of new words, how do you revise the words?

- do you have any notebook of vocabulary? If yes, which information do you write in that notebook? (Pronunciation, making words in group or making up storyline, suffixes or definition in paraphrasing).

- do you do the exercises relating to words or new vocabulary? If yes, what kinds of exercise you did? (Word test, space practice or reading comprehension, etc.)

- Have you ever heard the word "semantic" or "key word methods"?

APPENDIX 4

Sample interview note-extract (Translated version)

1. Interviewee 1:

 "I guess meaning of new words basing the sentences placed before and after the sentence including the new words. Or I look up in dictionary or ask teachers and my classmates."

 "Yes, as I said above, I guess basing on the sentences around the words. But I rarely guess from the suffixes and picture."

 "All the time, I look up English-Vietnamese dictionary."

 "I ask my teacher first. If I don't have chance to do that, I ask my classmates and normally I ask straightforwardly the meaning. "

 "I usually learn the words by heart and write repeatedly."

 "I just have the notebook used in the class, and I write the word and the meaning in that book."

 "Sometimes, I do the word exercises involving filling in the blanks or reading comprehension."

"What does that mean? I've never heard of those words."

2. Interviewee 2:

 "Sometimes, when I make guess, normally I guess from the context or I see the new words having the similar patterns to the words I have known already"-
"Yes. English-Vietnamese dictionary"
"Yes, I ask my classmates immediately for straight translation."

"Yes, but I just take note the words and the meanings in Vietnamese."

"Sometimes, because those are the exercises teachers assign us to do."

"Never heard of those".

3. Interviewee 3:

"I normally look up the dictionary; ask teachers, classmates or my tutors"

"Sometimes, because I don't have skills to guess the right meaning of words form the context"

"Most of the time and of course, English-Vietnamese dictionary"

"As I said that, I ask my teachers or classmates for the meaning right away in order to do exercises."

"I have a notebook to take note the things teacher says in the class and before taking the exam, I learn words from that notebook"

"The notebook which I write new words on includes words, their meaning and their word families."

"Of course, because those exercises are the ones teachers assign, and teachers ask us to write each word on 2 lines."

"I have never heard of those."

4. Interviewee 4:

"Guessing through context, looking up the dictionary and asking classmates"

"Yes, I guess from the context."

"Yes, all the time, and normally I use bilingual dictionary, sometimes I use monolingual dictionary but I give up because I cannot understand the definitions in that dictionary."

"Yes, I ask the friend sitting next to me, and ask the equivalent meaning in Vietnamese immediately"

"I rarely revise; sometimes I write the words or phrases on a piece of paper and make the sentences with those."

"Yes, I write meanings, suffixes and the word families, I never jot down the pronunciation.

"Yes, I do fill-in-blank or matching exercises.

"Never heard of semantic or key words"