

**BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG**



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Sinh viên : Bùi Thị Trang

Giảng viên hướng dẫn : Th.s Khổng Thị Hồng Lê

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**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
HAIPHONG PRIVATE UNIVERSITY**

**A STUDY ON COMMON ERRORS IN SENTENCE
CONSTRUCTION BY SECONDARY SCHOOLERS IN
HAIPHONG CITY**

GRADUATION PAPER

Student : Bui Thi Trang
Class : NA1802
Supervisor : Khong Thi Hong Le, M.A

HAI PHONG – 2019

**BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
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NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

Sinh viên: Bùi Thị Trang

Mã SV: 1412751068

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Ngành: Tiếng Anh

Tên đề tài: A study on effective vocabulary learning strategies for students at Tran Phu Gifted high school

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1. Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp (về lý luận, thực tiễn, các số liệu cần tính toán và các bản vẽ).

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3. Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp.

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GS.TS.NGƯT Trần Hữu Nghị

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Được bảo vệ Không được bảo vệ Điểm phản biện

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Giảng viên chăm phản biện

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

COG	Cognitive Strategies
DET	Determination Strategies
EFL	English as Foreign Language
L2	Second Language
LI	First Language
MEM	Memory Strategies
MET	Metacognitive strategies
SOC	Social Strategies
TP	Tran Phu

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale.

“Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.”(Cited in Hoang Tat Truong 1985: I). The saying sounds very familiar with many people. However, the researcher still wants to repeat it once more to confirm the importance of vocabulary in any language. “If a language could be considered as a house, then its grammar could be considered as cement and its vocabulary could be figuratively compared to bricks. To build a complete house, not only cement but also bricks are needed. Without bricks, no house can be built, even when plenty of high quality cement is available.” (Nguyen Huyen, 2004: I). This means that to be a competent English communicator, one must acquire a good knowledge of English grammar and have a rich amount of English vocabulary as well. Vocabulary is an essential element of language. Whether in speaking or writing, learners need vocabulary to communicate and understand others. In many cases, learners produce grammatically incorrect sentences, but they still get their message across if they use key words appropriately. In other cases, learners may feel uncomfortable because they fail to employ certain words, or do not know the words to express themselves. Vocabulary is not only indispensable for personal communication, but also for academic study. In fact, many standardized tests require knowledge of vocabulary such as TOFFLE, IELTS, GMAT, etc. For this reason, learners must give high priority to learning and developing their knowledge of vocabulary.

For a long time in the past, method ologies have continuously kept seeking effective ways to teach English vocabulary but learning English. Teacher’s role and teaching tools have been paid so much attention. Fortunately, it has been witnessed that there has been a prominent shift in the field of language teaching and learning over the last few decades with greater emphasis being put on learners and learning rather than on teachers and teaching. This change has been reflected in various ways in language education and in applied linguistics. Many books on learning strategies have been introduced by such experts as Oxford (1990), O’Malley and Charnot (1990), Nunan (1991), Nation (1990) and soon. Some books on vocabulary learning strategies have been written by such scholars as Nation (1982, 1990), Rubin and Thompson (1994) and Taylor (1990), etc.

In Vietnam, there have so far been some researches on vocabulary learning strategies. However, research on vocabulary learning strategies employed by students at Tran Phu Gifted High School has not been done yet. It is in this light that a lot of attempts have been made to do a research on “effective vocabulary learning strategies applied for students at Tran Phu gifted high school”. The study was conducted with the view to finding out effective strategies to enhance student’s vocabulary at Tran Phu Gifted High school.

2. Aims of the study

The study mainly aims at exploring what strategies are commonly used by students in learning vocabulary and the relationship between the use of vocabulary learning strategies and the gender as well as learners’ field of study.

Therefore, the study was conducted based on two following research questions:

- ✓ What are effective vocabulary learning strategies employed by students at Tran Phu Gifted High School?
- ✓ Do students’ gender and field of study have any influence on their use of vocabulary learning strategies?

3. Scope of the study

Due to the limited time together with the small scope of the study, the study was only designed to investigate vocabulary learning strategies which are employed by the students of Tran Phu Gifted High School. It also found out the differences in the use of VL strategies among groups of students in relation to their gender and field of study.

4. Methods of the study

In order to achieve the aims of the study mentioned above, the *quantitative analysis* was chosen as the main tool for analyzing the data, which was collected from the questionnaire.

After the data was analyzed and discussed, the findings were shown and some conclusions were drawn with useful recommendations for teaching and learning vocabulary.

5. Design of the study.

The study is divided into three main parts:

- ✚ Part I is the introduction which includes the rationale, aims of the study, the scope, the study method and the design of the study.

✚ Part II is the development - the core of this paper which is composed of 3 chapters:

- Chapter 1 covers the information about vocabulary learning strategies, some basic concepts related to learning strategies and vocabulary learning. In addition, learning strategies and learning strategy classification were reviewed to set up the theoretical framework for the investigation in the next chapter.

- Chapter 2 shows detailed explanation of the methodology. It includes the context of the study, the research method, the participants and the findings of the study.

- Chapter 3 discusses the use of vocabulary learning strategies by the students of Tran Phu Gifted high school and the differences among groups of students by their gender and major.

✚ Part III is the conclusion which summarizes what was given in previous parts, gives some limitations of the study as well as suggestions for further research.

PART II: DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Language learning strategies.

1.1.1 The definitions of learning strategies

It is clearly seen that research on learning strategies in general and language learning strategies in particular is becoming increasingly popular. So far, there has been no consensus among the linguists regarding the definitions of leaning strategies.

According to Nunan (1991:168), “Learning strategies [...] are the mental processes which learners employ to learn and use the target language”. Nunan’s definition restricts learning strategies only to “mental processes”. Richard et al. (1992:209), offers a broader definition of learning strategies, that is, learning strategies are intentional behavior and thoughts that learners make use of during learning in order to better help them understand, learn and remember new information.” Similarly, Weinstein and Mayer (1986) (in O’ Malley and Charmot1990:43) have learning facilitation as a goal and are intentional on the part of the learner. The goal of strategy use is to affect the leaner’s motivational or affective state, or the way in which the learner selects, acquires, organizes, or integrates new knowledge.”

Oxford (1990:8) defines learning strategies as “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transfer able to new situation.”

Ellis defines learning strategies as “the particular approaches or techniques that learner employs to try to learn an L2.” (1997:76). He furthers explains that learning strategies can be behavioral or mental and are typically problem - oriented.

Rubin (in Wenden and Rubin 1987:19) is even more explicit when he defines learning strategies as “any set of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval and use of information, that is, what learner do to learn and do to regulate their learning.”

According to O’Malley and Charmot (1990:I), learning strategies are special ways of processing information that enhance comprehension, learning, or retention of the information” or in their other words learning strategies are the “special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend,

learn, or retain new information.”

Obviously, learning strategies are defined in different words and from different perspectives such as cognitive, social or pragmatic. Therefore, researchers worked out the taxonomy of learning strategies instead of defining them. This can be seen in the following part.

1.1.2 The characteristics of learning strategies

Learning strategies are techniques, approaches or deliberate actions that students take in order to facilitate the learning and recall of both linguistic and content information and to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations.

Wenden and Rubin (1987:7-8) claimed that learning strategies were composed of the following components:

Table 1: Components of learning strategies

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. They are specific actions or techniques.2. They can be observable/ behavior able or non-observable/mental.3. They are problem-oriented.4. They can contribute directly or indirectly to learning.5. They may be consciously employed and became automatized.6. They are changeable.

Oxford (1990: 9) offers a more comprehensive list of the features of language learning strategies as the following:

Table 2: Features of language learning strategies

1. Contribute to the main goal, communicative competence.
2. Allow learners to be more self-directed.
3. Expand the role of the teacher.
4. Are problem-oriented.
5. Are specific action taken by learner
6. Involve many aspects of the learner, not just the cognitive.
7. Support learning both directly and indirectly.
8. Are not always observable.
9. Are often conscious.
10. Can be taught.
11. Are flexible.
12. Are influenced by a variety of factors.

Source: Oxford (1990:9)

1.1.3. Classifications of learning strategies

In the literature, like the definition of learning strategies, learning strategies are classified differently by different scholars.

Wenden (1991:18) divides learning strategies into two broad groups as follows:

- Cognitive strategies
- Self-management strategies.

In her explanation, cognitive strategies are mental steps or operations learners use to process both linguistic and sociolinguistic content. Self-management strategies are used to oversee and manage the learner's learning. She notes that in cognitive psychology self-management strategies are called metacognitive or regulatory strategies.

Rubin, who pioneered much of the work in the field of strategies, make the distinction between strategies contributing directly to learning and those contributing indirectly to learning. According to Rubin (1987), there are three types of strategies used by learners that contribute directly and indirectly to language learning. These are:

- Learning strategies
- Communication strategies
- Social strategies

Learning strategies include two main types: cognitive learning strategies and metacognitive learning strategies. Cognitive learning strategies refer to the steps or operations used in learning or problem solving that require direct analysis, transformation or synthesis of learning materials. Rubin identifies 6 main cognitive learning strategies contributing directly to language learning. They are clarification/verification, monitoring, memorization, guessing/inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning and practice. The indirect strategies include creating opportunities for practice and productions tricks.

Naiman et al. (in O'Malley and Charlot 1990:4) offers a classification schema of 5 broad categories of learning strategies and a number of secondary categories. Their broad categories of learning strategies include: an active ask approach, realization of language as a system, realization of language as a means of communication and interaction, management of affective demands, and monitoring of L2 performance.

O'Malley and Charlot (1990) analyzed learning strategies in parallel with language learning. Learning strategies were defined as complex cognitive skills. O'Malley divides language learning strategies into three main subcategories:

- Metacognitive strategies
- Cognitive strategies
- Social affective strategies.

Metacognitive strategies involve contemplating learning processes such as planning, monitoring, analyzing, and assessing learning which are indirectly involved in learning.

Cognitive strategies are more limited to specific learning tasks and they involve more directly manipulation of the learning materials itself. They

include strategies such as rehearsal, organization, in referencing, summarizing, deducing, imaginary, transfer, and elaboration. Social affective strategies are related with social mediating activity and transacting with others.

According to Stern (1992), there are five main language learning strategies. These are as follows:

- Management and planning strategies.
- Cognitive strategies
- Communicative –Experiential strategies
- Interpersonal strategies
- Affective strategies

Oxford (1990:9) see the aims of language learning strategies as being oriented towards the development of communicative competence. Oxford divides the language learning strategies into main classes, direct and indirect, which are further divided into 6 subgroups. In Oxford's system, metacognitive strategies help learners regulate their learning. Affective strategies are concerned with the learner's emotional requirements such as confidence, while social strategies lead to increased interaction with the target language. Cognitive strategies are the mental strategies the learners use to make sense of their learning, memory strategies are those used to the storage of information, and compensation strategies help learners overcome their knowledge gaps to continue the communication.

Table 3: Direct learning strategies

Class	Set of strategies	Specific strategies	
I. Memory strategies	a. Creating mental linkage	1. Grouping	
		2. Associating/Elaborating	
		3. Placing new word into context	
	b. Applying images and sounds	1. Using imaginary	
		2. Semantic mapping	
		3. Using key words	
		4. Representing sounds in memory	
	c. Reviewing well	1. Structured reviewed	
	d. Employing action	1. Using physical response or sensation	
		2. Using mechanical techniques	
II. Cognitive strategies	a. Practicing	1. Repeating	
		2. Formally practicing with sounds and writing system	
		3. Recognizing and using formulas and patterns	
		4. Recombining	
		5. Practicing naturalistically	
	b. Receiving and sending message	1. Getting the idea quickly	
		2. Using resources for receiving and sending message	
	c. Analyzing and reasoning	1. Responding deductively	
		2. Analyzing expression	
		3. Analyzing contrastively (across language)	
		4. Translating	
		5. Transferring	
	d. Creating structure for input and output	6. Taking notes	
		7. Summarizing	
		8. Highlighting	
	III. Compensations strategies	a. Guessing intelligently	1. Using linguistic clues
			2. Using other clues
		b. Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing	1. Switching to the mother tongue
2. Getting help			
3. Using mime or gesture			
4. Avoiding communication partially or totally			
5. Selecting the topic			
6. Adjusting or approximating the message			
7. Coining words			
8. Using a circumlocution or synonym			

Table 4: Indirect learning strategies

Group	Set of strategies	Specific strategies	
I. Metacognitive strategies	a. Centring your learning	1. Overviewing and lining with already known material	
		2. Paying attention	
		3. Delaying speech	
	b. Arranging and planning your learning	1. Finding out about language learning	
		2. Organizing	
		3. Setting goals and objectives	
		4. Identifying the purpose of language task (purposeful listening/reading/ speaking/ writing)	
		5. Planning your task	
		6. Seeking practice opportunities	
c. Evaluating your learning	1. Self-monitoring		
	2. Self-evaluating		
II. Effective strategies	a. Lowering your anxiety	1. Using progressive relaxation, deep breathing or meditation	
		2. Using music	
		3. Using laughter	
	b. Encouraging yourself	1. Making positive statements	
		2. Taking risks wisely	
		3. Rewarding yourself	
	c. Taking your emotional temperature	1. Listening to your body	
		2. Using checklist	
		3. Writing a language learning diary	
		4. Discussing your feelings with someone else	
	III. Social strategies	a. Asking questions	1. Asking for clarification or verification
			2. Asking for correction
b. Cooperating with others		1. Cooperating with peers	
		2. Cooperating with proficient users of the new language	
c. Empathizing with others		1. Developing cultural understanding	
		2. Becoming aware of others thoughts and feelings	

1.2. Vocabulary and vocabulary learning strategies

1.2.1. Construct of knowing a word

Many people believe that knowing a word means knowing its meaning. Cook (2001:61) states that “a word is more than its meaning.” For Cook, knowing a word may involve four aspects: form of the word (for instance spelling and pronunciation), grammatical properties (for example, grammatical category of a word, its possible and impossible structure), lexical properties (for instance, word combinations and appropriateness), and general meaning and specific meaning.

According to Nation (1990), what is involved in “knowing” a word depends on whether a word is learned for receptive skills or for productive skills. Taylor (1990) also shared the same point of view. Their argument is that knowing a word involves not only knowing its spelling, morphology, pronunciation, and meaning or the equivalent of the word in the learner’s mother tongue. Besides these aspects, the learner must know its collocations, register, polysemy, (a single word with many meanings, e.g. she broke her foot due to the foot of the stairs), and even its homonym (different words which happen to have the same spelling and pronunciation, e.g. he often lies in the sofa to lie to his wife).

The aspects of words mentioned above can be examined in detail as followed:

- + Word form: When learning a word, learners should not only what a word sounds like (its pronunciation or its spoken form) but also how it looks like (its spelling or its written form).

- + Grammar: a word may have unpredictable change of form and meaning in different contexts or some idiosyncratic way of connecting with other words in sentences. Therefore, when learners learn a new word, they should know this information at the same time they learn the basic form of a word. For example, when a noun such as foot, it should be noticed that its plural form is feet.

- + Collocation: collocation is the way in which words are used together regularly in a specific language. It refers to the restriction on how words can be used together in right contexts. Therefore, this is another piece of information of a new item, which may be worth paying attention to. For example, we can say *throw a ball* but *to a coin*.

- + Word meanings include denotation, connotation, appropriateness and

meaning relationship.

The denotation refers to things or concepts. For example, “*tiger*” denotes an animal that eats meat or “*rose*” denotes a kind of flowers with red color and symbolizes for love.

The connotation includes stylistic, affective, evaluative, intensifying values, pragmatic, communicative values. Connotation of a word may or may not be indicated in a dictionary definition.

Appropriateness is more subtle aspect of meaning which indicates whether a particular item is appropriate one to use in a certain context or not. Thus, it is useful for a learner to know whether a certain word is very common, or relatively rare or taboo impolite conversation, or tends to be used in writing but not in speech, or is more suitable for a formal than informal discourse or belongs to a certain dialect.

Associations or meaning relationships show how the meaning of one item relates to the meaning of the others. There are some of the main ones such as synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, co-hyponym, superordinate, etc.

1.2.2. Classifications of vocabulary learning strategies

Knowing a word is also defined as knowing its spelling, pronunciation, collocations (i.e. words it occurs with), and appropriateness (Nation, 1990). Therefore, lexical competence is far more than the ability to define a given number of words and covers a wide range of knowledge which in turn requires a variety of strategies to gain the knowledge. Foreign language learners may then use various strategies to acquire the target language word knowledge. Taking this into consideration, language researchers have made various attempts to classify vocabulary learning strategies employed by foreign and second language learners. Instances of such classifications are the taxonomies proposed by Gu and Johnson (1996), Schmitt (1997) and which are briefly discussed below.

Gu and Johnson (1996) list second language (L2) vocabulary learning strategies as follows:

- Metacognitive
- Cognitive
- Memory
- Activation strategies

Metacognitive strategies consist of selective attention and self-initiation strategies. Learners who employ selective attention strategies know which words are important for them to learn and essential for adequate comprehension of a passage. Learners employing self-initiation strategies use a variety of means to make the meaning of vocabulary items clear.

Cognitive strategies in Gu and Johnson’s taxonomy entail guessing strategies, skillful use of dictionaries and note-taking strategies. Learners using guessing strategies draw upon their background knowledge and use linguistic clues like grammatical structures of a sentence to guess the meaning of a word.

Memory strategies are classified into rehearsal and encoding categories. Word lists and repetition are instances of rehearsal strategies. Encoding strategies encompass such strategies as association, imagery, visual, auditory, semantic, and contextual encoding as well as word-structure (i.e: analyzing a word in terms of prefixes, stems, and suffixes.)

Activation strategies include those strategies through which the learners actually use new words in different contexts. For instance, learners may set sentences using the words they have just learned. All these suggested strategies can be summarized in a table as follows:

Table 5: Vocabulary learning strategies (Source: Gu and Johnson (1996))

Strategies			
Metacognitive	Cognitive	Memory	Activation
*Selective Attention: Identifying essential words for comprehension *Self-initiation: using a variety of means to make the meaning of words clear	*Guessing: Activating background knowledge, using linguistic items *Use of dictionaries *Note-taking	*Rehearsal: word lists, repetitions, etc. *Encoding: association (imagery, visual, auditory, etc.)	*Using new words in different contexts

A comprehensive inventory of vocabulary learning strategies is developed by Schmitt (1997). He distinguishes the strategies into two groups: The ones to determine the meaning of new words when encountered for the first time, and the ones to consolidate meaning when encountered again. The former contains determination and social strategies and the latter contains cognitive, metacognitive, memory and social strategies. Schmitt includes social strategies in both categories since they can be used for both purposes. This categorization is based, in part, on Oxford's (1990) classification scheme. The details can be seen on the table below:

Table 6: Taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies

Strategies group	
Strategies for the discovery of a new word's meaning	
DET	Analyze parts of speech
	Analyze affixes and roots
	Check for ;l cognate
	Analyze any available pictures or gestures
	Guess the meaning from textual context
	Bilingual dictionary
	Word lists
	Flash card
SOC	Ask teacher for an LI translation
	Ask teacher for paraphrase or synonym of a new word
	Ask teacher for a sentence including the new word
	Ask classmates for meaning
	Discover new meaning through group work activities
Strategies for consolidating a word once it has been encountered	
SOC	Study and practice meaning in a group
	Teacher check students flash card or word lists for accuracy
	Interact with native speaker
MEM	Study word with a pictorial presentation of its meaning
	Image word's meaning
	Connect word to a personal experience
	Associate the word with its coordinates
	Associate the word with its synonyms and antonyms
	Use semantic maps
	Use "scale" for gradable adjectives

	Peg method
	Loci method
	Group words together to study them
	Group words together spatially on a page
	Use new word in sentence
	Group word together within a storyline
	Study spelling of a word
	Study sound of a word
	Say a word aloud when studying
	Image word form
	Underline initial letter of the word
	Configuration
	Use keyword method
	Affixes and roots (remembering)
	Paraphrase the word's meaning
	Use cognate in study
	Learning the words of an idiom together
	Use physical action when learning a word
	Use semantic feature grids
COG	Verbal repetition
	Written repetition
	Word lists
	Flashcards
	Take note 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
MET	Use English-language media (song, movie, new casts, etc.)
	Testing oneself with word test
	Use spaced word practice
	Skip or pass new word
	Continue to study word over time

(Source: Norbert Schmitt (1997), p.207-208.)

In general, although the taxonomies cited above may slightly differ in terms of strategies they categorize, they all provide a list of widely applicable vocabulary learning strategies.

1.2.3. The classification of vocabulary learning strategies by Schmitt

Vocabulary learning strategy classification system proposed by Schmitt (1997) will be used as the theoretical framework of the investigation in this thesis. Therefore, the classification and exemplification of those vocabulary learning strategies that are used in the questionnaire will be presented below as a source of reference.

a. Determination strategies

Determination strategies are used when students are faced with discovering a new word's meaning without resource to another person's expertise. They can have the leaning of a new word from the following techniques:

Guessing from their structural knowledge of the language: learners may be able to discern the new word's part of speech, which can help in guessing process. Hints about meaning can be also obtained from its roots or affixes.

Using reference material: Dictionaries are primary in this technique.

Word lists and flashcards are those suggested to be useful for initial exposures to a new word.

b. Social strategies.

Guessing from an LI cognate: cognates are words in different languages which descended from a common parent word. If the target language is closely related to learner's first language, cognates can be excellent resource for both guessing the meaning of and remembering new words.

Guessing from context: an unknown word's meaning can be guessed from context. However, learners must have a certain level of language proficiency as well as adequate background knowledge of the subject and the strategic knowledge of how to effectively go through inferencing process.

Social strategies are used to both discover the meaning of a new word and consolidate a word once it has been encountered. They can be defined as those are used to understand a word by asking someone who knows it. Teachers are said to be often in this position. They can be expected to give help in a number of different ways such as giving LI translation, giving a synonym, giving a definition by paraphrase, using a new word in a sentence, checking learners' work for accuracy, or any combination of these. Learners can also get help from their classmates or benefit from interactions with others such as group work activities or interaction with native speakers.

c. Memory strategies

Memory strategies are approaches which relate new materials to existing knowledge using some form of imaginary, or grouping. The strategies can be listed as follows:

Picture/ imaginary: students can learn new words by studying them with pictures of their meaning instead of their definition, by creating their own mental images of a word's meaning, or by associating new words with a particularly vivid personal experience of the underlying concept.

Related words: new words can be linked to L2 words which the student already knows. This usually involves some types of sense relationship such as coordination, synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, or metonymy which can be illustrated with semantic maps-one way used often to consolidate vocabulary. (Oxford (1990)).

Unrelated words: words that have no sense relationship can be linked together while they are learnt.

Grouping: words can be grouped together so that they are easier to memorize, store and recall. Words can be grouped mentally or in writing according to their topic, function, in a story and soon.

Word's orthographical or phonological form: words can be learnt by explicitly studying their spelling and pronunciation, remembering its orthographical form, or making a mental representation of its sound.

Other memory strategies are also suggested in this group. A structural analysis of words can be useful for determining their meaning. Studying a word's affixes, root, and word class is potentially useful as a way of consolidating its meaning. Paraphrasing can be used as a strategy to compensate for limited productive vocabulary. Learning a new word in its chunk often as phrases, idioms, or proverbs is a mnemonic device for remembering the individual word meanings. Physical actions or semantic feature grids are two other suggested ways of vocabulary learning.

d. Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies are those somewhat similar to memory strategies but the difference is that they are not focused so specifically on manipulative mental process" (Schmitt, 1997:215). This group includes repetition and mechanical means of learning vocabulary such as: Verbal and written repetition: words are repeatedly written or spoken again and again. Word lists and flashcards: words

are reviewed by using word lists and flashcards. (not for initial exposure).

Studying aid using: words are learnt through such study aids as: note taking in class, using vocabulary sections in textbooks, or taping L2 labels onto their respective physical objects.

Vocabulary notebooks: words can be learnt by written down in a notebook.

e. Metacognitive strategies

Metacognitive strategies are those used to control and evaluate their own learning by having a conscious overview of the learning process. Students can employ such strategies as:

Using English-language media: to get the aim of efficient acquisition of an L2, it is important to maximize exposure to it. In case that English is chosen as L2, English - language media such as: books, magazines, newspapers, movies, websites, etc. offers an almost endless resource.

Continuing studying over time: a part from making full use of above strategies, one can maximize the effectiveness of his practice time if it is scheduled and organized.

Testing oneself with test and using spaced word practice can be considered as organized activities by students themselves.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Participants

A total of 67 students from Tran Phu Gifted High School participated in the study including thirty five students of English major (n=35) and thirty two students of Maths (n=32). Forty seven were female and twenty were male. The age of the students was 16 to 18 years old. Their English competence is also different because of the fact that English major students have better English than Maths students. Besides, the participants have been studying English for 5 to 8 years. In addition, they come from different places in Hai Phong City.

2.2 Data collection instruments

In order to collect data for the study, survey questionnaire was chosen because it is a simple and familiar instrument of collecting information from the students and is less time-consuming than other instruments.

The questionnaire was aimed at measuring the frequency of vocabulary learning strategy use. The strategies were based on the study done by Schmitt (1997) and most of the items in the questionnaire were also chosen from Schmitt's questionnaire due to the researcher's interest.

The questionnaire consists of two sections: the first section was the questions to gain personal information about the participants and the second section was the questions about the strategies that participants may have used. It contained 38 items, which were divided into five categories: Determination, Social, Memory, Cognitive and Metacognitive. The participants were asked to rate each strategy statement on a 5-point interval like scale in terms of their frequency of use in ascending order ranging from 1 ("never") to 5 ("always"). For more detail, a table of vocabulary learning strategies in the questionnaire is provided below:

Table 7: Vocabulary learning strategies in the questionnaire

Group of strategies	Questions in the questionnaire	Number of questions
Determination	Q1, Q2, Q3	3
Social	Q4, Q5, Q6, Q7, Q8, Q25	6
Memory	Q9, Q10, Q11, Q12, Q13, Q23, Q26, Q27, Q28, Q29, Q30	11
Cognitive	Q14, Q15, Q16, Q18, Q19, Q20, Q22, Q36, Q37	9
Metacognitive	Q17, Q21, Q24, Q31, Q32, Q33, Q34, Q35, Q38	9

In addition, the questionnaire is designed in both English and Vietnamese for students to easily understand.

2.3 Data collection procedure

The questionnaire was administered in the students' English class at their break time and students were given 15 minutes to complete. Before filling out the questionnaire, students were told that their participation was voluntary and their responses would remain confidential; they were also asked to give their opinions as honestly as possible, which was crucial to the success of this investigation. I also confirmed to them that the research was carried out with the aim of improving their own English learning in general and their English vocabulary learning in particular. The questionnaire was written in Vietnamese so that all the informants can understand and complete all questions.

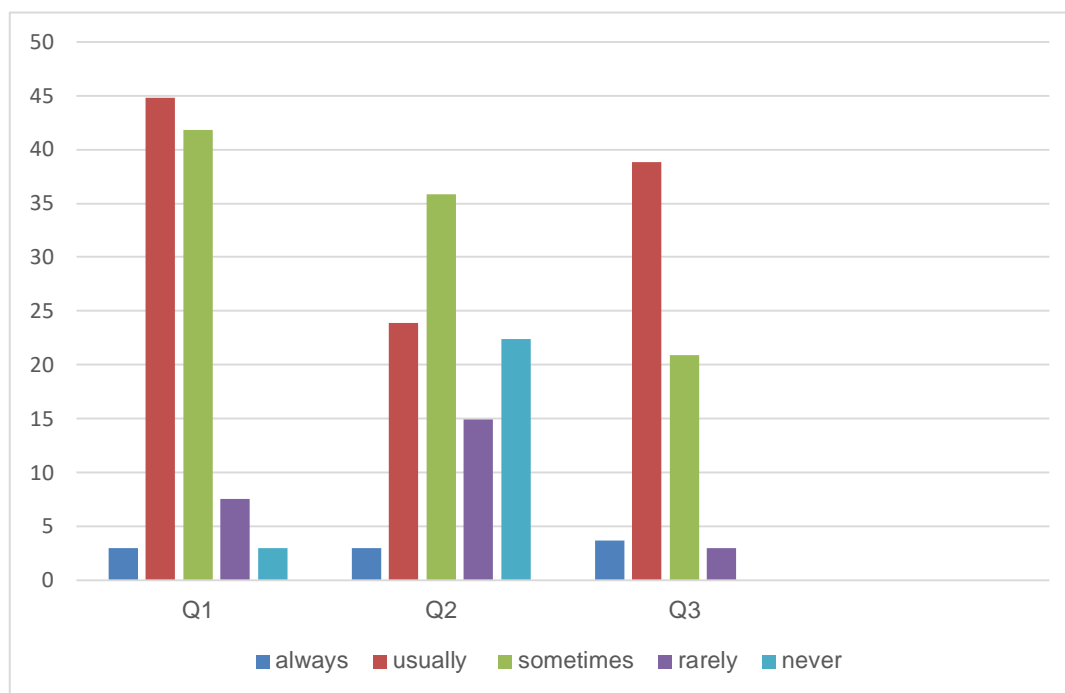
2.4 Data analysis and discussion

The data gathered through the questionnaire were coded for statistical analysis to investigate which vocabulary learning strategy are commonly used and how often each strategy is used by students at Tran Phu Gifted High School. The terms "high frequency and low frequency" will be used in the data analysis procedure. The former term refers to always and usually and the later one refers to sometimes and rarely. The questions in the questionnaire will be analyzed one by one in their vocabulary learning strategy groups by counting its percentage. Mean values of vocabulary learning strategy use were calculated to determine whether there were differences in strategy use in terms of the students' gender and major.

2.4.1 Vocabulary learning strategies used by TP gifted high schoolers

2.4.1.1 Applying Determination strategies to learning English vocabulary

Figure 1: Students' use of DET strategies in vocabulary learning



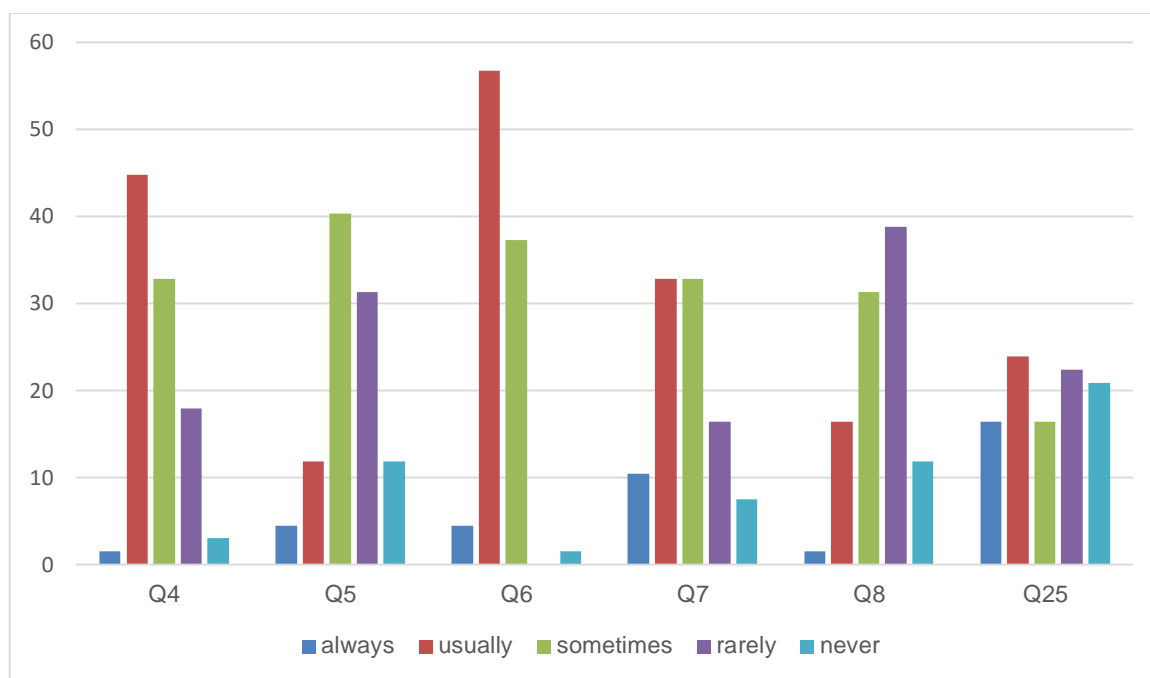
The answers to question 1 show that 47.8% of the informants always or usually found the meaning of a new word by guessing from textual context but less than half of them used this strategy with low frequency (49.3%). Only 3.0% never did so.

Monolingual dictionary use (question 2) is supposed to be rarely applied in our English learning setting. As can be seen from the results of the second question, 22.4% never used it. 26.9% of the informants used monolingual dictionaries. 50.7% used this kind of dictionary with low frequency.

The third question shows us how often the informants used bilingual dictionaries. It is not surprising that most of them used English-Vietnamese dictionaries with high frequency (76.1%). None of them never looked up a new word in bilingual dictionaries.

2.4.1.2 Applying Social strategies to learning English vocabulary

Figure 2: Students' use of SOC strategies in vocabulary learning



In question 4, 44.8% of the informants usually asked their teacher to translate a new word into Vietnamese, 32.8% sometimes and 17.9% rarely did so. 1.5% always and 3.0% never asked for their teacher's help.

Asking teachers or friends to make a sentence in which a new word is used is one way to learn and retain new words (question 5). However, up to 40.3% of the informants revealed that they sometimes asked their teacher or their friend to make a sentence containing a new word. Only 4.5% always, 31.3% rarely and 11.9% never did so.

Apart from making a sentence including a new word, students can ask their classmates to translate a new word into Vietnamese (question 6). The result shows that 56.7% of the informants usually asked their friends or classmates to translate a new word into Vietnamese; meanwhile, 37.3% of them sometimes did so.

With regard to studying and practicing meaning of words in a group (question 7), only 10.4% of the informants always used it. 32.8% of them usually and the same number rarely adopted it. 7.5% never did so.

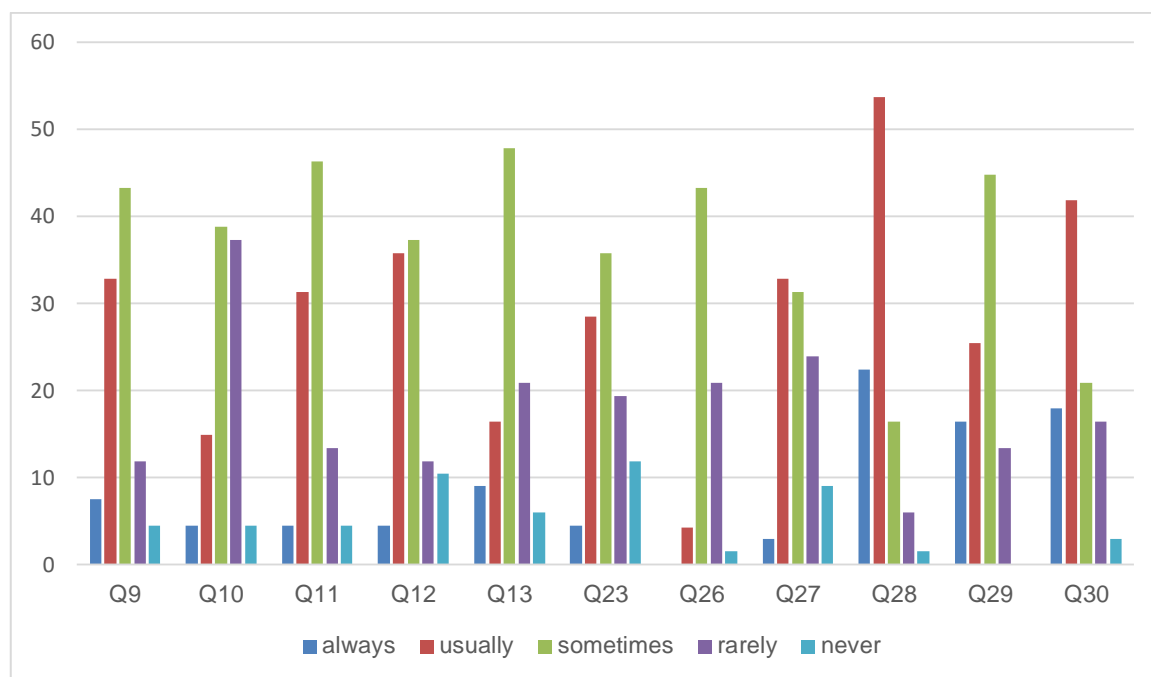
When asked whether they asked their teacher to check the meaning or spelling or not (question 8), most of them (70.1%) employed this strategy with low frequency or even never used it (11.9 %).

Communicating with native speakers (question 25) is a fantastic way to

practice vocabulary. Noticeably, there have recently been some voluntary foreign teachers coming to school and this is a wonderful chance for students to practice their English in general and their vocabulary in particular. However, a moderate number of the informants (16.4%) always took the chances to use it. Meanwhile, 23.9% usually, 16.4 % sometimes, 22.4% rarely and up to 20.9% never did so.

2.4.1.3 Applying Memory strategies to learning vocabulary

Figure 3: Students' use of MEM strategies in vocabulary learning



Question 9 asks whether the informants associated a new word with the words they have already known. More than a half of them (55.2%) used this strategy with low frequency. Only 7.5% of them always did so. 32.8% of them usually employed it. Meanwhile, 4.5% of them never used this strategy.

Associating new words with personal experience helps vocabulary learning more effectively (question 10). The answer to this question shows that 75.1% sometimes or rarely connected new words to personal experience. Only 19.4% employed this strategy with high frequency. 4.5% even never did so.

Some types of sense relationship such as coordination, synonym or antonym are used to consolidate vocabulary effectively (question 11). However, more than half of the informants sometimes or rarely used this strategy (46.3% and 13.4% respectively). Only 4.5% always used it and the same number never used it.

Grouping words according to particular topics or word types in order to

study them (question 12) was usually used by 35.8% of the informants. Meanwhile, 37.3% and 11.9% sometimes and rarely used this strategy respectively. Up to 10.4% of them never did so.

To our surprise, the majority of the informants reported that they sometimes (47.8%) or rarely (20.9%) made sentences to study or practiced the meaning of words (question 13).

Explaining the meaning in your own English (question 23) is one of effective ways to practice and study vocabulary. Only 4.5% of the informants always and 28.4% usually did this. Meanwhile, more than half of them sometimes and rarely applied this strategy (55.2%). Up to 11.9% never did so.

Question 26 asks if the informants adopted keyword method to guess the meaning of surrounding words. More than half of them used this strategy with low frequency (64.2%). 34.3% employed it with high frequency. 1.5% of them never used this strategy.

Remembering affixes and roots (question 27) was not commonly used by our students. More than half of them used this strategy with low frequency (55.2%). 34.8% of them employed it with high frequency and 9% never used it.

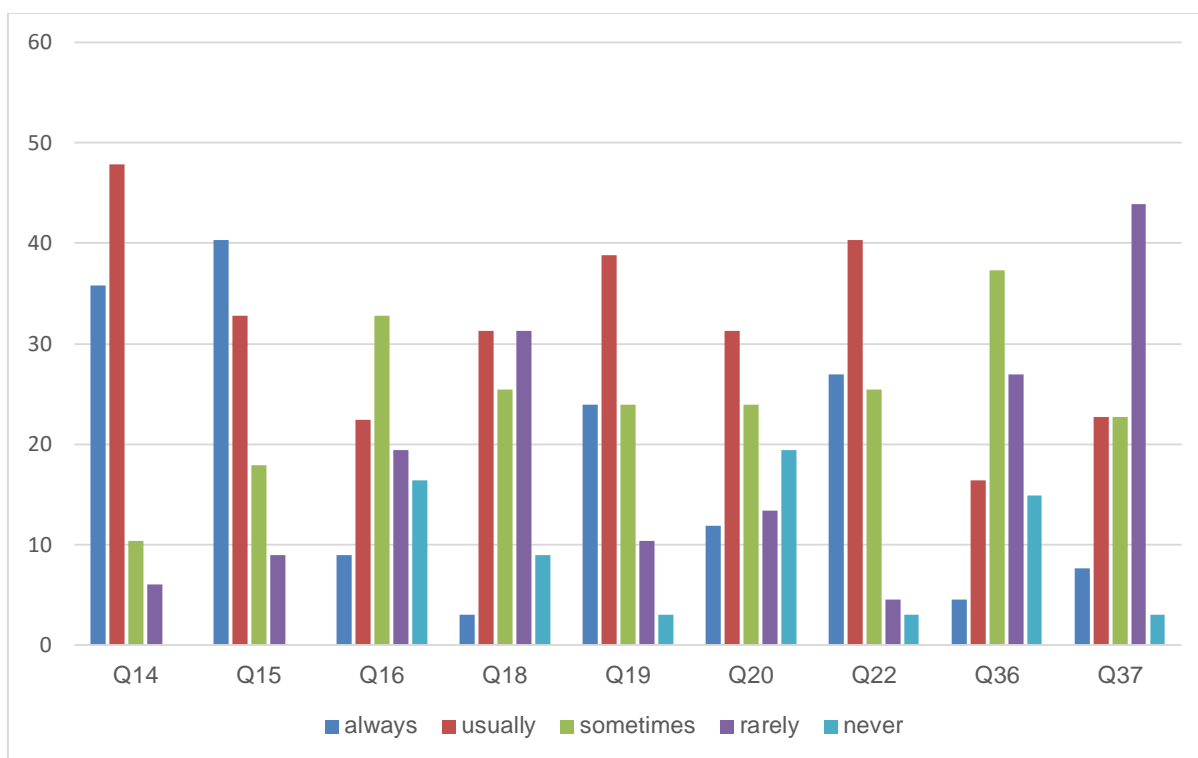
Question 28 aims at finding out whether the informants remembered parts of speech or not. The answer to this question is really optimistic. Up to 76.1% used this strategy with high frequency. Meanwhile, 22.4% employed it with low frequency and 1.5% never did so.

In question 29, the informants were asked whether they paraphrased the words' meaning or not. The result showed that most of them used this strategy with low frequency (58.2%) and 41.8% of them employed it with high frequency.

With regard to learning the words of an idiom together (question 30), more than half of the informants used this strategy with high frequency (59.7%). 37.3% applied it with low frequency and 3.0% never used it.

2.4.1.4 Applying Cognitive strategies to learning vocabulary

Figure 4: Students' use of COG strategies in vocabulary learning



Taking note in class (or note down the new words) is a helpful way for learners (question 14). Perhaps for that reason, up to 83.6% of the informants reported that they took notes in class with high frequency. Only 16.4% did so with low frequency.

Studying the vocabulary in the textbook seems to be convenient to our students (question 15). Therefore, the majority of the informants applied this strategy with high frequency (73.1%). 17.9% sometimes and only 9% rarely did so.

Copying the new words in a diary is also an interesting way (question 16). However, over half of the informants employed this strategy with low frequency (52.2%). 31.4% used it with high frequency and 16.4% even never did so.

Verbal and written repetition (question 18 and 19) are very popular strategies for most of English learners. It seems to be no exception to our informants in written repetition (question 19). More than half of the informants used this strategy with high frequency (62.7%). Only 3.0% never did so and 34.3% used this strategy with low frequency. However, less than half of the informants applied verbal repetition to learning vocabulary (34.3%). More than half of them sometimes or rarely did so. Even 9.0% never did so.

Labeling physical objects in L2 (question 20) is not only relaxing and fun but also helpful activity for learning vocabulary. The use of this strategy with

high and low frequency is not much different. The former accounts for 43.2% and the latter accounts for 47.3% of the total. Up to 19.4% of the informants never employed this strategy.

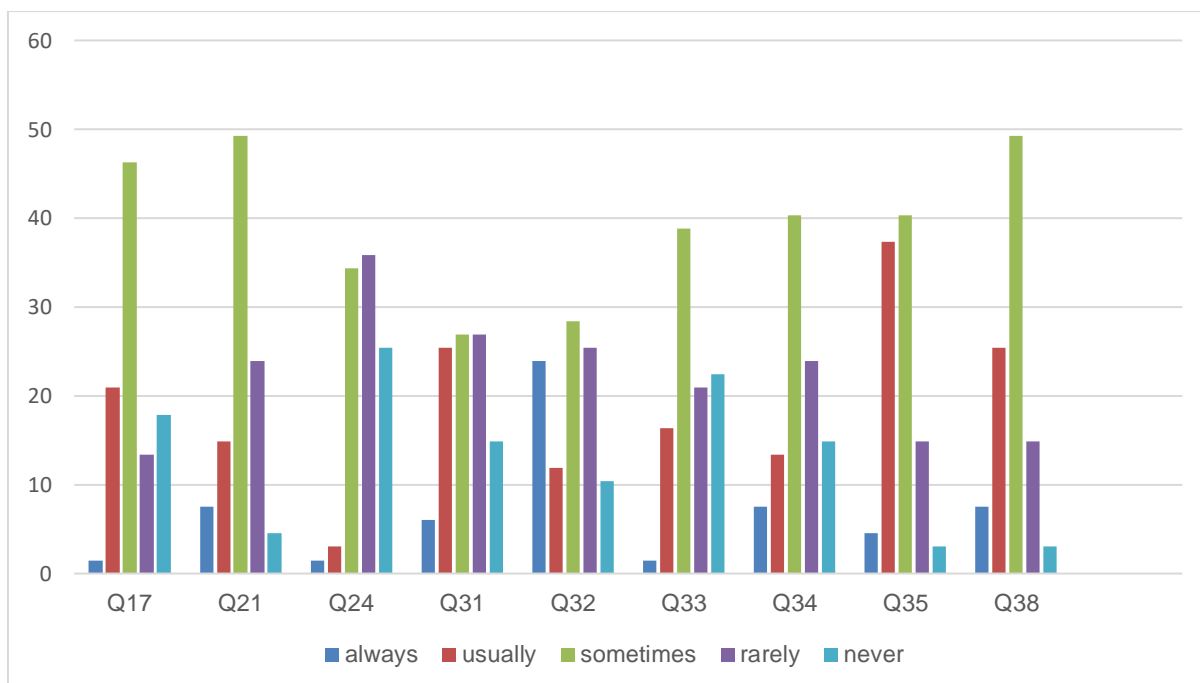
Highlighting, underlining or circling new words for notice should be a habit of learning vocabulary (question 22). This can be clearly seen from the answer. The majority of the informants used this strategy with high frequency (67.2%). 25.4% sometimes and only 4.5% of them rarely did so. 3.0% never highlighted new words when learning.

Not many of the informants (20.9%) reported that they sought the chances to practice the words they have learned or need to learn by talking to their friends (question 36). More than half of them (64.2%) sometimes or rarely used this and even 14.9% of them never did this.

In question 37, the informants are asked whether they associated the similarity of sounds or word formation between English and Vietnamese or not. More than half of them used this strategy with low frequency. 30.3% did so with high frequency and the rest of them (3%) never applied it.

2.4.1.5 Applying Metacognitive strategies to learning vocabulary

Figure 5: Students' use of MET strategies in vocabulary learning



Mass media such as television (question 17), radio (question 33), newspapers, magazines, stories (question 34), internet (question 31) or songs (question 32) are not only informative but also effective ways to enrich and

retain vocabulary. That is the reason why students are always encouraged to make use of them. However, not many of the informants used these strategies. Most of them used this strategy with low frequency. Even a big proportion of the informants (between 10% and 22%) never did so.

Continuing to study words over time (question 38) or studying words everyday (question 17) are supposed to be necessary to all learners. However, the majority of the informants applied this strategy with low frequency. A very small proportion of them did this job with high frequency. Up to 17.9% never studied words every day and 3.0% never studied words over time.

Skipping or passing new words is not expected (question 24). Luckily, a vast proportion of the informants (70.1%) sometimes or rarely skipped new words they have met. May be they took note, highlighted or copied them in their diary. Up to 25.4% never passed new words. A very small number of the informants always did so (1.5%).

The results of our questionnaire can be seen easier when the mean score of each question is counted as in the table below. Our coding is that:

Always = 5 Usually = 4 Sometimes = 3 Rarely = 2 Never = 1

Table 8: Means of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Categories	Questions	Mean (M)
DET	Guessing from textual context (Q 1)	3.37
DET	Monolingual dictionary (Q2)	2.70
DET	Bilingual dictionary (Q3)	4.10
SOC	Ask teacher for an LI translation (Q4)	3.24
SOC	Ask teacher for a sentence including the new word (Q5)	2.66
SOC	Ask classmates for meaning (Q6)	3.63
SOC	Discover new meaning through group work activities (Q7)	3.22
SOC	Ask teacher for checking flash cards or word lists for accuracy (Q8)	2.57
SOC	Interact with native speaker (Q25)	2.93
COG	Take note in class (Q14)	4.13
COG	Use the vocabulary section in your textbook (Q15)	4.04
COG	Keep a vocabulary notebook (Q16)	2.88
COG	Verbal repetition (Q18)	2.88
COG	Written repetition (Q19)	3.70
COG	Put English labels on physical objects (Q20)	3.03
COG	Highlight new words (Q22)	3.84
COG	Study words through talking to classmates (Q36)	2.69
COG	Associate English sounds and word formation with Vietnamese (Q37)	2.85
MEM	Associate new words with known words (Q9)	2.78
MEM	Associate the word with its synonyms and antonyms (Q11)	3.18
MEM	Group words together to study them (Q12)	3.12
MEM	Use new word in sentences (Q13)	3.01
MEM	Explaining the meaning in your own English (Q23)	2.94
MEM	Use keyword method (Q26)	3.10
MEM	Affixes and roots (remembering) (Q27)	2.97
MEM	Part of speech (remembering) (Q28)	3.90
MEM	Paraphrase the word's meaning(Q29)	3.45
MEM	Learn the words of an idiom together (Q30)	3.55
MET	Study words through television programs (Q17)	2.75
MET	Skip or pass new word (Q21)	2.97
MET	Study words every day (Q24)	2.91
MET	Study words on the internet (Q31)	2.81
MET	Study words through English songs (Q32)	3.13
MET	Study words through radio programs (Q33)	2.54
MET	Study words through newspapers, magazines or stories. (Q34)	2.75
MET	Testing oneself with word tests (Q35)	3.25
MET	Continue to study word over time (Q38)	3.19

2.4.2 The effectiveness of using vocabulary learning strategies by TP gifted high schoolers

First of all, it can be concluded that all the vocabulary strategies introduced in the questionnaire were employed by both majored and non-majored English students at Tran Phu Gifted High School. The strategies consisted of Determination, Social, Cognitive, Memory and Metacognitive strategies.

Table 8 above showed that the average means of frequency of strategy use ranged from 2.54 to 4.13. Three most frequently used strategies with mean values above 4 were “Take note in class” (M = 4.13), “Bilingual dictionary (M=4.10), “Use the vocabulary section in the textbook” (M=4.04). The rest had mean values ranging from 2.54 to 3.90.

In general, the results show that Memory strategies were used the most while Metacognitive strategies were used the least. The informants used Cognitive and Determination strategies more than Social strategies.

2.5 The differences in the use of vocabulary learning strategies in terms of gender and majors

It is widely known that vocabulary learning strategy use was affected by many different factors, namely, place of living, years of learning English, attitude, self-rated English proficiency, motivation, gender, field of study and so on. However, the researcher only focused on gender and field of study due to the limited time. Also, it is impossible to cover so many things in such a minor thesis.

In order to find the impacts of gender and major on the use of vocabulary learning strategies or in other words, the differences in strategy use between English majors and non-English majors, between male and female students, means were calculated and then compared.

2.5.1 Strategy used by gender

Table 9: Comparisons of Strategy Use by Gender

Numbers	Strategies	Female	Male
1	Guess from the textual context	3.36	3.04
2	Monolingual dictionary	2.66	2.80
3	Bilingual dictionary	4.28	3.70
4	Ask teacher for LI translation	3.30	3.10
5	Ask teacher or friend for a sentence including new words	2.77	2.40
6	Ask classmates for meaning	3.60	3.70
7	Discover new meaning through group work activities	3.30	3.05
8	Ask teacher for checking students' flash cards or word lists for accuracy	2.66	2.35
9	Associate new words with known words	3.40	2.35
10	Connect word to a personal experience	2.77	2.80
11	Associate the word with its synonyms and antonyms	3.19	3.15
12	Group words together to study them	3.11	3.15
13	Use new word in sentences	3.09	3.00
14	Take note in class	4.15	4.10
15	Use the vocabulary section in your textbook	4.11	4.90
16	Keep a vocabulary notebook	3.09	2.40
17	Study words through television programs	2.96	2.25
18	Verbal repetition	2.94	2.75
19	Written repetition	3.81	3.45
20	Put English labels on physical objects	3.26	2.50
21	Study words everyday	3.00	2.90
22	Highlight new words	3.87	3.75
23	Explaining the meaning in your own English	2.98	2.85
24	Skip or pass new word	2.13	2.35
25	Interact with native speaker	3.15	2.40
26	Use keyword method	3.06	3.20
27	Affixes and roots (remembering)	3.09	2.70
28	Part of speech (remembering)	3.96	3.75
29	Paraphrase the word's meaning	3.49	3.35
30	Learn the words of an idiom together	3.68	3.25
31	Study words on the internet	2.83	2.75
32	Study words through English songs	3.34	2.65
33	Study words through radio programs	2.55	2.50
34	Study words through newspapers, magazines or stories	2.81	2.60
35	Testing oneself with word tests	3.45	2.80
36	Study words through talking to classmates	2.77	2.30
37	Associate English sounds and words formation with Vietnamese	2.96	2.25
38	Continue to study word over time	3.23	3.10

The results showed that means of vocabulary learning strategy use between male and female students were not so much different. Most of the female had greater means than the male. However, there were 6 strategies in which the male had bigger means than the female. The male rely more on guessing from textual context, monolingual dictionary, asking teacher for LI translation, connecting word to a personal experience, grouping words to study, using key words. They also are more likely to skip new words. Meanwhile, the female preferred such strategies as “Take note in class” (M=4.15), “Bilingual dictionary” (M=4.28), and “Use the vocabulary section in the textbook” (M=4.11). Clearly, the female employed the vocabulary strategies more often than the male did. A possible explanation is that the female are said to be more hard working than the male.

2.5.2 Strategy used by majors

Table 10: Comparisons of Strategy Use by Field of Study

Numbers	Strategies	English Major	Math Major
1	Guess from the textual context	3.60	3.13
2	Monolingual dictionary	3.31	2.03
3	Bilingual dictionary	4.54	3.63
4	Ask teacher for LI translation	3.57	2.88
5	Ask teacher or friend for a sentence including new words	3.06	2.22
6	Ask classmates for meaning	3.69	3.56
7	Discover new meaning through group work activities	3.77	2.63
8	Ask teacher for checking students' flash cards or word lists for accuracy	2.97	2.13
9	Associate new words with known words	3.46	3.06
10	Connect word to a personal experience	2.86	2.69
11	Associate the word with its synonyms and antonyms	3.57	2.75
12	Group words together to study them	3.63	2.56
13	Use new word in sentences	3.40	2.59
14	Take note in class	4.14	4.13
15	Use the vocabulary section in your textbook	4.06	4.03
16	Keep a vocabulary notebook	3.06	2.69
17	Study words through television programs	3.20	2.25
18	Verbal repetition	2.74	3.03
19	Written repetition	3.46	3.97
20	Put English labels on physical objects	3.77	2.22
21	Study words everyday	3.17	2.75

22	Highlight new words	4.09	3.56
23	Explaining the meaning in your own English	3.26	2.59
24	Skip or pass new word	2.23	2.16
25	Interact with native speaker	3.77	2.00
26	Use keyword method	3.17	3.03
27	Affixes and roots (remembering)	3.54	2.34
28	Part of speech (remembering)	4.20	3.56
29	Paraphrase the word's meaning	3.80	3.06
30	Learn the words of an idiom together	4.14	2.91
31	Study words on the internet	3.29	2.28
32	Study words through English songs	3.60	2.63
33	Study words through radio programs	2.77	2.28
34	Study words through newspapers, magazines or stories	3.60	2.31
35	Testing oneself with word tests	3.63	2.84
36	Study words through talking to classmates	3.06	2.16
37	Associate English sounds and words formation with Vietnamese	3.37	2.06
38	Continue to study word over time	3.54	2.81

As seen from the above table, English majors had a large proportion of mean values above 3.00. Up to 6 strategies had mean values above 4. Meanwhile, the non-English major's mean values were mostly above 2.00 and below 3.00. There were only two of the total strategies with mean values above 4. There was only one strategy in which the non-English majors had greater mean value than the English majors (strategy 14, written repetition). In general, the English majors reported making more use of strategies in vocabulary learning than the non-English majors. A possible explanation is that English majors have a stronger motivation to enhance their vocabulary learning than non- English majors.

2.6 Summary

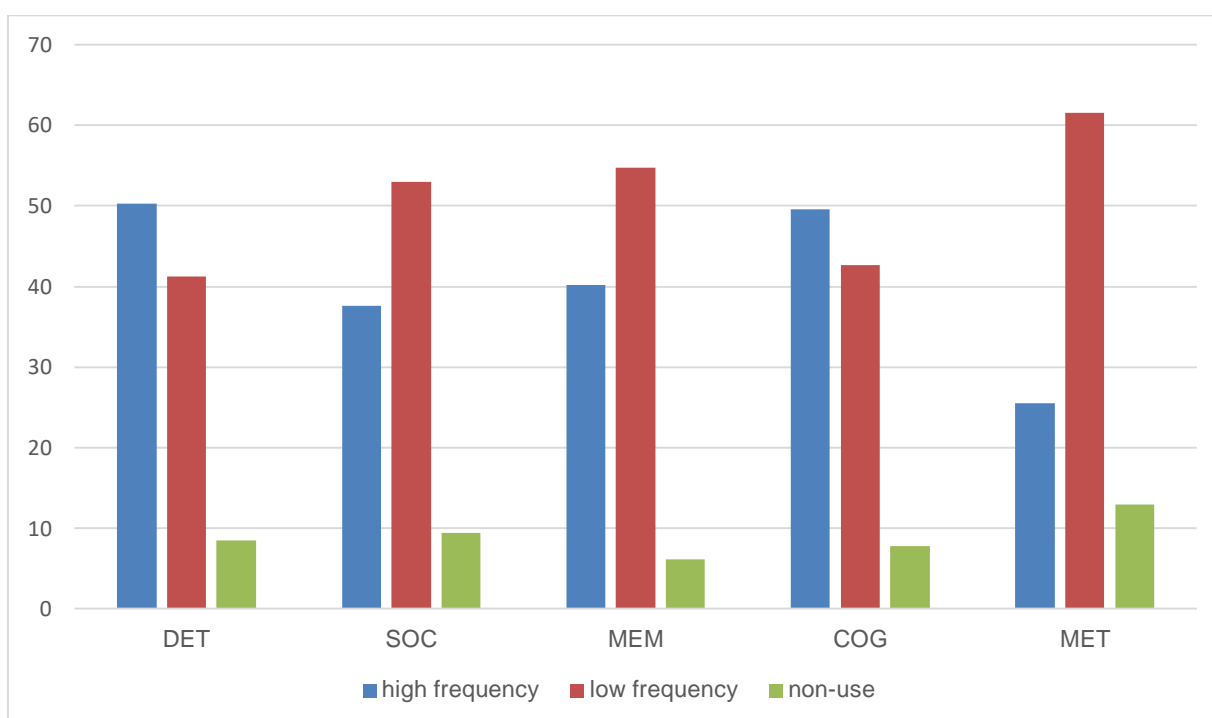
In this chapter, I presented the context of the study, the background information about the subjects of the study and the research method. Besides, data collection instruments and data collection procedures for the study were also shown. All the findings of the study were presented in tables and figures. The analysis and discussion of the findings are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: IMPLICATION

In the previous chapter, I presented all the results from the survey questionnaire. In this chapter those findings are discussed and analyzed. Particular emphasis is given to the discussion of the overall vocabulary learning strategy used by students and then the differences in vocabulary learning strategy use between English majors and non-English majors, between male and female.

3.1 Vocabulary Learning Strategies used by Tran Phu Gifted High School students: What and How often?

Figure 6 : Statistics of five groups of vocabulary learning strategies



The participants reported that they used most of the strategies given in the questionnaire in their vocabulary learning. However, these strategies were not used with high frequency. Only one of five groups of strategies had the frequency above 50% (Determination strategies). The rest had the frequency below 50%.

For Determination strategies, bilingual dictionaries are more frequently used than monolingual dictionary and guessing from the textual context. The reason might be that using monolingual dictionary and guessing from the textual context often take time. In fact, the students are often encouraged to use

monolingual dictionaries because it will give them chance to practice and study words repeatedly. Once the students get familiar with this strategy, they will find it very helpful especially for English majors.

Regarding Social strategies, the informants reported that more than half of them used these strategies with low frequency (52.99%), about 37.56% used them with high frequency and 9.45% never did so. It can be seen that these strategies were not frequently used by the students. Asking teachers or friends for LI translation is the most frequently used strategy (97%) while interacting with native speakers is the least frequently used (79.1%). This fact can be easily understood because students are not afraid of asking their friends or teachers for help in LI translation. As far as I know that our students really want to interact with native speakers although they do not have many chances. That is the objective reason why more than half of them employed the strategy of interacting with native speakers. Studying and practicing meaning of words in groups or peer learning was not frequently used by students. A possible explanation is that the students have no extra time for this activity. They finish school and then go home and most of them have the habit of learning at home by themselves. For the students living in the hostel, this activity can be easily organized and conducted. But why didn't they do it? They didn't make use of this activity regardless of its benefits such as vocabulary command, communicative competence, cooperation, group work skills and something like that. Students should be encouraged to employ this strategy in learning vocabulary. Asking teacher to check the meaning or spelling was used with low frequency or even 11.9% of the students never used it. This can be acceptable. They can apply this strategy to peer learning instead of asking their teacher.

Memory strategies are the approaches which relate new materials to existing knowledge such as associating new words with the known words, associating new words with personal experience, sense relationship, or key word method, grouping words according to particular topics or word types, making sentences to study and practice the meaning of words, remembering affixes and roots, paraphrasing the words' meaning, etc. Not many of the students used these strategies, maybe, for the reason is that they are not familiar with it. However, among this group of strategies, remembering parts of speech and learning the words of an idiom together were used with high frequency. Up to 76.1% of the students employed the former and 59.7% of the total informants

used the latter. It's because learning idioms is not only interesting but also necessary for their vocabulary tests. The students, especially English majored students, often deal with this when having tests.

Cognitive strategies such as taking note in class, studying the vocabulary in the textbook, verbal and written repetition, highlighting, underlying or circling new words were preferred by the students. Meanwhile, the rest strategies (copying new words in a diary, practicing words by talking to friends and associating the similarity of sounds or word formation between English and Vietnamese) were used with low frequency. These are very simple and feasible activities for the students, so that they should be encouraged to use them as often as a habit.

In a whole, Metacognitive strategies were not frequently used. Mean values of this group ranged from 2.54 to 3.25. As it is said that the mass media and information technology are on a big move all over the world. Therefore, most of the students used television, radio, newspapers, magazines, computers, etc. with not very high frequency. Yet, the public internet has become more popular in here, so that students should make use of this kind of modern technology for the purpose of learning English in general and for learning English vocabulary in particular. Somehow, the students have been always given the best learning conditions from the teachers, the school and the local government. When the researcher delivered the questionnaire, she hoped that she would get the large proportion of the students continuing to study words overtime or study words everyday with high frequency. What a pity that a very small number of them always did this (7.5%). Up to 17.9% never studied words every day and 3.0% never studied words overtime. Teachers should know this and think of ways to encourage, even request their students to employ this strategy. Luckily, most of the students sometimes or rarely skipped or passed new words. Up to 25.4% of them never did this.

To sum up, the results of the study show that only some of the strategies introduced in the questionnaire are frequently used by the students. Most of the strategies are infrequently used.

3.2 The differences in the use of vocabulary learning strategies in terms of gender and majors

3.2.1 Strategies use by gender

It can be concluded that gender did not affect strategy use significantly.

More interestingly, the female preferred such strategies as “Take note in class”, “Bilingual dictionary”, and “Use the vocabulary section in the textbook”. The reason is that the female seem to be more hard working than the male. Meanwhile, the male rely more on guessing from textual context, monolingual dictionary, asking teacher for LI translation, connecting word to a personal experience, grouping words to study, using key words. They also are more likely to skip new words. The male should be encouraged or even forced to learn new words by checking frequently. Taking note in class and using the vocabulary section in the textbook are useful and feasible strategies so that the male and the female should apply them to their learning.

3.2.2 Strategies used by majors

The results of the study show that the English majors generally exceeded non- English majors in their report of overall vocabulary learning strategy use. The English majors had a large proportion of mean values above 3.00. Up to 6 strategies had mean values above 4. Meanwhile, the non-English majors’ mean values were mostly above 2.00 and below 3.00. A possible explanation is that English majors have a stronger motivation to improve their vocabulary learning. Moreover, English is their major so they need to spend most of their class time as well as home time on this subject. For non-English majors, although English is not their major, it is ever more and more important and compulsory to them in their graduation exam. Therefore, non-English majors spend more time and their effort on this subject. They try to apply the strategies in their English learning in general and to English vocabulary learning in particular. Yet, we should note that both majors rated the use of connecting word to a personal experience as the least-used strategy. The strategies of taking note in class and using vocabulary section in the textbook are preferred by both majors.

In short, both majors and non-majors’ awareness of English learning generally and English vocabulary learning particularly should be enhanced. Teachers should suggest and guide their students how to apply appropriate and effective vocabulary learning strategies. Hence, students’ English learning and vocabulary learning will be improved.

PART III: CONCLUSION

1. Summary

The study indicates that there are not many significant differences in vocabulary learning strategy used between the male and the female. At the micro level, however, there are some differences. The male rely more on guessing from textual context, monolingual dictionary, asking teacher for LI translation, connecting word to a personal experience, grouping words to study, using key words. They also are more likely to skip new words. Meanwhile, the female preferred such strategies as “Take note in class”, “Bilingual dictionary”, and “Use the vocabulary section in the textbook”. Clearly, the female employed the vocabulary strategies more often than the male did. Basing on this finding, it is suggested that the male should be encouraged to use the strategies which are given in the study more frequently than they did.

This study also generated interesting findings about learners’ majors in relation to vocabulary learning. The English majors make use of strategies introduced in the questionnaire more frequently than the non-English majors. Out of which, the strategies of taking note in class for new words and using vocabulary section in the textbook are preferred by both majors. Connecting word to a personal experience is the least-used strategy.

Although our participants reported they used most of the strategies given in the questionnaire, the frequency is not really high. There are some of the strategies which are reported to be frequently used such as “bilingual dictionary”, verbal and written repetition”, “taking note in class”, “using the vocabulary section in the textbook”, “remembering parts of speech”. The other strategies are said to be used with low frequency or even rarely or never used. This phenomenon may be due to the fact that students learn words simply by using dictionary and listening to the teacher’s explanation. In addition, in Vietnam in general and in Tran Phu Gifted High School in particular, a typical EFL environment, words are primarily taught through decontextualized activities in English classes. A considerable amount of instructional time is devoted to presenting, explaining, and defining terms. Moreover, students are usually expected to learn vocabulary on their own, mostly by mechanical memorization, without much guidance from teachers. Little effort has been made to teach students strategies to improve their vocabulary learning. However, merely

giving students lists of words to learn does no result in effective learning, despite the growing awareness on the part of learners of the importance of enhancing their communicative competence of the target language and the recognition that a much larger vocabulary is needed to this end.

2. Limitations and suggestions for further study

This was an exploratory study that only caught a glimpse of the present status of vocabulary learning by Tran Phu Gifted High School students. A larger sample with more diverse backgrounds would be desirable in order to yield more generalizable findings. Furthermore, the data for the study were based on the self reports of the participants. Therefore, further studies are needed using other instruments such as oral interview and so on. Such multiple sources would provide more insights into what learners actually do. Hopefully, this will lead to more thorough investigations in the field.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire about vocabulary learning English

Bảng câu hỏi về chiến lược học từ vựng

This questionnaire was designed to investigate the English learning strategy of Tran Phu gifted high school students. I hope you take some time to answer the questions below in a most honest way. All information provided by you is kept completely confidential and only used for research purposes. Your help will help me complete my graduation. I sincerely thank you.

(Bảng câu hỏi này được thiết kế nhằm điều tra chiến lược học tiếng anh của học sinh trung học phổ thông Cấp 3 chuyên Trần Phú. Tôi rất mong các em dành chút thời gian trả lời các câu hỏi dưới đây một cách trung thực nhất. Mọi thông tin các em đưa ra đều được giữ bí mật hoàn toàn và chỉ được dùng cho mục đích nghiên cứu. Sự giúp đỡ của các em sẽ giúp tôi hoàn thành khóa luận tốt nghiệp của mình. Tôi xin chân thành cảm ơn các em.)

- 1 Gender (Giới tính): Male/Female (nam/nữ)
- 2 Native place (Quê quán):
- 3 Class (Lớp): 10/11/12
- 4 Your age (Tuổi của em):
- 5 Your major (Khối chuyên ban mà em đang học): Natural/social sciences/ English/ Mathematics (khoa học tự nhiên/xã hội / chuyên anh/ chuyên toán)
- 6 How long have you had learn English? (Em học tiếng anh được bao lâu)

The following is a strategy to learn English, which is what you use to learn new words or review your learned words. Please choose the way you learn new words that you have used by checking one of the following answers. (Sau đây là chiến lược học tiếng anh, tức là các mà em dùng để học từ mới hoặc ôn lại từ đã học. Các em hãy lựa chọn cách học từ mới mà em đã sử dụng bằng cách tích vào một trong những đáp án sau đây)

Vocabulary learning strategies (Chiến lược học từ vựng)

Numbers (STT)	Strategies (Chiến lược)	Always (Luôn luôn)	Usualy (Thường xuyên)	Some times (Thỉnh thoảng)	Rarely (Hiếm khi)	Never (Không bao giờ)
1	Guess from the textual context (Đoán nghĩa của từ mới dựa vào ngữ cảnh)					
2	Monolingual dictionary (Tra từ điển Anh Anh)					
3	Bilingual dictionary (Tra từ điển Anh-Việt)					
4	Ask teacher for LI translation (Nhờ giáo viên dịch sang Tiếng Việt)					
5	Ask teacher or friend for a sentence including new words (Nhờ bạn hoặc giáo viên đặt một câu trong đó có từ mới)					
6	Ask classmates for meaning (Hỏi bạn về nghĩa của từ)					
7	Discover new meaning through group work activities (Tìm hiểu nghĩa của từ mới qua các hoạt động nhóm trên lớp)					
8	Ask teacher for checking students' flash cards or word lists for accuracy (Nhờ giáo viên kiểm tra xem danh mục từ của mình có đúng chính tả không)					
9	Associate new words with known words (Liên hệ với những từ mà em đã biết)					
10	Connect word to a personal experience (Gắn liền từ mới với liên hệ bản thân)					
11	Associate the word with its synonyms and antonyms (Học từ mới bằng cách gắn liền với các từ đồng nghĩa và trái nghĩa của nó)					
12	Group words together to study them (Nhóm các từ mới theo các tiêu chí cụ thể để học theo chủ đề hoặc từ loại)					
13	Use new word in sentences (Học từ mới bằng cách đặt câu với các từ đó)					

Numbers (STT)	Strategies (Chiến lược)	Always (Luôn luôn)	Usualy (Thường xuyên)	Some times (Thỉnh thoảng)	Rarely (Hiếm khi)	Never (Không bao giờ)
14	Take note in class (Ghi chép lại tất cả các từ mới xuất hiện trong các giờ trên lớp)					
15	Use the vocabulary section in your textbook (Học từ mới trong phần từ của sách giáo khảo)					
16	Keep a vocabulary notebook (Chép từ mới vào cuốn sổ nhật kí)					
17	Study words through television programs (Học từ mới qua các chương trình tiếng anh trên truyền hình)					
18	Verbal repetition (Học từ bằng cách đọc to nhiều lần)					
19	Written repetition (Học từ bằng cách viết đi viết lại nhiều lần)					
20	Put English labels on physical objects (Dán tên bằng tiếng anh lên các đồ vật xung quanh)					
21	Study words everyday (Ngày nào cũng dành thời gian học từ mới)					
22	Highlight new words (Gạch chân từ mới)					
23	Explaining the meaning in your own English (Giải thích nghĩa của từ bằng vốn tiếng anh của em)					
24	Skip or pass new word (Bỏ qua từ mới)					
25	Interact with native speaker (Nói chuyện nhiều với người nước ngoài)					
26	Use keyword method (Sử dụng phương pháp từ khóa)					
27	Affixes and roots (remembering) (Phân tích cấu trúc của từ)					
28	Part of speech (remembering) (Ghi nhớ từ loại của từ)					

Numbers (STT)	Strategies (Chiến lược)	Always (Luôn luôn)	Usualy (Thường xuyên)	Some times (Thỉnh thoảng)	Rarely (Hiếm khi)	Never (Không bao giờ)
29	Paraphrase the word's meaning (Tự mình diễn giải ý nghĩa của từ một cách đơn giản hơn)					
30	Learn the words of an idiom together (Học từ theo những cụm từ cố định)					
31	Study words on the internet (Học từ trên những trang mạng)					
32	Study words through English songs (Học từ qua những bài hát Tiếng Anh)					
33	Study words through radio programs (Nghe các chương trình Tiếng Anh trên đài phát thanh)					
34	Study words through newspapers, magazines or stories (Học từ tăng vốn Tiếng Anh thông qua sách báo, tạp chí nước ngoài)					
35	Testing oneself with word tests (Tự kiểm tra trình độ tiếng anh của mình bằng cách làm các bài tập liên quan đến tiếng anh)					
36	Study words through talking to classmates (Học từ mới bằng cách nói chuyện với các bạn trong lớp)					
37	Associate English sounds and words formation with Vietnamese (Học từ mới bằng cách liên hệ sự giống nhau về cách thành lập từ, cách phát âm của tiếng anh và tiếng việt)					
38	Continue to study word over time (Học và thực hành ý nghĩa của từ ngoài giờ học trên lớp)					