Volume 15 Issue 61
Originally issued as G12



Global Journal of human-social science: G
Linguistics & Education
Volume 15 Issue 12 Version 1.0 Year 2015
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals Inc. (USA)
Online ISSN: 2249-460X & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

Exploring Vocabulary Learning Strategies used by Bangladeshi Undergraduate EFL Learners: A Comparative Analysis of Three Proficiency Level Learners

By Nousin Laila Bristi
Faculty United International University, Bangladesh

Abstract- The goal of the study is to explore Vocabulary Learning Strategies used by Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners. The survey was conducted among 70 undergraduate BBA major students of United International University, a private university in Bangladesh. A 45 item-Vocabulary Learning Strategies questionnaire was used as the research tool. The finding reveals that, Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners highly use determination strategies and moderately use social, memory, cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies. Among them cognitive strategy is least used. The study also discovered that, these learners make little changes in their strategy uses at different proficiency levels. Considering the findings, the researcher has pointed out some implications for teaching VLS. It has also offered some suggestions regarding more effective use of Vocabulary Learning Strategies by Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners.

Keywords: vocabulary learning strategies, proficiency level, Bangladesh, undergraduate EFL learners.

GJHSS-G Classification : FOR Code: 930599p



Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:



© 2015. Nousin Laila Bristi. This is a research/review paper, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported License http:// creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/), permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Exploring Vocabulary Learning Strategies used by Bangladeshi Undergraduate EFL Learners: A Comparative Analysis of Three Proficiency Level Learners

Nousin Laila Bristi

Abstract- The goal of the study is to explore Vocabulary Learning Strategies used by Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners. The survey was conducted among 70 undergraduate BBA major students of United International University, a private university in Bangladesh. A 45 item-Vocabulary Learning Strategies questionnaire was used as the research tool. The finding reveals that, Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners highly use determination strategies and moderately use social, memory, cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies. Among them cognitive strategy is least used. The study also discovered that, these learners make little changes in their strategy uses at different proficiency levels. Considering the findings, the researcher has pointed out some implications for teaching VLS. It has also offered some suggestions regarding more effective use of Vocabulary Learning Strategies by Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners.

Keywords: vocabulary learning strategies, proficiency level, Bangladesh, undergraduate EFL learners.

I. Introduction

It is impossible to think of a language without words. Zhi-Liang (2010) cited from Laufer (1986) that, it is not possible to understand even the mother tongue if someone doesn't know enough words of that language. So, in a second or foreign language learning context learning enough words deserves high attention. Unfortunately, the importance of teaching and learning of vocabulary in an EFL context is one of the recent issues that have got lots of attention from EFL/ESL researchers and educators (Gu, 2003, Shen, 2008, Schmitt, 1995, Zhi-liang, 2010, Richards and Renandya, 2002). Until some 20 or 25 years ago, the importance of teaching and learning vocabulary of a second language was not realized (Richards and Renandya, 2002: 255).Researchers have been exploring many areas of teaching and learning vocabulary. Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) is one of the widely studied areas. Without knowing enough vocabulary, learning a foreign language is unfeasible and without strategies it is tough to effectively learn new words of that language. When a learner's vocabulary strategies are poor and vocabulary size is small they cannot be successful up to their expectation and get deprived of many benefits of knowing the global language, English (Richards and Renandya, 2002: 255).

In universities of Bangladesh vocabulary is taught both as integrated and individual content. Still this area is not given proper attention so far. Specifically, a comprehensive understanding of frequency of the applications of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) by learners is quite out of focus. Whether students are using VLS customized to their needs and proficiency levels is still unknown to the educators and researchers. In consequence, the researcher inspects the VLS used by undergraduate EFL learners of Bangladesh.

II. Literature Review

a) Vocabulary learning and vocabulary knowledge

There is no straight-forward definition of vocabulary knowledge, but it is more or less approved by the researchers that, learning vocabulary is a continuous process or a continuum (Shen, 2008, Laufer, 1998). Learning vocabulary means gaining the knowledge of the word and increasing the number of vocabulary with time (Laufer, 1998). According to Scmitt and Scmitt (1995) knowing a word refers to knowing more than its meaning. Knowing a word refers to receiving and producing other information related to the word's structure and use. Tılfarlıoğlu and Bozgeyik (2012) defines vocabulary learning as

> "….. The knowledge of the spoken or written form of a given word, its meaning and morphology. In a detailed description, two concepts, receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge, deepen the complexity of vocabulary knowledge further. It contains a wide range of components such as being able to retrieve the correct word for productive use and the right meaning for receptive use, being aware of various relations between words and being able to select appropriate words taking into consideration the degree of formality."

When an EFL learner learns a new word in English, he/she also gains and employs the knowledge

Author: Faculty United International University, Nobonir Government Officers' Residence, Khilji Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka.
e-mail: n.l.bristi@gmail.com

© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)

of 'frequency, style, register, dialect, collocation, structure, semantics, polysemi, translation' (Campillo, 2012 cited from Linda Taylor, 1990).

Researchers agree that, learning vocabulary in a foreign language is not a simple thing (Campillo, 1995). For that reason, learning new words in a foreign language requires a lot of efforts. Moreover, the learning speed and success of the learners depend on a number of factors. Gu (2003) has identified learner's 'age, sex, language aptitude, intelligence, prior knowledge, motivation, self-concept/image, personality, and cognitive and learning style' as the affecting factors while learning vocabulary.

Vocabulary learners can be of two types. In the first type learners receive input through reading and listening. In the second type they produce output through speaking and writing. The first type of involvement with the words is passive one and the second type is active one. Based on this, vocabularies are divided into two groups (Laufer, 1998, Moghadam, Zainal, Ghaderpour, 2012, Ebrahimi, Azhideh and Aslanabadi 2015, Nation, 2001). They are

- Productive/active vocabulary: Productive vocabulary means what they learn while writing or speaking in English (Nayan and Krishnamy, 2015).
- Receptive/ passive vocabulary: receptive vocabulary learning means what they learn while they read or listen. In that case they just need to understand the meaning of the word. The size of receptive vocabulary is bigger than the size of receptive vocabulary (Moghadam, Zainal, Ghaderpour, 2012).

To sum up, learning vocabulary can rather be seen as a circle of many interwoven aspects of the learner and the content. Consequently, it can be said that, learning vocabulary is an essential but complex feature of foreign language learning. For handling this complexity and meet the linguistic necessity, the EFL learner does not have any alternative but being strategic. As a result, the study is dedicated to the discovery of VLS used by Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners.

b) Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS)

VLS is usually seen as a branch of language learning strategies (Abadi, Baradaran, 2013, Zhi-Liang, 2010). Therefore, the nature of VLS can be understood from the characteristics of general language learning strategies. Language learning strategies are a mental process (O' Malley and Chamot, 1995), and studies related to language learning strategies is actually a part of cognitive psychology.

Vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) are the actions taken by the language learners to learn new English words (Safian, Malakar and Kalajahi, 2014, Jafari and Kafipur, 2013, Zarrin and Khan, 2014). Takac (2008) cited from Ellis (1994) that, VLS trigger different actions that include trying deliberately to find new words, carefully organizing words, guessing meaning based on situation, and preserving the information in the 'long-term memory'. VLS help them to gain grammatical, phonological, semantic and contextual knowledge about words in the foreign language. To say simply, VLS help learners to cope up with the difficulties of learning new words and to learn the words more effectively. Nation (2013) has identified some characteristics of VLS. They are:

- First of all, a number of strategies are available from where learners can make choice
- Then, these strategies are learns through several stages
- Next, In order to use VLS successfully one needs knowledge of these strategies and guidelines from training
- Finally, these strategies should enhance the ability to learn and use new words.

However, same language learning strategies are not effective for all learners (He, 2010).According to Gu (2003) the effectiveness of learning strategies depends on a learner's attitude, motivation, schemata, style, difficulty, complexity, generality and learning environment. To this list can be added Oxford's (2002) career/academic motivation, learning level, cultural background. She has found that, more motivated L2 learners use more strategies. Aptitude is also another influencing factor (Takac, 2008). Scmitt (1997) recounted from Chamot and Rubin (1994) that, the success of both teaching and employing learning strategies is driven by some variables like "proficiency level, task, text, language modality, background knowledge, and context of learning, target language, and learner characteristics."Therefore, learners need careful instructions to make good choices of VLS which are appropriate for their contexts.

Learners' choice of VLS often is representative of the type of learners they are.VLS can be used either consciously or unconsciously. Oxford (2002) in her article states that, effective learners are conscious about their learning strategies and they can successfully choose strategies needed for the language activity. Moreover, the highly effective learners can use both cognitive and meta-cognitive learning strategies together. On the other hand, the less effective students sometimes unconscious about the strategies they are using. Sometimes, even if they are aware, they cannot choose the necessary strategies carefully. Schmitt (1997) evidenced from Ahmed (1989) that 'good learners' use more VLS and they are more grounded about their strategies than 'poor learners'. Nation (2013) has divided learners in two groups based on their VLS

© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)

use. He thinks that, active learners determinately use VLS and they have a very good storage of words and proficiency. On the other hand, the passive learners try to learn new words by memorizing, and they don't use a lot of strategies.

Strategies are very important in a second language learning context. Vocabulary learning strategies help low proficiency learners to overcome difficulty while learning new words in foreign or second language. They enlarge the scope of learner's extensive reading which in turn will also increase the size of vocabulary (Nation, 2013). In this way VLS contribute to learner's overall language proficiency. VLS are also important because it makes learners to learn new words independently without taking help of the teacher. Oxford (2002) has said, "Strategies are tools for the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability". A study among Iranian EFL learners shows that, there is a strong relationship between learners' use VLS and learners' autonomy (Abadi, Baradaran, 2013). Zhi-liang (2010) says that, VLS help learner to increase the speed of their vocabulary learning. According to him, it is not possible to know all the words. Additionally, learning vocabulary takes place both inside and outside the class. Respectively, it is not possible for the teacher to teach and monitor the learning of all necessary words. Accordingly, it is better to teach the strategies thanto teach the words in the EFL class. In fact, many recent theories are more occupied with teaching the VLS than the words.

c) Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy of VLS

Although many taxonomies of VLS have been prepared and used by many linguists, this study has chosen to use Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy for its comprehensiveness and wide use around the world. In the original taxonomy he included 59 items which was later modified and used by many other researchers. While preparing this taxonomy, other previous taxonomies and classification of strategies were taken into account. He prepared this taxonomy to investigate the VLS used by Japanese learners. Schmitt (1997) has categorized all the VLS into five types under two major categories, namely discovery strategies and consolidation strategies.

The first strategy is determination strategy which helps learners to find out word meaning using their previous knowledge about the form of language, inferring based on situation, inferring from cognates in their mother tongue, connecting to related things, and asking somebody for the meaning.

Secondly, social strategy means asking other people specially the teachers who know the meaning of the new word. It also indicates finding word meanings through group work with classmates.

Thirdly, memory strategy means remembering the meaning of new words through past knowledge, picture or grouping.

Fourthly, cognitive strategies include mental processing of the words. Scmitt (1997) believes these strategies are used to gain high competence.

Finally, meta-cognitive strategies are used to take control of own learning and evaluate to the learning. This strategy enables students to make choices of strategies and help them to change or continue the strategies based on their effectiveness.

d) Vocabulary teaching and learning in Bangladeshi universities

To be honest, here vocabulary learning and teaching is still old fashioned and entangled with so many problems. Ashraf (2014) has pointed out that, one of the main obstacles to teaching vocabulary is the Bengali medium background of the students. As a result, these learners have very poor stock and knowledge of words. Moreover, they have common fear about this language. She has also indicated that, the language courses still focus on grammar. Jahan and Jahan (2011) have found that, majority of learners don't read outside the text in English. Hence it becomes difficult to teach them enough words within the short duration of classes. Hasan (2014) has identified some problems of teachers while teaching new words, like inadequacy of contextual words, relevant wordlist, prolific teaching methods, ideas, coherence between vocabulary and other language items, proper direction for spelling and pronunciation of new words. She has also identified some problems related to the learners, like learning difficulty, fear of English, lack of interest to learn, ineffective teaching, lack of strategy use and unawareness about the strategies. Despite all these problems, recent studies in this field prove that, the concern for effective teaching and learning vocabulary is rising.

e) A glimpse of teaching and learning vocabulary at United International University

About 95% of the students here are from Bengali medium background. Due to recent degradation of standard of education in Secondary and Higher Secondary levels, they get good grades even with a poor knowledge. When they come here, especially in the first year, they find it very challenging to cope up with the English medium environment. This institution offers three English courses based on the proficiency levels of students. They are Pre-English, Basic English, and Composition and Communication Skills. After admission test, students with pre-intermediate level language skills have to take pre-English course, and students with intermediate level language skill take Basic English course. Students who take Pre-English, after finishing this course, they also take Basic English course the next

© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)

semester. In these two courses they are taught vocabulary with other language activities as integrated item as well as individual item. The text book contains a vocabulary section for teaching vocabulary. After success fully finishing these two courses, they take Composition and Communication Skills course. At this stage it is supposed that, they have upper intermediate level language skills. In this course they are given Awl Academic Sublist. In addition to all these, students are also asked to find the meanings of new words while doing reading and listening activities. For teaching vocabulary some common strategies are advised. They are asked to bring mobile dictionary and use it as frequently as possible. They are also prescribed to guess word meanings from contexts and the structures of the words.

f) Statement of the problem

Schmitt, (1997) asserts that, it is more important to know what strategies students are already using than to decide what strategies they should use. Keeping this in mind, before planning the teaching of VLS, it is necessary to gain knowledge about the current practices. However, little is known about the VLS used by Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners as this fact has not been explored by any other educator or researcher yet. Thereupon, the study will inquire into Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners' use of VLS. Additionally, the study will scrutinize the differences among three proficiency level learners regarding their use of VLS.

g) Aim of the research

- To know how frequently Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners use VLS.
- To make teachers and learners aware about the VLS.
- To help making better plan for teaching VLS.
- To help learning vocabulary more effective.

h) Significance of the study

The study is particularly important for Bangladeshi private university context where students struggle a lot because of not knowing many words. This study will help learners to become aware about their vocabulary learning strategies. Teachers will be able to make decisions about how to teach new words as this study will open their eyes to a wide range of VLS and their frequency of use. Furthermore, this study will enable teachers to give proper instructions to the learners to learn new words.

i) Research questions

The study will try to find the answers of following questions:

- In general, how frequently do Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners use VLS?
- Are there any major differences in the use of VLS among the three proficiency level (Pre-Intermediate, intermediate and upper intermediate) learners?

j) Research design

Participants: The participants of this study are 70 undergraduate EFL learners of United International University. All of them are majoring in BBA. The distribution of participants is shown below.

Table 1 : Demography of participants

Proficiency level	Name of course	Number of participants	Percentage
Pre-Intermediate level	Pre-English	23	32.9%
Intermediate level	Basic English	23	32.9%
Upper-Intermediate Level	Composition and Communication Skills	24	34.3%
Total		70	100%

To be clear only 8.6% of the intermediate level participants took pre-English course while all the learners of upper intermediate level took Basic English course. For selecting participants convenience sampling (Leard Dissertation, Convenience Sampling, 2012) method was used.

Instrument: Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy of VLS was used to collect data. Some items were deleted from the original taxonomy considering the context and knowledge of the students. Also, considering the language level of the students, the items were rephrased. The questionnaire is consisted of two parts. In the first part the questionnaire briefly introduced the research work and asked the participants to provide some personal data like age, gender, present course, past course/s etc. The next section of the question includes 45 research items. Each item was measured with five point likertscale (1=always, 2= often, 3=sometimes, 4= almost never, 5= never). The items are divided into the five categories of VLS. The distribution of these items in the questionnaire is shown below:

Table 2 : Distribution of questionnaire items

Serial	Category	Item numbers
1	Determination Strategy	7
2	Social Strategy	7
3	Memory strategy	16
4	Cognitive strategy	9
5	Meta-cognitive strategy	6
	total	45

© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)

Data collection and analysis: Before collecting data, the particular groups of students were informed through their teachers. Then, during the class, the researcher personally went to the class and collected the data. Descriptive statistics and ANOVA test were used to get the answers of the research questions. SPSS 16.0 version was used to get the results.

k) Findings of the survey

Frequency of VLS use: This section will present the frequency of VLS used by Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners. Within the scope of the first research question, it will also present the analysis of top 10 mostly used VLS and top 10 least used VLS.

Table 3 : Frequency of each type of VLS use

Serial	Category	mean	Standard deviation	Status
1.	Determination Strategy	2.3449	.61649	High
2.	Meta-cognitive strategy	2.6310	.64761	Moderate
3.	Memory strategy	2.7232	.47439	Moderate
4.	Social strategy	2.8755	.58266	Moderate
5.	Cognitive strategy	2.9794	.81787	Moderate

The table displays that, Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners moderately use all types of VLS. In their choice the first priority is determination strategy. In the second and third positions are meta-cognitive and memory strategies respectively. Social and cognitive strategies are least used VLS types by Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners. It seems they are lacking strategies they may help them learn new words through producing them.

Table 4 : Top 10 mostly used VLS

Serial	Category	item	Mean	Standard deviation
1.	Meta-cognitive	I watch English movies, cartoons, news to learn new words.	1.8143	1.17081
2.	Memory	I try to explain and make the word's meaning simple.	1.8857	.98603
3.	Determination	I use English to Bangla dictionary to find the word meaning.	2.0000	1.29660
4.	Determination	I try to understand the meaning of the word from the situation/incident/story where it is used	2.0143	1.01429
5.	Meta-cognitive	I keep learning new words all the time.	2.0143	1.06992
6.	Memory	I examine the sound of a word	2.3286	1.13854
7.	Cognitive	I say the new word again and again	2.3571	1.11688
8.	Determination	I use English to English Dictionary to find the word meaning.	2.4143	1.36724
9.	Determination	I try to understand the part of speech of the new word	2.4429	1.24686
10.	Determination	I check the prefixes and roots	2.4571	1.30424

In this table among 10 strategies, 5 are determination strategies; 2 are meta-cognitive strategies; 2 are memory strategies; 1 is cognitive strategy.

Firstly, using bi-lingual dictionary (item 3, M=2.000), guessing from context (item 4, M=2.0143), guessing from the parts of speech of the word (item 8, M=2.4429), using monolingual dictionary (item 9, M=2.4143) and checking prefixes and roots (item 10, M= 2.4571) are the mostly used determination. It is noticeable here that, they are very interested to use the dictionaries in developing their vocabulary knowledge and stock. However, it seems they are more comfortable with bi-lingual dictionary which can be an indicator that, they have difficulty in learning new words from their synonyms or antonyms. Guessing from context is one of the top five most used strategies. Since these learners have matured and gained knowledge about the world and the language for many years, they can utilize that knowledge for understanding new words. In most cases these learners are mixed ability learners. They need contextual as well as structural clues to understand meanings of words. For that they give considerable attention to the prefixes and the parts of speech to understand the meaning of new words.

Then explaining or paraphrasing word's meaning (item 1, M=1.8857) and checking the sounds of new word (item 6, M=2.3286) are the most used memory strategies. Paraphrasing strategy is the second mostly used strategy which reveals that, they learn new words through a very comprehensive meaning representation of the word. They try to remember the word through its simplified meaning because it helps them remember the word for longer time. The sounds of words are particularly popular among them because of using digital dictionaries.

© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)

Next, oral repetition of word (item 7, M= 2.3571) is the only most used cognitive strategy. This strategy is one of the most common learning strategies among general students of Bangladesh. So, it seems they hold on to the age old cognitive strategy without making much modification in it.

Finally, watching English films and other programs (item 2, M=1.8143) and continuously learning new words (item 5, M=2.0143) are the most used meta-cognitive strategies. Watching English films and other programs is the most used strategy among all other strategies which affirms that, they are more interested to learn new words from its contextual representations instead of structure of the words. It can also be because of the high availability of internet and appealing programs on the television. They may feel the urge to enjoy the satellite programs by putting more concentration on the new words they hear or see in the subtitle.

Surprisingly, among the ten most used VLS there is no social strategy which confirms that, they are employing those strategies most that are related to receptive learning. In order to make vocabulary learning successful and to enhance productive leaning, they should employ more and more social and cognitive strategies.

Table 5 : Top 10 least used VLS

Serial	Category	item	mean	Standard deviation
1.	Social	I ask my teacher to translate the word in Bangla	3.0286	1.07638
2.	Cognitive	I write English names on physical objects	3.0571	1.46343
3.	Cognitive	I keep a vocabulary notebook where I write down any new word that I find anywhere	3.2000	1.39979
4.	Social	I ask the teacher to say a sentence using the new word.	3.2714	1.08910
5.	Memory	I make group of words based on their parts of speech	3.3000	1.18383
6.	Cognitive	I make lists of new words while listening or reading something in English	3.3286	1.27087
7.	Cognitive	I listen to tape of word lists to learn new words.	3.3286	1.33755
8.	Memory	I underline first letter of the word.	3.5714	1.42006
9.	Cognitive	I make small cards where new words and their meaning, related information	3.6143	1.37570
10.	Meta-cognitive	I simply ignore the new word	3.8143	1.32198

Among the top 10 least used VLS, 5 are cognitive strategies; 2 are social strategies; 2 are memory strategies; 1 is meta-cognitive strategy.

First of all, asking teacher to translate word meanings in Bengali (item 2, M= 3.0286), asking teacher to make sentence with new word (item 3, M= 3.2714) are the least used social strategies. It can be understood that, they are less interested to involve the teacher in learning new words. Hence, learning through communication doesn't often take place as they meet many new words during their class.

Secondly, making list of words based on parts of speech (item 5, M=3.3000), underlining first letter of the word (item 8, M= 3.5714) are the least used memory strategies used by Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners. They have little interest in making list of words because in many cases they have little understanding about the parts of speeches. Moreover, many of them may not be familiar with this strategy. They don't use the underlining strategy very frequently perhaps because they are matured now and can often remember words even without marking them.

Thirdly, writing English names on objects (item 1, M= 3.0571), keeping vocabulary notebook (item 4, M= 3.2000), making list of words while listening or reading (item 6, M= 3.3286), listening to tape of word list (item 7, M= 3.3286) and using flash cards (item 9, M= 3.6143) are the least used cognitive strategies. They have very little interest for the cognitive strategies which involve learning of words as isolated items even though sometimes those words are taken from a written or oral text. In many cases these strategies are not known to them, especially, the use of flash card or writing names of objects. These strategies are rarely hard about in their context. Again some strategies are not always easily available, like the tape of word list may not be available or at least they may not know the sources of those lists.

Finally, just ignoring the new word (item 10, M= 3.8143) is not only the least used meta-cognitive strategy, but also the least used strategy among all VLS. This confirms that, they are very much aware about the importance of continuous learning of new words. They have motivation and they preserve that motivation carefully as a strategy to keep learning new words.

Differences among three groups regarding frequency of VLS used: This section will report the findings related to the differences among three proficiency levels regarding VLS use.

© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)

Table 6 : Mean scores of three proficiency level in for each category

Proficiency level	Determination	Social	Memory	Cognitive	Meta-cognitive
Pre-intermediate	2.3913	2.9130	2.6576	2.7971	2.5507
Intermediate	2.2795	2.8882	2.8315	3.2222	2.6884
Upper intermediate	2.3631	2.8274	2.6823	2.9213	2.6528

First, the table indicates that, pre-intermediate level learners use more determination strategies than the intermediate level. Although the students of pre-intermediate and intermediate level both are newcomers, the students of pre-intermediate learners use this strategy more because they have more difficulty in absorbing the new words. It helps them to utilize most common strategies to cope up with the English medium instructions. On the other hand, in the upper intermediate level the use of this strategy decreases because with time they have become more expert in guessing word meaning with a greater than before vocabulary stock.

Next, the social strategy is least used by the pre-intermediate level learners, and it gradually increases in intermediate and upper intermediate levels. It is because learners at the pre-intermediate level have less linguistic command and subsequent less confidence. As a result, they fail to utilize the social strategies to learn new words. With maturity and linguistic development, this barrier goes away, so they use more social strategies.

Then, memory strategy is most used by the pre-intermediate level. They use this strategy most because they need as many words as possible to absorb the English medium education and the initial shock. Remembering words' meaning can save them from initial downfall. Upper intermediate level learners use it least because they have more opportunities for extensive reading and writing which help them learn from guessing and context.

After that, cognitive strategy is most used by the pre-intermediate level. Because of their low language ability, they feel the urge to learn new words both in receptive and productive way. On the contrary, it is least used by the intermediate level because they are often not aware about them. It increases a little in the upper intermediate level as they have big list of words as a part of their syllabus. Tocope up with this, they need a lot of cognitive strategies.

Finally, meta-cognitive strategy is also most used by pre-intermediate level learners. In intermediate level it decreases, and in upper intermediate level it increases again. It seems learners at pre-intermediate level are more conscious about learning new words than those of intermediate level. With maturity the use is somewhat restored.

Table 7 : Anova between groups mean differences

Between Group mean differences	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Determination strategy	.156	2	.078	.200	.819
Social strategy	.092	2	.046	.132	.877
Memory strategy	.409	2	.204	.906	.409
Cognitive strategy	2.202	2	1.101	1.678	.195
Meta-cognitive strategy	.235	2	.118	.275	.761

Table 7 shows that, there is no significant difference among these three groups regarding their uses of VLS. This indicates at different proficiency levels learners make slight changes in the use of VLS.

III. Discussion

The findings of the study are in consistent with the findings of the studies conducted in other parts of the world. The study discovered that, Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners mostly use determination strategy which is similar to the findings of Baharudin and Ismail, (2015), Jafari and Kafipur (2013), Amirian and Hesmatifar (2013) and Tılfarlıoğlu and Bozgeyik (2012).They also moderately use social, memory, cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies which is similar to the findings of Jafari and Kafipur (2013) and Baharudin and Ismail, (2014). The least used VLS type of the participants is cognitive strategy which is similar to the findings of Baharudin and Ismail, (2015).Schmitt (1997) and Oxford (2002) mentioned that, highly efficient learners use cognitive strategies. Therefore Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners need to gain more linguistic capacity to be able to apply more cognitive VLS users and subsequent effective learners.

The highest used strategy is learning new words through English movies, cartoons etc. Using TV programs for developing vocabulary is an effective strategy because it provides the participants with contextual, oral, written (subtitle) repetitive and pictorial presentation of the words to be learnt (Wang, 2012). Paraphrasing one of the most used strategies by these learners. Harris (2014) indicated that, this is a very valuable active learning strategy which enables the learner to enhance their ability to understand things. In this sense it can be confirmed that, Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners are employing a strategy

© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)

that involves the authentic material and hence effective learning happens.

They also moderately analyze parts of speech. These findings are similar to the findings of Nirattisai and Chiramanee (2014). One of the top five priorities of Bangladeshi learners is using bilingual dictionary which is similar to the findings of Nirattisai and Chiramanee's (2014), Amirian and Heshmatifar's (2013) and Schmitt's (1997) study. However, using dictionary is one of the most used passive vocabulary learning strategies (Mokhtar, Rawian, Fauzee, 2013). Many researchers agree that, using dictionary is ineffective in learning vocabulary because it reduces the speed of learning (Knight, 1994 cited in Huang and Eslami, 2013). As a result, learners should use guessing strategy more than using dictionary (Huang and Eslami, 2013). These learners also use context for learning new words meaning which is widely appreciated strategy. This strategy helps weaker and struggling learners to overcome difficulty of unknown words (Zorfass, Gray, WORKS, 2014). These learners also utilize their knowledge of prefix and suffixes to understand new word's meaning which is in compliance with the findings of Schmitt (1997).

Although keeping vocabulary notebook is suggested for autonomous and productive learning (Walters and Bozkurt, 2009), these learners have very little interest for using this strategy. This again reinforces the fact that, they have little interest in productive learning of words. The finding is similar to that of Nirattisai and Chiramanee (2014). The use of flash cards is the least frequent VLS among Bangladeshi learners which is similar to the findings of Nirattisai and Chiramanee's (2014) and Schmitt's (1997) findings. Underlining first letters is one of the least frequently used strategies which is similar to the findings of Amirian and Heshmatifar (2013). It was found that, Bangladeshi learners are very interested to learn new words and don't skip words which is in compliance with Amirian and Heshmatifar's (2013) and Schmitt's (1997) findings.

The study has unveiled that, there is little difference among the three levels of learners whereas Schmitt (2001) mentioned that, as learners mature their strategy use change. Safian and Malakar and Kalajahi (2014) in a study among the second and third year EFL learners in Malaysia and Schmitt (2001) in his study among Japanese learners, Jafari and Kafipur (2013) in their study among Iranian learners found a lot major differences among the three proficiency level learners.

IV. Implications for Teaching VLS

The factor behind the high use of determination, meta-cognitive and memory strategies is these strategies are more common and easily accessible in the English language teaching and learning context of Bangladesh. On the other hand, the lower uses of cognitive and social strategies may be because instructions for these strategies are traditionally rarely instructed and practiced. Accordingly, learners are not aware about these strategies. It can be further implied that, even the instructors here have little awareness about teaching wide range of suitable strategies since in most cases they have the similar type of VLS experiences and have little specialization on the teaching of VLS when numerous focuses are given on teaching grammar.

Moreover, as they have also shown high interest for learning words through watching TV programs and films, using CALT (computer Assisted Language Teaching) will be highly beneficial for them. Since participants like using paraphrasing, encouraging them to do this consciously will increase both their productive and receptive word knowledge. As they have also demonstrated interest in context based learning, instructions for extensive reading can bring success for them.

Keeping the interest for learning new words alive is a strategy that these learners strongly stick to. Consequently, these learners maintain their motivation and keep on learning regardless the degree of their learning success. In addition, table 7 indicates that,at different proficiency levels they make little modifications in the uses of VLS. All these imply that, they are very much unaware about using these strategies and their suitability to their own needs and context. In order to be successful learners, instead of randomly using all types of strategies, they need to choose strategies carefully (Schmitt, 2001). Oxford (2003) has observed that, learners often lack the ability to be aware about the strategies. Hence, it is the educators who have the responsibility to make learners aware about learning strategies. Thence, it can be said that, proper instructions about VLS can make them more effective learners.

V. Recommendations

To begin with, learners should be made aware about the various strategies and making choices among many strategies. For doing this, the teaching of VLS should be given good attention in the pedagogy. In the syllabus design for vocabulary teaching and learning, various strategies should be indicated. If that is not possible, then there should be some specific guides for teachers about teaching the VLS.

Next, the teaching of social and cognitive strategies should be introduced with more care. Specific classroom instructions and activities should be designed to enhance the uses of these strategies. In this respect, classroom interactions and vocabulary games can be taken under consideration.

After that, the study is limited in the sense that, it was conducted in one institution. Also, it excluded the learners from public institutions. For this reason, the

© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)

findings may not be generalized. Accordingly, to get a broader view of the VLS use in Bangladesh, a similar study in broader context should be run.

In the end, only knowing the frequency of VLS may not help learners, educators and planners to set the effective strategies. The effectiveness of the used VLS should be investigated too. On that note, co-relative studies on VLS and language proficiency should be carried out in Bangladeshi context.

VI. Conclusion

The research paper has uncovered important facts about the Vocabulary Learning Strategies used by Bangladeshi undergraduate EFL learners. It has reported that, they highly use determination strategy and moderately use all other types of strategies. However, they make little modifications in their VLS use with maturity. The study implies that, learners are quite unaware about the strategies that they are using. Practically, without awareness VLS use cannot be fruitful, and without proper instructions it is not possible to be aware about them. While closing, it is worth quoting Aktekinand Guven (2003), 'Skilled and experienced teachers help their students develop an awareness of learning strategies so that they can use a wider range of appropriate strategies because learning to learn has become enormously important.'

References Références Referencias

1. Abadi, E., & Baradaran, A. (2013). The Relationship between Learner Autonomy and Vocabulary Learning Strategies in Iranian EFL Learners with Different Language Proficiency Level. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature, 2*(3). doi:10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.2n.3p.176.
2. Amirian, S., & Heshmatifar, Z. (2013). A Survey on Vocabulary Learning Strategies: A Case of Iranian EFL University Students. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 4*(3), 636-641. http://dx.-doi.org/10.4304/jltr.4.-3.636-641.
3. Ashraf, T. (2014). Teaching Vocabulary to Non-English Majors: A general Perspective. *DIU Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 2*, 167-175. Retrieved from http://dspace.daffodilvarsity.edu.-bd:8080/bitstream/handle/123456789/1198/11%20Teaching%20Vocabulary%20to%20NonEnglish%20-Majors%20A%20General%20Perspective.pdf?sequence=1
4. Aktekin, C., & Güven, S. (2007). Raising learners' and teachers' awareness of vocabulary strategy learning. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *13*, 72. Retrieved from http://sl.sabanciuniv.edu/-sites/sl.sabanciuniv.edu/files/raisinglearnersandteachersawarenessofvocabularystrategylearningnafiye-cigdem_s.pdf
5. Baharudin, H., & Ismail, Z. (2015). Learning Strategies of Arabic Language Vocabulary for Pre-University Students' in Malaysia. *Asian Social Science*, *11*(10), 32-38. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/-ass.v11n10p32
6. Campillo, R. M. L. (1995). Teaching and learning vocabulary: an introduction for English students. *Ensayos: Revista de la Facultad de Educación de Albacete*, (10), 35-50. retrieved from https://www.revista.uclm.es/index.php/ensayos/index
7. Ebrahimi, Z., Azhideh, P., & Aslanabadi, H. (2015).The Effects of Teaching Vocabulary Learning Strategies on Iranian EFL Learners 'Vocabulary Development. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL), 3*(1), 57-64. Retrieved from https://www.arcjournals.org/-international-journal-on-studies-in-english-language-and-literature/index
8. Gu, P. (2003). Vocabulary Learning in a Second Language: Person, Task, Context and Strategies. *TESL-EJ, 7*(2). Retrieved August 18, 2015, from http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/
9. Harris, R. (2014). *Learning Strategy 2: Paraphrasing*. *Virtualsalt*. Retrieved 1 November 2015, from http://www.virtualsalt.com/learn2.html
10. Hasan, N. (2014). Teaching Vocabulary through Collaboration: Students as Independent Readers. *Journal Of Education And Practice*, *5*(13), 60-68. Retrieved from http://iiste.org/Journals/index.php/-JEP
11. He, Y (2010). A Study of L2 Vocabulary Learning Strategies (unpublished thesis paper). Kristianstad University, Kristianstad, Sweden. Retrieved from http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:326994/-fulltext01.pdf
12. Huang, S., & Eslami, Z. (2013).The Use of Dictionary and Contextual Guessing Strategies for Vocabulary Learning by Advanced English-Language Learners. *English Language and Literature Studies*, *3*(3), 1-7. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ells.v3n3p1
13. Jafari, S., & Kafipour, R. (2013). An Investigation of Vocabulary Learning Strategies by Iranian EFL Students in Different Proficiency Levels. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature, 2*(6), 23-27. http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.-v.2n.6p.23
14. Jahan, A., & Jahan, N. (2011). Working with Vocabulary at Tertiary level in Bangladesh. *Journal Of Education and Practice*, *2*(2), 45-57. Retrieved from http://iiste.org/Journals/index.php/-JEP
15. Laufer, B. (1998). The Development of Passive and Active Vocabulary in a Second Language: Same or Different? *Applied Linguistic: 19*(2), 255-271. Retrieved from http://applij.oxfordjournals.org/
16. Leard Dissertation (2012). Research Strategy. Retrieved August 13, 2015 from http://dissertation.-laerd.com/convenience-sampling.php

© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)

17. Min, Y. (2013). Vocabulary Acquisition: Practical Strategies for ESL Students. *Journal of International Students, 3*(1), 64-69. Retrieved from http://-jistudents.org/
18. Moghadam, S., Zainal, Z., & Ghaderpour, M. (2012). A Review on the Important Role of Vocabulary Knowledge in Reading Comprehension Performance. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 66*, 555-563. Retrieved from http://www.journals.-elsevier.com/procedia-social-and-behavioral-sciences/
19. Mokhtar, A., Rawian, R., & Fauzee, M. (2013).The Role of Dictionary Strategy in Passive Vocabulary Knowledge Acquisition of Net Generation Students.*Journal for The Study Of English Linguistics*, *1*(1), 8-20. http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/-jsel.v1i1.4444
20. Nation, I. (2013). *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.76
21. Nayan, S., & Krishnasamy, H. (2015). A Preliminary Study on Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by the Students from the Faculty of Accountancy. *International Journal Of Languages, Literature And Linguistics*, *1*(1), 10-14. http://dx.doi.org/10.7763/-IJLLL.2015.V1.3
22. Nirattisai, S., & Chiramanee, T. (2014).Vocabulary Learning Strategies of Thai University Students and Its Relationship to Vocabulary Size. *International Journal of English Language Education, 2*(1), 271-287. http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/ijele.v2i1.5366
23. O' Malley, J. Micheal, and Anna Uhl Chamot. *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition*. 4th ed. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995. Retrieved from http://catdir.loc.gov/catdir/samples/cam031/-89009770.pdf
24. Oxford, R. (2002). Language Learning Strategies in a Nutshell: Update and ESL Suggestions. In J. Richards & W. Renandya, *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice* (1st ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from http://s3.amazonaws.com/engrademyfiles/408-5017259025879/Methodology_in_Language_Teaching.pdf
25. Oxford, R. L. (Ed.). (2003). *Language learning styles and strategies*. Mouton de Gruyte. Retrieved from http://web.ntpu.edu.tw/~language/workshop/read2.pdf
26. Richards, J., & Renandya, W. (2002). *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice* (1st ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from http://s3.amazonaws.com/-engrade-myfiles/4085017259025879/Methodology_-in_Language_Teaching.pdf
27. Sadaf, Z., & Zoya, K. (2014). A Study of Vocabulary Learning Strategies among Undergraduate Learners of A.M.U. *US-China Foreign Language, 12*(1), 75-82. Retrieved from https://www.google.com.bd/-search?q=A+Study+of+Vocabulary+Learning+Strategies+Among+Undergraduate+Learners+of+A.M.U.&oq=A+Study+of+Vocabulary+Learning+Strategies+Among+Undergraduate+Learners+of+A.M.U.&aqs=chrome..69i57j69i64l3.883j 0j8&sourceid=chrome&es_sm=93&ie=UTF-8
28. Safian, N., Malakar, S., & Kalajahi, S. (2014). Exploring Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by UPM TESL Undergraduates. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, *5*(5), 1-4. http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.alls.v.5n.5p.1
29. Shen, Z. (2008). The Roles of Depth and Breadth of Vocabulary Knowledge in EFL Reading Performance. *Asian Social Science*, *4*(12), 135-137. Retrieved from http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/-index.php/ass
30. Schmitt, N., & Schmitt, D. (1995). Vocabulary notebooks: Theoretical underpinnings and practical suggestions. *ELT Journal, 49*(2), 133-143. Retrieved from http://www.hetutors.com/uploads/schmitt-n-and-schmitt-d-(1995)-vocabulary-notebooks-theoretical-underpinnings-and-practical-suggestions-english-language-teaching-journal-49-2-133-143.pdf
31. Schmitt, N. (1997). Vocabulary Learning Strategies. In N. Schmitt & M. McCarthy, *Vocabulary: Description, Acquisition, Pedagogy* (3rd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
32. Songhao, L. (1997). Dictionary use as a way of learning vocabulary in SLA: A preliminary study. *Directions: Journal of Educational Studies*, *36*(1), 82-99. Retrieved from http://www.-directions.usp.ac.fj/cgi-bin/library?e=d-01000-00---off-0direct--00-1--0-10-0---0---0prompt-10---4-------0-1l--11-en-50---20-about---00-3-1-00-0-0-11-1-0utfZz-8-00&a=p&p=about
33. Takač, V. P. (2008). *Vocabulary learning strategies and foreign language acquisition* (Vol. 27). Multilingual matters.
34. Tılfarlıoğlu, F. and Bozgeyik, Y. (2012).The Relationship between Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Vocabulary Proficiency of English Language Learners. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*, *1*(2), 91-101. http://dx.doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/ijalel.v.1n.2p.91
35. Walters, J., & Bozkurt, N. (2009).The effect of keeping vocabulary notebooks on vocabulary acquisition. *Language Teaching Research*, *13*(4), 403–423. Retrieved from http://ltr.sagepub.com/
36. Wang, Y. (2012). Learning L2 Vocabulary with American TV Drama from the Learner's Perspective. *English Language Teaching; 5*(8), 217-225. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n8p217
37. Zhi-liang, L. (2010). A Study on English Vocabulary Learning Strategies for Non-English Majors in Independent College. *CROSS-CULTURAL CO-*

© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)

MMUNİCATİON, 6(4), 152-164.http://dx.doi.org/10.-3968/j.ccc.1923670020100604.007

38. Zorfass, J., Gray, T., & WORKS, P. (2014). *Using Context Clues to Understand Word Meanings*. *Read in Rockets*. Retrieved 1 November 2015, from http://www.readingrockets.org/article/using-context-clues-understand-word-meanings

© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)

Global Journal of Human-Social Science (G) Volume XV Issue XII Version I Year 2015
12

This page is intentionally left blank

© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)