

Jimma University
College of Social Sciences and Humanities
Department of English Language and Literature
MA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

**A Comparative Study of Vocabulary Learning Strategy Use between
Students of Seyo Secondary School and Seyo Preparatory School:
Grade 9 and Grade 11 in Focus**

By
Getachew Gudissa

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Master of Arts in TEFL**

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Declaration, Confirmation, Approval and Evaluation

Research Title: A Comparative Study of Vocabulary Learning Strategy Use between Students of Seyo High School and Seyo Preparatory School: Grade 9 and Grade 11 in Focus

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, not presented for any degree in any universities, and that all the sources used for it are duly acknowledged.

<u>Getachew Gudissa Idea</u>	_____	_____
Name	Signature	Date

Confirmation and Approval

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a thesis advisor.

Principal Advisor:

_____	_____	_____
Name	Signature	Date

Co-Advisor:

_____	_____	_____
Thesis Evaluators:	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Principal Advisor	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Co-Advisor	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
External Examiner	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Internal Examiner	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Chairperson	Signature	Date

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Abstract

The main purpose of this comparative study is to investigate vocabulary learning strategy (VLSs) use between different grade level students. Particularly, the focus is to see if there is a significant difference between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students of Seyo High School and Seyo Preparatory School in their vocabulary learning strategies use. One hundred and twelve (112) respondents were proportionally taken (94:18) from the students of grade 9 and grade 11 who were attending the schools in 2007 E.C. The instruments employed were a five point likert scale questionnaire adapted from Schmitt (1997) and classroom observations. Data obtained through questionnaire were analyzed manually for frequencies and percentages, and SPSS version 16.0 was used for generating mean and t-test values. The data obtained via classroom observation was analyzed qualitatively and triangulated with the data obtained via questionnaire. The frequencies and the percentages were used to describe the data obtained through a questionnaire. The mean values and the t-test values were used to compare the VLSs use of the two groups and ranked out the most, the medium and the least frequently used strategies. The t-test values were used to see for the presence or absence of significant differences in VLSs use between the students of the two grades. The finding indicated that both grade 9 and grade 11 students of the study area used all the 28 items (VLSs presented for them) with a slight difference of frequencies. Grade 9 students predominantly used three sub-categories of VLSs: determination, social for discovering the meaning of a word and memory strategies, whereas grade 11 students used only two of them: determination and cognitive strategies. They both used the rest sub-categories at the medium level of VLSs use. The finding also indicated that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups of students in their vocabulary learning strategy use. Finally, it was recommended that teachers of English language should identify their students VLSs use and train them on the areas they have problems.

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Acronyms and/or Abbreviations

L2 = Second language

VLSs = Vocabulary learning strategies

SPSS = Statistical package for social sciences

EFL = English as a foreign language.

TEFL = Teaching English as a foreign language

SILL = Strategy inventory for language learning

SOL = Speakers of other languages

Symbols

G 9 = grade 9 students

G 11 = grade 11 students

& = and

i.e. = that is

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

Second or foreign language teaching and learning has its own historical emergence. Concerning how, when and why foreign language teaching and learning began and what teaching and learning methods were employed since its beginning, scholars like Griffiths and Para (2001) pointed out that as years come and pass, many different methods and approaches to the teaching and learning of language to and by speakers of other languages (SOL) has come and gone, too. For instance, the grammar-translation method, the audio lingual method, the communicative approach are some of these approaches developed one after the other.

Historically, second or foreign language learning began during the period of Romans. At that time Latin was the popular language which was given by Europeans. The method of teaching was grammar translation. As aforementioned, during this period and afterwards different approaches to language learning, each with different perspectives on vocabulary learning, have been introduced. Based on such perspectives the position given to vocabulary has been different through times. That means ,vocabulary sometimes received good attention in language teaching methodologies, other times, it was completely neglected (Allen, 1983; Carter & McCarty, 1988; Taylor, 1991).It has got good position in language teaching and learning with the development of the communicative approach to language teaching. As the approach emphasizes meaningful interactive activities over form, it recognizes that vocabulary learning strategies that students use have a greater impact on their success in vocabulary learning (Hatch & Brown, 1995).

In line with the above notion, researchers are recently trying to change or shift the concern of vocabulary teaching to vocabulary learning. That means, they are trying to change responsibility from teacher to the students for their own language learning. As sources indicate, language learning strategies research abruptly began in the 1970s as a shift from a predominately teaching oriented perspective to the learner oriented view

which mainly gives emphasis to how learner rather learn than how teachers teach. It believes that the actions of learners might affect their acquisition of language so the responsibility had to shift to learners. This is because, before that period, natural talent of students was considered as a major factor than the action of students in language learning success. Nonetheless, this time and afterwards it has been understood that language learning mainly depends on the individual learner's effort not on natural gift. This arose a greater interest in scholars to study how individual learners approached and controlled their own learning of language (Schmitt, 1997& Nation, 2001). Accordingly, many researchers invested their time and energy and come with a new compelling idea that language learning requires much effort on the part of the learner. To accomplish this responsibility, the learners should know the vocabulary learning strategies, and the teachers should better train students on how to learn the language instead of teaching them the language itself. This realizes the proverb used by Griffiths to strengthen his argument about the potential use of vocabulary learning strategies in enhancing students' language learning.

Give a man a fish and he eats for a day; teach him fishing he eats for a lifetime. Applied to the language teaching and learning field, this proverb might be interpreted to mean that if students are provided with answers, the immediate problem is solved. But if they are taught the strategies to work out the answers for themselves, they are empowered to manage their own learning (Griffiths, 2004, p. 1).

Nowadays, in Ethiopia, the curriculum is designed in this line and the practice has been begun. There are tasks and activities in the teaching materials that are developed in the way they help learners exercise meaningful, real life like communicative performances. There are also strategies of language learning in the materials though to discuss their sufficiency is not the concern of this study. However, there are considerable differences in students' achievement. Some achieves good result whereas, others achieve less than the expected result .This means, as the researcher saw from own experience, many of the students cannot express their ideas fluently, and cannot do English examinations well.

Regarding this issue, scholars have conducted many studies in and out of the country and found out that students' achievement correlates with their vocabulary learning strategy use (Examples are: Ahmed, 1989; Getachew Seyoum & Getachew Bekele, 2014; Getnet Gidey, 2008; Gu & Johnson, 1996).

Getnet (2008, p. 58) states the relationship between VLSs and students achievement as "there is a relationship between language learning achievement and vocabulary-learning strategies, i.e. high achievers frequently or always use more wide range of vocabulary learning strategies than low achievers." Getachew Seyoum's and Getachew Bekele's (2014) finding also reflected the same result as that of Getnet's, i.e., their finding indicated the presence of a relationship between VLSs use and English language achievement. It depicted that the students who used VLSs most frequently achieved good results and the ones who used it rarely achieved poor results.

Similarly, Gu and Johnson (1996) arrived at the same conclusion as that of the above mentioned scholars, too. According to them, the most successful learners use a wide range of vocabulary learning strategies which help them to be successful in learning language in general, and in learning vocabulary in particular. By contrast, less successful learners use limited range of vocabulary learning strategies inappropriately and became ineffective in vocabulary learning. In support of this assertion, Ahmed noted that good language learners differ greatly from the poor language learners in two ways. One way of their difference concerns to their interest to learn the vocabulary. Second area of difference is choice of appropriate VLSs and use of varieties of VLSs in different contexts (Ahmed, 1989). He stated that the more successful learners differ from the less successful ones by using more strategies as well as the interest they have to learn words.

Overall, many studies have shown that differences in vocabulary learning strategies use brings about achievement difference. The implication of this reality is that vocabulary learning should be an important instructional goal and a critical research issue. Therefore, studies that aim to investigate vocabulary learning strategies use among a particular group of students should be important. It is with this understanding that this study has been proposed. The study aims to find out if the students' vocabulary learning strategy use across different grade level is different. Specifically, it intends to assess vocabulary

learning strategy use between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students at Seyo Secondary and Seyo Preparatory School and to compare the two groups of students in terms of this variable

1.2. Statement of the problem

There are numerous factors that can affect learner's language learning and teachers' language teaching. Among the various factors that contribute a lot to learner's language learning; using varieties of language learning strategies in general and vocabulary learning strategies in particular are the major ones. Many research findings reflect that though vocabulary knowledge of students is considered as the base for general language ability, its teaching and learning has been the most challenging for both teachers and students. In support of this, Carter and McCarthy (1988, p.9) identified through their study that the overall language ability of the students are determined by their "lexical competence". Nonetheless, Coady and Huckin (1997, p. 1) on their part describe that vocabulary learning as "one of the biggest challenges of language learning for most of language learners".

Due to this case a few investigators have made attempts in and out of the country to find out how learners cope with the difficulties language learning poses. All of them reached at similar investigations that enable learners manage to overcome the obstacle to their language learning. That solution is to being active participant in the teaching learning process. As O'Malley and Chamot (1990) state meaningful learning and teaching takes place when there is an active involvement of learners in the language learning process. Moreover, successful second or foreign language learning can be achieved when students participate in the learning process (Alemu Hailu, 1994)

Students can participate actively if they clearly know what they have to do to learn the language. The ability to use appropriate vocabulary learning strategies can lead students to have enough vocabularies, and this in turn increases their interest in learning language, English in our case. Using or not using appropriate vocabulary learning strategies is one of the many factors that make students successful or unsuccessful in language learning. Gu and Johnson's (1996) study showed that the most successful learners were those who

actively drew on a wide range of vocabulary learning strategies. By contrast, the same study indicated that the least successful ones used much more limited range of vocabulary learning strategies. Such research findings lead to successive investigations into student's use of vocabulary learning strategies in various contexts. Below are some in Ethiopian context

Some studies were conducted to understand students' effort in using vocabulary learning strategies in Ethiopian context. For the purpose of this study, five of them are taken to see the areas they tried to assess and the solutions they forwarded. One is a study carried out by Abebe G/Tsadik (1997) on strategies of vocabulary learning employed by first year students at A.A.U. The finding indicated that the sample students were aware of a wide range of English vocabulary acquisition strategies but a large number of them use few of these strategies. The second study is the one conducted by Setegn Mayew (1997) that investigated vocabulary learning strategies employed by Somali speaking students. Setegn tried to see the difference in using language learning strategies between male and female students. According to Setegn Mayew (1997), there was no statistically significant difference among learners (between male and female) in using vocabulary-learning strategies. The third study was conducted on grade 11 students of Menelik II Senior Secondary School in A.A. by Jeylan Aman (1999) on the same title. Jeylan found out that the majority of students rarely used most of the strategies developed by the scholars. The fourth study is the one conducted by Getnet Gidey (2008) at Addis Ababa University on the title "Vocabulary–Learning Strategy Use: The Case of High and Low Achiever Students in Gondar College of Teacher Education." According to the findings of this study, there was a relationship between language learning achievement and vocabulary learning strategies, i.e. high achievers frequently or always used wider range of vocabulary learning strategies than low achievers did. The fifth study was conducted by Getachew Seyoum and Getachew Bekele (2014) at Jorgo Nole Preparatory School on the title "Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by EFL Students" in particular reference to grade 11 high and low achievers. Their finding revealed the presence of a significant difference between the high and the low achievers in using VLSs.

Although there are some local studies like the ones mentioned above which investigated vocabulary learning strategy use among students at different levels, the researcher's experience shows that research studies that compare vocabulary learning strategy use across different grades is lacking. It is the need to fill this gap that initiated to conduct this study. The study was aimed to compare vocabulary learning strategy use between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students at Seyo Secondary School and Seyo Preparatory School. Therefore, the study was made a new contribution by assessing the application of vocabulary learning strategies between-grade differences regarding this important educational goal

1.3. Objective of the study

1.3.1. Main objective

The study generally attempts to compare Grade 9 students at Seyo Secondary School with their Grade 11 counterparts at Seyo Preparatory School in their use of vocabulary learning strategies.

1.3.2. Specific objectives

Particularly, the study tries to:

- Find out the vocabulary learning strategies that are predominantly used by students of Grade 9 and Grade 11.
- Identify if there are changes in vocabulary learning strategy use as grade level increases.
- Determine if there are significant differences in vocabulary learning strategy use between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students at Seyo Secondary School and Seyo Preparatory School.

1.4. Research questions

- What vocabulary learning strategies are predominantly used by students in each grade level?
- What are the changes that are observed in vocabulary learning strategy use as grade level increases?

- Are there significant differences in vocabulary learning strategy use between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students of Seyo Secondary School and Seyo Preparatory School?

1.5. Significance of the study

Vocabulary learning strategies play a significant role in helping students learn and acquire vocabularies easily. The findings of this study, therefore, can have the following benefits:

- The findings of the study could help the students to improve their vocabulary learning strategies for a better effect since they will be taught by English language teachers who have awareness about their students' vocabulary learning strategies.
- It is also believed that the study will initiate teachers to focus on training their students in how to learn vocabulary which enable them to apply the vocabulary learning strategies consciously in vocabulary learning endeavors. Because the finding indicates them about their students VLSs use.
- The study also can initiate other researchers to conduct similar studies.

1.6. Limitations of the study

This study will provide useful findings for different parties in the education sector (students, teachers, curriculum designers, and researchers). The researcher would like to acknowledge that this study is far from being perfect in many aspects. For one thing, the study was confined to only two schools because of shortage of time and resources. The representative population and the section are too small; one hundred and twelve (112) students which are 15% of the total students in the two schools were selected to respond to the questionnaire, and only three sections were observed. The researcher feels that it would have been much better if more students from other grades and other schools had been involved in the study. Secondly, the instruments used to gather the information were also limited to two: questionnaire and classroom observation. While a questionnaire is used in eliciting learners' self-reports on what they generally do to learn the new language

or what they do as they perform a specific language task (Chamot, 1987 & Cohen, 1987 as cited in Jeylam Aman, 1999), other instruments such as interview and focused group discussion with teachers could have been still used to supplement the questionnaire and the classroom observation. Moreover, while the questionnaire was administered to all participants and yielded enough data, the classroom observations was held in three sections for only six sessions and fail to provide ample data. For one thing, the frequency of observation was not enough to get enough data. In addition to this some of the vocabulary learning strategies are non-observable to be seen during these observation sessions, too. These were the limitations that can affect the generalizability of the findings of the study to large populations. Hence, future studies should consider these issues to gain the best result from it.

1.7. Delimitation

The study was undergone at Seyo School School and Seyo Preparatory School which are found in Ethiopia, Oromia Regional State, West Shoa Zone, Dano Woreda, Seyo town. It was delimited to these two schools because of resource constraints. The researcher had chosen these schools for two reasons. One reason is that the researcher is familiar with the school community which can ease the information gathering processes. The other reason is that as the area is where the researcher works the issues of shortage of time and resource can be minimized. Additionally, the study delimited to one aspect of LLS excluding others. Although it had been better if the study had covered more high schools and preparatory schools in Ethiopia and other LLSs, thereby the generalizability of the result would have been reliable because of the aforementioned cases the study was confined to these schools.

1.8. Definitions of key terms (conceptual definition)

Vocabulary: Graves define vocabulary as the entire stock of words belonging to a branch of knowledge or known by an individual. He also states that the lexicon of a language is its vocabulary, which includes words and expressions (Graves, 2000, as cited in Taylor, 1990)

Learning: Rubin (1987) views learning as, “the process by which information is obtained, stored, retrieved, and used” (p. 29).

Strategy: The word strategy comes from the ancient Greek word ‘Strategia’, which means steps or actions taken for the purpose of winning a war known as military strategy (Wikipedia, 2009). Retrieved from: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategy>

Vocabulary learning strategy: Oxford (1990) defined them as “strategies are operations which the learner applies “to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information” (p.4). She expands this definition by stating that learning strategies are “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situations” (p. 8).

Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to lay down a foundation for the research problem by situating it in an ocean of scholarly founded bases. For this purpose a review of some relevant literature concerning the vocabulary learning strategies had been made. Accordingly, the definition of vocabulary, definition of strategy, definition of vocabulary learning strategies, importance of vocabulary learning strategies, taxonomies of vocabulary learning strategies and research into the area of vocabulary learning strategies were discussed respectively in this chapter. This review of the literature confirmed that the issue under investigation is prevalent and worthy researched.

2.1. Definition of vocabulary

Many scholars defined the term vocabulary in different ways though there are some common elements in their definitions .For the purpose of this study some of them are here under.

Graves (2000, as cited in Taylor, 1990) defines vocabulary as the entire stock of words belonging to a branch of knowledge or known by an individual. He also states that the lexicon of a language is its vocabulary, which includes words and expressions.

Krashen (1998, as cited in Herrel, 2004) extends Graves' definition further by stating that lexicon organizes the mental vocabulary in a speaker's mind. An individual's mental lexicon is that person's knowledge of vocabulary.

A more comprehensive definition is given by Gardner. According to Gardener (2009, as cited in Adger, 2002) vocabulary is not only confined to the meaning of words but also includes how vocabulary in a language is structured; how people use and store words and how they learn words and the relationship between words, phrases, categories of words and phrases .

In general, vocabulary definition encompasses not only a bare word but it also comprises the word and it's collocates, the form, and the context of use (the spoken or written, in single form or phrase form, its register). In brief, it represents the organized form of the language (in chunks or phrases) in the human brain that manifests when a need arises.

2.2. Importance of vocabulary

The importance of vocabulary in language learning is very high. It is the soul of the language without which grammar or any other patterns of language cannot exist at all. It conveys meaning which ensures an effective communication. This means that words are the basic unit of a language form without which one cannot communicate effectively or express his or her ideas. In relation to the importance of vocabulary many scholars have said a lot. For instance, Krashen, (1998, p.33) states it as follows:

Vocabulary is basic to communication. If acquirers do not recognize the meanings of the key words used by those who address them, they will be unable to participate in the conversation. And if they wish to express some ideas or ask for information, they must be able to produce lexical items to convey their meaning.

McCarthy also pointed out that without vocabulary communication in a second or foreign language is not possible in a meaningful way. McCarthy (1990, p. VII) stresses that “no matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way.”

Vocabulary is also very indispensable for the acquisition process. Cameron (2001, p. 82) states that “Vocabulary has been considered as a major resource for language use.” Early foreign language learning offers the chance for learners to build up a solid core of words useful for further learning. For example, Harmer (1991) and Krashen (1998) indicated that language students need to learn the lexis of the language and need to learn what words mean and how they are used. Regarding the importance of vocabulary, McCarthy (1990, p. VII) states that “No matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way.”

Harmer (1991, p.53) also writes “If language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh.” These all

show that the ability to use grammatical structure does not have any potential for expressing meaning unless an appropriate vocabulary is used. So vocabulary knowledge of a language is very vital in order to understand or engage in communication, and succeed in one's learning. Zhihong (2000) also states that vocabulary is vital to guarantee communication between and among people. Hence, it is the basic unit of language form, without which one cannot communicate or express ideas effectively.

Seal (1991) assured it by indicating that word knowledge is an essential component of communication and it is important for both production and comprehension in a foreign language.

As the above scholars pointed out, vocabulary is the life of communication. Without it, meaningful communication is impossible. Hence, vocabulary knowledge is very crucial for one's language learning and language use for effective communication.

In conclusion, since vocabulary is very important for language acquisition, meaningful communication, and academic achievement, students should learn as many active vocabularies (the most frequent words that they use in their daily life) as possible in their schooling and afterwards. One of the factors that influence success in vocabulary learning is the use of vocabulary learning strategies. Thus, as indicated above, vocabulary learning strategies should receive adequate focus in instruction and research.

2.3. Definition of vocabulary learning strategies

Before we try to see what other scholars found out about the problem, first let us see what the word 'strategy' and the phrase, 'vocabulary learning strategy' are.

Strategy: The word strategy comes from the ancient Greek word *Strategia*, which means steps or actions taken for the purpose of winning a war known as military strategy (Wikipedia, 2009).

Vocabulary learning strategies: Many scholars defined it in different ways. Some relate the definition to the general learning strategies, while others say that the general language learning strategies by themselves are strategies for learning vocabulary, too. Under this topic two of the opinions are presented to see the similarities and the differences of the

two ways of the definitions. Five scholars who defined it as general language learning strategies and four who defined it by adopting the general language strategies as specific to VLS are presented below. To harvest a good view of the concept let us see them as follows.

According to Richards, language learning strategies are intentional behaviors and thoughts that learners make use of during learning which help them understand, learn or remember new information. These may include focusing on certain aspects of new information, analyzing and organizing information during learning to increase comprehension, evaluating learning when it is completed to see if further action is needed. They may be applied to simple tasks such as learning a list of new words, or more complex tasks involving language comprehension and production (Richards, 1992).

Stern (1992) explains it as, “the concept of language learning strategy is based on the assumption that learners consciously engage in activities to achieve certain goals. That means, they engage in exercises, choices, procedures in which they undertake” (, p.261).

Cohen (1990) states that “learning strategies are processes which are consciously selected by learners and which may result in actions taken to enhance the learning or use of a second or foreign language through the storage, retention, recall, and application of information about that language” (p. 4)

Rubin (1987) views learning as, “the process by which information is obtained, stored, retrieved, and used” (p. 29).

Schmitt’s (1997) definition of vocabulary learning strategies reflects Rubin’s (1987) understanding of learning. According to Schmitt (1997) vocabulary learning strategies could be any action which affects the broadly defined process by Rubin like obtaining, storing, retrieving and using information (p.203).

Similarly, Cameron (2001) defines vocabulary learning strategies as, “actions that learners take to help themselves understand and remember vocabulary” (p.92).

Oxford (1990) defined them as “strategies are operations which the learner applies “to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information” (p.4). She expands this

definition by stating that learning strategies as “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situations” (p.8). She revised and defined language learning strategies as “specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques, which can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language learners employ to develop their L2 skills. These strategies are the tools for the self-directed involvement which is a necessity for developing communicative ability” (Oxford, 1992, p.124).

Catalan (2003, p. 56) proposed a more concrete and thorough definition of vocabulary learning strategies by adopting Rubin’s (1987) and Oxford’s (1990) definitions of language learning strategy. She suggested the following definition. It is knowledge about the mechanisms (processes, strategies) used in order to learn vocabulary as well as steps or actions taken by students (a) to find out the meaning of unknown words, (b) to retain them in long-term memory, (c) to recall them at will, and (d) to use them in oral or written mode.

McCarty defined it based on what vocabulary learning strategies should take in to account. He stated that vocabulary learning strategies should not focus only on memorizing lexical items but also on using them in different contexts (McCarty,1984, as cited in Lu,2013, p.24).Therefore, it is necessary to incorporate “knowing a word” and “being able to define the word in to the list of vocabulary learning strategies”(sick). For the learning process of L2 vocabulary, (Brown and Hatch 1995, p. 373) have identified five key steps: “a/having sources for encountering words, b/getting a clear image, either visual or auditory or both, of the forms of the words, c/learning the meaning of the word, d/making a strong memory connection between the forms and the meaning of the words, e /using the words”

In both cases the definitions concentrates around learner’s role for language learning in general and vocabulary learning in particular. The common element in their definitions are processes and actions or operations students use to accomplish a language learning task. However, Oxford’s definition sounds better as it is comprehensive and reflective of the feature of the strategies.

In sum, vocabulary learning strategies are the deliberate actions that learners perform and the mental processes that are exercised by them in the process of language learning. They are a special ways of processing information that improve comprehension, learning, or retention of the information. Therefore, students should be equipped with this very crucial tool in order to be successful in their vocabulary learning.

2.4. Importance of vocabulary learning strategies

Vocabulary learning strategies are new methodologies which enable the students learn the new words they encounter during communication independently or in the absence of a teacher. As Nation and Schmitt tries to illustrate, there are many words on which teachers may not be able to spend time within the class time limits. Thus, if students have number of vocabulary learning strategies, they deal with these words on their own and as a result have access to large number of target language words (Nation, 2001 & Schmitt, 2000).

Atkins et al. (1996) also discussed that the ability to use vocabulary learning strategies can improve students' vocabulary development and help them for coping with new vocabulary in written or spoken texts. The main benefit gained from vocabulary learning strategies is that they enable learners to take more control of their own learning so that students can take more responsibility for their vocabulary learning.

Nation (2001); Scharle and Szabo (2000) consequently discussed that the roles of vocabulary learning strategies by showing that vocabulary learning strategies foster learner autonomy, independence, and self direction. They say that if students are equipped with a range of different vocabulary learning strategies, they can decide upon how exactly they would like to deal with unknown words. Gu and Johnson, and Schmitt also strengthen the truth by saying a good knowledge of the strategies and the ability to apply them in suitable situations might simplify the learning of new vocabulary for students /sick/ (Schmitt, 2000; & Gu & Johnson, 2000) The summary of the importance of vocabulary importance/sic/ is given by (Fan, 2003, cited in Yunhao, 2011, p. 5) “vocabulary forms the biggest part of the meaning of any language, and vocabulary is the

biggest problem for most learners. So I've always been interested in ways of helping learners in building up a big vocabulary as fast as efficiently as possible.”

“Vocabulary is put in the central place in many linguistic theories. Lewis believes lexis to be the core of language (Lewis 1993, as cited in Yunhao, 2011, p. 5) He strongly discusses it by saying the lexicon is more important than any other component, and that it may be the most important language component for learners. The basic benefit gained from all learning strategies, including strategies for vocabulary learning, is the fact that they enable learners to take more control of their own learning so that learners can take more responsibility for their studies (Nation, 2001, as cited in Yunhao, 2011, p. 6).

2.5. Taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies

Although vocabulary learning strategies is relatively a new area of study, several classifications of them have been developed. For this research purpose some of them were taken to lay down a strong background for it. Investigators like Ahmed(1989), Gu and Johnson (1996), Nation(2001), O'Malley et al.(1985), Oxford(1990), Sanaoui (1995), Schmitt(1997), and Wenden and Rubin (1987) are some of the researchers who have developed the classifications of vocabulary learning strategies based on the second or foreign learner's various strategies to acquire the target language words (vocabularies). Accordingly, let us see some of them here.

Oxford (1990) is one of the scholars who try to propose the VLSs classifications .She tries to provide a comprehensive taxonomy of language learning strategies which is termed as the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). This inventory has two categories of strategies: the 'direct strategies' (working with the language itself) and 'indirect strategies' (general management of learning). The direct strategies are also sub-divided into three classes: memory strategy (strategies to store and retrieve aspects of the target language), cognitive strategies (strategies for using the language and for understanding how it works), and compensation strategies (strategies for using the language despite gaps in knowledge).Again the indirect strategies are sub-divided in to meta-cognitive strategies (strategies for planning, organizing and evaluating learning),

affective strategies (strategies for approaching the task positively), and social strategies (strategies for working with others to get input and practice).

Scholars, Gu and Johnson (1996) classified second language vocabulary learning strategies in the/sic/ in to six categories which also have some sub-divisions as follows:

- ❖ Meta Cognitive Regulation
- ❖ Guessing Strategies
- ❖ Dictionary Strategies
- ❖ Memory Strategies (Rehearsal)
- ❖ Memory Strategies (Encoding)
- ❖ Activation strategies.

Lu (2003, p.17) put the summary of Gu and Johnson's (1996) VLSs classification by adding 'note-taking' as the 7th independent strategy. The meta-cognitive strategy of Gu and Johnson's encompasses selective attention and self initiation strategies. Selective attention strategy refers to the ways how students identify the words which are valuable for them to concentrate on and learn. Students who employ this strategy know the words which help them understand the given text and they are selective. Self- initiation strategy refers to the students' ability to make use of different ways of understanding the meaning of a new word. Students who employ self-initiation strategies use varieties of means to make the meaning of vocabulary items clear. Cognitive strategies consist of guessing strategies, skillful use of dictionaries and note-taking strategies. Learners who are 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 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 are those strategies through which learners actually use new words in different contexts. For instance, learners may set sentences using the words they have just learned (Ibid)

Classification of Gu and Johnson's (1996) vocabulary learning strategies is summarized as follows:

Meta-cognitive strategies: 1. **Selective attentive-** identifying essential words for comprehension

2. **Self-initiation:** using a variety of means to make the meaning of words clear

Cognitive strategies: 1. **Guessing:** Activating background knowledge, using linguistic items

2. **Use of dictionary**

3. **Note-taking**

Memory strategies: 1. **Rehearsal:** word list repetition, etc

2. **Encoding:** association (imagery, visual, auditory, etc)

Activation strategies: 1. Using new words in different contexts

The most comprehensive and detailed classification of vocabulary learning strategies developed by Schmitt has 58 strategies. These 58 strategies in his taxonomy had been organized based on Oxford's (1990) taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies. Schmitt (1997) tried to fill the gap in Oxford's taxonomy did not satisfy/sic/. In Oxford's classification determination strategies are not focused on; and Schmitt used four of Oxford's list and added two of his own (Lu, 2003, p.18) Then he distinguished the strategies into two groups, discovery strategies which are helpful to determine the meaning of new words when encountered for the first time and consolidation strategies which are helpful to remember meaning when encountered again.

Schmitt's (1997) fifty-eight individual strategies are further classified into six categories of vocabulary learning strategies as described below.

1. Strategies for the discovery of a new word's meaning

Strategy category	Individual strategies under each category.
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I .Determination	-Analyzing parts of speech -Analyzing affixes, prefixes and roots -Analyzing any available pictures or gestures
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- Guess meaning from textual context
- Use a dictionary (bilingual or monolingual)

- II. Social**
- Ask a teacher for a synonym, paraphrase, or L1 translation of a new word
 - Ask classmates for meaning

2. Strategies for consolidating a word once it has been encountered

- A. Social strategies:**
- Study and practice meaning in a group
 - Interact with native speakers
- B. Memory strategies:**
- Connect a word to a previous personal experience
 - Associate the word with its coordinate
 - Use semantic maps
 - Image word forms
- Use keyword method (creating linkage b/n new word &familiar one)
 - Group words together to study them
 - Study the spelling of a word
 - Say a new word aloud when studying
 - Use physical action when learning a word
- C. Cognitive Strategies:**
- Verbal repetition
 - Written repetition
 - Word lists
 - Put English labels on physical objects
 - Keep a vocabulary notebook
- D. Meta cognitive Strategies:**
- Use English language media (songs, movies, news, castes, etc)
 - Use spaced word practice (expanding rehearsal)
 - Test one-self with word tests
 - Skip or pass new word
 - Continue to study word over time
- Source: Schmitt (1997, p.207-208)*

Schmitt (1997) grouped the fifty-eight strategies under two main categories and six-sub categories. The first groups are discovery strategies which comprise determination, and social strategies, the second groups are consolidation strategies and they contain cognitive, meta-cognitive, memory and social strategies. Schmitt (1997) includes social strategies in both categories since they can be used for both purposes. Schmitt named the strategies students employ to uncover the meaning of a new word based on his/her experience without consulting other sources as determination strategies. Schmitt also further described how learners can discover new words in these two ways. In the first way learners try to discover the meaning of a word by guessing it with the help of structural knowledge of language, context, and reference materials. The second way to discover a new word's meaning is through employing the social strategies: asking someone for help with the unknown words. Besides, in the initial discovery of a word, learners need to employ varieties of strategies to practice and retain vocabulary. Learners thus, use a variety of social, memory, cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies to consolidate their vocabulary knowledge. Cooperative group learning through which learners study and practice the meaning of new words in a group is an example of social strategies for consolidating a word" (Schmitt 1997).

Schmitt also briefly described the rest strategies types: memory, cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies one by one as follows by showing the relationship and the differences exist between them. "Memory strategies, traditionally known as mnemonics, involve relating the word with some previously learned knowledge by using some form of imagery or grouping"(Schmitt, 1997, p. 205-206). Schmitt's cognitive strategies are similar to his memory strategies but there focus is different. Memory strategies focus on manipulative mental processing, whereas cognitive strategies focus on using mechanical means like word list, note-takings, preparing flashcards, putting English labels on physical objects and repetitions activities(verbal or written). Thompson (1987) and Stockmen (1997) also shares Schmitt's idea that memory strategy use involves relating the words with the one they have experienced before.

The last strategy in Schmitt's classification is meta-cognitive strategies which the learners use to control and evaluate their own learning by themselves. They includes

finding an opportunity by exposing own self to different sources like watching medias broadcasted in English language(songs, movies news ,casts) and planning to test oneself with word tests. In general, it is an advanced preparation, self-management and monitoring activity for own learning (Schmitt 1997).

Differently from the above classifications of vocabulary learning strategies, Nations (2001) developed three groups of strategies as planning, sources and processes. According to Nation, planning means choosing what to focus on and when to focus on while learning a word and it entails strategies like choosing words, choosing the aspect of the knowledge, choosing strategies, and planning repetition. Sources in Nation's strategy taxonomy refer to finding information about the words. Analyzing the word, using context, consulting reference materials in L1 and L2 are the strategies used in this category. The third strategy type is processes which mean establishing knowledge through noticing, retrieving, and generating (Nation 2001).

According to Nation (2001), noticing is a mechanical activity performed by the learner to learn and remember the new word. Writing the words in a vocabulary notebook list; putting the word onto a word card, and orally and visually repeating the word are the strategies used in this sub-strategy category. The second sub-division is retrieving which involves the remembering what has been learnt already. It requires recalling the words when need arise. The third strategy under processes is generating which includes relating the new knowledge to the previous knowledge using different strategies like word analysis, semantic mapping and using visual images. "Generating strategies include rule-driven generation, as well as, creating context, collocations and sentences containing the new word. Besides,the mnemonic strategies and using the word in different context through four skills are also defined as generating strategies" (Nation, 2001, p. 223).

Chamot (1992) classify learning strategies as observable and non-observable. He describe them as purposeful actions and thoughts learners engage in for understanding, storing ,and remembering new information and skills. Some learning strategies are observable as in note-taking, writing a plan for problem solving, drawing visuals or diagrams but many learning strategies are purely mental processes. Examples of these are monitoring

comprehension, activating prior knowledge, listening comprehension activities, reading activities where specific task is not observable.

In sum, whatever classifications they use, all the researchers rotate around one orbit, that is how learners learn vocabulary independently or autonomously, from discovering meaning to bringing back from memory for later use. All these classifications have common elements, too. Though the taxonomies have many common elements, the researcher focused on Schmitt's (1997) vocabulary learning strategies taxonomies for one thing, they incorporate the elements of the other strategies. For the other thing, it clearly categorizes the discovery strategies and the consolidating strategies differently that the students can use them at ease.

2.6. Research on vocabulary learning strategies

Research into the area of vocabulary learning strategies has been made based on two purposes. The first one was to investigate the vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) that students of EFL learners use to empower themselves with the vocabulary knowledge and use of the language. To address this very aim, researchers tried to develop the vocabulary learning strategy inventories or taxonomies. This was done by many of the foreign researchers like Gu and Johnson (1996), Hulstgin (1993), Lawson (1996), Nation and Lin (2001), O'Malley et al. (1985), Oxford (1990), Schmitt (1997), and Wenden and Rubin (1987). The second groups of researchers were aimed to explore how these invented VLSs employed by the students, and to what extent they have been employed by the learners of different grade levels. These groups of researchers also concerned with studying the relationship between these strategies use and language learning achievement, the difference between male and female students in using the strategies, the difference between good and poor language learners in VLSs use and which strategies are used most and least frequently by students. Most of the Ethiopian researchers focused on the second aspect of VLSs study. Under this title two of these areas are briefly discussed beginning with the research done in line with the researcher's title which compares VLSs use of different grade level students. Then, the researcher

tries to revise other researchers' works beginning from foreigners. Finally, the works of some Ethiopian researchers was discussed to create the context for the study.

Although there are lots of researches conducted in the area of vocabulary learning strategies use inside and outside of Ethiopia, as to the knowledge of the researcher, research conducted by comparing different grade levels is not seen in Ethiopian context. But one research was conducted in Hungary which compares high school and university students VLSs use by (Dóczy, B., 2011). It was intended to answer three research questions in relation to the title. However, the responses contradict one another. To see these, first let us look at the questions and their corresponding responses. Then the analysis follows bellow to show the areas that contradict with each others. The questions and their respective responses are as follows.

1. What kind of vocabulary learning strategies do the students of the present study use in high school and at university?

The answer to research question appears to be that the number of strategies for practicing on a regular basis and using word lists for consolidation decreases as the level of the students improves. In contrast, the strategies of skipping a new word, putting words into sentences and pronunciation become more important as students become more advanced. However, the students of the present study tend to avoid social and meta-cognitive strategies. (Dóczy, 2011, p.153)

2. Where and when do Hungarian high school and university students meet new words?

In response to research question it has to be stated that there was no significant difference either between the different groups of students or between the strategies they listed for discovering new vocabulary, and the most popular strategy listed was guessing from context, followed by the use of monolingual dictionaries (Ibid).

3. How does the number of strategies change as the level of the learner increases?

The results of research question showed that students at higher levels use more strategies, which is definitely a positive finding; however, possible reasons for this are still to be discovered. Some of the findings raise certain questions in light of the literature mentioned. First of all, even though Huang and Van-Naerssen (1987) concluded that the use of functional practice strategies (referred to as social strategies in the present study) might contribute to success in the development of oral communicative abilities, therefore, we have yet to direct students' attention to the importance of this strategy. Also, in accordance with the findings of Lawson and Hogben (1996), as well as those of Gu and Johnson (1996), the students rely more on the meaning of a new word and pay relatively little attention to the physical or grammatical features of words, which again implies that there is a need for training in this respect. This is also confirmed by Takač (2008), who also called attention to the lack of relevant and recent research with regard to VLS use (Ibid)

As described above, there are contradictions in the results of this finding. In response to question 1, the finding shows that two strategies use of the students decrease as level of students increase: practicing on the regular basis and using word list for consolidating new words. Three strategies' use increase as level of students increase: skipping a new word, putting words into sentences, and pronunciation. Two strategies' use avoided: social and meta-cognitive strategies. In response to question 2, the finding reflects the absence of significant difference in strategies use between the groups. But in respond to question 3 it says higher level students use more strategies than lower level students and the researcher declared that it was a positive finding. For the three research question three seemingly contradicting results are reflected: for one thing it says as level of students increase, two VLSs use of students decrease, three VLSs use of them increase, and two VLSs use of them avoided; for the other thing it says no significance difference between the groups in their VLSs use, and in contrary to this it says higher level students use more

VLSs. Though the result of the research seems contradicting, it was used as a spring board to launch this study.

As discussed under the statement of the problem, endeavors have been made by some researchers to find out strategies students can use to solve the problems they may encounter by language learning. The relevant solution for the issue was to develop VLSs inventories that students can use to solve their problem of vocabulary learning. These investigators have produced different inventories of vocabulary learning strategies. For example, Knight (1994), Naiman et al. (1978), Rubin (1975), Stern (1975), and Thompson (1987) have developed lists of strategies that learners can use for vocabulary learning. Stern (1983) justified that though they divided or list the strategies in different ways their lists comprise more or less similar categories.

As described by Rubin and Wenden, the main focus of all the aforementioned studies has been to investigate what good language learners do for learning a second or a foreign language (Rubin & Wenden, 1987, cited in Hismanoglus, 2000). According to Gu and Johnson (1996) good language learners use varieties of vocabulary learning strategies actively but the poor language learners use limited range of VLSs. Good language learners also control their strategy use by choosing the most pertinent strategy from the range of strategies in the context. They decide when to use, how to use, and up to where to use the strategy and when to pass to another strategy. For instance, after referring dictionary students can pass to the next strategy like writing it into their notebook or use in sentences of their own.

Other scholars like (Ahmed, 1989; Sanaoui, 1995; and O'Malley & Chamot, 1990) also justified what was described by Gu and Johnson above. They stated that more effective students use a greater variety of strategies and use them in ways that help them complete the language task successfully. But less effective students do not use strategies that help them successfully accomplish learning tasks. They also do not have wide ranges of strategies types in their mental set .As Ahmed (1989) and Sanaoui (1995) state good learners do things such as using a variety of strategies, structure their vocabulary learning and review and practice target words, and they are aware of the semantic relationships between new and previously learned second/foreign language words; that is, they are

conscious of their learning and take steps to regulate their vocabulary learning. Poor learners generally lacked this awareness and control.

McCarthy (1990) also shares the above scholars point by stating how successful language learners manage to learn new words and the unsuccessful ones fail to do so. According to him learners adopt a variety of strategies to cope with new vocabulary some are better than others in satisfactorily exploiting their strategic resources.

What can be inferred from the above scholars' discussion is that the students' problem in language learning in general and vocabulary learning in particular are two things. The first thing is lack of enough ranges of strategies in their mental set. The other one is their inability to choose the appropriate strategy under particular situations or contexts. Therefore, a good knowledge of vocabulary learning strategies and the ability to apply them in suitable situations might considerably simplify the learning of new vocabularies. Thus, learner strategy research focused on studying how learners use strategies, and what differences are there between the strategies used by successful and unsuccessful learners (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). According to Wenden (1991) many scholars endeavor to understand more what good language learners do thereby they might be able to train the poor learners to make them good or successful language learners.

As briefly discussed under the statement of the problem some studies were conducted to understand students' effort in using vocabulary learning strategies in Ethiopian context. For the purpose of this study, five of them are taken to see the areas they tried to assess and the solutions they forwarded.

One is a study carried out by Abebe G/Tsadik (1997) on strategies of vocabulary learning employed by first year students at A.A.U. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the VLSs student of the target study area used. The finding indicated that the students have the awareness of a wide range of English vocabulary learning strategies, but a large number of them use only few of the strategies.

The second study is the one conducted by Setegn Mayew (1997) that investigated vocabulary learning strategies employed by Somali speaking students. The purpose of

this study was to see if there is a difference in using language learning strategies between male and female students. This finding depicted that there was no statistically significant difference in using vocabulary learning strategies between male and female students.

The third study was conducted on grade 11 students of Menelik II Senior Secondary School in A.A. by Jeylan Aman (1999). The study was aimed at exploring what efforts a sample of grade eleven students of English at Menelik II Senior Secondary School make so as to be successful in their vocabulary learning. Jeylan's study indicated that the majority of students rarely used most of the strategies investigated.

The fourth study is the one conducted by Getnet Gidey (2008) at Addis Ababa University on vocabulary learning strategy use of high and low achiever students in Gondar College of Teacher Education. The aim of this study was to identify what similarities and differences observed between high and low achievers in vocabulary learning strategy use; if there is any significant difference between the two groups in vocabulary learning strategy use; and if there is any relationship between vocabulary learning strategy use and language learning achievement. The study showed that at the individual vocabulary learning strategies level, high achievers frequently use the strategies under investigation while the low achievers rarely use them. Secondly it reflected that greater overall use of vocabulary learning strategies are noted among high achiever students than low achiever ones. Additionally it reflected the existence of significant differences between high and low achiever students in all sub categories except in social strategies as consolidating strategies. Lastly, the study depicted that there is relationship between language learning achievement and vocabulary learning strategies, i.e. high achievers frequently or always use more wide range of vocabulary learning strategies than low achievers.

The fifth study was conducted by Getachew Seyoum and Getachew Bekele (2014) at Jorgo Nole Preparatory School on vocabulary learning strategies used by EFL students with particularly reference to grade 11 high and low achievers. The main objective of their study was to assess vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) used by high and low achievers. In their study they revealed five important points regarding students VLSs use and their perception towards it.

Accordingly, their study showed that the high achievers' perception about the importance of vocabulary learning to improve their English language achievement is higher than the low achievers' perception. The second point obtained by this study was that the high achievers use a variety of VLSs than the low achievers do. The third issue addressed by this study is that there are differences between the high and the low achievers in using all the VLSs provided except some. This means the two groups commonly use some strategies like analyzing affixes and roots to guess meanings of the new words, using available pictures or gestures to understand the meanings of words, trying to remember new words by remembering the location or where they first encountered the words, saying new English words aloud and saying new English words several times. Their study also revealed the presence of a significant difference between the high and the low achievers in using VLSs and the existence of a relationship between VLSs use and English language achievement. Moreover, it identified the sub-categories of strategies most frequently used by low and high achievers. The most frequently used sub-category for the high achievers is 'cognitive subcategory' and the least used sub-category is 'social sub-category' under 'discovery strategy'. On the contrary, 'determination sub-category' and 'meta-cognitive subcategory' are the most and the least used ones for the low achievers.

In sum, researches regarding to the vocabulary learning strategies use of students have been conducted at different levels of educational institutions like elementary schools, high and preparatory schools, and colleges and universities. Of these, comparative studies were made between male and female, and between high and low achiever students in the same grade levels. However, the present researcher did not find any research carried out by comparing students' vocabulary learning strategy use between different grade levels in Ethiopian context. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to identify the vocabulary learning strategies predominantly used by the students at different grade levels; and to see if there is statistically significant difference between these different grade level students in using vocabulary learning strategies.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

As the aim of this study was to compare Grade 9 students at Seyo Secondary School with their Grade 11 counterparts at Seyo Preparatory School in their use of vocabulary learning strategies, a comparative survey type of research was employed. In that regard, it was intended to find responses to three research questions such as: What vocabulary learning strategies are predominantly used by students in each grade level? What are the changes that are observed in vocabulary learning strategy use as grade level increases? Are there significant differences in vocabulary learning strategy use between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students of Seyo Secondary School and Seyo Preparatory School? On how to address this issues the research design, the sources of data, the sample population and the sampling technique, the data collecting instruments and procedures of data collection, and method of data analysis were dealt in detail one by one as follows.

3.1. Design of the study

A comparative survey method was employed by using both qualitative and quantitative approach. This approach is used to recognize that all methods have limitations; researchers felt that biases inherent in any single method could neutralize or cancel the biases of other methods. The type of mixed method applied in this research was concurrent triangulation. Because triangulating data sources across qualitative and quantitative methods is important (Jick, 1979 as cited in Creswell, 2007). This is because it is helpful to the overall strength of the study than using either quantitative or qualitative research (Creswell, 2007). The quantitative aspect of this study was addressed using data collected via questionnaire while the qualitative aspect was based on data that was collected through classroom observation. For this very fact, the researcher used this mixed method to explore the students' vocabulary learning strategy use.

3.2. Study population and samples

The populations of this study were Grade 9 and Grade 11 students of Seyo Secondary School and Seyo Preparatory Schools who were learning in the academic year of 2007 E.C. These two schools were selected due to proximity. Accordingly, the total

populations of the study in the two schools were 751 students. Grade 9 and Grade 11 students were selected for two reasons. One reason was that they were found in different cycles so that it was likely to see significant differences in vocabulary learning strategies use between them. The second reason was to get enough time for data collection as they would stay up to June in the school.

There were 12 and 3 sections of Grade 9 and Grade 11 students at Seyo Secondary School and Seyo Preparatory School respectively. From these sections the three representative sections were selected using lottery method (assigning numbers for sections, rolling paper and then drawing as a lottery). Each section had students ranging from 42-57. Seyo Second School has 625 students (320 male and 305 female). Seyo Preparatory School has 126 students (67 male and 59 female). Accordingly, 15%(94 students) and 15 %(18 students) of the total population from Seyo Secondary School and Seyo Preparatory School respectively was selected using probability sampling of stratified followed by systematic sampling technique. The base for selecting 15 percent of the total population is that Gay & Airasian (2000) stated that a descriptive type of research needs enough amounts of participants to generalize for the total population and 15 % is recommendable for selecting the representative samples. These samples were selected from each section by taking 15% of the students using systematic sampling technique (every nth number of the population was selected randomly from list of population or attendance of students) in order to obtain best representative sample of a population for it gives an equal and independent chance of being selected for each and every population.

3.3. Data collection instruments

There are different types of data collection instruments: questionnaire, interview, observation, focused group discussion, and document analysis. From these the appropriate ones for this study are questionnaire (self-report), interview and observation. This study used two instruments to collect data. These were questionnaire and classroom observation. Therefore, questionnaire questions and observation checklist were used to collect the data. The following subsections give the details on the methods and instruments of data collection.

3.3.1. Questionnaire

This study employed a questionnaire survey. For this purpose, the questionnaire was adapted based on vocabulary learning strategies developed by Schmitt (1997). From a strategy inventory for language learning /SILL/ set by Schmitt, 28 vocabulary learning strategies were used for 112 Grade 9 and Grade 11 students to investigate students' vocabulary learning strategies use on a five point likert scale. This likert scale ranges from '1' I never use/do to '5' I always use/do. The survey in this paper was based on students' responses to a list of twenty-eight statements about these vocabulary learning strategies. These statements were grouped in to two major categories and six strategy sub-categories (two discovering strategies and four consolidating strategies). Items 1–7 were discovering strategies (1-5 were determination strategies, 6&7 were social strategies). Items 8-28 were consolidating strategies (Items 8–9 were social strategies, items 10–19 were memory strategies, items 20–24 were cognitive strategies, and items 25–28 were meta-cognitive strategies.

The questionnaire presented for the students was translated into Afan Oromo so that students could understand and respond to the items easily. This data collection instrument was piloted on 4% (50 students) of the population which are under similar context with the samples but different from the selected ones before the real implementation for the actual survey. After that the necessary modifications was made in order to make the instrument (**questionnaire**) more reliable and valid by including the information left out; and by avoiding the ones which were irrelevant and ambiguous to the students. **For example, as an equivalent word in Afan Oromo is not found some students ask the English word for some keywords. So, based on students' repetitive questions, the key English words were given in brackets for some words which have no equivalent meaning in Afan Oromo.** Additionally, in order to check the reliability of the two pilot tests, the research employed cronbach alpha. Accordingly, the results were (.801) which implies that high internal contingency coefficient. This indicates that the questionnaire is reliable and valid for the actual research. Data collected through this questionnaire provided information that served for the quantitative description of the study

3.3.2. Classroom observation

A classroom observation was used to gather additional data. It was deemed (considered) important to collect qualitative data on students' observable vocabulary learning strategy use. Because it is relevant and useful since it captures human behavior as it actually happens and it helps to provide important events and situation as (Black & Champion, 1976 as cited in Ahuja, 2004). The observation was conducted using the checklist prepared in order that it could help to see what was going on in the actual setting. The qualitative data collected using observation was used with the quantitative data collected through the questionnaire in order to find a better picture of the research issue. For this purpose, three section students, two from Seyo Secondary School and one from Seyo Preparatory School were observed. **These three sections were selected from the two schools based on their section proportion. That is Seyo Secondary School had 12 sections and Seyo Preparatory Schools had 3 sections.** The sections were selected using lottery method (assigning numbers for sections, rolling paper and then drawing as a lottery). Each of them was observed twice to check for the consistence of the information gathered during the first round observation and to see if new strategies used in context to the new lesson. A particular note was taken on the area of observable vocabulary learning strategies use.

3.4. Data collection procedures

As aforementioned, the data was collected using questionnaire and classroom observation. First, the questionnaire was prepared in English. Second, it was translated to Afan Oromo. Thirdly, it was reviewed by assistant teachers before it was administered. Fourthly, the researcher gave an orientation for the assistant teachers on how to administer the questionnaire for the students. Fifthly, in order to ease the data collection process, the researcher gave each teacher a copy of the questionnaire in charge of the classes. Next, the teachers explained the purpose of the study and the data collection procedures to the students. Lastly, the Afan Oromo version was distributed to the students to ease their understandings of the various sub-strategies. Accordingly, the selected representatives of the 12 sections in Seyo Secondary School came together to

respond to the questionnaire. Similarly, the representatives of the 3 sections in Seyo Preparatory School came together to respond to the questionnaire. The three assistant teachers explained the purpose of the data and how to respond to it for the students thoroughly. Finally, they administered the questionnaire. The researcher was moving around the classes to provide support when necessary. After the questionnaires' data collection process had been over, classroom observation was carried out by the researcher in order to make sure that all the data gained through the questionnaires holds true.

3.5. Data analysis

Data obtained from questionnaire was organized in tables in to two main and six sub-categories. The two main categories were strategies to discover meanings of words, and strategies to consolidate meanings of words. Under the discovery strategies there were determination and social strategies as sub-divisions, whereas, under consolidation there were memory, social, cognitive, and meta-cognitive strategies. Each sub category was tabulated under each rating scales. Then, the SPSS data processing software was used to analyze the quantitative raw data gathered through questionnaire for the mean, the standard deviation and the t- test value. Data gathered through classroom observation was described qualitatively in order to support the data gathered through questionnaire. Finally, the findings obtained through the questionnaire and the classroom observation were discussed, summarized, concluded, recommended, and reported to the concerned body.

3. 6. Ethical considerations

The copy of the research proposal paper was submitted to the institutional board of the graduate program of the Jimma University. Then after, application letter was presented to the department of English language and literature to get permission. Then, a letter of cooperation offered was given to the officials of research sites. After that it was signed by the department head of English, and counter signed by the College of Social Sciences and Humanities. Next, this letter was handed over to the study schools and other stakeholders. After that, the school leaders and other school community members were briefed on the objective of the study. Additionally, to get full information, the respondents were

reassured about the confidentiality of their response. They were also ensured about their voluntarily participation and their right to take part in the study or terminate at any time they wanted. Respondents' confidentiality and privacy was maintained. For this reason, their names were not be written on the questionnaire and revealed to anyone.

Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion

This study aimed to identify the strategies that Grade 9 and Grade 11 students of Seyo Secondary School and Seyo Preparatory School use to discover and consolidate the meanings of new words. To this effect, data were collected through questionnaire (quantitative data) and observation (qualitative data) from a sample of 112 students. Then, the data obtained through the questionnaire were tabulated, analyzed and discussed in this chapter. The frequency and the percentage results of these data were organized in tables, and the results were discussed. Then, the raw data of the quantitative type were entered into SPSS version 16.0. The SPSS was used to analyze this raw data and produced them in the form of means, standard deviation and t-test values. Then, these values were summarized in tables. From its result, the mean values and the independent samples t-test values were used to check for the presence of significant difference between the two groups of students, Grade 9 and Grade 11, in their use of vocabulary learning strategies. Additionally, the data obtained through classroom observation on observable vocabulary learning strategies use of the students were analyzed and discussed qualitatively. Finally, the results of these qualitative data were compared with the result obtained through the quantitative data to support or justify it.

This chapter has two parts. The first part presents the findings while the second deals with the discussion. The finding section presents the quantitative result found from the quantitative data analysis under sub-section 4.1.1. It also present the qualitative finding in separate section under sub-section 4.1.2. These are presented respectively in section 4.1 and 4.2 below:

4.1. Findings

Based on the data gathered using the two instruments the findings of the qualitative data and quantitative data were analyzed and discussed in this section. The findings of the quantitative data were tabulated and organized in tables as follows. The results of the quantitative data also discussed qualitatively.

4.1.1. Quantitative finding.

The quantitative findings obtained by quantitative data analysis were tabulated and organized in tables based on the strategy categories. Then, below each of them the results were discussed one by one.

4. 14: Strategies for discovering meaning of new words (determination)

NO	Item	Grade 9					Grade 11				
		Responses					Responses				
		never	rarely	sometimes	frequently	always	never	rarely	sometimes	frequently	always
1	Analysis of word kind	6 (6%)	10 (11%)	30 (32%)	32 (34%)	16 (17%)	1 (6%)	2 (11%)	3 (17%)	4 (22%)	8 (44%)
2	Analysis of word part (affixes and roots)	13 (14%)	11 (12%)	33 (36%)	22 (23%)	15 (16%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	3 (17%)	7 (39%)	6 (33%)
3	Analysis of pictures or gestures	6 (6%)	15 (16%)	15 (16%)	34 (37%)	24 (25%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	2 (11%)	10 (56%)	4 (22%)
4	Guessing from context	3 (3%)	13 (14%)	28 (30%)	30 (31%)	23 (24%)	1 (6%)	3 (17%)	5 (28%)	5 (28%)	5 (28%)
5	Using dictionary	3 (3%)	10 (10%)	13 (14%)	40 (42%)	28 (30%)	2 (11%)	2 (11%)	5 (28%)	5 (28%)	4 (22%)

Table 4.1 shows that Grade 11 students use the strategy of word part analysis more frequently than Grade 9 students. Concerning this strategy use, Grade 9 and Grade 11 students are different at two points. One point is that they are different in terms of the

frequencies of use. This means that a large number of Grade 11 students use the strategy ‘frequently’ and ‘always’, but a large number of Grade 9 students use it ‘sometimes’ and ‘frequently’. Secondly, the numbers of students who use the strategy at these ranges are also different. That is, while 30(32%) and 32(34%) of Grade 9 students use the strategy ‘sometimes’ and ‘frequently’, only 8(44%) and 4(22%)of the Grade 11 students use it ‘frequently’ and “always” to discover the meaning of a new word.

Table 4.1 also shows that a larger number of Grade 11students use the strategy of word part analysis (affixes and roots) than their Grade 9 counterparts do. This means, while 34(36%) and 22(23%) of Grade 9 students use it ‘frequently’ and always’ respectively, 7(39%) and 6(33%) of Grade 11 students use it frequently’ and always’ in the stated order.

As Table 4.1 further shows, greater number of students in both grades use analysis of picture or gesture as strategy of determining the meaning of a new word. That is, 35 (37%) and 24 (25%) of Grade 9 students use it ‘frequently’ and ‘always’. Likewise, 10 (56%) and 4 (22 %) of Grade 11 students use it ‘frequently’ and ‘always’. Additionally, equal percentages (6%) of students in both grades never use this strategy. This shows that the strategy is the predominantly used strategy by both groups of students.

As indicated in Table 4.1, almost the same percentages of students use the guessing strategy around almost of the ranges. Meaning, 28 (30%), 26 (28%) and 23(24%) of Grade 9 students use the strategy at the frequencies of ‘sometimes’, ‘frequently’ and ‘always’ respectively. In the same way, 5 (28%), 5 (28%) and 5 (28%) of Grade 11 students respectively use it ‘sometimes’, ‘frequently’ and ‘always’.

As can be seen from Table 4.1, concerning the use of dictionary as a strategy of determining the meaning of a new word, Grade 9 students exceed Grade 11 students by a third at the range of ‘frequently’ and ‘always’. That is while 40 (42%) and 28(30%) of Grade 9 students use the strategy ‘frequently’ and always’; 5 (28%) and 4 (22%) of Grade 11 students use it in the same range. Similarly, few numbers, 1 (3%) of the Grade 9 and 2 (11%) of Grade 11 students never use it.

In general, a greater percentage of Grade 11 students use the determination strategy more frequently than their Grade 9 counterparts as demonstrated in the Table 4.1.

To see if there is a significant difference between the students of the two groups in the use of this strategy (determination strategy), the data were entered into SPSS software and the following results are obtained. (Equal variance was assumed as Sig. >0.05 in all cases)

Table 4. 15: Group statistics and t-test values of determination strategies use of students

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD.	SE.	t	df	Sig
Determination strategies use of students	Grade9	94	3.53	1.094	.113	.543	110	.588
	Grade 11	18	3.69	1.189	.280			

As can be seen from table 4.2, the group statistics shows that the mean values of Grade 9 students (3.53) is lower than that of Grade 11 students' mean values (3.69). From this, we can say that Grade 11 students use determination strategies more frequently than Grade 9 students. If we look at the standard deviation (SD) of both grades, it is around 1 point (1.094 and 1.189). This shows us that the individual responses on average were about 1 point away from the mean. This means that they concentrate around the mean values. The standard error also indicates how close the samples mean values are to the true mean of the overall population. Accordingly, the standard errors (SE) of both grades (.113 for Grade 9) and (.280 for Grade 11) are relatively small, and these indicate that the mean values of both grades are relatively close to the true mean values of the overall population. Put it differently, the samples means are relatively accurate in showing the actual population mean. These concepts held true for all the analyses which were carried out in this study as the results obtained under each group of strategies are similar.

To see if there is a significant difference between the strategy uses of students of both groups, the independent t-test was calculated and the results are given in Table 4.2 above. The result in this table shows that the calculated t-value (.543) is greater than alpha value

(.0.05). Although the mean values look different, there is no significant difference between the two groups of students in using the components of determination strategies. This implies that there is no substantial change in this strategy use as grade level increases.

Table 4. 16: Discovery strategies use of students at both grades (social)

No	Items	Grade 9					Grade 11				
		Responses					Responses				
		never	rarely	sometimes	frequently	always	never	rarely	sometimes	frequently	always
6	Ask teacher	3 (3%)	14 (15%)	23 (24%)	24 (26%)	30 (32%)	1 (6%)	7 (39%)	5 (28%)	3 (17%)	2 (11%)
7	Ask classmate	3 (3%)	10 (10%)	22 (23%)	28 (30%)	31 (33%)	1 (6%)	3 (17%)	6 (33%)	4 (22%)	4 (22%)

Table 4.3 indicates that a greater number of students of Grade 9 use the strategy of asking their teacher to discover the meaning of a new word than Grade 11 students do. This means, While 24 (26%) and 30 (32%) of Grade 9 students respectively use the strategy ‘frequently’ and ‘always’, only 3(17%) and 2 (11%) of Grade 11 students respectively use it with the same frequencies. Likewise, more Grade 9 students than Grade 11 of their counterparts use the strategy of asking classmates for discovering the meaning of a new word. That is to say, while 28 (30%) and 31(33%) of Grade 9 students respectively use the strategy ‘frequently’ and ‘always’, only 4 (22%) and 4(22%) of Grade 11students respectively use it with the same frequency. This shows that Grade 9 students focus on social learning, but the Grade 11 students seem to focus on independent learning for discovering the meanings of new words. The data analyzed by SPSS for group statistics (mean values) and t-test(t-value) are discussed below to see for the presence or absence of significant difference between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students on vocabulary learning strategies use.

Table 4. 17 : Group statistics and t-test values of social strategies for discovery used by students40

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD.	SE.	t	df	Sig
Social strategies	Grade9	94	3.73	1.130	.117	2.045	110	.043
	Grade 11	18	3.13	1.135	.268			

Table 4.4 depicts that the mean value of Grade 9 students (3.73) is greater than the mean value of Grade 11 students (3.14). It seems that there is a significant difference in vocabulary learning strategies use between students of the two groups (Grade 9 and Grade11). To prove this point, it is seems imperative to see the independent samples t-test which is given bellow:

Table 4.4 also illustrates that there is a difference between the two groups of students in social strategies use for determining the meaning of a new word as reflected by the mean values in group statistics(3.58 >3.14). This seems that Grade 9 students are much better than Grade 11 students with regard to this strategies use. The t-test values show that the difference is statistically significant. This is because the calculated t-value (2.045) is greater than the alpha value (0.05). Thus, the change in this respect is significant as shown by mean values. The implication of this point seems that students at lower grades are better at using social strategies for discovering meaning of a new word and it decreases as grade level increases with regard to this strategy use. From this the researcher felt that it may come from the feeling that the students get ashamed of asking their teacher or their friends as they can be considered as weak or lazy.

Table 4. 18: Social strategies use of students for consolidating a new word

	Items	Grade 9					Grade 11				
		Responses					Responses				
		never	rarely	sometimes	frequently	always	never	rarely	sometimes	frequently	always
8	Study and practice meaning in groups	9 (9%)	16 (17%)	18 (19%)	26 (28%)	25 (27%)	0 (0%)	2 (11%)	5 (28%)	6 (33%)	5 (28%)
9	Interact with native fluent speakers	25 (27%)	25 (27%)	19 (20%)	17 (18%)	8 (8%)	3 (17%)	3 (17%)	5 (28%)	5 (28%)	2 (11%)

Table 4.5 shows that more Grade 11 students use the strategy of studying and practicing the meanings of new words in groups as compared to their Grade 9 counterparts. Statistically, 33% and 28% of Grade 11 students respectively use it ‘frequently’ and ‘always’. In contrast, 26 (28%) and 25 (27%) of the Grade 9 students use this strategy with the same frequency. Similarly, regarding the social strategy of making interaction with native or fluent speakers of the language, Grade 11 students are relatively better than Grade 9 students. Specifically, 25 (27%) and 25 (27%) of Grade 9 students respectively use it ‘never’ and ‘rarely’, while 5 (28%) and 5 (28%) of Grade 11 students respectively use it ‘sometimes’ and ‘frequently’. To check for the presence of significant difference the mean values and the t-test values are presented in Tables 4.6 below.

Table 4. 19: Group statistics and t-test values for social strategies use to consolidate new words

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD.	SE.	t	df	Sig
Consolidating social strategies	Grade9	94	3.00	1.276	.132	-.514	110	.608
	Grade 11	18	3.17	1.163	.274			

The group statistics in table 4.6 above demonstrates that there is a little variation in the mean of the two groups of students. This means that, the mean value of Grade 11 students

(3.17) slightly exceeds the mean values of Grade 9 students (3.00). In other words, in terms of this strategy use, Grade 11 students are slightly better than Grade 11 students. From this, it can be inferred that Grade 11 students do not get ashamed of practicing the meanings of a new word with their peer as they do so when they ask for meaning. That is, they do not fear of being considered as weak or lazy by their teacher or classmates when compared to that of social strategy for getting the meanings of new words.

To show if the variation highlighted above is significant or not, the independent samples t-test is summarized in table 4.9 above. From this table, the t- value (-.514) is greater than alpha value (0.05). Therefore, it is possible to say that there is no statistically significant difference between the students' use of social strategies for consolidating the meaning of a new word once they have obtained. This result is opposite to the one obtained in table 4.6 above. This means that there is statistically significant difference between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students in social strategy use for determining the meaning of a new word, but there is no such a difference in social strategy use for consolidating the word they have learned.

Table 4. 20: Memory strategies use of students for consolidating new words

No	Items	Grade 9					Grade 11				
		Responses					Responses				
		never	rarely	ometimes	frequently	always	never	rarely	ometimes	frequently	always
10	Associate(relate) new word with objects it refer to	4 (4%)	14 (15%)	24 (25%)	31 (33%)	21 (22%)	2 (11%)	4 (22%)	2 (11%)	8 (44%)	2 (11%)
11	Connect the word to personal experience	4 (4%)	12 (13%)	20 (21%)	37 (39%)	21 (22%)	0 (0%)	3 (17%)	2 (11%)	11 (61%)	2 (11%)
12	Group words with their synonyms or antonyms	11 (12%)	19 (20%)	26 (28%)	22 (23%)	16 (17%)	1 (6%)	2 (11%)	5 (28%)	4 (22%)	6 (33%)
13	Use semantic mapping	8 (8%)	16 (16%)	13 (14%)	28 (30%)	29 (31%)	1 (6%)	2 (11%)	4 (22%)	9 (50%)	2 (11%)
14	Use rhyme	39 (41%)	32 (34%)	15 (16%)	4 (4%)	2 (2%)	8 (44%)	7 (39%)	2 (11%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)

15	Study spellings of a word	10 (11%)	11 (12%)	19 (20%)	30 (32%)	24 (25%)	3 (17%)	3 (17%)	5 (28%)	3 (17%)	4 (22%)
16	Make sound association	17 (18%)	24 (25%)	19 (20%)	21 (22%)	13 (13%)	4 (22%)	7 (39%)	4 (22%)	1 (6%)	2 (11%)
17	Use physical action	15 (16%)	20 (21%)	24 (25%)	20 (21%)	15 (16%)	2 (11%)	5 (28%)	7 (39%)	2 (11%)	1 (6%)
18	Image words' meaning	11 (12%)	18 (19%)	21 (22%)	24 (25%)	20 (22%)	2 (11%)	9 (50%)	4 (22%)	2 (11%)	2 (12%)
19	Say new word loudly	13 (14%)	24 (25%)	23 (24%)	16 (17%)	18 (19%)	1 (6%)	9 (50%)	2 (11%)	3 (17%)	3 (17%)

As can be seen from table 4.7, at the ratings of ‘frequently’ and ‘always’, equal number of Grade 9 and Grade 11 students use the strategy of relating the meaning of a new word to the object it refers to. That means in sum 52(55%) of Grade 9 and 10 (56%) of Grade 11 students use it at the expressed frequencies. Conversely, Grade 11 students who never use this strategy are about three-folds of Grade 9 students who do not use the same strategy. Statistically, 2 (11%) of Grade 11 and 4 (4 %) of Grade 9 students never use the strategy.

Regarding the use of personal experience for memorizing the meanings of new words, once they have been encountered, Grade 11 students are by far better than Grade 9 students. Statistically, while 11 (61%) and 2 (11%) of Grade 11 students respectively use this strategy ‘frequently’ and ‘always, only 37 (39%) and 19 (20%) of Grade 9 students respectively use this strategy with the same frequencies.

Grouping words into their synonym or antonym is one way to remember new words. As table 4.10 shows equal percentages of both groups of students (28%) ‘sometimes’ use the strategy. Of course, the data in the table shows that the tendency of using this strategy slightly increases as grade level increases. That means, at Grade 9, 22(23%) and 16(17%) of students use the strategy ‘frequently’ and ‘always’, but at Grade 11, 4(22%) and 6(33%) of the students use it with the same frequencies.

As to semantic mapping strategy, 28(30%) and 29(31%) of the Grade 9 students respectively use it 'frequently' and 'always' while 9(50%), and 2(11%) of Grade 11 students respectively use it in the same way. This strategy seems one of the predominantly used strategies by students in both grade levels. With regard to the use of rhyme, 39(41%) and 32(34%) of the Grade 9 students, and 8(44%) and 7 (39%) of Grade 11 students 'never' and 'rarely' use it as indicated in table 4,10. Moreover, the students responded that almost none of them use the strategy 'frequently' or 'always'. Thus, it can be inferred that this strategy might be unfamiliar to both grade students.

Table 4.7 further indicates that 30 (32%) and 24(25%) of Grade 9 students respectively use the strategy of studying the spelling of a word 'frequently' and 'always', but 5(28%) of Grade 11 students respectively use it 'sometimes'. On the other hand, 10 (11%) and 3(17%) of Grade 9 and Grade 11 students respectively 'never' use the strategy as indicated in table4.10. Furthermore, concerning the use of physical action in order to study meanings of new words, 24 (25%) of Grade 9 and 7(39%) of Grade 11 students respectively use it 'sometimes'. However, 15(16%) and 2 (11%)of Grade 9 and Grade 11 students respectively 'never' use the strategy as indicated in Table 4.10. This shows that the strategy is somewhat more frequently used by Grade 11 students. Table 4.10 also depicts that 24(25%) and 21(22%) of Grade 9 students use the strategy 'frequently' and 'always', but 9 (50%) of Grade 11 students 'rarely' use the strategy of creating a new word's image for studying the meaning of a new word. Regarding this strategy, use Grade 9 students are better than Grade 11 ones.

Additionally, as Table 4.7 shows, the majority of the students at both grades 'rarely' use the strategy of associating the sound of the target language (L2 in our case) with the sounds of L1 words. That is, 24 (25%) of Grade 9 and 7(39%) of Grade 11 students use it rarely. Likewise, 17 (18%) and 4 (22%) of Grade 9 and Grade 11 students never use the strategy at all. From Table 4.10, one can also see that more Grade11 students do not use the strategy of saying the word loudly compared to their Grade 9 counterparts. Statistically 9 (50%) of Grade 11 students and 24 (25%) of Grade 9 students respectively use this strategy rarely. So, this strategy is found to be the least frequently used by both

groups of students though a slight difference is observed between the two. For the determination of significant difference the following Table 8 have clear cut responses

Table 4. 21: Group statistics and t-test values of memory strategies use of students

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD.	SE.	t	df	Sig
Memory strategies	Grade9	94	3.13	1.183	.122	.551	110	.582
	Grade 11	18	2.96	1.073	.253			

As can be observed from the group statistics (see Table 4.8 above), the mean value of Grade 9 students (3.13) is slightly greater than that of Grade 11 students (2.96). However, the independent samples t-test value (0.551) is greater than that of alpha value (0.05). This reveals that there is no statistically, significant difference in memory strategies use of Grade 9 and Grade 11 students. This suggests that there is no considerable change in the use of memory strategies as grade level increases.

Table 4. 22: Cognitive strategies use of students in order to consolidate new words

No	Items	Grade 9					Grade 11				
		Responses					Responses				
		never	rarely	sometimes	frequently	always	never	rarely	sometimes	frequently	always
20	Use word lists	8 (8%)	12 (13%)	19 (20%)	23 (24%)	32 (34%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	9 (50%)	5 (28%)	3 (17%)
21	Verbal repetition	1 (1%)	17 (18%)	15 (16%)	27 (29%)	33 (35%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	3 (17%)	4 (22%)	9 (50%)
22	Written repetition	5 (5%)	20 (21%)	24 (26%)	27 (29%)	20 (21%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	6 (33%)	8 (44%)	3 (17%)
23	Take notes in class	3 (3%)	8 (8%)	17 (18%)	22 (23%)	44 (47%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (11%)	10 (56%)	6 (33%)
24	English labels on physical object	18 (19%)	28 (30%)	24 (25%)	13 (14%)	11 (12%)	4 (22%)	3 (7%)	8 (44%)	3 (17%)	0 (0%)

From Table 4.9, we can observe that the majority of Grade 9 students tend to use the word list strategy ‘frequently’ and ‘always’, while Grade 11 students make use of it ‘sometimes’ and ‘frequently’. As Table 4.9 shows, 23 (24%) and 32 (34%) of Grade 9 students respectively use the strategy ‘frequently’ and ‘always’. In contrast, 9 (50%) and 5 (28%) of Grade 11 students use it ‘sometimes’ and ‘frequently’. This shows that many of the Grade 11 students use the strategy more frequently than Grade 9 students do.

As indicated in the Table 4.9, students of both groups use verbal repetition strategy with a higher rate. While 27 (29%) and 33(35%) of Grade 9 students respectively use the strategy ‘frequently’ and ‘always’, 4 (22%) and 9 (50%) of Grade 11 students use it ‘frequently’ and ‘always’. This strategy is used by both grade students at large; only 1 (1%) and 1(6%) of Grade 9 and Grade 11 students, respectively, never use it.

Concerning the written repetition strategy for memorizing new words, as that of the verbal repetition, a larger numbers of students of both grades use it with about the same frequency(frequently and always). That is, 24 (26%) and 27 (29%) of Grade 9 and 6 (33%) and 8 (44%) of Grade 11 students use the strategy ‘sometimes’ and ‘frequently’. However, a larger number of Grade 9 students never use the strategy when compared to those of Grade 11 ones. That is, 5 (5%) of Grade 9 students and none of Grade 11 students never use it. This implies that grade 11 students are more familiar to the strategy than grade 9 students.

Note-taking is one strategy of learning vocabulary. This strategy is much more used by students of Grade 11 than Grade 9 ones. Statistically, while 22(23%) and 44 (47%) of Grade 9 students use it ‘frequently’ and ‘always’, 10 (56%) and 6 (33%) of Grade11 students use it in the same manner. Likewise, fewer number of Grade 11 students never use the strategy when compared to those of Grade 9 ones. That is, none of Grade 11 students and 3% of Grade 9 students reported that they never use it. Although the frequency of use is different, almost all the sample students of both grades use the strategy. Hence, this strategy is also found to be the most frequently used one by both grade students with slight difference.

Putting English labels on physical object is another strategy of studying the meaning of a new word. As Table 4.9 indicates, students of both grades look unfamiliar with the use of this strategy. This is shown by the number of students who do not use the strategy. A large number of them (18(19%) and 28 (30%) of Grade 9 and 4(22%) and 3(17%) of Grade 11 students) respectively ‘never’ and ‘rarely’ use it. However, Grade 11 students are relatively better as 8(44%) of them use it ‘sometimes’

Table 4. 23: Group statistics and t-test values o cognitive strategies use of students

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD.	SE.	t	df	Sig
Cognitive strategies	Grade9	94	3.51	1.164	.120	-.745	110	.458
	Grade 11	18	3.72	.895	.211			

The result of the group statistics in table 4.10 reflects that the mean values of Grade 9 students (3.51) is less than that of the mean value of Grade 11 students (3.72). This result appears to show significant difference between the two groups of students. In order to cheek this fact, the independent t-test was calculated and the results are shown in Table 4.10 above. Accordingly, the t-calculated value and the t-critical value are compared. This result revealed that t-calculated value (-.745) is greater than the p-value (0.05). This justified that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups in their cognitive strategy use for consolidating the new words they have learned

Table 4. 24: Meta-cognitive strategies use of students for consolidating new word

No.	Items	Grade 9					Grade 11				
		Frequencies					Frequencies				
		never	rarely	sometimes	frequently	always	never	rarely	sometimes	frequently	always
25	Testing oneself with word tests	13 (14%)	19 (20%)	30 (32%)	18 (19%)	21 (22%)	3 (17%)	2 (12%)	6 (33%)	4 (22%)	3 (17%)

26	Use English language media	14 (15%)	19 (20%)	30 (32%)	16 (17%)	15 (16%)	2 (11%)	3 (17%)	6 (33%)	3 (17%)	4 (22%)
27	Skip or pass a new word	48 (51%)	19 (20%)	14 (15%)	10 (10%)	3 (3%)	2 (11%)	4 (22%)	3 (17%)	4 (22%)	5 (%)
28	Have a plan for studying words	10 (11%)	43 (45%)	18 (19%)	13 (14%)	10 (11%)	3 (17%)	2 (11%)	(4) 22%	6 (33%)	3 (17%)

Meta-cognitive strategy is the strategy by which students control and evaluate their own learning. Four strategy types are indicated in table 4.11 above. Testing oneself with word tests is one strategy. As shown in table 4.11, large number of students of Grade 9 use the strategy ‘rarely’ and ‘sometimes’. However, a large number of Grade 11 ones use it ‘sometimes’ and ‘frequently’. Accordingly, 30 (32%) and 18 (19%) of grade 9 students use it ‘rarely’ and ‘sometimes’, but 7 (39%) and 4 (22%) of Grade 11 students respectively use it ‘sometimes’ and ‘frequently’. Of course, large numbers of students seem unfamiliar with this strategy use. Because 13(14%) of Grade 9 and 3 (17%) of Grade 11 students respectively never use it.

The use of English language media is another aspect of meta-cognitive strategy. A very large number of students use this strategy less frequently as can be observed from table 4.11. This means, while 19 (20%) and 30 (32%) of Grade 9 use the strategy ‘rarely’ and ‘sometimes’, 3(17%) and 6 (33%) of Grade 11 students use it ‘rarely’ and ‘sometimes, too’. At the same time, table 4.16 depicts that 14 (15%) of Grade 9 and 2(11%) of Grade 11 students never use the strategy, too.

The third component of meta-cognitive strategy is to skip or pass a new word while reading or listening to a text if it constrains understanding of the message. This strategy is used if there is no way of understanding a new word. As shown in table 4.11, the strategy is not used by the largest number of students of both grades though Grade 11 students are better than Grade 9 ones. In statistics 49 (51%) and 19 (20%) of Grade 9 students and 2(11%) and 4 (22%) of Grade 11 students ‘never’ and ‘rarely’ use the strategy

respectively. Thus, from this we can say that this strategy is the least frequently used one as compared to others.

The fourth type of meta-cognitive strategy is having a plan for studying vocabulary. According to the students' responses to the respective items of questionnaire, a large number of students do not use the strategy to develop their own vocabulary power. As can be seen from table 4.11 above, 10(11%) and 42(45%), and 3(17%) and 2(11%) of Grade 9 and Grade 11 students respectively 'never' and 'rarely' use the strategy. Only few of Grade 9 and about half of Grade 11 students budget their time to study vocabulary. In spite of this fact Grade 11 students show slight progress than Grade 9 ones. In order to see the existence of significant difference between the students in relation to this strategy use the group statistics for the mean values and the t-test values are shown in Table 4.12 below.

Table 4. 25: Group statistics and t-test values on meta-cognitive strategies use of students

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD.	SE.	t	df	Sig
Meta-cognitive strategies	Grade9	94	2.77	1.146	.118	1.506	110	.135
	Grade 11	18	3.22	1.260	.297			

A close look at the group statistics in the Table 4.12 above shows that there is a mean discrepancy between the two groups of students (Grade 9 and Grade 11). This is observed from the data but existence of significant difference can be determined by analyzing the t-test value from Table 4.12. This table reveals that the t-calculated value (1.506) is greater than the p-value (0.05). This proves the absence of significant difference between the two groups of the students in their meta-cognitive strategy use. This in turn reflects that the two groups of students use meta-cognitive strategies at about the same level of frequency.

4.1.2. Qualitative findings

A classroom observation was conducted to get qualitative data used to complement the data obtained through a questionnaire. Three sections, two from Seyo Secondary School

and one from Seyo Preparatory School were observed. Each section was observed twice to see the observable vocabulary learning strategies used by the students. A checklist was prepared and used during these data collection sessions. The contents of the checklist was the reflections of the activities of the teachers and the students during the teaching learning process. Though the focus was to see how the students use vocabulary learning strategies to determine the meanings of the new words, to get the information, the researcher planned to observe how teachers lead their students towards the use of these strategies in response to the vocabulary questions. So during the observation sessions three teachers were also observed. They were using different strategies of vocabulary teaching which could result in different learning strategy cultivation among the students. Of course the observation was not aimed to investigate the vocabulary teaching strategies of the teachers but it was intended to observe how students learn the vocabularies the teachers teach using whatever methodology. What observable vocabulary learning strategies they employ in response to the teachers questions regarding vocabulary learning or discovering and consolidating meanings of words. As known some VLSs are observable like as in note taking, asking the teacher for meaning or synonymy /antonym/paraphrase, calling the word, writing the spellings, etc, however; others are non- observable as they are purely mental processes. Examples of these are monitoring comprehension, activating prior knowledge...etc. So, what is intended to do is to observe these observable strategies and having the ample information relevant to the issue under investigation.

From this observation, the following results were obtained. The information was analyzed under three sessions based on the number of sections being observed.

Observation Sessions 1 and 2

During these sessions one section was observed twice. At both sessions the teacher and the section were the same. During these times what the teacher did and how the students react was put here. When one Grade 9 teacher teaches the vocabulary lesson which is a revision exercise of three chapters, he asked the students to determine the meanings of each word from the context in which they are placed. Definitions of the words were

given in the students textbook and the students were asked to call the names of the words which match with each of the given definitions. Secondly, they were asked by the teacher to come to the front and write the words on the blackboard. More than two students came to the front and wrote the spellings of each word on the board. Next, the teacher asked the students in the class which words were correct or spelt correctly. Then, the teacher underscored the words spelt correctly. After that, the teacher asked the students to say the words loudly. Additionally the teacher asked the word classes of the words. But students are observed fail to say the word classes of the words except a few of them. In addition to that the teacher asked the students to write sentences of their own using each word individually. Again the teacher let the students to read their sentences loudly. The teacher also gave some corrections to the students' sentences. Later on, the students observed taking the notes of each word in to their notebook. The second day the same teacher teaches vocabulary lesson which is new and extracted from the reading text. He let the students to find the meanings of the words by guessing from the context in which they are found. The students did so. Then, the teacher asked some students for the meanings of the words and wrote the right ones on the blackboard. Students copied them in to their notebook. He gave them homework to make sentences with each word and concluded the lesson. From these we can infer the vocabulary learning strategies use of the students as follows:

Determination strategies:

- Guess meaning of new words from context.
- Identify the word class of the words particularly by looking at the suffixes attached to the root-word like important-important-ly. Here –ly is a suffix added to some adjectives to change its word class from adjective to an adverb.

Social strategy:

- Looking at how the other students write the words on the blackboard.
- Perceive the correct spellings of the words after teachers' feedback was given.

- Say the spellings in their mental and practice it by listening to one another or their teachers' pronunciations. Moreover, they practice the sound when they read their sentences containing the new words

Memory strategies:

- They memorize the words from contexts they are placed in.
- Try to write the spelling of the word from their memory.

Cognitive strategy:

- Practice the right spellings while they write them.
- Take notes for later study and practice. They were observed taking notes of the words with their definitions and the example sentences encompassing them.

Observation Sessions 3 and 6

The seconded two observation sessions were also carried out in grade 9 of different section and, different teacher from the aforementioned ones. During these two observation sessions one section was observed twice at different times. But as the section and the teacher observed were the same the result was brought here together. What the teacher was doing to cultivate the students' vocabulary learning strategies use, and what the students were doing in response to this looks like these. The first day, this teacher first wrote eight (8) words on the blackboard with their respective definitions. Next she explained them one by one. Then, she told the students to copy them down into their exercise books. After that she asked the students to write sentences with each word. Then, she asked them to read their sentences loudly. Later, the teacher asked the students to read through the reading text which contains these words for developing contextual understanding; and discuss the contextual meaning of the words being in groups of three (desk groups). The students were observed accomplishing the five orders given by the teacher one by one. The second day the teacher teaches the vocabulary lesson from the reading text. She ordered the students to look at the new words given in bold in the text. She asked some students to tell her what the meanings of the words are by guessing from context. Then, she asked the students to match these words to their definitions given

in the exercise section of the text. Lastly, students copied the words with their definitions into their notebooks. From these, students were observed while applying these vocabulary learning strategies.

Determination strategies:

- Guess practically from the context in which the words are used in the text.

Social strategies:

- Practice group learning by analyzing the words in the text. Social strategy for consolidating the word is realized when the students are given an opportunity to work together in such away. Using this opportunity the students can learn from one another on how to guess the words meaning; which contextual clue to use for each of the words in the text.

Cognitive strategies:

- Practice the word in real context (written and spoken context).When they write the words in sentences of their own they are practicing the spelling and the pronunciation of the words at a time.
- Taking notes of each word into their notebook. They were observed copying the words with their meanings and the sentences containing them.

Observation Sessions 4 and 5

The last observation was held in grade 11.It was held twice within the same section, and on the same teacher and students. As grade 9 teachers did, the grade 11 teacher also introduced lessons of the days orally. He also gave them some instruction they need to follow for accomplishing each task. The first day, he asked the students to open their book and look at the list of words on the page. Then, he asked them predict their meaning before reading the text. After that, he let the students to read through the text designed for vocabulary teaching and learning. Then, he instructed them to skim the vocabulary items given boldly in the text and guess their meanings by using the context provided. The

students tried as far as they can. Next, the teacher gone through each paragraph and showed them how to guess each word's meaning using different contextual clues. On the next session, this teacher teaches word part analysis strategy for determining a new word's meaning. He let the students to discuss in groups to determine the meanings of the words by analyzing their parts. Then he asked them to write the words on the blackboard and tell their parts as suffix, prefix and roots with their respective meanings. Some students come out and did it. At last, the teacher asked the students to list some words containing such affixes individually. The students wrote a lot and some of them who got a chance read it loudly to the class. From these two observation sessions, students were observed using the following vocabulary learning strategies.

Determination strategy:

- Guessing meanings of words from the context in which the words placed by using background knowledge and linguistic clues. They have got three chances of learning how to guess the meaning of each word. They got the opportunity to try on themselves (to individually act up on the words), next in their desk groups and finally following their teacher.
- Used word part analysis strategy for learning meanings of words.

Social strategy:

- Discuss in groups to determine words' meaning. They were observed doing this with their peer and with their teacher at the later stage.

In general, from the six observation sessions of both grades, students were seen using some vocabulary learning strategies like memory strategy as memorizing the words based on contexts they are placed in; cognitive strategies like verbal repetition (saying the word loudly) , written repetition (writing the spellings and following when others write it on the board and using the words in sentences) and note-taking; determination strategies like word kind analysis (which word class the new word belongs to) ,word part analysis (prefix-root-suffix) ,and guessing from context in which the word is used; social strategies like discussing in groups for learning the meanings of the words by analyzing the words' part (word part analysis) and how to guess word from context.

As the observation sessions are not enough they cannot yielded sufficient information regarding the vocabulary learning strategies use of the students. If the observation session were more frequent than this, other observable VLSs of the students would have been manifested. Moreover, some vocabulary learning strategies are non-observable that they cannot be observed even during these sessions. This implies that, another data gathering tool that serves this purpose was worthwhile.

4.2. Discussion

Under this heading, the major findings of this study was explored and discussed shortly based on the results obtained from the data gathered, analyzed, organized and narrated under the heading, the findings. Data was gathered from the sample students using questionnaire and observation and both were analyzed separately. Data gathered through questionnaire was analyzed manually for percentage and the raw data again fed in to the SPSS software to get the mean value and the t-test values. The summary of the results are organized and provided bellow in order that it can answer the three research questions. Here are the three tables that serve this purpose.

Table 4. 26: Summary of group statistics values for the six sub-categories of VLSs

No	Sub-categories of VLSs	Grade 9		Grade 11	
		mean	rank	mean	rank
1	Determination strategies use	3.53	2	3.69	2
2	Social strategies use for meaning discovery	3.58	1	3.14	5
3	Social strategies use for word consolidation	3.00	5	3.17	4
4	Memory strategies use	3.13	4	2.96	6
5	Cognitive strategies use	3.51	3	3.72	1
6	Meta-cognitive strategies use	2.77	6	3.22	3

This table (table 4.13) answers two of the research questions (Q1 &Q2).

Q1. What vocabulary learning strategies are predominantly used by students in each grade level?

Looking at the table we can identify the strategies which are predominantly used in each grade level. As shown by table 4.19 the two discovery strategies: determination and social strategies followed by cognitive strategy are predominantly used by Grade 9 students. In case of Grade 11 students, cognitive strategies and determination strategies are used predominantly followed by memory /sic/strategies. Meta-cognitive strategies are the least frequently used strategies by Grade 9 students; whereas, memory strategies are less frequently used by Grade11 students. On the other hand, while Grade 9 students are better in using social strategies for meaning discovery, Grade 11 ones are better at using social strategies for consolidating the words they have already learnt. The results of the qualitative data also show that the aforementioned strategies are predominantly used by both groups of students except slight difference on the use of cognitive strategy used by Grade11 students.

Q2.What are the changes observed in vocabulary learning strategy use as grade level increases?

As can be observed from table 4.19 there is no positive expected change as the grade level increases. That means there is no considerable change in vocabulary learning strategies use of the students in line with grade level increase. The observation also reflected similar result. That means the same types of vocabulary learning strategies were used with similar process by both Grade 9 and Grade 11 students. This is a questionable result that can be answered through replication of the study in the same grade level following the same procedures.

Q3.Are there significant differences in vocabulary learning strategy use between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students of Seyo High School and Seyo Preparatory School?

The following table (Tables 4.14) explicitly answers this question

Table 4. 27: Group statistics and t-test values of students on 28 strategies used for this study

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD.	SE.	t	df	Sig
Comparative strategies use of students on 28 of the items	Grade9	94	3.26	1.153	.119	-.054	110	.957
	Grade 11	18	3.28	1.076	.254			

Table 4.14 shows that there is a slight difference in mean values of students of the two grades. That is the mean value of Grade 9 students (3.26) is a bit less than that of Grade 11's mean value (3.28). Answering the third research question also requires comparison of the t-test value against the p- value. In relation to this, the t-calculated value (-.054) is greater than the p-value (0.05). This means, there is no significant difference in vocabulary learning strategies use between students of Grade 9 and their Grade11 counterparts. Therefore, as this study reflects there is no statistically significant difference between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students of Seyo High School and Seyo Preparatory Schools with regard to their vocabulary learning strategies use. This fact was also observed during the observation session, too. That means, the result of the observation shown that no considerable difference was seen between the two grades in their vocabulary learning strategies use.

From the overall results obtained, it appears that the majority of the sample students in both grades use most of the strategies at the medium level of strategy use (mean values between 2.5-3.4). This level of strategies use was given by Oxford (1990) as cited in Getachew Bekele and Getachew Seyoum (2014). According to Oxford, the three levels of strategies use are: the strategies that have mean values of 1.0-2.4 are categorized as 'low'; 2.5-3.4 as 'medium'; and 3.5-5.0 are categorized as 'high'. As can be seen from the overall responses to the six sub-categories of vocabulary learning strategies summarized in table 4.19 above, most students are found to employ many of these strategies at the 'medium' level of strategy use. However, this result is a little bit different between the two grades. This means that Grade 9 students use three strategies: determination

strategies, social strategies for discovering meanings and cognitive strategies at the high level. Conversely, Grade 11 students use only two strategies: determination and cognitive strategies at a high level. Additionally, while Grade 9 students use three strategies: social strategies for consolidating meaning, memory strategies and meta-cognitive strategies at the medium level, Grade 11 students use four strategies: social strategies for discovering meaning, social strategies for consolidating, memory strategies and meta-cognitive strategies at the same level.

In addition, though these results do not show the result for individual strategies use, they may provide us with the overall pictures of strategy use of the majority of the students who participated in the present study. Even if the use of meta-cognitive strategies use of Grade 9 and memory strategies use of Grade 11 students seem somewhat discouraging, their use of other strategies are as a whole encouraging. This negligible use of the two strategies can be attributed to different factors. Grade 9 students may not have awareness of how to manage their vocabulary learning. For Grade 11 students the reason can be not giving due attention to the strategy as they are mature enough than Grade 9 students. Therefore, strategy training and encouraging the students towards using this important strategy is very valuable.

In general, the result showed that Grade 9 and Grade 11 students use most of the strategies investigated by the scholars. But their frequencies of use are different from strategy to strategy. That means the strategies that are used predominantly by Grade 9 are used less predominantly by Grade 11 students and vice versa. In addition to this, their level of use is different across grade level and the strategies. They use some of the strategies at the medium level and others of them at the high level. This finding disagrees with the vocabulary learning strategies researchers who studied VLSs use of good and poor learners like Schmitt, 1997; Gu and Jonson , 1996; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Getnet Gidey , 2008; and Getachew Bekele and Getachew Seyoum (2014) who in one voice declare that good language learners use a varieties of strategies than poor learners. This is because as obviously known, grade 11 students are considered as good learners since they took and passed the national exam. They are approximately about 25% of the grade 10 students who could be able to pass to grade 11. These researchers declared that

students' achievement correlates to their language proficiencies which in turn correlates to their VLSs use. However, this finding showed that there is no considerable change in VLSs use as the grade level increase from grade 9-11. At the same time the current study showed that there is no significant difference between the two groups of the students in their VLSs use. This raises a question why? That may be answered by replicating the research in similar contexts.

Although there are lots of researches conducted in the area of vocabulary learning strategies use inside and outside of Ethiopia, as to the knowledge of the researcher, research conducted by comparing different grade levels is not seen in Ethiopian context. But one research was conducted in Hungary which compares high school and university students VLSs use by (Dóczy, 2011). It was intended to answer three research questions in relation to the title. However, the responses contradict one another. The study shown three findings based on its research questions. These are as follows:

1. The finding shows that two strategies use of the students decrease as level of students increase: practicing on the regular basis and using word list for consolidating new words. Three strategies' use increase as level of students increase: skipping a new word, putting words into sentences, and pronunciation. Two strategies' use avoided: social and meta-cognitive strategies.
2. The finding reflects the absence of significant difference in strategies use between the groups. But in respond to question 3 it says higher level students use more strategies than lower level students and the researcher declared that it was a positive finding. For the three research question three seemingly contradicting results are reflected: for one thing it says as level of students increase, two VLSs use of students decrease, three VLSs use of them increase, and two VLSs use of them avoided; for the other thing it says no significance difference between the groups in their VLSs use, and in contrary to this it says higher level students use more VLSs.

However, the present study shows that cognitive strategy use of students increase as their grade level increase. Word list is one of cognitive strategies and as a sub-category students' use of this strategy increase as grade level increase. So, this

finding is not in agreement with it. Regarding the second point the current study totally agrees with Dóczy's study that skipping a new word putting words into sentences and pronunciation use of students increases parallel to grade level increase. In the third point Dóczy's finding contradict each other. On one hand, it says "no significant difference in VLSs use between the university and high school students. On the other hand, it says higher level students use more VLSs. But the present study has one finding that is there is no statistically significant difference between grade 9 and Grade 11 students in their VLSs use. The researcher hopes that the next researchers will reconcile these issues one day.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Summary

Language learning strategies have been recognized as processes of utmost importance when learning a second or foreign language. They encompass those tactics and elements of language learning process which depend on the learner and are related to personality factors, learning styles, age, sex, and cultural background. Vocabulary learning strategies, being a sub-category of learning strategies in general, are significant because the acquisition of vocabulary is a never-ending process and often poses discouraging difficulties for language learners.

Despite this fact, little attention has been paid to VLS (Allen, 1983; Carter & McCarty, 1988; Taylor, 1991). But recently it has received particular attention and researchers are showing an outpouring interest towards this important issue since the 1970's. Accordingly, many researches have been conducted in and out of the country on different titles regarding VLSs. Most of the studies carried out around this important issue focuses on finding what good language learners are observed doing in learning a language, vocabulary learning strategies employed by good and poor learners, vocabulary learning strategies use differences between male and female students, vocabulary learning strategies use and language proficiency.

Although there are some local studies like the ones mentioned above which investigated vocabulary learning strategy use among students at different levels, the researcher's experience shows that research studies that compare vocabulary learning strategy use across different grades is lacking. It is the need to fill this gap that initiated the proposed study. The study was aimed to compare vocabulary learning strategy use between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students at Seyo School and Seyo Preparatory School. In line with this, it was intended to identify the strategies that were predominantly used by Grade 9 and Grade 11 students. Additionally, it was intended to see if there are changes in vocabulary learning strategy use as grade level increases. Lastly, it was intended to determine if there

are significant differences in vocabulary learning strategy use between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students of Seyo School and Seyo Preparatory School. In general, the study intended to answer these three research questions:

1. What vocabulary learning strategies are predominantly used by students in each grade level?
2. What are the changes that are observed in vocabulary learning strategy use as grade level increases?
3. Are there significant differences in vocabulary learning strategy use between Grade 9 and Grade 11 students of Seyo Secondary School and Seyo Preparatory School?

To answer these questions a comparative survey method was employed by using both qualitative and quantitative approach. The populations of this study were Grade 9 and Grade 11 students of Seyo Secondary and Seyo Preparatory Schools who were learning in the academic year of 2007. The total populations in the two schools were 751(625 students in grade 9; and 126 students in grade 11) .Out of these total population 15% was selected from each section using stratified sampling followed by systematic sampling technique in order to obtain best representative sample of the population

To get ample information data were collected using questionnaire and classroom observation. The questionnaire was adapted from Schmitt 1997 and translated in to Afan Oromo to let the students easily understand the question and give accurate response to it. This version of the questionnaire was pilot tested on 50 students who are not participated in the actual study to check for the reliability and validity of the instrument. Some amendments were made to it based on students' responses to it. Then, the Afan Oromo version of the questionnaire was distributed for the sample students. For observation a checklist was prepared in advance and used for collecting reliable data.

From the beginning it was thought that the instruments could provide enough information and complement one another. However, the observation appeared to have yielded less information as the time given or the frequency of observation undergone was not enough. Secondly there are certain vocabulary learning strategies which are non-observable.

These ones could have been addressed by using structured interview. But the notion came too late after the researcher reached the end. Despite this fact the questionnaire yielded ample and valuable information as it was already validated and its reliability was pilot tested and checked on samples of similar grades and similar environment. The quantitative data collected was analyzed manually for percentages and using SPSS software for the mean values and the t-test values. The qualitative data collected through observation was also analyzed and discussed qualitatively using verbal **descriptions**, and the result was discussed. Accordingly, the study yielded the following major findings.

The finding indicated that the sample students in both grades use all the vocabulary learning strategy types but their frequency of use with regard to each strategy is different. Grade nine (9) students predominantly (at high level) use three of the sub-categories of VLS like determination strategies, social strategies for meaning discovery and cognitive strategies. On the other hand, Grade 11 students predominantly use only two of them: determination strategies and cognitive strategies. The left strategies types are used at the medium level in both cases. The finding also depicted that though a slight change was observed between Grades 9 and Grade 11 students in their vocabulary learning strategies use when their mean values are compared; the t-test value revealed that there is no significant difference between the two groups of students. Therefore, this research need replication and verification why a considerable change is not observed in their vocabulary learning strategies use between two far apart grade levels.

In general, both Grade 9 and Grade 11 students of Seyo Secondary School and Seyo Preparatory School students use the twenty-eight VLSs provided by the questionnaire. However their frequencies of use are different from strategy to strategy. They use some of the strategies at the high level and others of them at the medium level. But there is no significant difference in their VLSs use between the two grade students.

5.2. Conclusions

From the findings and discussions carried out under chapter four, the following conclusions have been drawn.

The results obtained from both the qualitative and quantitative data showed that the participants in this study use the VLS in all the six sub-categories. However, Grade 11 students use them with a slight difference when we see their mean values. Nonetheless, the change observed is insignificant. This was shown by the t-test values. The t-test values showed absence of significant difference between the two groups. This implies that there might be some factors that contribute to this negligible difference. These can be lack of awareness on the part of teachers to train the students on how to learn and empower themselves with vocabulary knowledge autonomously. Or it can be the effect of teaching-learning materials used by both teachers and learners. Another factor can be the methodology the teachers employ in the classroom during training on how to apply VLSs, and during teaching the vocabulary lesson.

It was also investigated that the students of the two grades use all the vocabulary learning strategies at different frequency level (medium 2.4-3.4 and high 3.4-5.0) As Oxford (1990) categorized the level of VLSs use 1.0-2.4 low, 2.5-3.4, medium, and 3.5-5.0 high. When the sub-categories are ranked for both groups separately according to their use, determination strategies, social strategies for discovering the meaning of a word and cognitive strategies are used predominantly (at high level of VLS use which has mean values 3.5 and above) by Grade 9 students. On the other hand, determination strategies and cognitive are used predominantly by Grade 11 students. The left sub-categories on both sides are used less frequently (at medium level of VLS use which has 2.5-3.4 mean values) by the students. That is meta-cognitive strategies and memory strategies are less frequently used by Grade 9 and Grade 11 students respectively. This implies that Grade 9 students may be unfamiliar to use meta- cognitive strategies which require training. Regarding memory strategies use of Grade 11 students encouraging the students by stressing its importance may bring an improvement. Because Grade 11 students are supposed to have the awareness of the use of memory strategies but they appeared to give less attention to it.

At last, the finding indicated that there is no significant change in VLSs use as grade level increase, i.e. Grade 9 and Grade 11 students of the study area use VLSs with about the same frequencies.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the above conclusions the following recommendations have been made.

1. English language teachers should train and encourage the students on how to use vocabulary learning strategies which can help them develop their vocabulary knowledge and in effect which can develop their language proficiency.
2. Grade 9 and Grade 11 English language teachers are responsible to identify which strategies are predominantly used by most of the students in different grade levels and encourage them to use the ones they do not want to use by identifying why they refrain from using them. In this study, it was found out that Grade 11 students less frequently use social strategies for discovering meanings. But social strategies contribute to success in the development of their vocabulary power. So teachers should encourage their students to work on vocabulary in groups. Grade 9 students also use social strategy for consolidation and meta-cognitive strategies less frequently. Hence, English teaches of Grade 9 should pay attention for enhancing the cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies use of the students as they help them to retain and use words when need arises
3. It is recommended that future studies on this title should incorporate more qualitative data collection instruments like interview so as to get ample evidence on the none-observable vocabulary learning strategies to supplement the data gathered through questionnaire. Moreover, they should design detail observation of repeated sessions.
4. It is also recommended that the sample students from both grades should be taken in order that all ability group students can be included proportionally in the sample. This is because by traditions of some schools clever students are assigned to one or two sections. Hence, if the researcher does not have such experience he or she may take samples tends to one ability group which can violate the result of the study.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1: Questionnaire in English

Dear student! This questionnaire is designed for a study purpose. Each statement has five options to choose from. There are ‘never’ ‘rarely’ ‘frequently’ sometimes, and almost always. These are provided in the columns right in the form of the statement and are represented by number ranging from 1-5 as follows:

1. I” Never” do it.
2. I do it “Rarely”
3. I do it only “Sometimes”
4. I use it “Frequently”
5. ‘I use it “always”

Please read each statement very carefully and then put a tick mark (✓) against each statement to indicate how often you do the strategies described by the statement. There is no right or wrong answer, and you are not evaluated based on your responses.

No	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	I analyze part of speech of a new word to discover it’s meaning					
2	I analyze affixes and roots to their meaning .Eg. the word “reread” has a prefix ‘re-“and a root word “read”					
3	I analyze any available pictures or gestures					
4	I guess the meaning of a new word from the context when I read or listen.					
5	I use English-English or English-Afan Oromo dictionary.					
6	I ask the teacher to define, paraphrase or tell me the synonymy or L ₁ translation of a new word.					
7	I ask classmates (friends) to explain the meanings of new words					
8	I study and practice the meanings of new words in a group.					

9	I interact with fluent/native/ speakers					
10	I associate new words with objects it refer to so I can easily remember them.					
11	I connect a new word to my personal experience to remember a word.					
12	I group words to their synonyms (clever-outstanding) and antonyms (clever- lazy)					
13	I use semantic maps to remember new English words (e.g. wild animals like fox, pig, buffalo etc).					
14	I connect unrelated word with rhyme so I can remember them (e.g. one is bun, two is a shoe etc).					
15	I study the spellings of a word					
16	I try to identify a familiar word in Afan Oromo language that sounds like or otherwise resembles the new word. E.g. the English word “mat” for an Afan Oromo word ”maatii)					
17	I use physical action when learning to remember new words					
18	I create mental image of the word’s meaning					
19	I say new words loudly when studying					
20	I use word lists to study and remember words					
21	I say a new English word several times					
22	I write a new English word several times					
23	I take vocabulary notes in class					
24	I put English labels on physical objects					
25	I test myself with word test					
26	I listen to English radio or television programs, or read books, magazines or fictions and the likes to develop my English vocabulary knowledge					
27	I skip or pass new words					
28	I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study vocabulary					

Appendix 2: Questionnaires (Afan Oromo version)

Kabajamaa(tuu) barataa/ttuu!gaaffileen kun(these quastionair) qorannoo ittiin gaggeessuuf kan qophaa'ani dha.hama tokkoof filannoowwan shantu jira. Isaanis

- 1- Jechuun mala kana sirrumaa(never) itti hin fayyadamu jechuu dha .
- 2- Jechuun mala kana darbee darbee (rarely) ittan fayyadama jechuu dha .
- 3- Jechuun mala kana yeroo tokko-tokko(sometimes) ittan fayyadama jechuu dha .
- 4- Jechuun mala kana yeroo hedduu (frequently) ittan fayyadama jechuu dha .
- 5- Jechuun mala kana yeroo hundaa (always) ittan fayyadama jechuu dha.

Egaa hadara kee himicha erga dubbiftee sirriitti hubatteen booda malleewwam himoota kanaan ibsaman hammam akka itti fayyadamtu fuuldura tokkoo tokkoo isaaniitti mallattoo(✓) kaa'uun argisiisi. Debiin kun sirriidha ykn kun sirrii miti jedhmtee waan ittiin madaalamtu kan hin qabne ta'uu hubadhu.

T/L	Himoota	1	2	3	4	5
1	Gartuu jechootaa (parts of speech)fayyadameen hiika jechoota haaraa baradha.					
2	Hundee jechootaa fi dhalatoo(affixes and roots) isaanii fayyadameen hiika jechootaaa baradha.Fkn.” reread” kan jedhu jecha Afaan Ingilizii ‘re-‘dhalatoo,’read’hundee jechaa taasisuun hiika jechichaa guutummaatti hubachuun yaala.					
3	Hiika galmaa(meaning in contxt) fayyadamuun hiika jechootaa baradha.					
4	Hiika jechootaa barachuuf fakkiiwwan ykn mul’istoota biroo jiran nan xiinxala					
5	Galmees jechoota (English-English or English-Afaan Oromoo dictionary) fayyadameen hiika jechootaa baradha.					
6	Barsiisaan koo hiika walqixaa jechichaa akka natti himu ykn akka naaf ibsu gaafadheen baradha. .					
7	Hika jechaa haaraa tokko baruuf hiriyyoota koon gaafadha.					
8	Gareedhaan ta’uunan hiikaa jechoota haaraa shaakala ykn qo’adha					
9	Namoota dandeettii Afaan Ingilizii qaban wailiin haasa’uunan shaakala a.					
10	Jechoota haaraa salphaatti kanan ittiin yaadadhu waantota adda addaan walitti firoomsa					
11	Jecha haaraa yaadachuuf muuxannoo koo (my experience) waliinan					

	walqabsiisa						
12	Hiika jecha haaraa yaadachuuf hiika fakkii (cimaa-qaxalee)ykn faallaa isaa(cimaa-dadhabaa) fayyadama.						
13	Hiika waliigalaa jecha qabu(semantic maps) jalatti jechoota hammatamuu danda'an jechoota qo'achuunan jechicha yaadadha.Fky.bineensota bosonaa kan jedhu jalatti kan hammatamuu danda'an booyyee,gaffarsa,qabaroo,kkf						
15	Jechoota haaraa qubee isaanii qo'achuunan yaadadha.						
16	Hiika jecha tokkoo yaadachuuf sagaleen isaa kan walfakkaatu jecha Afaan Oromoo waliinan walitti firoomsa. Fkk.jecha Ingilizii 'mat'jedhu kan Afaan Oromoo"maatii"jedhu waliin walittan firoomsa.						
17	Gochaa qaamaa (physica action) jechicha mulisu raawachuunan yaadadha.Fkk. jecha Afaan Ingilizii "kick" jedhu waanta'e dhiituunan yaadadha.						
18	Hiika jeccha haaraa kana kan bakka bu'u sammuu koo keessatti boceen baradh						
19	Tarree jechootaa(word list) ilaaluunan jechoota haaraa qo'adha/yaadadha.						
20	Sagalee isaa qo'achuuf jechicha sagalee koo olfuudheen dubbisa						
21	Jecha haaraa irra deddebi'ee dubbisunan hikaa isaa yaadadha						
22	Jecha haaraa irra deddebi'ee barreessunan hikaa isaa yaadadha.						
23	Daree keessatti jecha haaraa baradhe yaadannoo kootti qabachuunan irra deebi'ee ilaala/qoa'dha.						
24	Jechoota haaraa yaadachuuf qaama waan isaan ibsanii irrattan kataba						
25	Hammam akkan gahumsa jechootaa qabu mirkaneeffachuuf of qoreen ilaala.						
26	Sagantaalee Afaan Ingiliffaan darbankan akka TV,barruulee,asoosama , fi kkf dubbisuun beekumsa jechootaa kiyya gabbifadha.						
27	Jecha haaraa yeroon argu biran darba.						
28	Beekumsa jechoota Afaan Inglilizii koo fooyyefachuuf karoora baafadheen baradha.						

Appendix 3: Classroom observation checklist

2.1. Lesson objectives (.if included in the textbook or mentioned by the teacher).

2.2. Overview of the lesson:

2.3. Beginning of the lesson:

a. Teacher's activities

b. Student's activities

c. Points to note

2.4. Lesson progression

a. Teacher's activities

b. Student's activities

2.5. End of the lesson

a. Major activities accomplished

b. Home work or achievement type

c. Points and note

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.

Appendix 4. Sample pictures showing classroom observation (1-3)



Classroom observation at Grade 9B



Classroom observation at Grade 11C



Classroom observation at Grade 9J

Appendix 6: Critical values table

Appendix 5
Critical Values of Student's
Distribution (t)

df	Two-tailed Test Level of significance		One-tailed Test Level of significance	
	0.05	0.01	0.05	0.01
1	2.706	6.314	2.620	6.314
2	2.306	4.303	2.262	4.303
3	2.178	3.182	2.132	3.182
4	2.132	2.776	2.015	2.776
5	2.015	2.571	1.943	2.571
6	1.943	2.447	1.895	2.447
7	1.895	2.365	1.860	2.365
8	1.860	2.306	1.833	2.306
9	1.833	2.262	1.812	2.262
10	1.812	2.228	1.796	2.228
11	1.796	2.197	1.783	2.197
12	1.783	2.179	1.772	2.179
13	1.772	2.164	1.763	2.164
14	1.763	2.151	1.756	2.151
15	1.756	2.140	1.750	2.140
16	1.750	2.131	1.745	2.131
17	1.745	2.124	1.741	2.124
18	1.741	2.118	1.738	2.118
19	1.738	2.114	1.736	2.114
20	1.736	2.110	1.735	2.110
21	1.735	2.107	1.734	2.107
22	1.734	2.105	1.734	2.105
23	1.734	2.103	1.733	2.103
24	1.733	2.102	1.733	2.102
25	1.733	2.101	1.733	2.101
26	1.733	2.100	1.733	2.100
27	1.733	2.099	1.733	2.099
28	1.733	2.099	1.733	2.099
29	1.733	2.099	1.733	2.099
30	1.733	2.099	1.733	2.099
40	1.733	2.099	1.733	2.099
60	1.733	2.099	1.733	2.099
120	1.733	2.099	1.733	2.099
∞	1.733	2.099	1.733	2.099

Handwritten notes on the right side of the page:

$$\frac{6 - 1}{10} = 0.5$$

$$\frac{6 - 1}{10} = 0.5$$

$$\frac{6 - 1}{10} = 0.5$$

Handwritten calculations at the bottom of the page:

$$\frac{60 - 110}{120 - 110} = \frac{1.98 - 2}{1.98 - 2}$$

$$\frac{60}{10} = 6$$

Appendix 7 : Letters of accreditation from the schools



Ref/No ss: 256/12

Date 15/10/2007 E.C.

To whom it may concern

Subject: To give a letter of justification

As stated above Mr. Getachew Gudissa was carrying out a research for his MA. He presented a letter of cooperation from Jimma University to our school to offer him necessary support in all endeavors from gathering data and upto the end. At the end of his work he requested us to offer him a letter of justification that he provide for the institution that send him for the work. Based on his request we justify that he was undergoing data gathering processes in our school from Feb.25-Jun 10,2007.

Hence, we had given him this letter of accreditation .

Yours faithfully!



ወይንስ ድንበር ደብዳቤ
ወይንስ ድንበር ደብዳቤ
ወይንስ ድንበር ደብዳቤ

