



The relationship between vocabulary learning strategies and English proficiency of Thai graduate students

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Abstract

The purposes of this current study was three folds: to identify the use of vocabulary learning strategies by graduate students at Naresuan University (NU); to investigate students problems of vocabulary learning and to explore the correlation between vocabulary learning strategies and CU-TEP scores. The sample group was 293 NU graduate students from three clusters: Health Sciences Cluster, Science and Technology Cluster and Social Sciences Cluster chosen based on probability sampling: stratified random sampling technique. The research instruments used in the study was the Schmitt's vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire adapted from Rahimy and Shams (2012). The statistical methods used for analyzing the collected data were frequency, descriptive statistics (mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (SD)) and Pearson Correlation. The findings of the study revealed that the NU graduate students were as medium strategy users and used determination strategies most frequently and metacognitive strategies least frequently. Also, the results showed that most NU graduate students had problems with word-remembering at the highest frequency. Moreover, the correlation analysis showed that vocabulary learning strategies significantly correlated with the CU-TEP scores.

Keywords: Vocabulary Learning Strategies, English proficiency

Introduction

Indeed, beyond the association of Asian community in 2005, according to students' knowledge of education, foreign language is one of the most important thing that can help students to transmit what they want to express their ideas to each other properly. In fact, English language will be used as a precious tool to help Thai people to be successful in wider communication with the Southeast Asian people (Lewis, 2006). As a general rule, English is an international language. If students have enough knowledge of the four skills, they will communicate and connect with people around the world effectively. Nonetheless, there are numerous problems of unequal knowledge of English language learning among Asian students. This means that students who lack knowledge of English language skills may encounter difficulty to both sharing their ideas and conveying meaningful information to others.

As a general rule, to ensure knowledge of language abilities, students have to take an appropriate language assessment, which show how much their English language skills and knowledge consistency (Bailey, 1998). Hence, language test is one of the beneficial instruments which is used to assess language skills of students in terms of speaking, writing, reading, listening and also grammar. Apart from that, to measure students language knowledge, it is necessary to apply language assessment by using English proficiency test in order to check not only students baseline of language skills but also vocabulary knowledge. As a matter of fact, vocabulary is put into English



proficiency test in many parts of tests. Additionally, back to the past 30 years, Bachman and Palmer (2007) mentioned that new coming students at the university level had to do language test. Thus, after students took this kind of test such as English placement test, the scores revealed students'abilities and showed that they had to remedy their insufficient knowledge of language skills because their results could place them in an appropriate level of EFL course that coped with all language skills. Noticeably, many institutions provide language support which aim at fulfilling what students lack among language skills. Due to the importance of academic performance, English language proficiency test is used to predict how well students will succeed or master language competencies before entering in each field of their programs of education. However, students have to demonstrate their academic performance which is shown by the actual scores of English proficiency test that are derived from many kinds of international predictor English proficiency tests such as TOEFL, IELTS, CU-TEP and TU-GET. Commonly, TOEFL has been one of the most useful standardized tests in the U.S.A. since the 1930s (Schmitt, 2000). For instance, a whole picture of TOEFL cooperates with the test of vocabulary because such test integrates vocabulary in every part of the test: listening, reading, speaking and writing.

Obviously, in Thailand, graduate students choose to take CU-TEP because they rely on the quality of the language test and the results can be submitted to their graduate program. Nowadays, many workplaces require CU-TEP results to ensure proficient in English of new coming workers. However, the results of the English language proficiency test is needed to ensure language ability of students because it is as a predictor of academic success among learners in the university. In order to be successful in doing English proficiency test, vocabulary knowledge is vital for success in doing such tests. For these reasons, students who have enough knowledge of vocabulary learning strategies can do the test easily. However, students who lack the use of vocabulary learning strategies meet difficulty of doing the test precisely. From this point of view, to excel in English language proficiency test such as CU-TEP, vocabulary learning strategies could correlate with English proficiency of students.

Review of Literature

Vocabulary learning strategies and benefits

In trying to accomplish vocabulary learning, it is important to stress that teachers should be the first persons who are interested in teaching vocabulary. In fact, teachers do not only help their students to acquire a large number of words that suit to their grade levels but also find out strategies to help them remember words in their memory appropriately (Carter & McCarthy, 1988). They should also bring the effective technique of teaching vocabulary learning strategies in order to help students to create beneficial activity and task for them easily. Traditionally, teachers never learn about vocabulary learning strategies that could lead misunderstanding about how to use vocabulary learning strategies. In contrast, teachers who were trained to use vocabulary learning strategies could categorize how to teach vocabulary learning strategies in order to help students becoming autonomous learners (Kafipour & Naveh, 2011). Importantly, teachers need to teach new strategies to aid students acquiring much vocabulary and increase the quality of reading. As a consequence, students could accomplish in learning independently (Heidari, Karimi & Imani, 2012). Besides, if students do not use vocabulary learning strategies, they will lack a chance to become independent learners who succeed in learning without guidance of teachers (Mokhtar *et al.* 2009). Essentially, students should find out how to invest their time to gain more about vocabulary knowledge by themselves because teachers might not teach all words all the time outside the classroom. Indeed, ESL and EFL teachers should focus on determining the major ways to increase self-efficacy for the students. It



means that self-efficacy deals with a strong influence on putting effort or doing challenging thing by themselves. Likewise, Bandura (1986); cited in Heidari; Izadi and Ahmadian (2012) mentioned that self-efficacy affects students effort to choose challenging work or activity that they can manage it or avoid to do it.

Typically, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is strongly correlated with psychological factors that deals with motivation, self-esteem, self-efficacy and anxiety (Seddigh & Shokrpour, 2013). Clearly, these factors could affect better second language learners in SLA. Indeed, in teaching SLA, it is needed to conduct efficient activities into the classroom. Hence, the use of shallow activities copes with simple activities such as simple memory, note-taking and repetition which can not enhance remembering words. In contrast, it has to be noted that activities and learning strategies could make deeper engagement of remembering words rather than shallow activities. Therefore, the use of games could be added into English language classroom activity because games are time-filling activity and it is used to create pleasant atmosphere (Azar, 2012). Thus, vocabulary in game could bring real-world context in communicative ways in order to bring vocabulary to use into English language situation that copes with flexible atmosphere. So, this is a more plausible ways to increase vocabulary. Rahimy and Shams (2012) also stated that when teachers provide interesting condition, it builds up better classroom atmosphere with interesting and enjoyable circumstance that leads students to apply the use of vocabulary learning strategies and encourage students to believe in benefit of English language learning

In order to excel in English language learning, it is necessary for students to stimulate their own intrinsic motivation in order to serve their needs of choosing appropriate use of language learning strategies. Broadly defined, language learning strategies are corporate with a whole picture of language learning (Atsushi & Osamu, 2008). For these reasons, students need to be concerned with language learning strategies. Additionally, Oxford (1990) stated that language learning strategies was applied in ancient time for thousands of years. Samida (2004) also mentioned that in the Celtic period, storytellers used mnemonic strategies in order to aid them remember many stories for telling story successfully. This means that language learning strategies are associated with the methods achievement in doing language activities. Apart from that, to focus on the development of language learning strategies, there are alternative taxonomies of language learning strategies that were developed by researchers such as O'Malley and Chamot (1990). In addition, language learning strategies deal with two strategies: Direct and Indirect strategies. To illustrate, Direct strategies cope with 1) Memory strategies, 2) Cognitive strategies and 3) Compensation strategies, Moreover, Indirect strategies deal with 1) Memory-related strategies, 2) Affective strategies and 3) Social strategies (Oxford, 2003).

On the other hand, Alemi and Tayebi (2011) suggested that teaching approaches and language strategies are two main factors of enhancing students' abilities of language learning. Hence, if students do not have a chance to associate with these teaching approaches, they have to do individual forcing language learning in terms of using language strategies that deal with vocabulary learning strategies (Medani, 1989; cited in McCarthy, 1990). As a matter of fact, EFL learners can understand vocabulary that deals with vocabulary learning strategies; it is part of language learning strategies that learners apply them into their real lives (Asgari & Mustapha, 2012). Thus, the development of language learning strategies can be signified by the key concept that extends to the progress of vocabulary learning strategies for efficient language learners. To illustrate, in case of memory strategies, EFL learners use familiar words that they have learned via their textbooks in the classroom by applying them in communication with the foreigners successfully. According to strategies for cooperating with vocabulary learning, McCarthy (1990) found out that there are both good and poor vocabulary learning strategies that depend on whether



students rely on language learning strategies or not. Therefore, students have to analyze and employ beneficial vocabulary learning strategies by themselves. Schmitt (1997; cited in Schmitt, 2000) involved vocabulary learning strategies into 2 category 1) Strategies for the discovery of a new word's meaning: determination strategies, social strategies, 2) Strategies for consolidating a word once it has been encountered: memory strategies, cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies.

The role of English language proficiency test: CU-TEP and academic success

In Thailand, the administrator of the test in CULI (Chulalongkorn University language institute) aimed at producing one standardized test, which helps to check the baseline ability of students' English language skills before entering the Chulalongkorn University (CU). Because of its importance, in 2001, CULI did a project about designing English proficiency test in order to measure the quality of the process to create English proficiency test namely CU-TEP test (Chulalongkorn University Test of English Proficiency). Consequently, the results after evaluating the quality of the test indicated that CU-TEP could be a standardized test because it has the same standard as TOEFL test. In addition, it had high quality in the process of designing test, organizing test and getting the reliability and the content validity of the test as well as TOEFL (Phongsurapipat, 2001). Likewise, it indicated that CU-TEP has the same quality of being reliable language test similar to other standardized tests especially TOEFL. Indeed, CU-TEP has been used to evaluate students' academic performance of English proficiency skills since 2002. Typically, new graduate students who need to study at CU require taking CU-TEP before studying there because CU-TEP scores can used to ensure the quality of English language ability and confirm that they have enough knowledge not only language skills which are meaningful knowledge to help them achieve academic success but also abilities to read texts from useful sources written in English (Opanon-Amata, 2005).

In Asia, Thai learners are not meet the standard of TOEFL scores because most of them have average of score lower than 500 (Prapphal, 2002). On the other hand, Singaporean and Philippines learners meet standard require of TOEFL with average scores almost 550. From this point of view, it reveals that Thai learners are still poor in English language knowledge when compared them with other Asian people (Prapphal & Opanon-Amata, 2002). However, Thai learners especially graduate students have to take English proficiency test because it can show their proficiency in English. Generally, students who need further study in many countries around the world especially in the U.S.A. need to take TOEFFL before studying in the western university. And also, IELTS is the most popular English proficiency test in Europe. Additionally, XU (1991) supported this claim that language impact international students who need to study aboard. In fact, in Thailand, universities which provide graduate program, aim at measuring students'academic performance of the four macro skills of English namely speaking, reading, writing and listening. Therefore, students have to show the results of well-known English proficiency test such as TOEFL, TOEIC, IELTS, CU-TEP or TU-GET. Apart from that many universities do not need the results of those tests but they create their own English proficiency test such as RU-TEST and KU-TEST. It is clear that English proficiency tests are gatekeepers and language preparedness impact academic pathways of new students at all universities (Hirsh, 2007). In fact, students have the option to choose the tests that suit to their abilities and to serve the admission requirement of many universities.



Purpose and significance of the study

As a matter of fact, according to the admission requirement of Naresuan University (NU) in the academic year 2012, in coming graduate students were required to take English proficiency test before being admitted. Due to this requirement, students who needed to study at NU had to submit their satisfaction scores of English language test before studying in graduate programs. Accordingly, the researcher need to study how graduate students use vocabulary learning strategies. Thus, they usually use to encourage students' self-directions of English language learning (Ghazal, 2007). Moreover, the researcher wants to study students' problems of vocabulary learning and how they integrate vocabulary learning strategies for doing the CU-TEP successfully. Furthermore, the researcher need to find out what is the correlation between CU-TEP scores and language learning strategies.

Research Question

1. To what extent do graduate students use vocabulary learning strategies?
2. What problems do graduate students have in vocabulary learning strategies?
3. Is there a relationship between vocabulary learning strategies and CU-TEP scores?

Research methodology

Research instruments and population samples

Population

The population of this study was 1,120 first year Naresuan University graduate students who studied both first and second semester in academic year 2012 at Phisanulok province. They studied in the three clusters: Health Sciences Cluster, Science and Technology Cluster and Social Sciences Cluster.

Samples

The samples in this current study comprised 293 first year graduate students using stratified random sampling technique. The estimated sample size was based on Taro Yamane's table.

Research instruments

To conduct the present study, vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire taken from Rahimy and Shams (2012) was adapted from many researchers such as Ming Wei (2007), Gu, Johnson (1996) and Fan (2003) who used in previous studies in some universities in the U.S.A. The questionnaire is based on Schmitt's five categories of vocabulary learning strategy. To test its proper reliability, the Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure the reliability of all items of vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire. It was proved that this questionnaire was reliable in the level of 0.899 ($\alpha = 0.899$). The reliability value was much higher than 0.70. As a general rule, good reliability of a questionnaire must be at least equal 0.70 ($\alpha > 0.70$) (Muijs, 2011).

However, in this current study, numerous expert panels reviewed and commented on this vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire in order to avoid any mistakes or misunderstanding, the Thai translated version of this questionnaire was used to collect the data. The item of congruence (IOC) was confirmed by five experts. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part asked students about their demographic information, the frequency of taking CU-TEP, CU-TEP scores and their clusters. The second part consisted of vocabulary learning strategies which were divided into five sub-categories: determination, social, memory, cognitive and metacognitive strategies. The students were asked to rate each strategy on five rating scales in terms of their frequencies of use in



ascending order ranging from 0 (never) to 5 (always). And also, the third part consisted of problems of vocabulary learning and recommendations.

Data collection

Procedures

To achieve the purpose of this study, the data collection was carried out without specific time to answer the questionnaire. However, students were asked to return them as soon as they were completed. The researcher collected the questionnaire both in the classroom and via e-mail. Moreover, it was a self-report questionnaire, therefore, students were asked to answer the questionnaire without discussing with their classmates. The questionnaires were administered in the classroom after the samples had been informed of the purpose of this study. Due to the Thai version of the questionnaire, the instruction were given on the first page that included how to fill in the blank spaces provided in the questionnaire such as demographic information, CU-TEP rank scores and clusters. In addition, the students were informed that their answers would not affect their marks and were kept confidential. On the other hand, with the questionnaire via e-mail, the students were informed of the purpose of the study and how to answer the questionnaire as same as the others students in the classroom.

Data analysis

The data in this questionnaire was collected and entered into 20.0 version of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to compute descriptive statistics: Mean (\bar{x}) and Standard deviation (SD) were used to answer the first research question. In order to determine the problem of vocabulary learning, frequency was employed to check the opinion about the problem in order to answer the second research question. Also, to answer the third research question, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to investigate the correlation between vocabulary learning strategies and CU-TEP scores.

Apart from that, the scoring system was used to check the level of strategies users, and then it was illustrated high, medium and low (Oxford’s 1997, 2001; cited in Morad Bagherzadeh & Ahmad Shahbazadeh, 2013) as follows: 1. 1- 2.4 low strategy use, 2. 2.4- 3.5 medium strategy use, 3. 3.5- 5 high strategy use

Results

The study aimed at answering the following research question:

Research question 1. To what extent do graduate students use vocabulary learning strategies?

Table 1: Rank order of the reported five categories of VLS

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Level of interpretation</i>
Determination	3.1734	.79844	medium
Metacognitive	3.13561	.827147	medium
Cognitive	2.9363	.93933	medium
Memory	2.9126	.73414	medium
Social	2.5859	.79568	medium
Total	2.9488	.60779	medium

As depicted in Table 1, graduate students were familiar with overall vocabulary learning strategies use at a medium level with the mean score of 2.9488, SD = 0.60779. The results of descriptive statistics conducted to



identify the students' vocabulary learning strategies use indicated that the most preferred strategy was determination strategies with the mean score of 3.1734, SD = 0.79844, metacognitive strategies with the mean score of 3.13561, SD = 0.827147, cognitive strategies with the mean score of 2.9363, SD = 0.93933, memory strategies with the mean score of 2.9126, SD = 0.73414 and followed by social strategies with the mean score of 2.5859, SD = 0.79568.

Research question 2. What problems do graduate students have in vocabulary learning strategies?

Table 2: The rank order of the reported students' problems of vocabulary learning

	Frequency
1. Students could not remember vocabulary.	49%
2. Students were confused about vocabulary.	24%
3. Students were not familiar with vocabulary.	20%
4. Students could not translate word-meaning and they did not have a chance to use vocabulary in their daily lives.	17%
5. Students could not understand grammatical rule and word order.	15%

The results from the top five responses of students' problems of vocabulary learning are presented in the Table 2, it can be indicated that graduate students had different opinion about the problems of vocabulary learning. In reference to vocabulary learning strategies in the opened-questionnaire, students had a lot of problems of vocabulary learning. Additionally, there were top 5 highest frequency; firstly, students could not remember words had the highest frequency. Secondly, students face problem when they wanted to remember words, it means that they were confused. Thirdly, students met difficulty when they encountered unfamiliar words. Fourthly, students could not grasp the meaning of words and they could not have a chance to use words in real life situations. Fifthly, students could not understand grammatical rule and word order.

Research question 3. Is there a relationship between vocabulary learning strategies and CU-TEP scores?

To answer the third research question, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient was performed.

Table 3: Correlation between vocabulary learning strategies and CU-TEP scores

	CU-TEP scores
Total vocabulary learning strategies	Pearson Correlation .120*
	Sig. (2-tailed) .040
	N 293

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In order to analyze correlation between overall categories of vocabulary learning strategies and CU-TEP scores, details are given in the Table 6, it indicates that all categories of vocabulary learning strategies are correlated with CU-TEP scores ($r=.120/ SD = 0.40, p<.05$). It can be concluded that vocabulary learning strategies are significant correlated with CU-TEP scores at the 0.05 level, there appeared to be very weak positive correlation between two variables.



Table 4: Correlation between sub- categories of vocabulary learning strategies and CU-TEP scores

		determination	social	memory	cognitive	metacognitive
CU-TEP scores	Pearson Correlation	.179**	-.147*	.091	.113	.201**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.012	.120	.054	.001
	N	293				

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As shown in the Table 4, results of sub-categories of vocabulary learning strategies used by students indicate that there is correlation between the two variables. Hence, vocabulary learning strategies are correlated with CU-TEP scores at the 0.05 level and 0.01 level. It can be seen that three categories of vocabulary learning strategies are correlated with CU-TEP scores: these are determination strategies ($r=0.179 / SD = 0.002, p<0.01$), social strategies ($r=-0.147 / SD = 0.012, p<0.05$) and metacognitive strategies ($r=0.201 / SD = 0.001, p<0.01$)

In sum, social strategies are significant correlated with CU-TEP scores at 0.05 level, there appeared to be very weak positive correlation between the two variables. Also, determination strategies and metacognitive strategies are significant correlated with CU-TEP scores at the 0.01 level, there appeared to be very weak positive correlation between the two variables. On the other hand, other strategies were not significant correlated with CU-TEP scores.

Conclusion and discussion

Based on the results of concerning the extent to which choice of vocabulary learning strategies are affected by students use of overall categories in order to answer the first research question, it indicated that graduate students at Naresuan University are medium strategy users with the mean score of $2.9488 / SD = 0.60779$. It found that overall categories of vocabulary learning strategies were not very common among the students. The results were similar to the research done by Komol and Sripetpun (2011) and Morad Bagherzadeh and Ahmad Shabazadeh (2013). Furthermore, determination strategies were the most frequent used among other sub-categories of vocabulary learning strategies. This finding was congruent with the finding of several previous studies of vocabulary learning strategies such as Mongkol (2009), Komol and Sripetpun (2011), Morad Bagherzadeh and Ahmad Shabazadeh (2013) and Çelik, and Toptaş (2010). It indicated that this strategy dialed how students used their own proficient learning because they needed to determine what they had read in the text before asking help from others. Wei-Shi (2005) supported this claim that students should guess the words when they encounter them in the text and they could read it freely because it could reduce making confusion or struggle when they read the text. Thus, this finding was consistent with the previous study of Morad Bagherzadeh & Ahmad Shabazadeh (2013). In light of these findings from the two studies, Lawson and Hogben (1996) also mentioned that guessing meaning was the most frequent use of vocabulary learning strategies among students who were likely to guess the meaning of vocabulary in context in order to understand what they found in the various contexts.

The next strategy, metacognitive strategies were situated at the second rank among others vocabulary learning strategies. The findings were similar to the findings of Morad Bagherzadeh and Ahmad Shabazadeh (2013). Naturally, the use of metacognitive strategies could help students to estimate whether the strategy is effective to help them or not. Metacognitive strategies could help students to use their abilities to coordinate, organize or make association among each strategy in order to determine weak or strong L2 learning (Anderson, 2002).



Çelik & Toptaş (2010) pointed out that clever learners use various vocabulary learning strategies because they are aware of the significance of the strategies but poor learners are not aware much of how to use strategies. Boonkongsaen (2012) also mentioned that students employ vocabulary learning strategies more or less in order to achieve the goals from their purposeful step: conscious actions or mental process. Thus, students who highlight the words invest their eager learning gradually to be successful in learning new words rather than inactive students.

Additionally, cognitive strategies were situated at the third rank of vocabulary learning strategies. The findings were the same as the research done by Zokae, Zaferanieh and Naseri (2012). Considering that most students could have been more selective in their practices writing words. Srimanee and Laohawiriyanon (2010) stated that students build up their word-retention by writing new word over times. This can be concluded that there are relationships between memorization and practice. Mokhtar *et al.* (2009) also mentioned that it should increase regular rehearsal, rote learning training because it could build up a large number of words in a short period of time.

Furthermore, the next strategy: memory strategies were situated at the fourth rank among others sub-categories of vocabulary learning strategies. The results were similar to the findings of Zokae, Zaferanieh and Naseri (2012). In this regard, Nemati (2009) stated that students create their mnemonic or memory in order to recall words in from their memories which connect between brain and language bolster. In contrast, the results were different from the research done by Dóczy (2011) the researcher found out that memory strategies were the most popular strategies in terms of learning language idiom and note-taking when students discover the unknown words. Thus, note-taking is beneficial tool when students aim at memorizing words from the notes. Conversely, Noor and Amir (2009) found that in fact, note-taking were sometimes less of use among students. Consequently, it indicated that memory strategies were used to help students in order to be successful in acquiring much word-retention by their imaginations.

Actually, the finding of the study presented that social strategies were found at the least frequent used among others vocabulary learning strategies. The findings were the same as the researches done by researchers such as Komol and Sripetpun (2011), Rahimy and Shams (2012), Kafipour and Naveh (2011), Morad Bagherzadeh & Ahmad Shahbazadeh (2013), Heidari, Izadi and Ahmadian (2012), Zokae, Zaferanieh and Naseri (2012). Accordingly, the results indicated that students still asked teachers to help them to translate in Thai because they were incapable of doing it by themselves. Surely, this can be summarized that students required social interaction. Azar (2012) pointed out that in L2 vocabulary learning classroom, students listen to teachers who explain, pronounce, spell words and tell grammar function. In fact, students still need to learn words when they learn them and retrieve them from the text both inside and outside the classroom. It means that students still need support from social interaction such as teacher or classmate when they are in the classroom. It could be concluded that students fail to become autonomous learners.

To answer the second research question, it is tempting to summarize that firstly, students had problem of word-remembering at the first rank. Dakun and Gieve (2008) pointed out that students should be trained to know how to use vocabulary learning strategies because it could help them to increase the knowledge of strategies and to build up long-term word-retention. Secondly, confusion in word-remembering, it can be shown that students had problem in the process of remembering words because students were unaware of the significance of vocabulary learning strategies but they liked to open dictionary and rote memorization from writing dictation. To shed more light on incidental vocabulary, selective dictionary use outside the classroom, it could increase coverage of vocabulary knowledge as much as possible. Clearly, inactive learners usually open dictionary more than active



learners. Thus, the strategy of open dictionary could enhance vocabulary knowledge of inactive learner as well (Prichard, 2008).

Absolutely true, if students know how to use each strategy, they will become self-directed learners who have a good process of learning and develop language learning that is better to become good vocabulary learner in the positive ways (Oxford, 1990; cited in Asgari & Mustapha, 2011a). Thirdly, unfamiliar words, students faced problem to grasp the meaning of unfamiliar words. Mongkol (2009) mentioned that Thai learners are feel anxiety when they meet unknown words. Essentially, teachers should focus more on the natural learning of students to understand students' behaviors in order to lead them to know how to be successful in learning new words effectively. To solve this problem, teachers should lead students to know three dimensions of vocabulary as mentioned earlier, thus, it involved practical, depth and breadth (Henrikson, 1999); cited in Ueda *et al.* 2011). Fourthly, students could not translate word-meaning and they did not have a chance to use vocabulary in their daily lives. This has been found to be one of main problems of vocabulary learning for EFL learners. As a matter of fact, some students acquire word-meaning and forget it. Latsanyphone and Bouangeune (2009) mentioned that to solve this problem, most students should learn word-meaning by translating in their L1. Thus, teachers have to give clear meaning of words by using L1 in order to increase better understanding of them. Moreover, Nation (2001; cited in Latsanyphone & Bouangeune, 2009) also mentioned that teachers should test students' understanding of word-meaning for several times.

Fifthly, students could not understand grammatical rule and word order. Taking up this point, Azar stated that most students generally listen to their teachers explanation in terms of grammar function, how to pronounce and spelling words by learning them from their textbooks. From this point of view, they do not understand the key point of grammatical rule and word order. To solve this problem, teachers should find out activities and learning strategies about grammar and word order in order to encourage their deeper engagement of words (Nemati, 2009). Indeed, Aebersold and Field (1997) also believed that teachers should consider how to teach the content of words that contain nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives. Importantly, these contents could enlarge much knowledge of grammatical rule and word order for students. As a general rule, it can be obvious that students who have a number of words will be successful in learning language. Therefore, if students know vocabulary learning strategies, it will help them both in direct and indirect learning to aid them in acquiring the four macro language skills of language especially reading. Hence, these ways tended to expand the size of vocabulary (Curtis, 1987; cited in Kafipour & Naveh, 2011). From this point of view, a large size of vocabulary could help them to be familiar with unknown word successfully.

To answer the third research question, the finding indicated that CU-TEP scores were significantly correlated with vocabulary learning strategies ($r=.120/ SD = 0.40, p<.05>$). The results of data analysis in the current study also revealed that vocabulary learning strategies made statistically significant contribution to the prediction of CU-TEP scores. The results of vocabulary learning strategies use, revealed that determination strategies, social strategies and metacognitive strategies had the least level of correlation. All of them were significant correlated with CU-TEP scores and $p<.05$ significance value and $p<0.1$ significance value. Admittedly, there were some strategies that did not correlate with CU-TEP scores: these were memory strategies and cognitive strategies.

The results of the present study were similar to the research done by an unnamed researcher in the Mechanical Paper (2013) who indicated that vocabulary learning strategies were correlated with English scores of secondary high school students because the significance of vocabulary learning strategies did not only help in



vocabulary learning increase but also self-control strategy, self-supervision strategy, classification strategy, context strategy, guess strategy, exercise strategy and note-taking strategy. Peng & Sarit (2009) also supported that high school Miao students had problem of learning vocabulary. Thus, scholar should look at vocabulary learning strategies among ethnic group of high school students. Atsushi and Osamu (2008) also indicated that there were relationship between vocabulary learning strategies and TOEIC scores. The finding revealed that vocabulary learning strategies could enhance English scores and English proficiency test of each student groups as well.

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