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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY FAST AND SLOW LEARNERS IN BOGALE WALELU SECONDARY AND PREPARATORY SCHOOL GRADE 10 STUDENTS IN WOLIATA ZONE: ETHIOPIA

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#### ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to explore the relationship between vocabulary learning strategies and academic achievement. To this end, fifteen fast and fifteen slow learners were selected purposively based on their performance in exams. A close-ended questionnaire was designed to gather data on their vocabulary learning strategies. Interviews were also conducted for triangulation. T-test and frequency statistics were used to analyze the data. Based on the data, it was found out that there was no significant difference between fast and slow learners in their vocabulary learning strategies. Only slight differences were observed in frequency use of the strategies; fast learners tend to use vocabulary learning strategies than slow learners. In planning and memory strategies both groups used the strategies similarly. Based on these findings, it was concluded that even though the difference between the two groups was statistically non-significant, there existed slight changes in adopting some vocabulary learning strategies. Thus, the slow learners are recommended to practice strategies used by fast learners and consider themselves as a student who can successfully learn new words.

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## INTRODUCTION

There has been a prominent shift with in the field of language learning and teaching over the last twenty years with greater emphasis being put on learners and learning rather than on teachers and teaching. In parallel to this new shift of interest, how learners process new information and what kinds of strategies they employ to understand, learn or remember the information has been the primary concern of the researchers dealing with the area of foreign language learning (Chamot and O'Malley, 1987). Research in language learning strategies began in the 1960s with the developments in cognitive psychology that influenced much of the research done on language learning strategies. Scholars like Cohen and Aphek (1981) Chamot and O'Malley (1987) Polizzerr and McGroat (1985) and others studied strategies used by learners during the process of foreign language learning. In most of which, the primary concern has been on identifying what fast learners report they do in learning a second or foreign language (Chamot and O'Malley, 1987). This is because learners adopt a number of strategies in coping with language learning. However, not all learners are equally using strategies efficiently as different students use different strategies to learn the language (McCarthy, 1990). This implies that the slow language learners can have benefit from the report of fast language learners' strategies.

Psychologists, linguists and language teachers have been interested in vocabulary learning strategies for a long time (Levenston, 1979). Numerous studies have been conducted on the effects and different vocabulary learning strategies in learning a foreign language. For example, Medani (1989), as cited in McCarthy (1990) studied vocabulary leaning strategies of both fast and slow (in the sense of under-achieving) Arabic learners of English. It has been argued that it is impossible to teach all English words in the classroom because of time constraint, the English word increment, due to technological advancement, the extended nature of the language in borrowing words from other languages, and meaning complexity. Therefore, it is imperative to learners find the meaning of words by themselves using vocabulary learning strategies. It seems that research on vocabulary learning strategies comparing fast and slow learners is scanty in Ethiopia. Researchers like Abebe (1997) and Mulugeta (2006) studied on vocabulary learning strategies. These studies try to assess learner's vocabulary learning strategies. All the above studies show that a few memory strategies were used by the learners. However, the studies do not identify learning strategies used by fast and slow learners. Moreover, the relationship between the vocabulary learning strategies and learning achievement were not discovered. Therefore, it is believed that, there is a knowledge gap on identifying vocabulary learning strategies used by fast and slow learners

and the relationship between the vocabulary learning strategies and learning achievement. The need to identify the strategies used by fast and slow learners is desirable as learners adopt a number of strategies in coping with new vocabulary McCarthy (1990). Checking the relationship between the vocabulary learning strategies and learning achievement is also important to discover if there is strategy use implication for academic achievement. Thus, this study has attempted to discover vocabulary learning strategies that fast and slow learners use in learning vocabularies. The study has also tried to observe the relationships between strategy uses and academic achievement. The research, therefore, attempted to:

- Discover the vocabulary learning strategies that fast and slow learners use.
- Describe similarities and differences of vocabulary learning strategies used by fast and slow learners.
- Expose the relationship between the vocabulary learning strategies and academic achievement.

## METHODS OF THE STUDY

### Sampling

**School:** Bogale Walelu Secondary and Preparatory School was intentionally selected for the study purpose for it is the school where found around the university the researchers work.

**Students:** Thirty grade 10 students from Bogale Walelu Secondary and Preparatory School were data sources for this study. The researcher selected grade 10 since he could have easy access for the data. The sample students were selected using purposive sampling technique. They were taken from registrar according to their result. There are three sections of grade 10 in the school. 10 students (5 from fast learners and 5 from slow learners) were chosen from a section. Thus, totally thirty students were selected.

**Instruments:** Two instruments were employed for data collection for this study: questionnaires and interviews.

**Questionnaire:** Questionnaire was the main instrument used for data collection in the study. The questionnaire contained twenty three questions accompanied by three response categories in which the students would be asked to rate. Since it would be difficult for the students to understand the English version, the researcher translated them in to Amharic language to gather data. The questionnaire was designed to gather data on student's use of vocabulary learning strategies. The instrument was employed for it allows the researcher quantify the results for appropriate statistical analysis. Regarding to the distribution, grade 10 students from three sections were asked to fill in the questionnaire. It was administered in the school library. After distributing the questionnaire, the students were asked to study the questions from the beginning to the end. Then, the students were made to fill in the questionnaire with the help and guidance of the researcher (each item was briefed as the respondents filled the questionnaire). The researcher decided to brief the questions because he realized that students had problems in understanding them. Totally, one hundred and twenty copies of the questionnaire were distributed. The researcher collected all of them because the respondents filled in the questionnaire in his presence. All copies were filled properly and returned. Information gathered from thirty students was used for data analysis.

**Interviews:** Interviews were conducted with purposely selected 6 students (5 fast learners, and 5 slow learners) 2 students (1 from fast learners and 1 from slow learners) were taken from a section. The numbers of students limited to 5 due to the data saturation. The interview was conducted within a day. In this study, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews. That is, before conducting the interviews, the researcher prepared questions to be asked. However, during the interviews, he did not necessarily stick on asking only those questions. The researcher preferred to conduct semi-structured interviews for its flexibility. The content of the interviews was not basically different from the content of the questionnaires though not all individual strategies are included in the interview. The questions for the interviews focused on gathering data on students learning and memory strategies when they learn new English words.

**Data Organization:** With an employment of the frequency scale, the planning, learning and memory strategy each was tabulated. Following this, the data were analyzed and interpreted. To check whether there is a significant strategy use difference between 'fast ' and ' slow' learners. To this end, tables showing t-test results were made. Then, the data were statistically analyzed. The qualitative analysis of interview results was made together with questionnaire results which are tabulated.

## RESULTS

**Plan for learning New Items:** An attempt was made to gather data on the plan that ' Fast and ' Slow' learners use in learning new words. Accordingly, in this section, results on planning strategies are presented. As can be seen from the above table, six sub strategies were included under planning strategies. In item 1, students were asked how often they set time and place to study new words. Accordingly, 9 respondents from Fast learners said that they sometimes set time and place to study new words while 6 claimed that they never set time and place to study new items. With in slow learners, 12 respondents replied as they sometimes set time and place to study new words. However, the remaining 3 indicated that they never set time and place to study new items. From the data, one might conclude that most students sometimes set time and place to study new items. Moreover, the data show that slow learners seem better than Fast learners by setting time and place to study new items. In the interviews, the students were asked to list their planning strategies. Accordingly, most slow learners listed setting place and time as their planning strategies while a few Fast learners listed it as their planning strategy.

The other planning strategy sought to be investigated was setting goals and objectives for learning vocabulary items. In item 2, students were asked to show how often they set goals and objectives for learning vocabulary items .10 respondents of Fast learners revealed that they always set goals and objectives for learning vocabulary items while 4 said that they sometimes set goals and objectives for learning vocabulary items. However, only 1 of them responded he/she never sets goals and objectives. Regarding to slow learners, 12 of them expressed that they always set goals and objectives for learning vocabulary items while 2 replied that they sometimes set goals and objectives for learning vocabulary. But 1 said he/she never sets goals and objectives for vocabulary learning.

Table 3.1.1. Plan to learn new words

Item	Sub- Strategies	Group of Respondents							
		Fast learners				Slow learners			
		Frequency	Always	Some times	Never	Frequency	Always	Some times	Never
1	Set place and time to study new words	F	-	9	6	F	-	12	3
2	Set goals and objectives for learning vocabulary items	F	10	4	1	F	12	2	1
3	Consider as a student who can successfully learn new vocabulary items	F	9	4	2	F	5	9	1
4	Try to improve vocabulary knowledge by reading	F	-	12	3	F	-	13	2
5	Listen to other people (teachers) to learn new words	F	5	10	-	F	6	6	3
6	Listen to English radio or TV programs to improve my English vocabulary	F	5	9	1	F	5	8	2

Table 3.1.2. Planning strategies in descriptive statistics

In analyzing student's responses descriptively, values were given to the options. The values were

2= always

1= sometimes

0 = never

Learners	N	Mean	Std. devotion	Variance	t-value
Fast	15	7.07	1.71	2.92	0.13
Slow	15	7.00	1.65	2.71	

Table 3.2.1. Strategies in learning new words

Items	Sub Strategies	Group of Respondents							
		Fast learners				Slow learners			
		frequency	Always	Some times	Never	frequency	Always	Some times	Never
7	Ask their classmates ( teachers) to learn the new word meaning	F	9	5	1	F	2	10	3
8	Use an English dictionary and learn new words	F	8	5	2	F	10	3	2
9	Use English L <sub>1</sub> dictionary and learn new words	F	1	11	3	F	7	7	1
10	Workout the meaning of unfamiliar word by examining its component parts	F	9	5	1	F	6	7	2
11	Underline, the new words I meet while I read and later find their meanings	F	2	4	9	F	1	5	9
12	Read a text or listen to someone, try to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from their context	F	8	7	-	F	5	7	3

Table 3.2.2. Learning strategies in descriptive statistics

Learners	N	Mean	St. deviation	Variances	t-value
Fast	15	7.40	1.88	3.54	
Slow	15	6.73	2.02	4.07	0.94

Table 3.3.1. Strategies to remember new words

Item	Sub Strategies	Group of Respondents							
		Fast learners				Slow learners			
		Frequency	Always	Some times	Never	Frequency	Always	Some times	Never
13	Find an L1 word that has a similar sound (pronunciation) to the new word	F	4	5	6	F	2	8	5
14	Act out physically the meaning of the new word	F	-	7	8	F	5	5	10
15	Write new words again and again looking at them carefully	F	4	7	4	F	6	8	2
16	Use new words in conversation	F	7	6	2	F	6	8	1
17	Use new words in writing	F	5	10	-	F	6	8	1
18	Take notes of unfamiliar words, came across and keep their record on vocabulary note book	F	4	9	2	F	3	4	8
19	Group words according to their parts of speech.	F	-	4	11	F	-	9	6
20	Place words in group with other words that are similar to t in some ways	F	2	6	7	F	4	5	6
21	Group words according to their similarity in meaning		6	6	6	F	3	6	6
22	Group words according to their dissimilarity in meanings		4	4	7	F	1	7	7
23	Try to remember the new words, by remembering their location on the page, on blackboard, or on a street sign		4	7	4	F	9	5	1

**Table 3.3.2. Memory strategies in descriptive statistics**

Learners	N	Mean	St. deviation	Variance	t-value
Fast	15	10.07	3.92	15.35	
Slow	15	9.93	3.26	10.64	0.09

The above data show that slow learners seem better than Fast learners by setting goals and objectives for learning vocabulary items. During the interview, most slow learners and a few Fast learners mentioned that they set goals and objectives for learning new vocabulary items. In item 3, students were asked to indicate how frequently they consider themselves as a student who can successfully learn new vocabulary items. From the students' report, it can be seen that 9 of Fast learners reported that they always consider themselves as a student who can successfully learn new vocabulary items while 4 of them claimed that they sometimes consider themselves as a student who can successfully learn new words. However, 2 indicated that they never consider themselves as a student who can successfully learn new vocabulary items. Regarding to the slow learners, 5 replied that they always consider themselves as a student who can successfully learn new vocabulary while 9 of them indicated that they sometimes consider themselves as a student who can successfully learn new vocabulary items. However, 1 expressed that he/she never consider himself/herself as a successful vocabulary learner. The data showed that Fast learners seem better than slow learners by considering themselves as a student who can successfully learn new vocabulary. The result of the interview also was also supported the above idea.

The other planning strategy sought to be seen was students' try to improve their vocabulary knowledge by reading. In item 4, the students were asked to show how often they try to improve word's knowledge through reading. Accordingly, 12 Fast learners responded that they sometimes try to improve their vocabulary knowledge through reading while 3 of them revealed that they never read to improve their vocabulary knowledge. Regarding to slow learners, 13 responded that they sometimes try to improve their vocabulary knowledge through reading while 2 of them claimed that they never read to improve their vocabulary knowledge. No students from both Fast and slow learners reported that they always try to read to improve the vocabulary knowledge through reading. From the data, one might conclude that both Fast and slow learners seem almost equally trying to improve their vocabulary via reading. In the interview, both of them mentioned they sometimes employ the strategy.

Thus, the data agree with the interview. In item 5, students were asked how frequently they listen to people to learn new words. Accordingly, 5 of Fast learners rated that they always listen to other people to learn vocabulary while 10 of them claimed that they sometimes do. Of slow learners, 6 reported that they always listen to people to learn while 6 claimed that they sometimes do. However, the remaining 3 stated that they never listen to learn new words. From the data, it might be said that Fast learners seem better than slow learners by listening people to learn new words. In the interview, most Fast learners listed as they use this strategy than the slow learners to learn new words. In item 6, students were asked how often they listen to English radio or TV programs to improve their vocabulary. In response to this, 5 Fast learners stated that they always listen to English radio or TV programs to improve their vocabulary knowledge while 9 of them claimed that they sometimes do.

However, 1 respondent said he/she never listen radio or TV to upgrade his/her vocabulary knowledge. With in slow learners, 5 stated that they listen to English radio or TV programs to improve their vocabulary knowledge while 8 of them rated that they sometimes do. However, 2 respondents reported that they never listen to English radio or TV programs to improve their vocabulary knowledge. The data indicated that most students sometimes listen to English radio or TV program to improve their English vocabulary. In addition, it might be said that Fast learners seem better than slow learners by listening English radio or TV programs to improve their vocabulary. The result of the interview supported the above idea. In analyzing student's responses descriptively, values were given to the options. The values were From Table 1.1.B, we can see that Fast learners seem slightly better than slow learners (mean 7.07 Vs 7.00) respectively in using planning strategies to learn new vocabulary items. However, the t-test analysis showed that this difference between the two groups was not statistically significant ( $t=0.13, p>0.05, df=28$ ).

**Strategies in Learning New Words:** An attempt was made to gather data on the strategies that 'good' and 'poor' learners use in learning new words. In item 7, students were asked to show how often they ask their classmates (teachers) and learn the new word's meaning. Accordingly, 9 respondents from Fast learners revealed that they always ask to learn the new word meaning while 5 of them replied that they sometimes ask to learn new vocabulary items. However, only 1 claimed that he/she never asks in learning the meaning of new items. Regarding to slow learners, 2 respondents revealed that they always ask to learn new vocabulary items while 10 of them claimed that they sometimes ask. However, 3 of respondents rated that they never ask to learn vocabulary. From the data, one might understand that Fast learners seem better than slow learners by asking their classmates (teachers) to learn new vocabulary. During interview, more Fast learners than slow learners reported that they always ask to learn new word meaning.

In item 8, students were asked to show the frequency of which they use an English dictionary and learn new words. Thus, 8 of Fast learners replied that they always use English dictionary and learn new words while 5 of them said they sometimes use. But, 2 of the Fast learners claimed that they never use an English dictionary and learn new words. From slow learners, 10 replied that they always use an English dictionary and learn new words while 3 said they sometimes use. However, 2 respondents claimed that they never use an English dictionary and learn new words. The data show that slow learners seem better than Fast learners with an employment of English dictionary and learn new words. During the interview, more students from slow learners expressed that they rely on dictionary and learn vocabulary than Fast learners. In a further question, students were asked to show how often they use English L<sub>1</sub> dictionary and learn new words (item 9). Accordingly, 1 respondent from Fast learners said he/she always uses English L<sub>1</sub> dictionary and learn new words while 11 of them expressed that they sometimes use English L<sub>1</sub> dictionary and learn new words. But, 3 of Fast learners stated that they never use English L<sub>1</sub> dictionary and learn new words.

Regarding to slow learners, 7 respondents indicated that they always use English L1 dictionary and learn new words while 7 of them said they sometimes use English L1 dictionary and learn new vocabulary items. However, only 1 from slow learners reported that he/she never uses English L1 dictionary and learn new words. The data depict that most slow learners use English L1 dictionary than Fast learners. In the interview, most slow learners reported that they always use English L1 dictionary and learn vocabulary while most Fast learners stated that they sometimes use L1 dictionary. In item 10, students were asked to show how often they work out the meaning of unfamiliar word by examining its component parts. To answer this, 9 of Fast learners stated that they always work out the meaning of unfamiliar word by examining its component parts while 5 of them replied that they sometimes work out the meaning of new words by examining its component parts. But, only 1 said he/she never works out the meaning of unfamiliar word by examining its component parts. In line with slow learners, 6 of them claimed that they always work out the meaning of unfamiliar words by examining its component parts while 7 of the slow learners stated that they sometimes work out the meaning of unfamiliar words by examining its component.

But, 2 of them never use this strategy. As the data showed, Fast learners seem better than slow learners by examining the components of unfamiliarly words and learn their meaning. It was also noted during the interview that most respondents from Fast learners reported that they analyze words to know its meaning while the slow learners do not mentioned it. In item 11, students were asked to indicate how often they underline the new words they meet while they read and find their meaning. Thus, 2 respondents from Fast learners indicated that they always underline new words while they read and find their meanings while 4 of them claimed that they sometimes do. However, 9 of Fast learners replied that they never underline and find their meaning. Regarding to slow learners, 1 respondent rated that he/she always underlines the new words and later find their meaning while 5 of them stated that they sometimes do. But, 9 from slow learners claimed that they never underline words while they read and find their meaning. The data indicates that both Fast and slow learners equally do not use this strategy. During the interview, both groups also did not say that they underline unfamiliar words and find their meaning later.

In item 12, students were asked how often they try to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from their contextual clues while they read. In response to this question, 8 respondents from Fast learners replied that they always guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from context while 7 of them claimed that they sometimes guess. However, no body from Fast learners said that they never guess to know the meaning of unfamiliar words. From slow learners, 5 respondents replied that they always guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from the contextual clues while 7 of respondents claimed that they sometimes guess. But, 3 of them stated that they never guess the meaning of unfamiliar words using contextual clues. From the data, one might understand that Fast learners seem better than slow learners by trying to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words using contextual clues while they read a text or listen someone. During the interview, most Fast learners listed guessing from context was there main vocabulary learning strategies while a few of slow learners listed it as their vocabulary learning strategy.

From Table 4.3.2.B, it might be estimated that Fast learners seem better than slow learners (mean 7.40 Vs 6.73) respectively in using vocabulary learning strategies to learn vocabulary items. The t-test result depicted that this difference between two groups was not significant statistically ( $t=0.94$ ,  $p>0.05$ ,  $df=28$ ). Memory Strategies to remember new words: An attempt was made to gather data on the memory strategies that fast and slow learners use to remember new words. Consequently, the following results were found. In item 13, Students were asked to show how often they find an L1 word that has a similar sound (pronunciation) to the new word. As can be seen from the above table, 4 from Fast learners responded that they always find L1 word that has a similar sound to the new word while 5 of them answered that they sometimes find an L1 word that has a similar sound to the new word. But, 6 respondents claimed that they never find an L1 word that has a similar sound to the new word. Regarding to slow learners, 2 of them indicated that they always find an L1 word that has a similar sound with the new word whereas 8 said that they sometimes do. However, the remaining 5 from slow learners rated that they never find an L1 word that has a similar pronunciation to the new word. Based on the above information, it would be possible to say that Fast learners seem slightly better than slow learners by finding an L1 word that has a similar sound to the new word. During the interview, more Fast learners stated that finding an L1 word that has similar pronunciation with new word is their strategy. However, a very less number of respondents from slow learners mentioned that they use finding L1 word that has similar sound to remember the new vocabulary items.

In item 14, students were asked how often they act out physically the meaning of the new word to remember. No body from both Fast and slow learners replied that they always act out physically the meaning of the new word to remember. However, 7 respondents from Fast learners stated that they sometimes act out physically the meaning of the new word to remember while 8 of them claimed that they never do. In line with slow learners, 5 of them stated that they sometimes act out physically the meaning of the new word to remember while 10 respondents said that they never use this strategy. Based on the above information, one might say that both Fast and slow learners did not employ this strategy. During the interview, no body from both slow and Fast learners listed that acting out physically the meaning of the new word to remember as their vocabulary learning strategy. Respondents were asked to show how often they write new words to remember them, in item 15. Accordingly, 4 from Fast learners reported that they always write new words to remember while 7 of them claimed that they sometimes write new words. But, 4 respondents replied that they never write new words to remember. From slow learners, 5 respondents stated that they always write new words to remember whereas 8 of them said that they sometimes write new words to remember. However, 2 respondents stated that they never write new words to remember. In item 16, students were asked to indicate how often they use new words in conversation. In response to this, 7 respondents from Fast learners stated that they always use new words in conversation while 6 from the same group i.e. Fast learners said that they sometimes use new words in conversation. But, 2 respondents claimed that they never use new words in their conversation. Regards to slow learners, 6 answered that they always use new words in conversation whereas 8 stated that they sometimes use unfamiliar words in their conversation.

However, only 1 replied he/she never uses new words in his/her conversation. Based on the data, it is possible to say that most respondents sometimes use new words in their conversation. In addition, one might understand that both group use new words in their conversation equally. The responses to the interview also yielded similar results. To know how often students use new words in writing, they were asked in item 17. Accordingly, 5 from Fast learners said that they always use new words in writing whereas 10 claimed that they sometimes use new words in writing. But, nobody says they never use new words in writing. From slow learners, 6 stated that they always use new words in writing while 8 replied that they sometimes use new words in writing. However, 1 said he/she never uses new words in writing. From the data, one can see that most students sometimes use new words in writing. Moreover, the data showed that no visible difference between Fast and slow learners by using new words in writing. However, it was revealed in the interview that most Fast learners replied that they sometimes use new words in writing to recall the new words meaning while the slow learners did not mention that they use new words in writing as their memory strategy. Thus, it might be said that Fast learners seem better in using new words in writing than slow learners. In item 18, the students were asked how often they take notes of unfamiliar words on their vocabulary note book.

In response to this question, 4 respondents from Fast learners replied that they always take notes of unfamiliar words on their vocabulary notebook whereas 9 of Fast learners stated that they sometimes take notes of unfamiliar words on their vocabulary note book. However, the remaining 2 said they never take notes of unfamiliar words on their vocabulary note book. From slow learners, 3 rated that they always take notes of unfamiliar words on their vocabulary note book whereas 4 stated they sometimes take unfamiliar words on their vocabulary. But, the remaining 8 indicated that they never take notes of unfamiliar words on their vocabulary note book. The data imply that Fast learners take notes of unfamiliar words on their vocabulary note book than slow learners. The responses in the questionnaire were also supported by the interview. Almost all Fast learners, during the interview, explained that they have their own vocabulary note book and write unfamiliar words on it. However, the slow learners said that they even do not have a vocabulary note book. Consequently, it is possible to say that the Fast learners write unfamiliar words on their vocabulary note book while slow learners do not write.

Item 19, was intended to discover how often the respondents group words according to their parts of speech. In response to this, 4 respondents from Fast learners reported that they sometimes group words according to their parts of speech whereas 11 of them stated that they never group words in accordance with their parts of speech. However, no body rated as they always group words according to their parts of speech. Regarding to slow learners, 9 of them said they sometimes group words based on their parts of speech whereas 6 replied that they never group words according to their parts of speech. Like Fast learners, no body from slow learners reported that they always group words according to their parts of speech. The data showed that slow learners slightly seem better than Fast learners in grouping words according to their parts of speech. This was also supported by the results of the interview. When the interviewees were asked what strategy they use to remember the meaning of words, most respondents from slow learners and a few respondents from Fast learners list grouping

words according to their parts of speech was one of their memory strategy. Therefore, it is fair to say that slow learners seem better than Fast learners in grouping words according to their parts of speech. Item 20 of the questionnaire was meant to find out how often the students group new words based on their topic relationship, for instance, if they group together words related to furniture with an intention to remember them easily. Thus, students were asked how often they group words based on their topic relationship. To answer this, 2 respondents from Fast learners reported that they always group words according to their topic relationship whereas 6 of them said that they sometimes place words in group with other words that are similar to it in some ways. However, the remaining 7 of Fast learners claimed that they never place words together based on their topic relationship. From slow learners, 4 respondents rated that they always group words based on their relationship in some ways while 5 of them said that they sometimes place words in group with other words that are the same to it in some ways. But, 6 respondents said they never place words together according to their topic relationship. From the data, we can see that most students indicated that they never place words in group with other words that are identical to it in some ways. In addition, the data depict that both Fast and slow learners seem have not difference in using this memory strategy.

This was also proved in the interview. Most students from both Fast and slow learners expressed that they did not place words in group based on their topic relationship to remember. The purpose of item 21 and 22 was intended to know how often the students generally group new words based on their meaning similarity (synonym) and dissimilarity (antonym) as an away of facilitating memory. In item 21, students were asked how often they group new words with words which have the same meaning. In response to this, 6 respondents from Fast learners said that they always group new words based on their synonymy also 6 respondents from the same group reported that they sometimes group new words according to their meaning similarity. However, 3 respondents stated that they never group words based on their meaning similarity. From slow learners, 3 respondents stated that they always group new words based on their synonymy while 6 claimed that they sometimes use this strategy. But the remaining 6 of slow learners said they never group words according to synonymy. From the above data, one might conclude that Fast learners seem better than slow learners by grouping new word according to their synonymy. In response to item 22, from Fast learners 4 respondents claimed that they always group words based on their antonym whereas 4 reported that they sometimes use this strategy. However, the remaining 7 replied that they never group words according to their antonym.

Regards to slow learners, only 1 respondent stated that he/she always groups words based on their antonym while 7 reported that they sometimes use this strategy. But, the remaining 7 respondents indicated that they never group words in accordance with their antonym. Based on the data, it can be said that most students sometimes groups based on antonym. In addition, the data depict that most of Fast learners group words according to their dissimilarity in meaning while a few slow learners group words based on antonym. The result of the interview was also supported the above ideas. In the first item of the questionnaire (item 23), students were asked to indicate how often they try to remember new vocabulary items by some means of visual imagery.

Accordingly, 4 respondents from Fast learners replied that they always use visual imagery to recall the meaning of new vocabulary items whereas 7 of them indicated they sometimes use this strategy. However, the remaining 4 claimed they never employ this strategy. From slow learners, 9 said they always use visual imagery strategy to remember the new vocabulary item meaning while 5 of them stated that they sometimes use the strategy. But, only 1 respondent said he/she never uses visual imagery strategy to recall the unfamiliar words. From the data, it can be seen that slow learners try more to remember the new words using visual imagery than Fast learners. During the interview, most slow learners listed as they use visual imagery strategy to remember words while a few Fast learners mentioned it as their memory strategy. Table 4.3.B, Indicated Fast learners seem better than slow learners (mean 10.07 Vs 9.93) respectively in using memory strategies to learn vocabulary items, however, the result of t-test (0.09) showed that the difference between Fast and slow learners was not statistically significant ( $t=0.09$ ,  $p>0.05$ ,  $df=28$ ).

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusion

Based on the findings stated in the previous chapter, it can be concluded the vocabulary learning strategies used by fast and slow learners was not statistically non-significant. As a result, relationship between the vocabulary learning strategies and academic achievement is not strong. However, there existed slight changes in adopting some vocabulary learning strategies between the two groups. Thus, it would be possible to forward the following conclusions.

**Planning Strategies:** Fast learners consider themselves as a student who can successfully learn new words; listen to other people (teachers) and English radio or TV program to improve their English vocabulary while slow learners set time, place, goals and objectives for learning vocabulary to improve their English vocabulary. Regarding developing vocabulary via reading, both Fast and slow learners almost equally try to improve their vocabulary knowledge by reading.

**Learning Strategies:** Fast learners ask their classmates (teachers); workout the meaning of unfamiliar word by examining its component parts; guess the meaning of unknown words from context and learn the meaning of new words while slow learners rely on only on monolingual and bilingual dictionary and learn the meaning of unknown words.

**Memory Strategies:** Fast learners use new words in conversation; take notes of unfamiliar words; group words according to their synonym and antonym; use new words in writing and conversation to remember new words while slow learners write new words again and again; place words based on topic relation; group words according to their parts of speech, remembering words based on visual imagery; find an L1 word that has similar sound to the new word to remember new words.

**Recommendations:** As indicated in many literatures, it has been suggested that one way to accelerate the learning of a

second / a foreign language is to identify ways in which learners learn more efficiently and effectively. Training learners in vocabulary learning strategies can help EFL students become better learners. In addition, skill in using learning strategies assists students in becoming independent, confident learners (Chamot, 1991:1). As indicated by scholars like Wenden and Rubin (1987), Fastlanguage learners use strategies that are specific to the activity they are engaged in. Learners adopt a number of strategies in coping with language learning. However, not all learners are equally maximizing their strategic resources as different students use different strategies to learn the language (McCarthy, 1990). This implies that the slow learners can have benefit from the report of Fast language learners' strategies. Thus, the following recommendations are forwarded to help students to use vocabulary learning strategies efficiently.

- Students need to be introduced to various vocabulary learning strategies in different activities.
- It would be helpful if curriculum developers be aware of the vocabulary learning strategies students use during learning vocabulary and should include vocabulary learning strategies used by Fast learners that enable slow students to develop their vocabulary knowledge.
- It seems profitable if teachers who prepare supplementary teaching materials make use of the output in this research that enable students to be effective in learning vocabulary.
- Slow students should be helped or advised to consider themselves as a student who can successfully learn new words.
- Slow students should be advised to listen English radio or TV program to improve their English vocabulary.

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