A Relational Study of English Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by Grade Nine Junior High School Chinese Students and Their English Achievement

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Abstract

This study is focused on the relationship between English vocabulary strategies used by grade 9 Chinese junior middle school students and their English achievement. There are two research objectives that helped the achievement of this research: 1) To identify the English vocabulary learning strategies used by the 9th grade students in Yucai Junior Middle School. 2) To determine the relationship between the English vocabulary learning strategies used by the 9th grade students from Yucai Junior Middle School and their English achievement.

There were 112 participants involved in this study. To carry out the research, an explanatory mixed methods design using 5 point Likert scale questionnaire survey and semi-structured interview were used. The questionnaire consisted of 5 categories of vocabulary learning strategies: meta-cognitive, cognitive, memory, resource, and flexible-use strategies. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 students from grade 9 in Guangzhou, China to support the statistical result.

The findings showed that the grade 9 students on average had low usage of the vocabulary learning strategies with Mean score (M) = 2.418 and standard deviation (SD)=1.052. Among the 5 categories of vocabulary learning strategies, COGNITIVE strategies were moderately used the most, while the rest of the strategies where seldom and very seldom used. This result was supported by the interviews. The correlation that was done using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient showed that there was a significant

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relationship between the students' usage of vocabularies learning strategies to their English achievement result. As indicated, there was a correlation value of r=.895, p= 0.000 among 112 participants.

The findings indicated that the Chinese grade 9 students do not have a fixed strategy used when learning English vocabulary. Instead, they mixed the strategies and used them when needed.

Keywords: Relational Study English Vocabulary Learning Strategies, Grade Nine Junior High School Chinese Students, English Achievement.

Introduction

When learners learn a foreign language, the first and most difficult part to be learned is the vocabulary. As well, among the factors that influence students' academic performance, is their ability to learn vocabulary and the strategies they use, especially for the junior high school students who are at the initial stage in learning the English language as part of their future education (Chen, 2016).

Not only for Chinese education but almost everywhere in the world, when you learn a language, vocabulary is one of the many factors that learners have to think about. Vocabulary measures learners' language proficiency not only with regards to English but also other languages. This is the reason why a learner's mastery of a language depends on the vocabulary s/he knows, so as in learning English (Chen & Zhang, 2002, p.100). Because of the *English Curriculum Education Standards* (ECES), the requirement standards of the Ministry of Education of China (2012), the vocabulary size Junior High School students need is ranged from 1500 to 1600 words, 200 to 300 idioms, and fixed collocations. These are listed and attached to the guidebook of New English Curriculum Handout (The New English Curriculum Handout, 2012). Based on the guideline, students are required to use vocabulary for contextual guessing and predicting the meaning of new words. The overall goal of the curriculum standards formulated by the Ministry of Education is to cultivate students' comprehensive language proficiency or competence. Meaning, this should be based on students' language skills, language knowledge, emotional attitudes, and cultural awareness. Such skills and knowledge will likely guarantee learners' comprehensive language ability. However, lacking vocabulary means to understand the language, such as English, might be hard for the learners to attain this goal (Ministry of Education of China, 2012). As China's engagement to the world becomes imperative, to be competitive in vocabulary becomes part

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of English learning (Gong, 2012), and plays an important role in language cultural exchanges globally.

Based on Tang's (2008) study, she claimed that Chinese students' biggest problem in English learning is about vocabulary. She argued that there was a lack of focus on English vocabulary teaching and learning strategies to help learners develop their language proficiency. Because of these findings, Chinese researchers have intensified the vocabulary learning strategies research to understand factors deeper. As a result, more systematic data collection and statistical analysis were done but their focus were more on the relationship between vocabulary learning strategies and vocabulary size of college students (Feng, 2003; Ma, 2001; Miao, 2008; Zhang, 2015; Zhao & Duan, 2008). Besides those areas, few studies are found on junior high school students' English vocabulary learning strategies and English achievement. Therefore, this study is focusing on this gap to understand better whether there is a relationship between junior high school students' English vocabulary learning strategies and English achievement. The following are different rationales as part of underpinnings.

Firstly, identifying the English vocabulary strategies used by the Chinese junior high school students needs to be investigated because learners' proficiency of the English language starts with their mastery of English vocabulary. Therefore, vocabulary learning strategies should be the focal point of English teaching and learning. Understanding which strategy suits well to the level of students can play an important role in improving students' English language ability. Thus, identifying and understanding this area better might be able to help learners to easily process their English language acquisition. According to Yang (2006), language teachers can introduce some useful, efficient, and commonly used Vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) to facilitate vocabulary learning. For many years, dictionaries have been undisputable tools to help learners understand the meaning of words. But more recently, information technology provides many tools that teachers and learners can use to acquire vocabulary faster and easier.

Secondly, mastery of English vocabulary and an appropriate use of vocabulary learning strategies do not only affect the quality of students' English learning but contribute to the lifelong learning. Therefore, vocabulary learning strategies need to be emphasized to determine their practicality in English language teaching and learning (Wang, 2012). For this reason, evaluating Chinese junior high school students' different needs and ability is of great significance so some recommendation or suggestion can be provided (Zhou, 2014). This means, if certain strategies are found to be helpful, the next step, therefore, is to know

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whether there is a relationship between students' English vocabulary learning strategies to their learning achievements or performance. Through this, teachers might be able to focus on strategies which help high achievers so low achievers can improve their English vocabulary acquisition better.

Lastly, this study would fill the gap on research on vocabulary learning strategies done in China as very few studies have investigated the relationship between VLSs and English achievement in junior high school students' level. Also, the strategies that were included were only focusing on cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies but the memory strategy, flexible use strategy and resource strategy were ignored.

In the present, there are still confusions about vocabulary learning strategies. Some students believe that English vocabulary learning is only about increasing the size of vocabulary they know but not necessarily the whole process of English language communication (my emphasis is based on my teaching experience). As well, other students think there are no effective strategies or ways to improve vocabulary. Other students have blamed too much reliance on rote memorization and poor memory (my emphasis is based on personal students' discussion). Although some teachers may pay attention to vocabulary teaching, vocabulary acquisition specifically in English seems to be problematic especially in the context of China. Hence, if the English vocabulary learning strategies can be investigated, this might provide some answers on whether certain strategies help students in acquiring the English language based on their vocabulary understanding that influences their learning achievement.

This study focuses on a relational study of English vocabulary learning strategies used by Grade Nine Junior High school students and their English achievement, the following research questions and objectives are to be investigated:

Research Questions:
1. What are the English vocabulary learning strategies the 9th grade students used the most in Yucai Junior Middle School?
2. What is the relationship between English vocabulary learning strategies used and the English achievement of the 9th grade students from Yucai Junior Middle School?

Research Objectives:

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1. To identify the English vocabulary learning strategies the 9th grade students used the most in Yucai Junior Middle School.

2. To determine the relationship between the English vocabulary learning strategies used and the English achievement of the 9th grade students from Yucai Junior Middle School.

As far as this study is concerned, vocabulary learning strategies studied by Li (2013) based on Brown and Payne (1994) and started with the perspective of vocabulary acquisition as compulsory in English Curriculum Standards (Ministry of Education of China, 2012) were divided into five dimensions, which are summarized as: resource strategy, meta-cognitive strategy, cognitive strategy, memory strategy, and flexible use strategy. Following is the structure of vocabulary learning strategies:

Table1.1- The structure of vocabulary learning strategies (Li 2013)

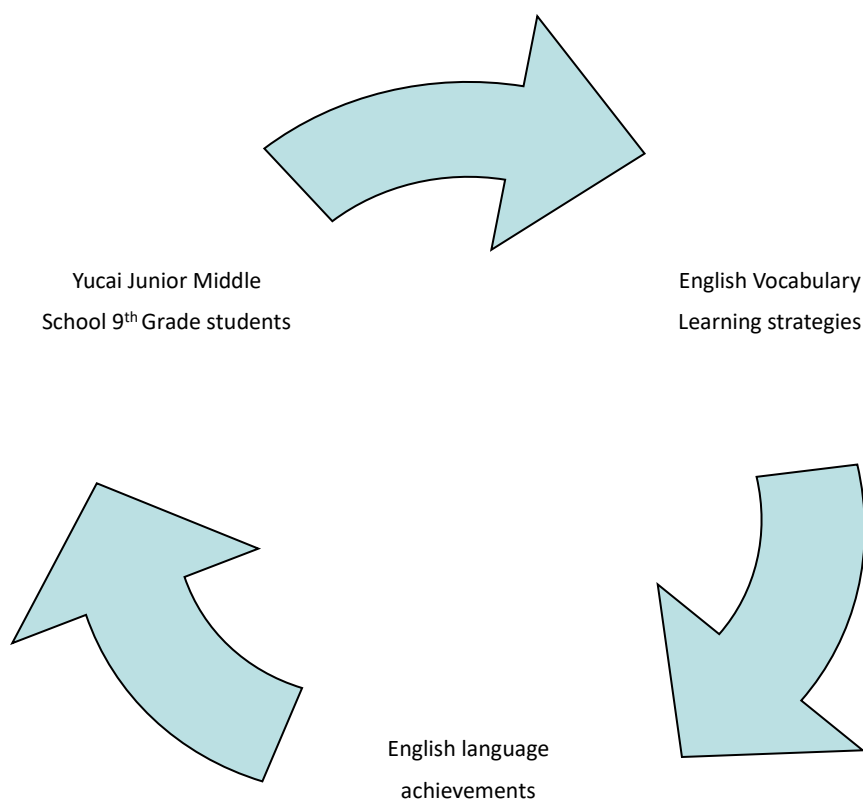| Vocabulary learning strategies	Sub-Categories
Meta-cognitive strategy	Self -reflection and regulation
	Making plans
	Adjust the depth of learning
	Exchange learning issues
Cognitive strategy	Guessing the meaning of words
	Making use of context
	Taking notes
	Looking up the dictionaries
Memory strategy	Repetition (word list, mechanical verbal repetition)
	Association
	Correlation
Resource strategy	Using extracurricular reading materials
	Using life resources (Internet, advertising)
Flexible-use strategy	Creating context and using words
	Written or oral communication

This study adapts Li's (2013) different language learning strategies to identify the

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English vocabulary learning strategies of the 9th Grade students in Yucai Junior Middle School.

Conceptual Framework

Based on the study, a conceptual framework is constructed to describe briefly the use of different vocabulary learning strategies and its relationship to the achievement of the 9th Grade students in Yucai Junior Middle School.

Figure 1.1 *- Conceptual Framework*

Yucai Junior Middle School 9th Grade students

English Vocabulary Learning strategies

English language achievements

Review of Literature:

The concept of language learning strategies

Vocabulary knowledge is the most fundamental structure in second language acquisition and the basic make up of language learning. In order to acquire vocabulary effectively, learners are required to master certain vocabulary learning strategies. Vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) are based on language learning strategies (LS), which in turn are a part of general learning strategies (Nation, 2013). So, what is the learning strategy? The

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concept of language learning strategy has appeared as early as the middle of the last century, but there is still no universally accepted definition. Since 1975, the researchers from abroad and China (Cohen, 2000; Jones, Amiran & Katims,1985; O'Malley &Chomat,1990; Rubin, 1975; Richards, 2005; Wen,1996) made theoretical studies of language learning strategy and gave different definitions according to different criteria. Richards (2005) defined language learning strategies as the way how learners try to find the meaning and usage of words, grammatical rules, and other aspects of language knowledge. This study mainly focuses on the subjects' abilities to use words (meaning, collocation) and grammatical rules.

Stern (1975), Naiman (1978) and Fillmore (1976) concluded that successful language learners shared four common characteristics, and divided language learning strategies into direct strategies and indirect strategies. Naiman (1978) divided language learning strategies into five categories and listed more strategies, such as strategies to promote classroom teaching, to solve specific problems in the learning process, focusing on fluency rather than accuracy, error correction and language learning strategies. The aim is to help students reduce learning anxiety.

Based on the (Gu, 2015) classification of history development into the study of language learning strategy, the author divides language learning into four periods. They are the early period, development period, flourishing period, and low tide period of learning strategy research.

Though the early research on language learning strategies seemed to be promising, this lacks a theoretical basis for the second language acquisition or cognitive theory. The insufficiencies found in the research are as follows (1) there is no system of learning strategy theory. (2) Lack of theoretical guidance which distinguishes the effect strategies used that can improve language learning (Gu & Zhao, 2015).

The development of cognitive psychology and the study of language learning strategies has entered a new period when O'Malley and Chamot (1990) put forward a series of information on processing theory on cognitive science that can be applied to a specific linguistic practice, mainly listening strategies and reading strategies, as Oxford (1990) described in his book what every teacher should know. For example, the strategy inventory for language *learning* (SILL), was of great value to the study and has become widely used by language learning researchers. The research focused on the definition and classification of strategy and involved descriptive and experimental intervention research but research on

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training was limited. There was also a development of the research on the correlation between language learning strategies and autonomous learning (Oxford, 1999; Boekaerts, 2000), then on the relationship between learning strategies and culture (O'Malley, 1990；Oxford, 1996). However, there was a debate on the concept of language learning strategy due to its development and content which is more difficult to be defined. According to Rubin (1994) and Chamot (1999), there is a necessity to understand these strategies since it has been developed.

Apparently, in the 21st century, there had been little research on language learning strategies. In the 1990s, the study of language learning strategies began to flourish in China. Wen (1996) comprehensively studied Chinese students' English learning strategies. In her study, she conducted a descriptive case study and looked at the relationship between oral strategies, learning strategies, and second language achievement. This was followed by other research in learning strategies but focusing on vocabulary, reading, writing and listening (Liu, 1996; Wang, 1998; Wu, 1998). These researchers have not only published a number of papers but also written books. For example, Cheng and Zheng (2002) Wen and Wang (2003) introduced various aspects of language learning strategies at home and abroad, including background, definition, classification, strategy training, and published papers at home and abroad. Through their publications, they inspire and help researchers to understand language learning and teaching strategies in English teaching (Gu, 2015). It was also found that based on these strategies, the basis of English language skills and the study of vocabulary learning strategies are really crucial in understanding the development of the second language acquisition.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) divided language learning strategy into three subcategories based on the cognitive theory of second language learning strategies: meta-cognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and social affective strategies.

Meta-cognitive strategy refers to learners' cognition of cognitive strategies, which is a process of self-evaluation, self-management, self-monitoring, and adjustment of the cognitive process. The strategy includes the formulation of a learning plan, the evaluation of the learning process, the feedback of learning results, the adjustment of learning strategy, guiding attention, functional preparation and selective attention. Accordingly, language learners use meta cognitive learning strategies to use the processes of acquiring the language.

Cognitive strategy is the strategy that learners adopt when they refine learning

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materials to effectively identify and select information. This strategy includes retelling strategy, finishing strategy, organizational strategy, association strategy, transformation strategy and inference strategy. The application of cognitive strategies can not only process and organize vocabulary information but also classify learning materials for effective memory.

Mastering emotion, motivation, and other factors can also promote language learning. Social affective strategies include cooperation, questioning, and clarification, which provide learners with more opportunities to use the language. It mainly includes the following six sub-strategies: reducing anxiety, encouraging oneself, understanding one's emotional state, asking for clarification, exchanging positions, and cooperating with others. However, O'Malley's classification also has a weakness as this ignored the emotional processes (Zhang & Guan, 1999).

On the other hand, Oxford (1992) divided the language learning strategies into direct and indirect strategies based on the relationship between learning strategies and learning materials. The direct learning strategy involves the psychological processing of the target language. This strategy deals with the target language learning which includes memory strategy, cognitive strategy, and compensation strategy. Whereas, indirect strategies provide indirect support for language learning through planning, evaluation, finding opportunities, controlling anxiety, and promoting cooperation. They mainly include meta-cognitive strategies, emotional strategies, and social strategies. The main difference of strategies is they are directly related to each other, and they work at the same level position. However, O'Malley meta-cognitive strategies are based on a higher level position.

With regards to language learning, Cohen (2014) divided it into two categories: language learning strategies and language use strategies. Language learning strategies refer to the materials that need to be used for learning, while the language use strategy is for the use of language, that is, the strategy that is normally used to learn a foreign language such as English. Saying all that, there is no clear cut strategy what works for Chinese students who are learning English as a foreign language. As a consequence, the Compulsory Education English Curriculum Standards of the Ministry of Education in China pointed out that English learning strategies should include cognitive strategies, control strategies, communication strategies, and resource strategies (Compulsory Education English Curriculum Standards, 2012). Cognitive strategies are steps and methods that students can use in order to complete specific learning tasks. While the control strategies can be used for students planning,

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implementing, evaluating, and adjusting the learning process or learning results, communication strategies, on the other hand, can be adopted by students who are striving for communication opportunities, as well as to maintain and improve communication. Such strategies can help students to effectively benefit in learning English, for example using media.

Vocabulary Learning Strategies

There are different types of vocabulary learning strategies which are viewed useful for second language learners. In the 90s, few empirical studies on vocabulary learning strategies play a big part in second language learning and become the basis of the study.

Gu and Johnson (1996) put forward six types of strategy - guessing, dictionary, note-taking, rehearsal, encoding, and activation - together with two other factors: beliefs about vocabulary learning and meta-cognitive regulation. According to these researchers, Meta-cognitive regulation consists of strategies for selective attention and self-initiation. Selective attention enables learners to determine which words are important and essential for their learning and understanding. While self-initiation refers to the clear meaning of vocabulary items determined by its usage and variety of means, the guessing strategies, skillful use of dictionaries and note-taking strategies are labeled as cognitive strategies. Rehearsal and encoding categories are classified under memory strategies. Word lists and repetition are some examples of rehearsal strategies. Accordingly, encoding strategies include association, imagery, visual, auditory, semantic, and contextual encoding and the word-structure. As for strategies where learners use new words in different contexts, they are labeled as activation strategies (Bastanfar & Hashemi, 2010).

At the same time, Lawson and Hogben (1996), on a more reflective part identified four categories of vocabulary learning strategies: repetition, word feature analysis, simple elaboration and complex elaboration. According to them, repetition includes reading of related words, simple rehearsal, writing of word and meaning, cumulative rehearsal and testing. As for the word feature analysis, this includes spelling, word classification and suffix. They also explained that a simple elaboration consisting of sentence translation, simple use of context, appearance similarity, sound link and complex elaboration includes complex use of context, paraphrase, and mnemonic. Based on their findings, learners who had used a greater range of learning strategies tend to remember what they had learned easier. They also found that most of the learners were likely to use repetition strategies compared with other strategies.

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Nevertheless, Ellis (1994, 1999) and Fan and Wang (2002) claimed that vocabulary learning strategies can be influenced by students' general skills, methods, and behaviors used in the process of learning to improve their learning efficiency. As a result, internal brain activity and external behavior create more efficient learning.

Brown and Payne (1994) put forward five steps in vocabulary learning" model based on the analysis of learners' vocabulary strategies.

1. Contacting new words
2. Understanding word form
3. Acquiring vocabulary meaning
4. Consolidating the memory of vocabulary form and meaning
5. Using vocabulary

According to them, positive vocabulary includes words that are used to master learners' spelling, part of speech and usage collocation, whereas negative words are those only mastering the meaning but not spelling, usage, nor pronunciation of words.

Accordingly, Stoffer (1997) divided vocabulary learning into nine categories: (1) strategies of practicing and applying vocabulary in real situations; (2) strategies of creative vocabulary learning; (3) strategies of self-motivation; (4) strategies of generating psychological connections; (5) strategies of using visual and auditory assistance; (6) strategies of learning vocabulary with the help of body movements; (7) strategies of vocabulary learning by means of body movements; (8) strategies for overcoming anxiety; (9) strategies for organizing words. Stoffer's classification of vocabulary learning strategies seem vague as each part has an inclusive relationship which cannot clearly reflect the essence of vocabulary learning strategies. In contrast, Gu and Johnson (1996) divided vocabulary learning strategies into meta-cognitive strategies and cognitive strategies which were based on O'Malley and Chamot (1990). Each part of these strategies has several sub- strategies.

Meta-cognitive strategy includes *selective attention* and *self-initiation* (Gu and Johnson, 1996) Cognitive strategy is made up of contextual guessing, dictionary strategies, note-taking strategies, rehearsal strategies and encoding strategies. Their classification emphasized that different words should be treated differently according to the frequency of learners' use. The key that most researchers have ignored as mastering all the vocabularies seem to be impossible.

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Wen (1996) divided vocabulary learning strategies into management strategies and cognitive strategies. Management strategy is related to learning process, including goal setting, plan making, strategy selection, self- appraisal, self-evaluation, and self -adjustment. Among them, the management strategies of vocabulary learning strategies can be divided into pre-strategy, mid-strategy, and post-strategy. The pre-strategy is to plan concepts and methods. Learners should learn to distinguish high frequency words from low frequency words according to different types of words to take different vocabulary learning methods. The mid-strategy is the implementation and monitoring of the plan, and the later strategy is the summary and adjustment, which was divided into experience summary and lesson summary. The cognitive strategies of vocabulary learning include dictionary strategy and word meaning guessing strategy. Looking up the dictionary is one of the most used strategies for students. When using this strategy, we should pay attention to: 1) when dealing with high-frequency words, we need to know the sound, shape, meaning and usage of the word; when dealing with low-frequency words, we only need to know the meaning of the word. 2) When looking up the meaning of a word, we need to grasp the common meaning of the word. Word meaning guessing strategy is widely used in reading. Synonyms or near synonyms in the context can be used to guess the meaning of words. While Cheng and Zheng (2002, P.68-75) divided vocabulary learning strategies into six categories:

1. Acquiring words in the context
2. Using association to enhance the learning effect of similar words
3. Using images or imagination to deepen the understanding and memory of words
4. Using synonyms and antonyms to compare information
5. Deepen the understanding and memory of words through classification
6. Reviewing and memorizing English words according to word formation.

In 1997, Schmitt disputed the strategies used by other researchers due to the lack of the comprehensive list, according to him. On his list, he categorized five types of vocabulary learning strategies: determination, social, memory, cognitive, and meta-cognitive. This classification had stemmed from Oxford (1990) inventory of general language learning strategies. The social, memory, cognitive and metacognitive strategies are originally taken from Oxford modifying the differences between discovery and consolidation strategies (1990).   Discovery is related to the meaning of new words learners have encountered for the first time while the consolidation is more on their memorization, practice and the retention of words.   In Schmitt's (1997) words, determination strategies can be used when "learners are faced with discovering a new word's meaning without recourse to another person's

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experience" (cited in Bastanfar & Hashemi, 2010, p.160), for example, by guessing the words with the help of context, structural knowledge of language, and reference materials (Catalan, 2003; Ruutmets, 2005; Zhang, 2001).

Nation (2001) argues that mastering certain vocabulary learning strategies help students learn a language more effectively in limited time. He believed that guessing the exact meaning of new words from context is important for vocabulary learning strategy. Nonetheless, differences between the 'sources' of vocabulary knowledge and the 'learning processes' should be taken into consideration. For this reason, the three general classes to cover the subset of key strategies are placed: the *planning*, *sources*, and *processes*. According to him, *planning* is about knowing when and how to use a vocabulary item, strategies for choosing words, word knowledge, and planning repetition. *Sources*, on one hand, involve finding information of words, context, a reference source, like, dictionaries or glossaries and correlation and associations with other languages. Process, on the other hand, is more on establishing word knowledge through noticing, retrieving and generating strategies.

Among these strategies mentioned, Li (2013) chose Brown and Payne's (1994) five steps model of vocabulary acquisition as part of a compulsory education of English curriculum standard (The Ministry of Education in China, 2012). He summarized vocabulary learning strategies into five aspects:

1. Meta cognitive strategy
2. Cognitive strategy
3. Memory strategy
4. Resource strategy
5. Flexible use strategy

This classification method was found suitable on how students have sorted out the vocabulary learning strategies in different aspects of vocabulary learning especially in the order of input to output of language materials.

With regards to the English language vocabulary teaching and learning, two of the main issues which need to be discussed are about the '*quantity*' of words a learner knows and '*quality*' of knowledge of each word a learner knows. The quantity of words indicates the number of vocabulary learners so s/he would know how to use them or understand a language (Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2014). The quality of words are the features or components of

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vocabulary which learners should know to be used in different context. Nation (2001) claimed that knowing a word means knowing the following:

      1. *Form* constitutes spoken, written, word parts.

      2. *Meaning* comprises form and meaning, concept and references, and association.

      3. *Use* or *usage* refers to grammatical functions, collocations and constraints on use.

According to Sonbul and Schmitt (2010), these different components of word knowledge can be learned incidentally or explicitly. Incidental vocabulary learning involves learners acquiring new words subconsciously while engaging in learning activities designed for developing skills such as reading or writing. While explicit vocabulary learning involves specific activities designed to ensure students' awareness and acquisition of specific words. Even though incidental learning of vocabulary has its advantage, Nation (2001) claimed that learners may not be able to acquire sufficient vocabulary to become effective language users. There, learning vocabulary is a must for many language learners. Additionally, Nation also claims that certain vocabulary learning strategies might help students to learn vocabulary effectively in limited time.

Different Approaches on Second Language Acquisition
Lexical Chunk Approach

According to Lewis (1997) lexical approach is based on the idea that "language consists not of traditional grammar and vocabulary but often of multi-word prefabricated chunks" (cited in Harmer, 2001, p. 91). Harmer pointed out that lexical phrases include collocations, idioms, fixed and semi-fixed phrases.

"A lexical approach would steer us away from an over-concentration on syntax and tense usage (with vocabulary slotted into these grammar patterns) towards the teaching of phrases which show words in combination, and which are generative in a different way from traditional grammar substitution tables" (Harmer. (2001, P401-405)

Language acquisition is not only about a construction of individual word but also phrases. Construction is a conventional linguistic unit that is part of the linguistic system, accepted as a convention in the speech community, and entrenched as grammatical knowledge in the speaker's mind" (Ellis, 2003, p. 66 cited in Ziafar & Namaziandost, 2019, p.

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247). This means that a grammar construction in all languages is determined by morphology, syntax, and lexicon. Accordingly, determining an utterance morphological, syntactic, and lexical form are also determined by language semantic, pragmatic, and/or discourse functions. Meaning to say, constructions functional properties are shaped by a speakers' knowledge of a language. According to Ellis (2003) this perspective implies that the language acquisition vocabulary or lexicon is considered a source of crucial knowledge in learning and discovering syntax. Language constructions are based on particular lexical items which have been acknowledged with different labels such as holophrases, prefabricated patterns, formulaic speech, formulae, sequences in SLA, chunks, and formulaic expressions or utterances (Sinclair, 1991, cited in Ellis, 2000).

Chunk memory strategy is helpful to improve learners' language fluency as they are stored in the brain's long-term memory and used frequently. Acquisition of lexical chunks strategy can help learners improve the accuracy of expression.

Relevant research showed that Chinese English learners often encounter collocation and class connection problems when using common English words (collocation and class connection belong to the category of lexical chunks, but they are only different in the degree of abstraction) (Pu, 2003). The basic reason for this phenomenon is that students ignore the language form, paying attention to the sound which shape the meaning of word and chunking of words. If learners can learn, for example, common collocations as a whole or as chunks, they might reduce collocation errors in language production and improve language expression. Lexical chunks have dual characteristics, grammar, and vocabulary, and can be used as a whole unit for learners to be kept in memory. As MacKenzie (2000) claimed, mistakes in language used are often caused by the lack of a large number of words and phrases that can be extracted immediately. Therefore, the process of using language is a process of using prefabricated chunks effectively. In most cases, lexical chunks will not only help in improving learners' language fluency but also pragmatic competence.

Corpus Linguistics

In the mid-20th century, a study of vocabulary changed tremendously. Lexicographers and grammarians used a large amount of text known as language corpora such as patterns of phrase and whole chunks of text in context both written and spoken (i.e., CANCODE, ICLE, CALL, etc.) in a database and showed how these items or patterns are used (Kennedy, 2014). However, learners need dictionary with a corpus. Corpus is a body of written or spoken languages transcribed and stored as a basis for linguistic analysis and description. The

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corpora of language transformed dictionaries when it comes to semantics and grammar and becomes a cutting edge that influences a concept of education and roles of teachers in various cultural and educational contexts (Foley, 2012). These different collections of learners' corpus are viewed by Granger (2003) as authentic texts as they were produced by foreign or second language learners such as Chinese. However, Widdowson (2000) argued that, "the texts which are collected in a corpus have a reflected reality: they are only real because of the presupposed reality of the discourses of which they are a trace. This is decontexualized language, which is why it is only partially real. If the language is to be realized as used, it has to be recontextualized" (cited in Stefanowitsch, 2020). Nevertheless, corpora are regarded authentic as they are part of an authentic communicative situation. This is supported by Stefanowitsch (2020) as according to him, a sample of spoken language is only authentic as part of the larger conversation it is part of, and a sample of newspaper language is only authentic as long as it is produced in a newsroom and processed by a reader in the natural context of a newspaper or news site for the purposes of informing themselves about the news. Therefore, the very act of taking a sample of language and including it in a corpus removes its authenticity.

The point is, there are lots of approaches that can be viewed as important when studying vocabulary and corpus linguistics is one of them. One important thing that can be understood about this approach is that language teachers can use the information they can find to choose which one they have to address first in contexts where English is used as a foreign language. As word list is one of the most powerful tools for making comparisons between corpora that represents different language uses, comparing word lists extracted from spoken and written texts can yield valuable insights into how the use of vocabulary varies depending on the specific modes of communication as words tend to occur in a form of collocations, colligations and other words combination also known as chunks, n-grams, words or more words that repeatedly occur consecutively in corpus, and lexical bundles (Szudarski, 2017, pp.22-23).

The argument is that vocabulary learning is not only about acquiring a 'native-like vocabulary size' as this also involves learners' language competence, strategic ability, and skills of using lexical resources when they need them.

Previous Studies on Vocabulary Learning Strategies
There are different studies on vocabulary teaching and learning in the classrooms in different countries and in China.

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Ma (2007), a Chinese scholar whose study is about a 'theoretical framework of second language vocabulary knowledge', divided L2 vocabulary knowledge into two aspects, *meta vocabulary knowledge* and *vocabulary knowledge*, explained that meta vocabulary knowledge involves macro knowledge of words, such as concepts, meaning, rules, and variant forms of words. Whereas vocabulary knowledge answers the question 'what does it mean to acquire a L2 words?' His findings showed that the framework of vocabulary knowledge includes phoneme knowledge, spelling knowledge, morphological knowledge, semantic knowledge, mother tongue knowledge, word frequency knowledge, collocation knowledge, syntactic knowledge, stylistic knowledge, pragmatic knowledge and vocabulary strategy knowledge.

In 2011, Kafipour, Yazdi and Soori (2011) investigated 238 Iranian junior high school students and selected them from Sunan University using quantitative method. In order to collect data, the author adopts Schmitt's vocabulary learning strategy questionnaire and vocabulary proficiency test. The findings showed that the participants needed more vocabulary learning strategy training to be more familiar with various vocabulary learning strategies. In addition, the researcher found that the most frequently used strategy is cognitive strategy, and the least is common cognitive strategy. Another Iranian research on vocabulary learning strategies was done by Davoudi and Chavosh (2016) in Iranian EFL students. The research found that advanced and intermediate language learners often used psychological connection, memory strategies and auditory strategies.

Then another research was conducted about the English vocabulary learning strategies used by students in Iran. Khoii and Sharififar (2013) found that *rote-memorizing* and semantic mapping are among the vocabulary learning strategies used by non-native English students of one of the universities in the UK. Rote-memorizing is a traditional learning method used by students by repeating words until these are memorized. This type of strategy is used especially in vocabulary learning. Another way is semantic mapping. Semantic mapping is a "visual strategy for vocabulary expansion and extension of knowledge by displaying categories of words related to one another" (Khoii & Sharififar, 2013 p.199-209). According to them, there are some advantages found in rote memorization and it is effective in helping students with vocabulary retention.

At the same year, Haghi and Pasand (2013) had also studied vocabulary learning strategies on 55 EAP students majoring in Social Sciences of Guilin University. The aim was to investigate the most and least commonly used vocabulary learning strategies. The results

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showed that learners used the same type of vocabulary learning strategies. This study indicated that students do not have particular preferences when studying English vocabulary learning strategies.

Consequently, Ender (2016) a Swiss researcher who used French as the research subject explored the effects of different vocabulary processing strategies on vocabulary acquisition in reading comprehension texts from the perspective of cognitive operation. His study discussed two aspects of vocabulary language processing; one is the *implicit* processing of information while the other one is *active*, *fine,* and *explicit* processing. The results showed that the implementation of implicit processing provides additional information about the differences of processing depth. The results also showed that students with different English levels chose different vocabulary learning strategies.

Furthermore, Manuel (2017), a researcher from Angola, investigated the influence of gender differences on vocabulary learning strategies of undergraduates in Agostinho Neto University. This study was designed as an inter- group study. His participants included 30 male and 30 female middle-level students aged between 18 and 21. The results showed that both male and female students used a wide range of vocabulary learning strategies. The researcher also found that there was no statistically significant difference between males and females with regards to vocabulary learning strategies.

Additionally, Baskin, Iscan, Karagoz, and Birol, G. (2017) conducted a survey on the use of vocabulary learning strategies in Turkish teaching at Gaziosmanpasa University. 22 students were investigated using a 25 items vocabulary learning strategy questionnaire. The questionnaire is based on Schmidt's classification. The data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, and average. The results showed that students' language proficiency is an important factor in their use of vocabulary strategies. However, it was also found that students use the decision strategies mostly but the least on cognitive strategies.

The Recent Studies on the Relationship between Vocabulary Learning Strategies and English Achievement

In China, Liang (2019) searched the core journals of Peking University in the category of 'pedagogy', using the key word 'English vocabulary strategy'. What he found was 245 topics related to English vocabulary strategies on journals from 2000 to 2019. These topics were from the preference of choosing vocabulary learning strategies and the relationship between learning strategies and English achievement.

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The summary of the studies found is shown in the table below:

Table 2.1-*Total number of Vocabulary Learning Strategies Searches in China*

Target group	Elementary junior, senior-high students	Adults	Vocational college students	University students	Post-under graduate students
Preference of choosing vocabulary learning strategies	24	25	30	142	5
The relationship between vocabulary learning strategies and English achievement	5	0	5	9	0

From the table, the indication is that the research on English vocabulary learning strategies in China mainly focused on the study of preferences of choosing vocabulary leaning strategies, while the number of researches on the relationship between English vocabulary learning strategies and English achievement is less. The number of researches on middle school students is even lesser, and the number of researches on College Students' vocabulary strategies is far more than those above mentioned. The main reason is that the researchers on vocabulary strategies mainly concentrate on universities.

Some of these research examples on the English vocabulary learning strategies which were conducted in different parts of China are discussed.

In 2010, Wen (2010) conducted a study on the use of the English vocabulary learning strategies. The researcher's focus was to compare the similarities and differences of students' use of the English vocabulary learning strategies among second-year business English majors. The results showed that the students' usage and choices of the English vocabulary learning

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strategies vary.

Then, Wang (2011) conducted a survey on 182 students from a high school in Shandong Province about a correlation of the English vocabulary learning strategies and the English vocabulary size on their achievement. The survey found that vocabulary learning strategies and vocabulary size of senior high school students were positively correlated with their English achievement. As well, among the strategies, meta-cognitive strategies and cognitive strategies were found that were positively correlated with the English scores of the participants. Also, the result indicated that, there were differences in the use of vocabulary learning strategies among students with high English scores and students with low English scores.

Cai (2014) studied 95 Chinese Engineering Undergraduates' use of the English vocabulary learning strategies in his research paper. In contrary with other studies, Cai's (2014) findings had indicated that the frequency of the English vocabulary learning strategies used by his subjects were high across strategies and found that among the five strategies, the Chinese engineering college students heavily used decision strategies the most but social strategies rarely.

Another interesting study by Zhang and Lu (2015) deserves mention. In their study on correlation, they surveyed the relationship between the English vocabulary learning strategies with vocabulary breadth and depth knowledge of 150 freshmen students in China. The researcher used a proficiency test consisting of the two types of vocabulary breadth knowledge. They also conducted interview surveys to find out students' use of the English vocabulary learning strategies. The results showed that there were two significant strategies that can greatly influence the expansion and deepening of vocabulary knowledge. These are cognitive strategy and mnemonic strategy.

The Present Study

Based on the theoretical bases and the different studies reviewed in this chapter, although many experts and scholars have done a lot of research on vocabulary learning strategies, most of them only focused on theories. Also, the participants of the previous researchers were limited to college students only. Thus, conducting the study at junior high school students can fill the theoretical gap of the study.

In addition, although the English vocabulary learning strategies have been used often,

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they have some limitations. For example, cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies were touched upon but the memory strategy, flexible use strategy and resource strategy were ignored. In addition, a correlation between English vocabulary learning strategies and English achievements in China were rarely studied. Thus, this study focused on the areas which were not studied and at the same time tried to understand whether in the context of junior high school in China, the specific English vocabulary learning strategy/ies used was correlated with their English achievement.

Research Design

An explanatory mixed method was employed in the research design of this study. According to Creswell (2003), the main purpose of explanatory mixed method design was to help explain or build the initial quantitative results by using qualitative data. The process of the explanatory design (Heigham & Croker, 2009) was as follows:

Figure 2.1- *Explanatory Mixed Method Design*

| **QUAN** | | **Qual** | | **QUAN** |

Interpret

| Survey of Yucai junior high students N=112 | Descriptive analysis | Semi-structured interview (N=10) | Pearson correlation analysis | Interpretation based on QUAN and Qual result |
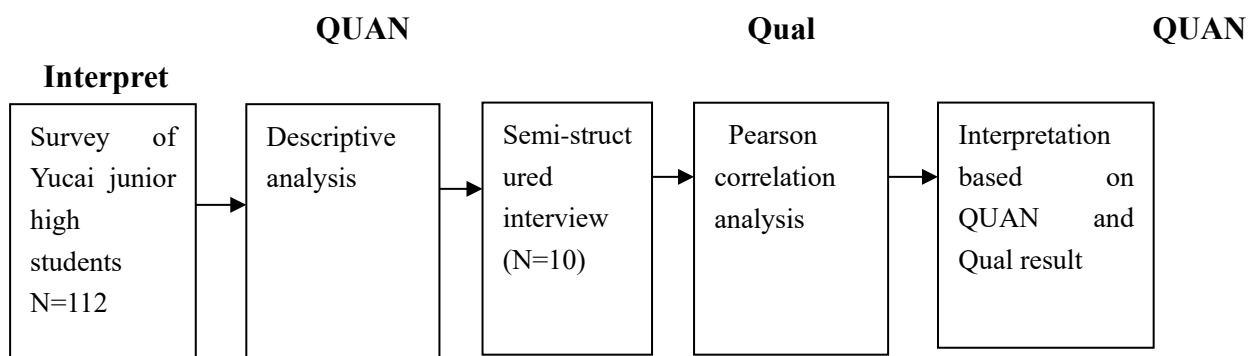
Focus of the Study and Population

Yucai

Junior Middle School was founded in 1997. It is a private school in Huangpu district, Guangzhpu, China. It is run by *Huangpu Education Group* and managed by Principal Xiao. This school was chosen because it is perceived to have a good teaching quality in the region. Also, with regards to access, the researcher obtained approval from the school as he used to work in this institution. This study planned to focus on grade 9 which has 112 as the sample under questionnaire investigation and 10 as the interviewee participants.

Sample Technique

The sample for this study was the grade 9 students. This grade has three classes. And the focus was the enrollees for Semester 1 for the Academic Year 2020, 26 February 2021.

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The researcher employed the purposive sampling technique to collect the data from participants using online mode as China is still coping with the COVID19 pandemic. The proposed idea is to use about 110 students (rough estimate based on Semester 2 AY2020).

Research Instrument

This study used questionnaire survey and semi-structured interview as research instruments. Nunan (2001) stated that a questionnaire survey is one of the frequently used methods in the investigation of foreign language teaching management, classroom teaching, students' learning situation, and attitude. As this study lies on these areas, the researcher decided to use the same instrument too.

Questionnaire

The 'questionnaire design' was adapted from Li (2013) English vocabulary learning strategies based on Brown and Payne's (1994) five steps of vocabulary acquisition" model as this supports the English Curriculum Standards of the Ministry of Education, China.

The questionnaire has two parts.

PART I was about the personal information of the participants.   This part was about student ID number, Class Profile and Grade. Although personal information was provided, in the study, all students' information was anonymous. Thus their names were replaced by S1-S100.

PART II was about the 5 Likert scale 49 items' questions. The questions were categorized into five dimensions: meta-cognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, memory strategies, resource strategies, and flexible use strategies.

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Table 3.1 -*Evaluation criteria*

1	Never	=	Never used at all
2	Seldom	=	Used occasionally
3	Sometimes	=	Maybe or not sure
4	Often	=	Used when needed
5	Always	=	Used every time

The statement gives the weight from 1-5 for scoring for the interpretation purposes.

The scale interpretation of this research is shown below.

The questionnaire of this study used 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1-5. So, as for the evaluation criteria in this study, it was based upon a range of score of 0.80 as per the formula:

Class interval=   The highest width -The lowest width

                                    The lowest width

                            =   5-1

                                          4

                            =   0.8

Table 3.2- *Interpretation and Scale*

Rating	S co re	Scare	Interpretation
Always	5	4.21-5.00	Very high
often	4	3.41-4.20	High
Sometimes	3	2.61-3.40	Moderate
Seldom	2	1.81-2.60	Low

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Never	1	1.0-1.80	Very Low

Interview

This study conducted a semi-structured interview with Grade 9 students at Yucai junior high school, Guangzhou, China. According to Creswell (1998) and Morse (1994), the sample size of qualitative study was around 6 to 25. 10 participants were randomly chosen from the sample to further gather information which was not available from the survey questionnaire. Data that was collected from the interview was used to support the findings from the questionnaire survey to answer the research question 1:

Questions that were used for the semi-structured interview was taken from the questionnaire survey and the objective of the interview in this study is to gain more insightful information and support and strengthen the findings from the questionnaire.

The interview questions and objectives are given in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 -*Questions and objectives for interview for students*

NO	Questions	Objectives
1	Can you tell me what strategies do you use when you are learning vocabulary?	To explore what strategies students used in order to get findings of research question 1.
2	Can you tell me how do you do when you are learning vocabularies? Please explain.	To get more detailed information about the vocabulary strategies students used

Validity and Reliability

Validity

As a research tool, the designed questionnaire can help the researcher to accurately measure what he needs, also known as measurement ability, which is called validity (Qin, 2009, p.226). The methods of validity analysis included factor analysis or correlation analysis. The minimum value should not be lower than 0.6 (Qin, 2009, p.226). The validity of the questionnaire is described as satisfactory; thus, this can be viewed as valid.

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Table 3.4-*The Analysis of Questionnaire Validity*

	Test of Kaiser Meyer Olkin and Barrett (Ding, 2017)	
Measurement of Kaiser Meyer Olkin with sufficient degree	Unit of measurement	0.755
Bartlett's sphericity test	Approximate Chi-Square	2584.778
	df	1176
	Sig.	0.000

Reliability

Qin (2009, p.211) defined reliability as "the stability or consistency of measurement results". The reliability is expressed by Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient which is greater than 0.70. The indication is that the reliability of measurement is high and suitable for the study.

Table 3.5-*The Analysis of Questionnaire Reliability*

	Meta cognitive strategy	Cognitive strategy	Memory strategy	Resource strategy	Flexible use strategy	Overall strategy
Cronbach alpha	0.752	0.800	0.708	0.806	0.790	0.904
Number of items	12	13	10	8	6	49

Results and Discussion

The first part presents the results of the quantitative data one collected from the students' questionnaire survey to answer the first research question. In addition, the second part presents the results of qualitative data taken from the students' interview questions to support the quantitative survey results, which provide insights into the answers to the first research question 1. The third part is the findings of the correlation analysis between the scores of choices of the vocabulary learning strategies and their English achievement scores, which would be presented to answer research question 2.

Research Findings of the Research Question 1

The findings based on the research question 1: What are the English vocabulary learning strategies the 9th grade students used the most in Yucai Junior Middle School?

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The findings indicated that the *Mean* score (M) is 2.418 and the *Standard Deviation* (SD) is 1.052. Based on the evaluation criteria, the range from 1.81 to 2.60 indicated that the grade 9 students' usage of vocabulary learning strategies was low.

Table 4.1 summarized the findings and its interpretation of the usage of each strategy in English vocabulary learning.

Table 4.1 -*English vocabulary learning strategy Used by the Chinese grade 9 students*

Domain	N	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Meta-cognitive strategy	112	2.09	0.97	Low usage
Cognitive strategy	112	2.93	1.09	Moderate usage
Memory strategy	112	2.55	1.09	Low usage
Resource strategy	112	2.38	1.06	Low usage
Flexible use strategy	112	2.14	1.05	Low usage
Total strategies	**112**	**2.418**	**1.052**	**Low usage**

The Table 4.1 shows that on average, students' usage of the five categories of English vocabulary learning strategies are relatively LOW. Based on the findings of each domain, meta-cognitive strategy has M=2.09 and SD=0.97; cognitive strategy M=2.93 and SD=1.09, memory strategy M=2.55 and SD=1.09, resource strategy M=2.38 and SD=1.06, and flexible use strategy M=2.14 and SD=1.05, all of which indicated the usage is low. But grade 9 students also indicated that they used the cognitive strategy MODERATELY. Meaning to say, though the usage of four domains seems to be low, the cognitive strategy was likely used when they need it.

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Figure 4.1- *Students' overall use of vocabulary learning strategies by rank*
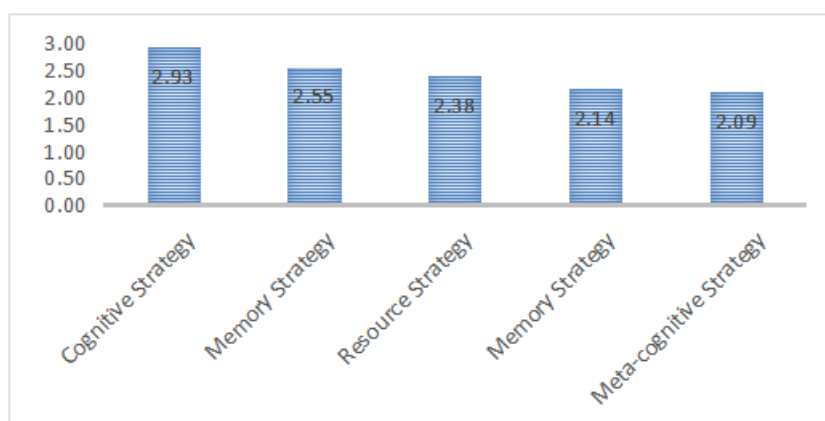

Figure 4.1 has clearly illustrated that none of the five strategies is higher. This result is supported by Ellis (2012). As he said, learners used more cognitive strategies than other learning strategies. While the average value of memory strategy (M = 2.55, SD = 1.09) and resource strategy (M = 2.38, SD = 1.06) is slightly lower than of cognitive strategy, the indication is that most junior high school students adopted certain methods in vocabulary consolidation and used other learning resources either inside or outside of class to help their vocabulary learning. The flexible used strategy (M = 2.14, SD = 1.05), and meta cognitive strategy (M = 2.09, SD = 0.97) had also shown a LOW usage. Perhaps this can be an indication of the daily usage of English in China context. As the language that the Chinese grade 9 students used is normally Chinese, this can be the reason why junior high school students seldom used English vocabulary to practice English communication.

Table 4.2- *Summary of the English vocabulary learning strategies from the interview data*

Domain	Sub-domain	Sample (N=10)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Total Frequency	Total (%)
Meta-cognit ive	Making plans	S5	3	4.28		
	Adjusting the depth of learning	S5	1	1.42	6	8.55
	Exchangeing learning issues	S4	2	2.85		
Cognitive	Taking notes	S2,S3,S5,	5	7.14		

		S6,S10			20	
	Looking up into the dictionary	S1,2,3,5, 6,8,9,10	15	21.42	28.56	
Memory	Repetition(word list & mechanical verbal repetition)	S1,S2,S4, S7,S8	15	21.42	17 24.27	
	Association	S4	2	2.85		
Resource	Using extracurricular reading materials	S3,S6,S9, S10	14	20	16 22.85	
	Making use of living resources(internet)	S1,S7	2	2.85		
Flexible-use	Written or oral communication	S3,S6	4	5.71	4	5.71
Other Strategies	Underlining the new words while reading	S2	1	1.42		
	Previewing the new words	S4, S6,S7	3	4.28		
	Imitating the pronunciation	S4	1	1.42	10 9.97	
	Review and consolidation	S5, S6	2	2.85		

Integration of mixed Data Analysis: Convergence and Augmentation of the Results

The quantitative results from students' questionnaire were supported by the data found from the interviews; the 6th theme was considered an augmentation.

The five Themes and Results of the questionnaire for students

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For the questionnaire for students, the results showed that students had low usage of the overall five sub-categories of Vocabulary learning strategies (M=2.418, SD=1.0502). Based on the themes from the semi-structured interview for students, it indicated that the themes showed both convergence and augmentation with the Questionnaire findings for students.

Research Findings of Question 2

To answer research question 2: What is the relationship between English vocabulary learning strategies used and the English achievement of the 9th grade students from Yucai Junior Middle School?

A correlational analysis was carried out to answer this question. Table 4.3 illustrated that there is a relationship among the vocabulary learning strategies used by grade 9 Chinese students and their English achievement.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient showed that students' average scores for 5 categories had statistically positive correlation (r=.895, n=112, p= 0.000) with their English achievement result. Similarly, positive correlations were also found between vocabulary learning strategies at each category of five including (Meta-cognitive, Cognitive, Memory, Resource, and Flexible-use vocabulary learning strategies) and scores for students' English achievement respectively.

Table 4.3-*Correlation between vocabulary learning strategies used by grade 9 Chinese students and their English achievement scores*

		Scores for vocabulary learning strategies	Scores for English achievement
Scores for English vocabulary learning strategies	Pearson Correlation	1	.895**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	__	.000
	N	112	112
Scores for English achievement	Pearson Correlation	.895**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	__
	N	112	

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

Table 4.3 has shown that the correlation between vocabulary learning strategies and English achievement was significantly correlated with P<0.01 level since Sig.was.000.

Conclusion

This research study used explanatory mixed method design. A Questionnaire and semi-structured interview were used as instruments of the study.

The research objective 1 showed that the grade 9 Chinese students studying at Yucai Junior Middle used different English vocabulary learning strategies depending on their situation. It was also indicated in the findings that almost all the domains outlined by Li (2013) in their research were rarely used by the Chinese students besides from COGNITIVE vocabulary learning strategy. The indication is that grade 9 Chinese students do not consistently used the strategies outlined. Instead, they used whatever strategy available to them or they have thought useful to them when they need them.

As for the research objective 2, the result showed that there is a relationship between the English vocabulary learning strategies used by the students of grade 9 and their English achievement scores.

The indication therefore is that the strategies the grade 9 students used to learn the English vocabulary is not only helpful for the development of their vocabulary knowledge but to their English language acquisition in general.

Pedagogical Implications

Based on the discussion of the findings, this study has outlined different pedagogical implications that can be used for the teaching and learning.

ENGLISH TEACHERS: Based on the discussions of the research on English vocabulary learning strategies, there are room improvements to help the grade 9 Chinese students to develop their English language using different vocabulary learning strategies. As the findings illustrate that the Chinese grade 9 students have limited strategies used in learning English vocabulary, the implication is that teachers are likely to be the lacking strategies themselves to help them impart that knowledge to their students. As teachers are viewed to be the carrier of knowledge, the knowledge therefore needs to start with them. To materialize this suggestion, Chinese teachers who are teaching English (or other language) 1)

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should learn to promote and integrate the different strategies of the development of the students' word consciousness, using different types of strategies such as, meta-cognitive strategies, flexible strategies, and resource strategies, to their teaching so that they can impart this knowledge to their students as they learned. There is nothing wrong with traditional strategies of learning the English vocabulary, as long as, these can be paired with other strategies which catered for the 21st century teaching and learning. 2) Make extra-curricular activities as part of everyday learning, for example, provide them reading material that they can bring home to read. Different studies on vocabulary emphasized the importance of reading to help students' vocabulary knowledge development. Being able to read different reading materials might be able to someday equipped students' knowledge that they can use in their everyday lives. 3) Teachers need to train or encourage students to learn how to learn. Meaning, learning English vocabulary should be part of everyday life and not just when they need to answer the exams or when they have to communicate with the foreigners. 4) Fun learning activities can be useful as long as it supports the teaching and learning objectives of the lesson. Therefore, teachers should understand what factors affect student's vocabulary learning so they can initiate the right English vocabulary learning strategies to the students. To be able to provide students different instructions/activities will allow students to work independently. 5) Learn to use other resources using technology to help students to develop their vocabulary. As education is already digitally taught, it seems to be the time to let learners be aware that processing the information should be done in an implicit and active way. In this regard, their vocabulary learning process is continuous and does not stop in the classroom. This is when the reflective strategy and the use of other resources to learn the English vocabulary can be useful. Lastly, teachers need to be aware that the English vocabulary learning strategies will not only be shown by looking at their students' achievement scores. Be technological literate, technology is full of resources waiting to be found and acquired, also, these are free. A good English vocabulary learning strategies can be measured through a learners overall learning competence; this can be in English, Chinese, other integrated courses, etc. as well as, intercultural competence as learners who know 'a language' should know them as a whole and not just a fragment. Thus, teachers should know how to model their teaching of vocabulary by teaching a language (English) in a holistic way.

ENGLISH STUDENTS: Be a 21st century learner. Students need to be exposed to different vocabulary knowledge which are not only meant for school but adequate to the world. Therefore, students need to be equipped with vocabulary that they can use every day. Students who know how to process the right vocabulary acquisition, might have more opportunities open for them. Therefore, students should not only rely on their learning with

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their teachers but should know how to find ways to integrate their vocabulary knowledge to their learning process, for example use the English vocabulary they know in a real life communication. After all, the best way to learn a language is to use the language. Based on the findings discussed in this chapter, the grade 9 students tend to use the different strategies, but two or three sub-categories of these strategies were the ones used repeatedly. Therefore, 1) other English vocabulary strategies need to be utilized especially for those which inspire independent learning or autonomous learning, such as the meta-cognitive strategy, flexible strategy and resource strategy. This can be ideal as different students especially in the China context tend to have richer vocabulary than others. 2) Make vocabulary learning be part of your everyday life activity. For example, let reading as be part of your extra-curricular activities. Different studies on reading suggest that reading helps tremendously in acquiring vocabulary. Also, learners who like to read tend to have wider and richer vocabulary than those who do not like to read. So, start to know what type of reading genre you like to start with. Exposure to the different types of reading materials tend to develop vocabulary knowledge and awareness of words. Also, students who are word conscious are more aware of the words around them. 3) Don't be afraid to ask questions and be engaged. Part of knowing is about engagement. A student who is more active in learning tend to ask questions more. Therefore, comprehension will likely develop faster if a student is more engaged in the class. Few research studies claimed that students who have low vocabulary knowledge tends to have low comprehension level, therefore, curious students are likely develop their vocabulary knowledge faster than those who just memorize them. As the study suggests the use of the memory strategy is one of the strategies used by the grade 9 Chinese students. Being able to use an effective use of vocabulary learning strategies can improve the automation of vocabulary learning. 4) Use technology to expand your vocabulary. There are different sources that you can find on the internet which help develop English vocabulary acquisition. For example, English movies, songs, vocabulary application, such as Doulingo, English news, etc. Multiple exposures to the English language can help a learner to easily understand different words that can be used in context.

Limitations of the Study

There are few limitations found in this study.

Firstly, the sample of this study. This study could not be generalized as the sample was not extensive enough and only focusing on grade 9 Chinese students at the Junior middle school in Yuchai, China. Therefore, the result only represented on this particular group and not the other grades and levels of this institution.

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Secondly, the result of the study relies heavily on statistical analysis based on the questionnaire used. As only 10 students participated in the interview, other participants' opinion on what other strategies they used when they utilized different domains for the English learning vocabulary were not included. Furthermore, as the interviews were done using WeChat some areas are not comprehensive enough for the purpose of the study.

Thirdly, the correlation between vocabulary learning strategies and English achievement did not involve other variables, such as learners' age, gender, vocabulary level, learning motivation and so on. Therefore, further studies need to be done in order to understand the different strategies used by the students in English vocabulary learning.

Finally, the instruments involved in this study only through questionnaire survey and interview, without tracking and observing the learning situation of students to explore the dynamic development of their learning process.

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