
EXPLORING STUDENTS' STRATEGIES OF VOCABULARY LEARNING AT ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM OF KHAIRUN UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the use of vocabulary learning strategies used by Economic students. This study was survey study and used mixed method to analyze the data. The techniques of data collection of this study were questionnaire to collect the quantitative data and interview to collect the qualitative data. This research data were collected by using Schmitt's Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS). The data analysis shows that the most frequently strategies used by the students were determination strategies especially in by looking up a word in English-Indonesian dictionary while the least frequently strategies used were social strategies through talking with a native English speaker.

Keywords: *Exploring, strategy, learning, vocabulary*

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary represents one of most important skills necessary for teaching and learning a foreign language. It is the basis for the development of all the other skills: reading comprehension, listening comprehension, speaking, writing, spelling and pronunciation. Vocabulary becomes the main tool for the students in their attempt to use English effectively, such as when they are confronted with a native English speaker, watching a movie without subtitle, listening to a favorite English song, reading a text or writing a letter to a friend, students will always need to operate with words. Moreover, it is impossible to think about a language without words.

The vocabulary of English as foreign language is seen as a significant component for foreign students, Most students face difficulty in learning a foreign language and they gradually lose interest in learning, due to the limiting barrier of vocabulary. Especially, for Students of English for specific purposes (ESP) since they will often find specialized English words in their program.

In the other hand, ESP students need VLSs (vocabulary learning style) in order to increase their vocabulary knowledge and understand the materials. VLSs is usually seen as a branch of language learning strategies To say simply, VLSs help learners to cope up with the difficulties of learning new words and to learn the words more effectively. Besides that, they need VLSs to achieve their future goal which is to succeed in their specialism.

VLSs play a critical role in language learning by helping learners expand their vocabulary. In this situation, the students cannot always rely on their teachers. Therefore, they need to find their own strategies to cope with unknown words independently in order to make them understand about the materials given. In contrary, without VLSs, learners will be unable to acquire vocabularies effectively. Based on the point above, this research was conducted to explore English Education students' strategies in learning English at 5th semester of in Khairun University.

Definition of Vocabulary

Vocabulary defined as one of the language components which should be mastered by English learners. Furthermore, it is impossible to be successful in study language without mastering the vocabulary. There are two kinds of vocabulary. According to Finnochiaro (1947:73), as cited in Nilawati (2009: 9), namely active vocabulary and passive vocabulary. Active vocabulary refers to the

words the student understands, can pronounce correctly and use them constructively in speaking and writing. On the other hand, passive vocabulary refers to the words in which the students can recognize and understand while they are reading or listening to someone speaking. But they do not use the words in speaking or writing.

Vocabulary is the significance component in language learning, Wilkins (1972:111), in Thornbury (2002:13) emphasized without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. Indeed, people need to use words in order to express themselves in any language. But, only with sufficient vocabulary one can express his ideas effectively, can understand the language task and foreign language.

2. Defining Vocabulary Learning Strategies

In learning English vocabularies students need to understand how to define a word. According to Ruitments (2005) cited in Jurcovic (2006:p.3), one subcategory of language learning strategies is vocabulary learning strategies and defined as what the learners do to reach the meaning of new words, hold these words in long-term memory, recall them when comprehension is used and use them in producing language.

Vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) are the actions taken by the language learners to learn new English words (Safian, Malakar and Kalajahi, 2014 cited in Bristi 2015:p.2). VLS help them to gain grammatical, phonological, semantic and contextual knowledge about words in the foreign language. To say simply, VLS help learners to cope up with the difficulties of learning new words and to learn the words more effectively.

Types of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Schmitt (2000:p.135) divided the strategies into two major groups: strategies which are used to discover the meaning of new words and strategies which are used to recall the known vocabulary. In Schmitt's taxonomy the vocabulary learning strategies are divided into two major areas by their function in the learning process of L2 words: 1) initial learning of a new word's meaning (discovery) and 2) studying and remembering the word's meaning once it is known (consolidation).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used mixed-methods. Hence, there are both Quantitative and Qualitative approach, with the samples was students of English study program at Khairun University. And, the technique of analysis data are:

Questionnaire Data Analysis: The questionnaire is analysed in quantitative analysis. The data obtained from the questionnaire was coded for statistical analysis to answer the research questions. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, version 25.0) was used for statistical analysis. Interview Data Analysis: After the students completed the questionnaire, personal interviews were conducted to seek more information. The interview was analyzed in qualitative analysis.

DISCUSSION

The researcher conducted a research by giving questionnaire about student's vocabulary learning strategies. After giving questionnaire, interviews also have been conducted. The results were divided into two parts; the use of overall strategies and the use of vocabulary strategies for each category by the respondents.

This study found that the most used strategy was Determination strategy (M=2.6782). Whether, Meta-cognitive strategy was the second preferences of the students (M=2.6121), following by memory strategy (M=2.4920), cognitive strategy (M=2.3760) and the least is social strategies (M=2.3760).

This finding is in line with the result of Khasawneh (2012) in the result of this research, Determination strategy (M=3.22) was the most used strategy in learning vocabulary. It also supported by the research of Rizqi et al (2016) which found that the most used strategy was determination strategy (M=3.38). However, this research is in contrary with the research conducted by Riankamol (2008) which found that the most used strategy in learning English vocabulary was Metacognitive strategies (M=2.61).

While in social strategies, the students mostly choose item number ten "Ask classmates" (M=2.91). The reason why most of the students choose item number ten in this research was because they feel scared to ask their lecturer besides, they also fear of being rude when they tried to ask their lecturer therefore they prefer to ask classmates about something that they do not understood.

Then, it was followed by cognitive strategy that the students mostly choose item number twenty-three "Say the word repeatedly" (M=2.80). Speak fluently and easier to memorize be the reason why this strategy become the most frequently choose by the students.

Whereas, in meta-cognitive strategy the most frequently items that they choose was on item number thirty-one "Test myself with word test" (M=2.95). The students believed that by doing this strategy they can practice their English. Therefore, their English will be better and makes them be confidently in learning English.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

1. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to find what Vocabulary Learning strategies were used by English Language study program students of Khairun University. Overall, the students always depend on the dictionary to define the new word meaning. That is why they choose determination strategy as the most used strategy. It was because most of them are not interested in learning English. Therefore, they lack of English vocabularies and immediately open the dictionary to get the meaning of words. To conclude, all strategies are necessary to help students learning vocabulary. This research suggests that the students have ever used all strategies, but they do not realize to optimize the five VLS. When they are aware of these strategies, they will become more motivated to learn and take part in the learning process more actively.

2. Suggestion

By investigating students' vocabulary learning strategies, the lecturers can decide how to teach and what strategies to use in teaching vocabulary properly. While, the students should know their learning styles and become familiar with different types of vocabulary learning strategies that can help them learn the meaning of new words more efficiently and much better. And hopefully, The study gives opportunity for the further research. The further study can examine the effectiveness of the vocabulary learning strategies found in this study.

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