

A STUDY ON STUDENTS' VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES AT THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF MA MUHAMMADIYAH 1 WATUKEBO

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ABSTRACT

Language learning is kind of dynamic process that makes no limitation in learning. People will have much to say if they have rich vocabulary. There should be such kind of strategies that can support the learning process. Those strategies will help students enhancing their vocabulary knowledge as well. A study on students' vocabulary learning strategies was done on the tenth grade students of MA Muhammadiyah 1 Watukebo. There were 23 statements under 8 categories of questionnaire items (Gu and Johnson, 1996) that responded by students via google form due to the pandemic. Moreover, the interview had been done by using whatsapp private chat to all students. There were 18 students/82 % students responded "agree" on activation strategies item, while the interview showed 16 students prefer to use activation strategies. Meanwhile, there were only 45 % students responded "agree" on note-taking strategies item, while the interview showed 12 students use note-taking strategy infrequently. Thus, it can be concluded that the most strategy used by students is activation strategy while the least strategy used by students is note-taking strategy.

Key Words: Activation Strategy, Note Taking Strategy, Strategies, Vocabulary, VLS,

People will have much to say if they have much words in their mind. Moreover, they are easy to get knowledge of English if they are not lack of vocabulary. Learning vocabulary will be easier if we know strategies that can be used in the learning process. As stated in Khalifa (2015, p.279) that one of the reasons of failure in learning language is

being a lack of emphasis on generating awareness among learners to build vocabulary effectively, especially to be aware of the strategies to help themselves acquire English vocabulary apart from classroom teaching. Thing we need to underline is that the awareness of using strategies in students' vocabulary learning. Strategies can

be tool for students to get knowledge of English. They can use their own way of learning and enjoy the process. Students easily absorb knowledge by using their own way of learning. Finding the most and the least strategy in this research gives students reference or guidance for their vocabulary learning so that they can learn easily.

Method

The research design used was qualitative descriptive research. Nassaji (2015, p.129) mentioned that descriptive research attempts to study language learning and teaching in their naturally occurring settings without any intervention or manipulation of variables. Thus, the researcher tries to analyze as objective as possible the data in the research.

The research started with an online filling questionnaire. It was in the form of google form link that shared to students in whatsapp group. Students as respondents responded 23 statements of questionnaire items about kinds of strategies used by students that adapted from Gu and Johnsons (1996) by choosing the 4 points of Likert Scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Moreover, researcher also interviewed each of students with 13 questions in whatsapp private chat to get clearer data or to support the data from questionnaire. After getting the data from those two instruments, researcher analyzed the data by using model analysis from Miles and Huberman as stated in Sugiyono (2017). Those were data reduction, data display, and conclusion/verification.

Result and Discussion

The responses and answers of questionnaire and interview have been reduced into several categories of vocabulary learning strategies. The result showed that students tend to use Activation Strategy in their vocabulary learning. It can be seen in the questionnaire's responses that 82 % or 18 students agree that reading a lot can help them remembering words they learn. Students will be familiar on some words they find by reading some texts. Mufaridah (2016) mentioned that students can get much information and knowledge by reading activity. Thus, it can be denied that reading can activate students' brain to work well. Moreover, in term of activation strategy using words in speaking and writing, 55 % students or 12 students agree that it works for them to learn vocabulary by directly applying the words in speech and writing. This result is supported by the interview that had been done before. The interview also showed that 16 students prefer to use activation strategy in their learning activity and 6 students sometimes do it too. They said that using words in all skills of English (reading, listening, speaking, and writing) helps them easier to remember. Moreover, they also mentioned that it is useless if we learn something but never try to use it. This result is in line with Noor and Amir (2009, p.324) and also Goundar (2019, p.184) that in terms of activation strategies, most students responded that they would employ the new words that they have learned in their speech and writing. While

some students responded that they would employ the new words learned in everyday situations. This means that learners are confident in using words in their daily life either in spoken or written English. These two researches showed that activation strategies give students chance to enhance their knowledge in vocabulary. Students will use their newly learned words in their activity (in speaking and writing) to make them be accustomed with the words so that they will easily remember it.

In addition, the questionnaire's responses also showed that 68 % students/15 students strongly agree or believe that when learning vocabulary, they should study and put to use the words they learn in all skills of English. Again, the interview also indicated that 59 % students have beliefs about vocabulary learning in using words to all skills of English rather than only memorizing it. From this result, we know that using words in daily life should be a habit. As we are accustomed with it, we will be easy to do it. It has the same idea with Zhang (2011, p.15), for anyone who has learned a second language, it becomes clear that they learn a language by getting used to it. In addition, Nation in Elashhab (2019) mentioned that vocabulary items must not only be known, they must be known well, so that they can be fluently accessed. Learning vocabulary in a good way is to use the words repeatedly. This surely works also to activation strategies that students used the most in vocabulary learning. Students need to try to read a lot as much as possible in order to get used to it so that they can make use of the words

they learn. They also have to use new words they find as often as possible in productive skill like speaking and writing.

Meanwhile, strategy that students rarely used is note-taking strategies. It can be seen from the questionnaire's responses that only 18 % students and 23 % students chose strongly agree in term of meaning-oriented and usage-oriented note-taking strategies. Moreover, the interview also supported this result. 8 students mentioned that they don't use any notebook to save words/phrases they find. While 4 of them said that they rarely note down the words because they are kind of lazy to do it. They also added that they tend to memorize and use words directly rather than noting downs it. In addition, when researcher asked kind of strategy that they infrequently use, they (12 students) mostly answered note-taking strategies. Some reasons were mentioned that noting down words in a note-book is kind of complicated and tiring activity. It happens because they seldom bring a note-book in case they don't have intention to do it. As what mentioned in Noor and Amir (2009, p.322) that students were unaware of the impact of note taking or keeping a vocabulary note book for vocabulary enhancement purposes. Moreover, the strategies that they employed such as writing the English words and translations as well as noting the meaning of words are insufficient for enhancement and memory of words.

The same thing happened in a research conducted by Baskin et.al (2017, p.133) that the least strategy students used is cognitive strategy which include verbal and written

repetition, creating a word list, and taking notes during the class. Moreover, Rahmatika et.al found that the least used strategy by students in their research is note-taking strategies. The reason of this point is because they have lack vocabulary knowledge. This is also in line with Noor and Amir (2009, p.325) that the least used strategy discovered is note taking strategies. This researches show that note-taking strategy rarely used by students in case they don't like to note down words as often as possible.

However, there were found differences between questionnaire's responses and interview's answers. In questionnaire's responses of note-taking strategy, some students responded that they use notes in vocabulary learning. Meanwhile, in interview, some of them answered that they don't use note-taking strategy. In fact, when students were asked directly strategy they rarely use in their learning process, most of them mentioned that they infrequently use note-taking strategy. This newly answer could be the strengthener of the previous data in interview because students spontaneously answer based on what they experience without any intervention on the answer. It is in line with Arifin who talk about exploratory question that exploratory question gives kind of question that being asked to the respondent in detail. The question gave students freedom to answer and the researcher got more detail information.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings that had been explained in

previous chapter, students use several strategies in their vocabulary learning activity. Moreover, it can be concluded from the research findings and the discussion that the most strategy used by students is Activation Strategies. Students tend to use words directly in daily life like speaking, writing, or reading. Meanwhile, the least strategy used by students is Note-Taking Strategy. Students don't like to bring notebook or note down words they learn.

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