Exploring Students' Strategies of Vocabulary Learning at Economic Faculty of Khairun University

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Abstract: This research aims to investigate the use of vocabulary learning strategies used by Economic Faculty 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.

1 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 favourite 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. Harding (2011: p. 53), as cited in Desiana, (2014:p.1) explained that vocabulary is crucial in ESP because students will meet many technical or specialized words which are used to explain materials in their specialism. Therefore,

understanding the meaning of the words could help the students comprehending the lessons.

ESP students need VLSs (vocabulary learning style) in order to increase their vocabulary knowledge and understand the materials. VLS 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. It is also stated by Akbari (2011: p.7), as cited in Desiana (2014) That English facilitates ESP students to achieve their future goals. Therefore, comprehending the vocabulary can help the students to understand the lessons and succeed in their specialism.

Based on the point above, this research was conducted to explore Economic Faculty students' strategies in learning English at 6th semester of Economic Faculty in Khairun University.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 How to Teach Vocabulary

In teaching vocabulary, the teacher has an essential role in helping students to improve their vocabulary. Unfortunately, vocabulary teaching has not been

enough responsive to such problems, and teachers have not recognized the tremendous importance of helping their students to develop an extensive vocabulary.

By the beginning of 1970s, there was a major change in teaching English. The focus turned from the Direct Method and Audiolingualism to the Communicative Approach which emphasized the importance of teaching vocabulary. Nowadays, there is more freedom in choosing the methods to be used during English classes. The English syllabus is organized around both vocabulary and grammar structures. Since there is a certain number of classes allotted for each item in the syllabus, teachers usually have the necessary time to insist on teaching and practiced vocabulary.

2.2 Defining Vocabulary Learning Strategies

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.

VLS can be used either consciously or unconsciously. Oxford (2002) as cited in Bristi (2015:p.2) stated that, effective learners are conscious about their learning strategies and they can successfully choose strategies needed for the language activity. Moreover, the highly effective learners can use both cognitive and meta-cognitive learning strategies together. On the other hand, the less effective students sometimes unconscious about the strategies they are using. Sometimes, even if they are aware, they cannot choose the necessary strategies carefully.

2.3 Types of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

In the area of vocabulary learning style taxonomy, the most comprehensive effort has been that of Schmitt's (1997) adopted from Bristi (2015:p.3). This research choose to use Schmitt's taxonomy for its comprehensiveness and wide use around the world as the basis while another theory was used as a support.

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). These two main categories are further divided into five subcategories:

1. Determination strategies (DET): individual strategies which are used to understand the meaning of the words without any help from others such as guessing context, guessing from L1 cognate, using reference materials such as dictionaries, analyzing affixes and roots, and using dictionaries to convey a particular word.

2. Social strategies (SOC): Social strategies are different with DET strategies. Strategies which belong to this type will involve interaction with others in learning the new words such as asking the teacher or classmates.. Thus, the key note of this type is involving interaction.

3. Memory strategies (MEM): These strategies are also commonly known as mnemonics strategies. The strategies are used to recall vocabulary which has already known. In these strategies, learners will relate their previously learned knowledge with the target words by grouping the words according to its form or topic, forming imaginary, using physical action, connecting new word to past experience, studying the spelling of the words and speaking out loud the words while studying them.

4. Cognitive strategies (COG): These strategies are similar to Memory strategies but they do not really focus on the mental process. Cognitive strategies emphasize more on the mechanical means to comprehend the known words. Thus, strategies in Cognitive engage repetition and tools to learn vocabulary. Strategies which belong to COG are repeating words verbally and written, making words lists, and labelling English words on physical objects.

5. Metacognitive strategies (MET): Strategies where the learners consciously decide the best way to plan, monitor, and evaluate the strategies to study the words. The examples of metacognitive strategies are using English-language media, skipping or passing new word, continuing to study the words all over the time, and test oneself by using word tests or games.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Method

This research used mixed-methods. Hence, there are both Quantitative and Qualitative approach. Hirsjärvi et al. (2005) as cited in Graceas, (2016:p.17) stated qualitative study includes a comprehensive acquisition and the data is collected in natural and real environment. It is also supported by Creswell & Plano Clark (2011:p.534) a mixed methods research design is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and "mixing" both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study or a series of studies to understand a research problem. However, this research is dominated with quantitative (survey) approach. Close-ended questionnaire and Interview was used as the instrument in this research.

3.2 Participants

The participants of the study are students at Economic Faculty of Khairun University in semester 6th who have experienced in English teaching and learning process which consist of 87 students. These students filled questionnaire and eight participants were interviewed.

3.3 Technique of Data Collection

To collect data in the research, the researcher used:

3.3.1 Questionnaire

In this research, close-ended questionnaire was used to collect the data. Close-ended questionnaire consisted of thirty three statements of vocabulary learning strategies (appendix 1). The questionnaire was based on Schmitt Taxonomy adapted from Desiana (2014). In the study, 4 likert-scale questionnaires were used to collect the data. The students will select an option from: 4 (always), 3 (often), 2 (rarely) or 1 (never) to respond to the given statements.

3.3.2 Interview

The researcher used semi-structured interviews with eight students who completed the written questionnaire to obtain more information about their beliefs and attitudes dealing with vocabulary learning strategies.

3.4 Technique of Data Analysis

3.4.1 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. SPPS is a comprehensive system for analyzing data. SPSS can take data from almost any type of file and use them to generate tabulated reports, charts, and plots of distributions and trends, descriptive statistics, and complex statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviation, etc.) were applied to obtain patterns of demographic information from the questionnaires and strategies use. Specifically, to identify the vocabulary learning strategies employed and to find out the most and least frequently used categories of vocabulary learning strategies.

3.4.2 Interview Data Analysis

After the students completed the questionnaire, personal interviews were conducted to seek more information. The interview was analyzed in qualitative analysis. Thematic analysis by Miles &Huberman (1994) was used in interview data analysis. The analysis consists of several activities as data reduction, data display, and verifying conclusion.

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Overall Strategies Use of the Six Categories of Strategies

Table below summarizes the strategies employed by Economic Faculty students. The deeper discussions on those findings will be elaborated afterwards.

Table 1: The Frequency of the Five Categories of VLS by Schmitt taxonomy.

Category	Mean	Rank
Determination	2.6782	1
Social	2.2203	5
Memory	2.4920	3
Cognitive	2.3760	4
Meta-cognitive	2,6121	2

The findings revealed that in five categories, the Determination strategies (M=2.6782) were the most frequently used by the students. The second strategy most frequently used by students in learning vocabulary were meta-cognitive strategy (M=2.6121). The third strategy most frequently used by students were memory strategy, then the fourth strategy most frequently used by students were cognitive strategy (M=2.3760). Meanwhile, the least use strategies are social strategies with the lowest mean score (M=2.2203).

This research investigated strategies in learning vocabulary in Economic Faculty based on Schmitt taxonomy. The objective of this study is to find the most used strategy and the most activities do the students do in their chosen strategies in learning English vocabulary.

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).

This research also reveals the most frequently activities do the students do in their chosen strategies. From determination strategy, the students mostly choose item number five "Look up a word in English-Indonesian dictionary" (M=3.14). The first reason was because they did not use English in their textbooks as well as their transfer language in learning process. Therefore, they become unfamiliar with it and finally, they have to open the dictionary first to find the meaning to make them feel easier in the learning process. This finding is in line with the result of Khasawneh (2012) in the result of this research, "Use bilingual dictionary." (M=3.03) reach high used among students. It is also in line with Hendrawati (2015) which found that "Look up a word in English-Indonesian dictionary" (M=3.78) was one of the high frequency used strategies.

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. This result was also occurs in Khasawneh (2012). His results show that "Ask classmate for meaning" (M=3.70) also becomes the highest chosen activities. Moreover, it is also in line by the research of Hendrawati (2015) also found that "interact with my classmates" (M=3.70) was the highest frequently used activities.

Furthermore, item number seventeen "Remember the new word by connecting with the words I have learnt before" (M=2.79) was the most chosen activities by the students in memory strategy. Some students say that by connecting a new word with a word they have learned, will make them not easy to forget and will remember the word faster. They added, arguably this strategy is an easy activities to do. This result also supported by the research by Desiana (2014). Her result found that the most chosen strategy by the students was "Remember the new word by connecting with the words I have learnt before"

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. This result also supported by Khasawneh (2012). In this research, "Verbal repetition" (M=3.50) was the highest used in this strategies. Riankamol (2008) also provide the same result. His research found that the highest item in this strategy was "when I try to remember a word, I write or say it repeatedly" (M=2.70).

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. It is also in line with the research was conducted by Desiana (2014) who shows that item number thirty one "Test myself with word test" also be the second frequently used item in this strategy.

5 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to find what Vocabulary Learning strategies were used by Economic Faculty students of Khairun University. It is obvious that the students of Economic Faculty in Khairun University used all of vocabulary learning strategies based on Schmitt Taxonomy. Determination strategy (M=2.6782) was most frequently used strategy by Economic Faculty students of Khairun University, especially by "Looking up a word in English – Indonesian dictionary" activities. Then, Meta-cognitive strategy was the second preferences of the students (M=2.6121) through "testing themselves with word test" activities, followed by memory strategy (M=2.4920) through "remembering the new word by connecting with the words they have learnt before", the next strategy was cognitive strategy (M=2.3760) by "saying the word repeatedly and the least frequently used vocabulary strategy was Social strategies (M=2.3760), especially through "Talking with Native English speaker" activities.

To conclude, all strategies are necessary to help students learning vocabulary. When they are aware of these strategies, they will become more motivated to learn and take part in learning process more actively.

5.2 Suggestions

1) By exploring students' vocabulary learning strategies lecturers can decide how to teach and what strategies to use in teaching vocabulary properly.
2) To make the students aware about 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.
3) Gives opportunity to be improved for the prospective research. The further study can examine the effectiveness of the vocabulary learning strategies found in this study

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