

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VOCABULARY MASTERY AND VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES

Purwanti, Bambang Setiyadi, Ari Nurweni
sacova_po3r@yahoo.co.id

Abstract

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi frekuensi strategi belajar kosakata yang digunakan siswa kelas 2 SMA dan mengetahui hubungan antara penguasaan kosakata dan strategi yang digunakan. Sampel dipilih secara acak yaitu kelas XI IPS 2. Instrumen yang digunakan pada penelitian ini adalah kuesioner berdasarkan rancangan Schmitt (1997) dan uji pengukuran kosakata yang dirancang berdasarkan buku bahasa Inggris yang digunakan siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada hubungan antara penguasaan kosakata siswa dan strategi mereka dalam belajar kosa kata (r -nilai= 1). Hubungan itu ada pada strategi penentuan, strategi sosial, strategi memori, dan strategi metakognitif. R -nilai pada masing-masing strategi adalah 0.904, 0.493, 0.78, dan 0.730 dan nilai signifikannya kurang dari 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). Sedangkan tidak ada hubungan untuk strategi kognitif karena nilai signifikannya lebih tinggi dari 0.05 ($p > 0.05$) dan r -nilai 0.534.

The purpose of this study was to identify the frequency of vocabulary learning strategies used by the second year students of SMA and to find out the relationship between their vocabulary mastery and their strategies in learning vocabulary. The sample was randomly chosen and it was class XI IPS 2. The instruments were questionnaire based on Schmitt's (1997) study and vocabulary test based on student's English book. The result of the research showed that there was a relationship between the students' vocabulary mastery and their strategies in learning vocabulary (r -value= 1). The relationship was on determination strategy, social strategy, memory strategy, and metacognitive strategy. The r -value was 0.904, 0.493, 0.478, and 0.730 respectively and the significant value was less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). While there was no relationship for cognitive strategy because the significant value was higher than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$) and the r -value was 0.534.

Keywords: *vocabulary, vocabulary mastery, vocabulary learning strategies*

INTRODUCTION

Since English has been chosen as the first and foreign language which is taught in all schools in Indonesia, it makes English as one of the most important subjects that must be mastered well by students. It, then, becomes a compulsory subject for most students in school. According to the 2006 School-Based Curriculum (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan/KTSP*), the goals of teaching English stated in the Curriculum for English subject are that students are projected to master and use the language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) for any relevant needs and situations they would encounter in their real life. It means that the students should be able to do oral or written communication in many situations. In order to master the four language skills, students should have good number of words and they should know how to use them well. It affirms that vocabulary is one of the important parts in learning English.

Based on the researcher's pre observation in teacher training program (PPL) in SMAN 1 Sumberjaya Lampung Barat, it was found that many students were poor in vocabulary mastery; they had problem to understand the reading text, the sentences, and the meaning of the words. It was also difficult for them to use English in communication, understand spoken language and to express their idea in written text.

It means that mastering vocabulary gives contribution for learners to perform their skill better. It is impossible for students to perform their English appropriately if their

vocabulary is very poor. Therefore vocabulary must be on the first priority in English language learning.

Naturally, vocabulary is considered as the most difficult language aspect to study. Therefore students need strategies to achieve the target words. Graves (1987:177) suggested because students actually do most of their learning of new words independently, it makes sense to encourage them 'to adopt personal plans to expand their vocabularies over time'. Many factors were correlated with language achievement, but only two of them: aptitude and strategy uses were significant in predicting performance (Setiyadi, 2014:360).

In addition, Wenden and Rubin (1987:17) stated that learners bring a various repertoire of learning skills in the process of language learning. It means that the learners should master some learning strategies to make their foreign language learning more effective.

According to Dóczy (2011), vocabulary learning strategies are significant because the acquisition of vocabulary is a never-ending process and can solve insurmountable difficulties for language learners. It can be said that through the use of vocabulary learning strategies, learners may be able to maximize the effectiveness of their English language learning. On this basis, it is crucial to be aware of the basics of vocabulary learning strategies and how students adopt the strategies effectively. That

is to say, it is vital to gain more insights into how Indonesia learners perceive the use of vocabulary learning strategies to help them learn vocabulary.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher used instrument for measuring students' vocabulary learning strategies. The researcher used a subset of language learning strategies, called vocabulary learning strategies, which was proposed by Schmitt (1997). The strategies were namely *determination*, *social*, *memory*, *cognitive*, and *metacognitive*. That basic scheme was used to identify the strategies implemented by successful and poor students in learning English vocabulary that was correlated to students' vocabulary mastery.

METHOD

This research was quantitative research. The design used in this research was ex post design because there was no control group and no treatment. Hatch and Farhady (1982:26) state that ex post facto design is often used when the researcher does not have control over the selection and manipulation of the independent variables. There were two variables in this research, independent variable (vocabulary learning strategies) and dependent variable (vocabulary mastery).

Here, the researcher distributed questionnaire to know the strategies used by students in learning vocabulary, then she gave a vocabulary test. After that, the score gained from the test were analyzed to see whether vocabulary mastery was related to the use of vocabulary learning strategies or not.

The population of this research was the second grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Bandar Lampung in academic year 2014/2015. There were five classes of the second grade students that consisted of 30 to 33 students for each class. XI IPS 2 was chosen as the sample to collect the data. There were 30 students in class XI IPS 2. In conducting the research, the procedures that were used in conducting this research were (1) determining the population and sample of the research, (2) distributing the questionnaire, (3) administering the try out, (4) administering vocabulary test, (5) analyzing the data, (6) drawing findings and conclusions from the data. In order to find the relationship between vocabulary mastery and vocabulary learning strategies used by students, the hypotheses were analyzed by using *Pearson Product Moment Correlation*. After finding the coefficient correlation, the researcher found out the criterion of the hypothesis acceptance. Two hypotheses were proposed as follows $H_0 (r_{\text{value}} < r_{\text{table}})$ and $H_1 (r_{\text{value}} > r_{\text{table}})$.

RESULT

Based on the research, it was found that the higher score was 83 from 30 students, the average score was 56 and the lowest score was 25. Considering the result of vocabulary test, the researcher divided the students into two groups, namely successful students and poor students. The students were classified based on mean score from the whole score. The total number of students was grouped into successful and poor students numbering of 11 students. The mean score from the whole score was 56 and standard deviation was 15. There were 5 students who were considered as successful students. The successful students were those students who obtained the

score higher than 71 (56+15). The average students were the students who obtained score 41-70. While, the poor students were the students who obtained score below 41 (56-15). There were 6 poor students. The result of vocabulary test could be seen in the table below:

Table 1 Vocabulary Test Result

Score Interval	Category	Number of Students	Percentage
71-100	Successful	5	16.7 %
41-70	Average	19	63.3 %
0-40	Poor	6	20%
Total		30	100%

Table 2 Successful and Poor Students' Strategies in Learning Vocabulary

No	Strategies	Successful Students (Frequency)	Poor Students (Frequency)
1.	Determination	4.80	2.95
2.	Social	2.88	2.90
3.	Memory	3.38	3.14
4.	Cognitive	2.67	2.64
5.	Metacognitive	4.20	3.50

In order to find out the relationship between vocabulary mastery and vocabulary learning strategies, the researcher also distributed a questionnaire to the students. The result of the research can be seen in the table above, successful students most frequently used determination strategy at high frequency score (4.80). The use of social and memory strategy was at medium frequency score (2.88 and 3.38). Meanwhile cognitive strategy was the least strategy used with the medium frequency score (2.67). Then, metacognitive strategy was used at high frequency score (4.20).

Compared to successful students, the poor students used all strategies at medium frequency score. The frequency score was 2.95 for determination strategy, 2.90 for social strategy, 3.14 for memory strategy, 2.64 for cognitive, and 3.50 for metacognitive strategy.

Having analyzed the data gathered from questionnaire and vocabulary test, the researcher found that there was relationship between two variables (vocabulary mastery and vocabulary learning strategies). The relationship was on determination strategy, memory strategy, cognitive strategy and metacognitive strategy.

Table 3 Pearson Product Moment Analysis

		Correlations					
		Score	Det	Soc	Mem	Coo	Metacoo
Score	Pearson Correlation	1	.904**	.637	.788**	.534	.730
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.035	.004	.091	.011
	N	11	11	11	11	11	11
Det	Pearson Correlation	.904**	1	.593	.859**	.433	.792**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.055	.001	.183	.004
	N	11	11	11	11	11	11
Soc	Pearson Correlation	.637	.593	1	.614	.589	.409
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.035	.055		.044	.057	.211
	N	11	11	11	11	11	11
Mem	Pearson Correlation	.788**	.859**	.614	1	.428	.726
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.001	.044		.189	.011
	N	11	11	11	11	11	11
Cog	Pearson Correlation	.534	.433	.589	.428	1	.366
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.091	.183	.057	.189		.268
	N	11	11	11	11	11	11
Metacog	Pearson Correlation	.730	.792**	.409	.726	.366	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	.004	.211	.011	.268	
	N	11	11	11	11	11	11

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

DISCUSSION

Based on the result of vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire, it can be seen that successful students used various strategies in learning vocabulary. In Schmitt's scheme (1997), the distinction has been made between the strategies, which learners use to determine the meaning of new words when they first meet them and the ones they used to consolidate meanings when they encounter the words again. The strategies included determination, social, memory, cognitive, and metacognitive strategies.

In relation to the determination strategies as a part of discovery strategies, they facilitated students in gaining knowledge of a new word. The students must discover its meaning by guessing from their structural knowledge of the language by doing some such as analyzing part of speech, analyzing affixes and roots, checking for L1 cognate, guessing from textual context, using bilingual dictionary and monolingual dictionary. Successful students analyzed part of speech as a determination strategy more frequently than any other strategy. It seemed that the successful students might be able to see the difference of the new word's part of speech, which could help them in guessing process. While the poor students tended to check for L1 cognate. It could be inferred that poor students were unfamiliar with the determination strategy that mostly used by successful students.

For the least frequently used of strategy is cognitive strategy that referred to the steps or operations used in learning or problem solving that needed manipulation or

transformation of learning materials. It was interesting that successful students used flashcard in high frequency. One main advantage of flashcards was that they could be taken almost anywhere and studied when one has free moment (Brown, 1980). In this study, the researcher found that cognitive strategy had no correlation to students' vocabulary mastery.

The last strategy was metacognitive strategies. Metacognitive strategies involved a conscious overview of the learning process. There was one of metacognitive strategies used by successful and poor students in high frequency, it was using English language media. It really helped them in learning vocabulary. This way is considered as the most enjoyable way in learning vocabulary. Riankamol's (2008:24) study showed that metacognitive strategies are most frequently used by English gifted students who are considered high proficient students in English.

From the description of the results in previous section, it could be seen that there was a relationship between students' vocabulary mastery and their vocabulary learning strategies (determination, social, memory, and metacognitive strategy). While, cognitive strategy had no relationship to vocabulary mastery. The results of these strategies were not statistically significant; the researcher assumed that there were at least two possible explanations for this result. The first concerned to the students' respond toward the questionnaire. Oxford (1990) states that what students know about themselves and about their own learning process for instance, proficiency level, the outcomes of learning, age, and personal theory of language learning can affect

their use of language learning. Further Oxford (1990) also found that those students who used a narrow range of strategies and were generally unaware of the strategies they used. Some successful students used the strategies in low frequency, but they had high score. While, some poor students used wide ranges but they had low score. The term of students' strategy also referred to what students knew about the strategies they used.

One of other explanations in this result was the persistence of unfamiliar strategy, for example: remembered the words in scales, put English labels on physical object, etc. It could be inferred that the students did not identify some their strategies and did not use maximally. They needed their teacher to help them become better language learners by training them in using the right strategies or appropriate strategies which were suitable their level. Later they would likely become more independent with exposure to the target language. Since the language learning strategies were considered as other good tools for language learners, it was expected that this study would be able to support the English teachers and gave valuable up-to-date information on how the students processed information and selected the most suitable vocabulary learning strategies to enhance English vocabulary mastery.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description of the result and discussion, it can be concluded that:

1. There were five types of learning strategies used by successful and poor students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Bandar Lampung, namely determination

strategy, social strategy, memory strategy, cognitive strategy, and metacognitive strategy.

2. The VLS that was most frequently used by successful students was determination strategy and the least frequency was cognitive strategy. Meanwhile, the poor students mostly used metacognitive strategy. Then, the VLS that was least frequently used by poor students was cognitive strategy. It indicated that both successful and poor students used cognitive strategy in low frequency.
3. There was relationship between students' vocabulary mastery and their strategies in learning vocabulary (r -value = 1). The relationship was found on determination strategy (0.904), social strategy (0.637), memory strategy (0.788), and metacognitive strategy (0.730) and the r -table was 0.463 at the significant level 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). While there was no relationship for cognitive strategy because the significant value was higher than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) and the r -value was 0.534.

REFERENCES

- Depdiknas. 2006. *Silabus Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan 2006*. Jakarta: Depdiknas.
- Dóczy, B. 2011. *Comparing the Vocabulary Learning Strategies of High School and University Students: A Pilot Study*. WoPaLP 5:138-158.
- Hatch, E and Farhady, H. 1982. *Research Design and Statistics for Applied Linguistics*. University of California Los Angeles: Newbury House Publisher, Inc.

- Oxford, R.L. 1990. *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*. Boston: Newbury House.
- Schmitt, N. 1997. Vocabulary Learning Strategies. In N. Schmitt & M. McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary: Description, Acquisition and Pedagogy*, pp. 199-227. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Setiyadi, Ag. B. 2014. Skill-based Categories: An Alternative of Language Learning Strategy Measurement. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 360-370.
- Wenden, A and Rubin, J. 1987. *Learner Strategies in Language Learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.