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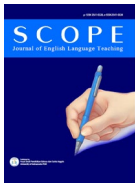

Article

Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by Undergraduate Students

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A B S T R A C T

Vocabulary is a tool for clarification of thinking, clearing, and satisfying expression of ideas. Hence, the research aims at investigating Vocabulary-learning strategy by EFL students. The data were collected by using questionnaires and interviews. This research employed a descriptive method by examining O'Malley and Chamot's strategies (2004). The results show that the common strategies used by learners in vocabulary learning namely Reading short stories, Reading loudly, Repeating after the lecturers, Using English social media, Making list of memorized vocabulary, Skipping new word which likely does not need to study, Watching movie, Listening the song, Applying new words in the sentences, Making conversation with friends in and outside the classroom, Writing the word repeatedly, Asking the lecturers or classmates who understand more than them, and Asking the lecturers to translate the meaning of a word. Meanwhile, the strategies to develop their English vocabulary such as Writing the repeated word, Discovering the meanings of new words by using the dictionary, Memorizing new vocabulary, Saying the word loudly in front of the mirror, and Using English social media.

INTRODUCTION

English is a common language in many different fields including business and education and no one denies the prominence of the English language in the present time as a universal language, especially in Indonesia. Most Indonesians' students face difficulties to study English. One of the difficulties in learning vocabulary. Meanwhile, the researcher as a lecturer of English as a second language does know how important vocabulary is.

Learners cannot understand the text and cannot do the conversation without recognizing vocabulary, because the first step to learn English is learning vocabulary. Hence, it is very prominent in a language and always taught in language classes. As EFL learners, it is not easy to study English vocabulary even though the students realize the importance of vocabulary in learning a language. They must memorize the new words every single day. The students also have to know how to pronounce them well, the meaning, and also how to use the words properly.

Based on the reasons above, students tend to be passive during English classes because they lack vocabulary, which affects their behavior in learning English. They get confused. They must learn thousands of English words. Even the students realize that vocabulary is a core and an element that links the four skills such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing, the students still get difficult to learn it**.** Nandy (1994) asserts that "The more words one can use correctly, a better one will be able to express oneself easily and with self-confidence and to understand the world one lives in"

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Most students feel bored in learning vocabulary because they are sometimes easy to forget the words that they have learned. They also learn vocabulary just to know the word, they do not know how to apply it properly in a different context. It can make the students feel frustrated because they think that learning vocabulary is very difficult. That is why, it is better to introduce vocabulary to stuents from the very beginning, especially in Indonesia as EFL learners.

Vocabulary is the meaning and usage of a set of words, taken as an independent semantic unit**.** Vocabulary itself is all the words that a person knows or uses, all the words in a particular language, all the words that people use when they are talking about a particular subject, and a list of words with their meanings, especially in a book for learning a foreign language. Vocabulary is a list of word ad often a phrase, abbreviation, inflectional form, etc., usually arranged in alphabetical order and defined or otherwise identified, as in a dictionary or glossary. . (Hornby, 1984; Graham, 1997; Hedge, 2000)). It can be said that vocabulary is a core and one of the most important elements in language learning. It also can be concluded that in learning vocabulary is not only about memorizing the word or knowing the meaning but how to apply the word based on the context correctly. Hence, vocabulary is very important to make a sentence. The more words one can use correctly, the better one will be able to express oneself easily and with self-confidence and to understand the world one lives in.

Vocabulary is considered to be one of the most important elements of comprehending lesson materials, especially when learning a foreign language. Vocabulary learning strategies have been shown to help learners develop their vocabulary knowledge. Thus, it is worthwhile to study vocabulary- learning strategies. That is why it needs a strategy to learn vocabulary (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990).

The strategies must make the EFL students enjoy to learn. Hence, it needs an alternative way which could help ELF students be more active in class, through the means of individual, pair, and group work activities. Not just listen to the teacher. As such, students cannot always rely on their teachers. They need to master the strategies of determining the meanings of unknown words independently so that they can better understand their class materials.

Spaulding (1992:2) states that "Learning words are a task which cannot possibly be intrinsically motivating". Therefore, we need strategies in learning English vocabulary. According to Chamot (2004), learning strategy is the special thoughts or behavior that individuals use to help them comprehended, learn, or retain new information. Hence, English proficiency has been found to be closely related to vocabulary knowledge. Knowledge of vocabulary is essential to students' success. If students do not understand the meaning of the words in the text, they will have difficulty understanding the context. Hence, the importance of vocabulary learning strategies for the students to develop their vocabulary is very needed and finally, they will understand the text well and can overcome the difficulties while they could not find the meaning of the word in a dictionary.

Therefore, this research aims at finding out the vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) in order to develop the English vocabulary employed by 15 EFL undergraduate students, academic year 2017/2018 at Indraprasta PGRI University. The researcher hopes that this research could be useful for the students of vocabulary classes, at Indraprasta PGRI University.

Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Many classifications of vocabulary learning strategies have been proposed above, but among these classifications, (Benson, 2005; Schmitt, N., 1997; Nation, 1990; and Schmitt, 2000; O'Malley and Chamot, 2004).One of the well-known and well-accepted among researchers is that O'Malley and Chamot (2004) who divide vocabulary learning strategies into three learning strategies, namely: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and social mediation/affective strategies.

a. **Metacognitive Strategies (MC)** are used to oversee regulate or self-direct language learning. They involved various processes like planning, monitoring, and evaluation. Planning processes consist of because they are a device for active, self-responsible of planning for advanced preparation, planning for and rehearsing linguistics components necessary to carry out an upcoming language task. The language task consists of grammar knowledge. Also practicing the pronunciation and enriching the vocabulary, directed attention, such as deciding in advance to attend in general to a learning task and to ignore irrelevant distracters; and management, for example trying to arrange the good condition or atmosphere for learning, in enriching vocabulary, memorizing. Monitoring is a self-monitoring, for example correcting one's speech for accuracy in vocabulary or for appropriateness of one's oral or written production while it is taking place. Evaluating, on the other hand, is self-evaluation, such as checking the outcomes of one's own language learning against an internal measure of completeness and accuracy.
b. **Cognitive Strategies (CS)** refer to strategies that operate on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning, consists of:
    1. Resourcing that is using target language reference materials such as dictionary, encyclopedias, or textbooks.

2. Grouping, i.e., classifying words, terminology, or concepts according to their attributes or meaning.
3. Imagery, i.e., using visual images (either mental or actual) to understand and to remember new information.
4. Inferencing is using available information to guess the meaning of new items, predict outcomes, or fill in the missing information.
5. Translation is using the first language as a base for understanding and/or producing the second language.
6. Note-taking: writing down the main idea, important points outline or summary of information presented orally or in writing.
7. Contextualization is placing a word or phrase in a meaningful language sequence.
8. Oral practice, that is, practicing vocabulary by making conversation and speaking with others.
9. Repetition is imitating a language model, including over practice and silent rehearsal.
10. Deduction is applying rules to understand or produce a second language or making up rules based on language analysis.

c. **Social Mediation or Affective Strategies (SMS/AS)**, it can be based that they related to social mediating activity and transacting with others. Cooperation and clarification are the main social affective strategies. Cooperation is working together with one or more peers to solve a problem, pool information, check a learning task, model a language activity, or get feedback on oral or written performance. Asking for clarity is asking for teachers and people who understand more than them for repetition, paraphrasing, explanations and/or examples.

METHOD

This research involved fifteen participants. They were undergraduate students in the 3rd semester, academic year 2017/2018, at Indraprasta PGRI University, Jakarta who have GPA more than 3.00. The researcher used them as the subject to get data needed because they had been studying English for approximately 7 years. Therefore, they may have used vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) in order to help them understand new words when learning English. The instruments of the research were close-ended questionnaires and interviews. The researchers used this instrument because the participants do not need to write much vice versa the researcher gets a higher response, it only needs "yes/no'' answers, and easy to be analyzed. Hence, the participants selected their answer from yes or no. The questionnaire is in Indonesian to help the students feel more confident in giving their answers.

In this research, the types of data were verbal report data, which consisted of a conscious strategy used by the fifteen participants as EFL learners. The data obtained were analyzed inductively. The analysis was based on the complete transcriptions of the interviews by applying "codification" and "classification" techniques (Bouma, 2001:185). It was dealing with qualitative data analysis. Hence, the researcher read the interview transcription many times to develop a deeper understanding of the information from the fifteen participants.

The researcher took place the interview in the library while the fifteen participants in free time. To make the participants felt comfortable and got the obtain content the researcher used the Indonesian language.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Respondents' GPA

No	Subject	GPA
1.	RAP	3,45
2.	LF	3,73
3.	RFS	3,45
4.	NLR	3,49
5.	DF	3,55
6.	SAPA	3,67
7.	QRF	3,62
8.	EM	3,52
9.	IMA	3,66
10.	NP	3,62
11.	MRS	3,71
12.	MRC	3,54
13.	MNPSS	3,64
14.	RFN	3,65
15.	RSJ	3,56

Table 2: Students' Use of Meta Cognitive Strategies

No	Statements	Frequency	%
1.	Functional Planning		
	a. Reading English short stories	15	100
	b. Reading English novels	12	80
	c. Reading English magazines or newspapers	10	66,7
	d. Reading English books	13	86,7
	e. Reading vocabulary loudly	15	100
	f. Repeating vocabulary in the heart	12	100
	g. Repeating vocabulary after the lecturers	15	100
	h. Making conversation with friends outside the classroom	14	93,3
	i. Making conversation with family at home	3	20
	j. Using English media (social media, news, news broadcasting,	15	100

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	internet, magazine, video, etc.).		
2.	Directed Attention		
	a. Making list of memorized vocabulary	15	100
	b. Memorizing new vocabulary	15	100
	c. Making sentences	14	93,3
	d. Making a paragraph or passage	14	93,3
	a. Skip or pass new word which likely does not need to study	15	100
	e. Making daily activity story	13	100
	f. Translating English text into Indonesian and vice versa	10	66,7
3.	Self-Management		
	a. Reading vocabulary loudly in front of the mirror	15	100
	b. Repeating vocabulary in the heart	15	100
	c. Continuing to study the word overtime	10	66,7
	d. Repeating conversation in the heart	12	80
4.	Self-Monitoring		
	a. Asking the lecturers of people who understand more than them	8	53,3
	b. Speaking with lecturers or friends in the classroom and outside the classroom	14	93,3
	c. Realizing the existence of new words by talking to their lecturers	12	80
5.	Self-Evaluation		
	a. Writing diary in English	10	66,7
	b. Testing myself with word test	12	80
	c. Writing articles or short stories	10	66,7
	d. Making a paragraph or passage	8	53,3

As stated by Table No 2 above, statement number 1, Functional Planning, there are 4 statements such as Reading English short stories, Reading vocabulary loudly, Repeating vocabulary in the heart, Repeating vocabulary after the lecturers, and for statement number 2, Directed Attention had three statements such as Making list of memorized vocabulary, Memorizing new vocabulary, and Skip or pass new word which likely does not need to study, then for statement no 3 Self-Management consists of 2 statements, namely Reading vocabulary loudly in front of the mirror ranked highest. 100% of participants chose these strategies. The participants said that those strategies above helped them very much in learning English vocabulary. It means that most participants enjoy learning those strategies.

On the other hand, only 3 (20%) participants chose Making conversation with the family at home as their strategy in learning English vocabulary. Most of the participants did not have any family who had the skill of English**.**

Table 3: Students' Use of Cognitive Strategies

No	Statement	Frequency	%
1.	Resourcing		
	a. Discovering the meanings of new words by using dictionary	12	100
	b. Reading English articles	13	86,7
	c. Reading popular magazines or newspaper	9	60
	d. Reading novels	13	86,7
	e. Reading favorite books	9	60
2.	Grouping		
	a. Making list of vocabulary	15	100
	b. Matching of words	10	66,7
	c. Keep a vocabulary notebook wherever you go.	8	53,3
3.	Imagery		
	a. Watching English movie on television	15	100
	b. Listening English song through radio.	15	100
	c. Using flashcard	5	33,3
4.	Inference Predicting the meaning of new words through the context	8	53,3
5.	Translating Translating English text into Indonesian	14	93,3
6.	Note Taking		
	a. Making list of vocabulary	15	100
	b. Writing diary in English	13	86,7
	c. Writing articles or short stories	9	69
	d. Underlining the word.	8	53,3
7.	Contextualization		
	a. Using new words in the sentences	15	100
	b. Making a paragraph or passage	10	66,7
	c.		
8.	Oral Practice		

a.	Reading vocabulary loudly	15	100
b.	Speak English with others	10	66,7
c.	Making conversation with friends outside the classroom	12	80
d.	Speaking with lecturers or friends in the classroom	13	86,7
e.	Reading vocabulary loudly	15	100
9.	Repetition		
a.	Repeating vocabulary after the lecturers	15	100
b.	Repeating vocabulary in the heart	9	60
10.	Deduction		
a.	Making a paragraph or passage	10	66,7
b.	Making conversation with friends outside the classroom	15	100
c.	Speaking with lecturers or friends in the classroom	13	86,7
d.	Write the word repeatedly.	15	100
e.	Listing the word	15	100

As stated by Table no. 3 above, statement number 2, Grouping for Making list of vocabulary, and, statement number 3, Imagery for Watching English movie on television and Listening English song through radio, meanwhile for statement number 6, Note Taking is Making list vocabulary, and for statement number 7, Contextualization is Using new words in the sentences, for statement number 8, Oral Practice is Reading vocabulary loudly and Reading vocabulary loudly, meanwhile for statement number 9 Repetition is Repeating vocabulary after the lecturers, and finally for statement number 10 Deduction is Making conversation with friends outside the classroom, Write the word repeatedly, and, Listing the word. It can be said that ranked highest. 100% of the participants.

By contrast,Statement number 3, imaginary namely using flashcard is ranked lowest in Cognitive Strategies,Using flashcards was considered to be complicated and they get bored. Only 5 participants or 33,3% of fifteen participants chose this strategy of Learning English vocabulary.

Table 4: Students' use of Social Mediation or Affective Strategies

No	Statement	Frequency	%
1.	Learning Strategies of Social Mediation/Affective Strategies Cooperation		
a.	Speaking with lecturers or friends in the classroom	13	86,7
		15	100
b.	Making conversation with friends outside the classroom	10	66,7
c.	Speak English with others	15	93,3%
d.	Making conversation with classmate		
2.	Asking for clarity		
a.	Asking the lecturers or classmates who understand more than them	15	100
b.	Asking the lecturers to translate the meaning of a word that I do not understand.	15	100
c.	Ask the teacher for synonyms or similar meanings of new word.	10	66,7
d.	Realizing the existence of new words through talking to their lecturers	14	93,3

Based on table number 4, statement number 1, Learning Strategies Social of Social Mediation/Affective Strategies Cooperation both Making conversation with friends outside the classroom and Making conversation with classmate are ranked high. It means that 15 participants or all participants chose these strategies for their vocabulary learning strategy. They said that through practicing conversation make them easier to memorize vocabulary.

Meanwhile for statement number 2, Asking for clarity, all the participants or 100% chose both Asking the lecturers or classmates who understand more than them and Asking the lecturers to translate the meaning of a word that I do not understand. They said that some of the time they face difficulties while finding the meaning of the word through the dictionary, because they could not get the suitable meaning. They often faced the fact that the meaning of the word cannot be always found in the dictionary but through the context of the sentence. Therefore, they do believe in their lecturers to ask about it.

Table 5: Students' Use of Learning Strategies in Developing English Vocabulary

No	Strategies	Frequency	%
1.	Take note	9	60
2.	Learning numbers and parts of the body	10	100
3.	Matching of words	13	86,7
4.	Use flash cards	5	33,3
5.	Fill in the blanks	10	66,7
6.	Repeating vocabulary in the heart	12	100
7.	Write the word repeated	15	100

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8.	Repeating vocabulary after the lecturers	14	93,3
9.	Discovering the meanings of new words by using dictionary	15	100
10.	Using new words in the sentences	10	66,7
11.	Underline the word	8	53,3
12.	Memorizing new vocabulary	15	100
13.	Making list of vocabulary	8	53,3
14.	Making a paragraph or passage	10	66,7
15.	Take notes	9	60
16.	Writing diary in English	10	66,7
17.	Writing article or short stories	12	80
18.	Reading vocabulary loudly	10	66,7
19.	Keep a vocabulary notebook wherever you go	8	53,3
20.	Say the word loudly in front of the mirror	15	100
21.	Use English media (social media, news, news broadcasting, internet, magazine, video, etc.)	15	100
22.	Study vocabulary in a group	9	60

As stated by Table no. 5 above, statement number 9,12, 20, and 21such as Discovering the meanings of new words by using dictionary, memorizing new vocabulary, say the word loudly in front of the mirror,use English media (social media, news, news broadcasting, internet, magazine, video, etc.) ranked highest. 100% of the participants, in other words, all participants chose these strategies.Vice versa, only 5 participants (33,3%) use flash card as Learning Strategies in Developing English Vocabulary

The reason that they used, Discovering the meanings of new words by using dictionary, Memorizing new vocabulary, Say the word loudly in front of the mirror, Use English media (social media, news, news broadcasting, internet, magazine, video, etc.) as the strategies to develop their English vocabulary because that strategies could help them to recall the new words. 12 of the 15 participants said that they used statement no 21 Use English media (social media, news, news broadcasting, internet, magazine, video, etc.) as their strategy to develop their English vocabulary because they did it every day. They became it as their daily habits.By contrast, statement number 4 ranked lowest in developing participants' English vocabulary. Using flashcards was considered to be complicated and they get bored.Thirteen participants preferred repeating vocabulary after the lecturers ormatching of words.

CONCLUSION

According to the result above and based on the aims of this research are to find out the vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) employed by 15 EFL undergraduate students and how they develop their English vocabulary. To answer the questions, the researcher could conclude are as follows:

1. The vocabulary learning strategies using by15 EFL undergraduate students, such are: Meta Cognitive Strategies (MCS), Cognitive Strategies (CS), andSocial Mediation or Affective Strategies (SM/AS) .
   a. Meta Cognitive Strategies (MCS), such are:
      Functional Planning, there are 5 statements such as Reading English short stories, Reading vocabulary loudly, Repeating vocabulary in the heart, Repeating vocabulary after the lecturers, Using English media (social media, news, news broadcasting, internet, magazine, video, etc.), and for statement number 2, Directed Attention had three statements such as Making list of memorized vocabulary, Memorizing new vocabulary, and Skip or pass new word which likely does not need to study, then for statement no 3 Self-Management consists of 2 statements, namely Reading vocabulary loudly in front of the mirror ranked highest. 100% participants chose these strategies. The participants said that those strategies above helped them very much in learning English vocabulary. It means that most of participants enjoy learning those strategies.
   b. Cognitive Strategies (CS), such are:
      Statement number 1, Resourcing for Discovering the meanings of new words by using dictionary, statement number 2, Grouping for Making list of vocabulary, and, statement number 3, Imagery for Watching English movie on television and Listening English song through radio, meanwhile for statement number 6, Note Taking is Making list vocabulary, and for statement number 7, Contextualization is Using new words in the sentences, for statement number 8, Oral Practice is Reading vocabulary loudly and Reading vocabulary loudly, meanwhile for statement number 9 Repetition is Repeating vocabulary after the lecturers, and finally for statement number 10 Deduction is Making conversation with friends outside the classroom, Write the word repeatedly, and, Listing the word. It can be said that ranked highest, 100% of the participants.
   c. Social Mediation or Affective Strategies (SM/AS), such as:
      Learning Strategies Social of Social Mediation/Affective Strategies Cooperation both Making conversation with friends outside the classroom and Making conversation with classmate are ranked high. It means that 15 participants or all participants chose these strategies for their vocabulary learning strategy. They said that through practicing conversation make them easier to memorize vocabulary. Meanwhile for statement number 2, Asking for

clarity, all the participants or 100% chose both Asking the lecturers or classmates who understand more than them and Asking the lecturers to translate the meaning of a word that I do not understand. They said that some of the time they face difficulties while finding the meaning of the word through the dictionary, because they could not get the suitable meaning. They often faced the fact that the meaning of the word cannot be always found in the dictionary but through the context of the sentence. Therefore, they do believe in their lecturers to ask about it.

2. To develop EFL learners vocabulary, they employed strategies:
   As stated by Table no. 5 above, statement number 2,6,7,9,12, 20, and 21such as learning numbers and parts of the body, repeating vocabulary in the heart, write the word repeated, Discovering the meanings of new words by using dictionary, memorizing new vocabulary, say the word loudly in front of the mirror, use English media (social media, news, news broadcasting, internet, magazine, video, etc.) ranked highest. 100% of the participants, in other words, all participants chose this strategy. Vice versa, only 5 participants (33,3%) use flash card as Learning Strategies in Developing English Vocabulary.

Some of the 15 students said that learning numbers and parts of the body made them happy, meanwhile 8 of them said it made them loved to study English, especially in learning vocabulary. Meanwhile, the reason that they used repeating vocabulary in the heart, Write the word repeated, Discovering the meanings of new words by using dictionary, Memorizing new vocabulary, Say the word loudly in front of the mirror, Use English media (social media, news, news broadcasting, internet, magazine, video, etc.) as the strategies to develop their English vocabulary because that strategies could help them to recall the new words. 12 of the 15 participants said that they used statement no 22 Use English media (social media, news, news broadcasting, internet, magazine, video, etc.) as their strategy to develop their English vocabulary because they did it every day. They became it as their daily habits. By contrast, statement number 4 ranked lowest in developing participants' English vocabulary. Using flashcards was considered to be complicated and they get bored. Thirteen participants preferred repeating vocabulary after the lecturers or matching of words

The findings of the study demonstrate that it could be useful for language students to enrich their vocabularies, which provides a better understanding of the language. The five strategies chosen by the participants indicate that these language learners tend to use practical, simple, and efficient strategies to understand their lessons. In addition, the participants also perceived that the strategies chosen were most efficient for them to comprehend the meaning of new words. Therefore, by using these strategies, the participants could better understand the materials being taught. The strategies used by these participants could likely be useful for other junior high school students in their language learning process. This study could be used as a reference for language teachers to help their students who encounter difficulties in comprehending the meaning of vocabulary. Teachers could suggest that students utilize the strategies identified in this study. Moreover, teachers could also encourage students to become independent learners by teaching. Furthermore, teachers could use this study as a reference to help learners in learning vocabulary.

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