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**STRATEGIES USED BY STUDENTS IN LEARNING ENGLISH
VOCABULARY: A SURVEY AT GRADE NINE STUDENTS OF SMPN 18
MATARAM ACADEMIC YEAR 2016/2017**

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed at finding out different kinds of strategies in learning English vocabulary which were used by the students and describing which of these strategies are dominantly used by the students. All of the students at grade nine students of SMPN 18 Mataram as the population were taken as the participants in this study (sixty eight students was the total number of three classes). To get the data; questionnaire and interviews techniques were used. The questionnaire was used to identify student's strategies in learning English vocabulary, while the interview was used to know which strategies are dominantly used among other strategies. In analyzing the data, qualitative descriptive method was applied by using Schmitt and Mc Charty (1997).The result of the study showed that there were four strategies used by the students, such as discovery strategy, social strategy, memory strategy and cognitive strategy. The most dominant strategy used by students in learning English vocabulary is discovery strategy which consists of learning English vocabulary by listening to English music and watching English movie.

Key word: English learning strategies, Students' vocabulary mastery

I. INTRODUCTION

English is the most popular language which is used by millions of people in the world. It is important to learn the English language, especially its vocabulary because vocabulary is a basic for learning English. People from all over the world speak English when they meet each other in every international meeting, conference, commerce, and also in learning.

Vocabulary is one of the basic parts of English that has important role in English and language skills. As the basic part of the language, vocabulary becomes the most important thing in mastering the language. The vocabulary that students have will help them understand the material and use the language. Mastering vocabulary is a basic matter in learning a foreign language. Thornbury (2002, 13) summed up that “without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed”. It means that, the student’s ability to read, to write, to listen, and to speak is determined by their vocabulary.

In English learning, teachers must be smart to choose several methods or techniques that are applied in the classroom to improve students’ achievement and students’ motivation in learning English. Not only do teachers have techniques in teaching vocabulary but also students must have their own strategies to increase achievement in vocabulary.

Based on researcher observation in SMPN 18 Mataram, especially in grade nine students, I found four main problems in teaching and learning vocabulary. Firstly is forgetting words rapidly. Remembering English words as a foreign language is not easy; it depends on learners’ retention. Secondly,

there are many errors in pronunciation. We know that pronunciation between native speakers and non-native speaker's pronunciation is very different, so for those who are non-native speakers, it is very difficult to correctly pronounce word the same as native speakers. Third is about teaching material. In teaching vocabulary, the appropriate materials are also needed. Teaching materials is very important in learning English. The appropriate materials make the students interested in studying English. Otherwise, the students feel bored in the classroom. Fourth is understanding meaning of words. Most students have found difficulties in understanding meaning of words, so that it is so hard for them to understand the lesson well and it also might make them unmotivated.

Based on some problems above, the students need to have their own strategies in learning vocabulary. An important learning strategy will be able to motivate themselves in studying English vocabulary.

a. Statement of the Problem

Based on the background above there are two problems arise. Those are:

1. What are the strategies used by students in learning vocabulary at grade nine students of SMPN 18 Mataram?
2. Which strategies are dominantly used by students in learning vocabulary at grade nine students of SMPN 18 Mataram?

b. Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study are:

1. To find out the strategies used by students in learning English vocabulary at grade nine students of SMPN18 Mataram.

2. To find out the strategies dominantly used by students in learning English vocabulary at grade nine students of SMPN 18 Mataram.

II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

1. General concept of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is list of words with their meanings, especially in a book for learning a foreign language (Richards,2003:4). A vocabulary usually grows and evolves with age, and serves as a useful and fundamental tool for communication and acquiring knowledge (Sagara& Alba: 2006) cited in Hidayat. So, we can say that vocabulary is a knowledge of words and knowledge of their meaning.

It is also stated (Richards and Renandya,2002:25) that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. The teachers know they must do something with the language of their content areas and provide much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read and write.

As Stahl (2005) cited in Diamond and Gutlohn (2006) points out, “Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of the word which not only implies a definition, but also implies how those words fit into the world”. Vocabulary knowledge is not something that can ever be fully mastered; it is something that expands and deepens over the course of a lifetime. Instruction in vocabulary involves far more than looking up words in a dictionary and using the words in a sentence. Vocabulary is acquired incidentally through indirect exposure to words and intentionally through

explicit instruction in specific words and word-learning techniques. According to Graves (2000), there are four components of an effective vocabulary program:

1. Wide or extensive independent reading to expand word knowledge
2. Instruction in specific words to enhance comprehension of texts containing those words
3. Instruction in independent word-learning techniques, and
4. Word consciousness and word-play activities to motivate and enhance learning.

2. Previous Related Research Findings

Schmitt and Mc Charty (1997) divided the taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies into four groups, namely:

1. Discovery Strategies

In this stage, when learners do not know the words, they must discover their meaning by guessing from structural knowledge of the language.

2. Social Strategies

A second way to discover new meaning employs the social strategy of asking someone who knows. Teachers are often in this position. They can be asked to help in a variety of ways.

3. Memory Strategies

Most memory strategies involve relating the word to be retained with some previously learners' knowledge, using some form

of imagery or grouping. The strategies used in this stage are pictures/imagery, related words, unrelated words, grouping, etc.

4. Cognitive Strategies

Language strategies in this taxonomy are similar to memory strategies, but are not focused specially on manipulative mental processing; they include sorting, classifying, comparing, predicating, repeating and using mechanical means to study vocabulary.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

This is a descriptive study using the survey method. Descriptive studies involve collecting the data and test the hypothesis or answer the question concerning the current status of the subject of the study.

The researcher tries to collect the data by using interview and questionnaire in order to know what strategies used by students in learning English vocabulary at grade nine students of SMPN 18 Mataram.

There were 68 students involved as the sample of this research. The researcher took all of the population as the sample of the research, because the subjects of the study were less than a hundred (Arikunto: 2002). Based on what has been stated by Arikunto (2001:112) that if the population is less than a hundred then it is better to take all of the population as the subject of the research. Thus, this study involved the whole population of ninth grade students of SMPN 18 Mataram academic years 2016/2017. That is 68 students.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

a. Findings

In short, the most dominant strategies used by the students in the grade nine students of SMPN 18 Mataram was discovery strategy; it is consist of learning English vocabulary when I find difficult words I try to quessing, learning English vocabulary by operating electronic games in English provided in computer and in hand phone, learning English vocabulary by using dictionary when Ie find difficult words and learning English vocabulary by listing difficult word.

The second are memory strategy, they consists of learn English vocabulary by memorizing of English vocabulary, learn English vocabulary by studying the English pictures, learn English vocabulary by listening to English music, and the last learn English vocabulary by grouping a list of difficult words and then I remembering and memorizing.

The third are cognitive strategy, they consists of learning English vocabulary by making notes of difficult words, learn English vocabulary by noting difficult words when I learning English in the classroom, learn English vocabulary by sticking notes and learn English vocabulary in every time I find difficult words I always write and recite repeatedly repeated times.

The last are social strategy, they consists of learn English vocabulary when I find difficult words I try to ask my friend or ask my teacher, learn English vocabulary by having private English courses/lessons, learn English vocabulary by communicative directly with native speakers and lean English vocabulary by holding study group with my classmate.

Therefore, the most dominant strategies used by students in learning English vocabulary obtained from interview are different from the most dominant strategies obtained from questionnaire.

b. Discussion

The strategies used by students in learning vocabulary at grade nine students of SMPN 18 Mataram are discovery strategy, they consists of learning English vocabulary when I find difficult words I try to quessing, learning English vocabulary by operating electronic games in English providing in computer and in hand phone, learning English vocabulary by using dictionary when I find difficult words and learning English vocabulary by listing difficult word.

The second are memory strategy, they consists of learn English vocabulary by memorizing of English vocabulary, learn English vocabulary by studying the English pictures, learn English vocabulary by listening to English music, and the last learn English vocabulary by grouping a list of difficult words and then I remembering and memorizing.

The third are cognitive strategy, they consists of learning English vocabulary by making notes of difficult words, learn English vocabulary by noting difficult words when I learning English in the classroom, learn English vocabulary by sticking notes and learn English vocabulary in every time I find difficult words I always write and recite repeatedly repeated times.

The last are social strategy, they consists of learn English vocabulary when I find difficult words I try to ask my friend or ask my teacher, learn English vocabulary by having private English courses/lessons, learn English

vocabulary by communicative directly with native speakers and learn English vocabulary by holding study group with my classmate. Even though, one class has different dominant strategy. For example, the most dominant strategies used by the students in learning English vocabulary in class A and in class C is the same, that is to say that they learn English vocabulary by using discovery strategy.

Meanwhile, the most dominant strategies used by the students in class B was memory strategy, which consists of learning English vocabulary by memorizing lists of English vocabulary, learning English vocabulary by studying English pictures, learning English vocabulary by listening to English music and learning English vocabulary by grouping a list of hard words and then remembering and memorizing.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

a. Conclusion

1. Based on the data from questionnaire, the strategies used by the students in learning English vocabulary at grade nine students of SMPN 18 Mataram was discovery strategy; it consists of learning English vocabulary in which when we find difficult words we try to quessing, learning English vocabulary by operating electronic games in English provided in computer and in hand phone, learning English vocabulary by using dictionary and learning English vocabulary by listing difficult words.

The second are memory strategy, they consists of learn English vocabulary by memorizing of English vocabulary, learn English vocabulary

by studying the English pictures, learn English vocabulary by listening to English music, and the last learn English vocabulary by grouping a list of difficult words and then I remembering and memorizing.

The third are cognitive strategy, they consists of learning English vocabulary by making notes of difficult words, learn English vocabulary by noting difficult words when I learning English in the classroom, learn English vocabulary by sticking notes and learn English vocabulary in every time I find difficult words I always write and recite repeatedly repeated times.

The last are social strategy, they consists of learn English vocabulary when I find difficult words I try to ask my friend or ask my teacher, learn English vocabulary by having private English courses/lessons, learn English vocabulary by communicative directly with native speakers and lean English vocabulary by holding study group with my classmate.

2. Based on the data obtained from interview it is shown that the most dominant strategies is that they learn English vocabulary by listening to English music and watching English movie and memorizing lists of English vocabulary.

b. Suggestion

Based on the result of this study above, the researcher offers the following number of suggestions:

1. For English Teacher

Teacher should give the students more opportunity to have listening session to support their study. Moreover, they have to be more selective in choosing the materials to be taught and they have to use the appropriate strategy in order that students are enjoyable or interested in the English teaching learning process.

2. For students at SMPN 18 Mataram

The students should increase their achievement in vocabulary by using some strategies that they have.

3. For next researchers

This research is far from perfect. This study discussed strategies used by students in learning English vocabulary; a survey at grade nine students of SMPN 18 Mataram in academic year 2015/2016. It is suggested for the next researcher to investigate in more detail about students' strategy in each grade.

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