A CASE STUDY OF VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGY USED BY MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS IN MTSN 1 PATI

(A Case Study on Vocabulary Learning Strategies of Eight Grade Students in MTsN 1 Pati)

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A CASE STUDY OF VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGY USED BY
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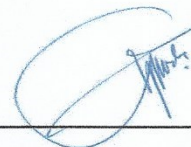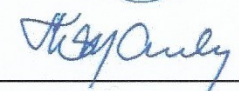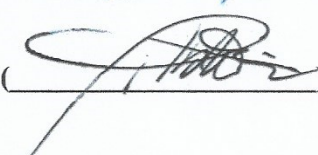## A CASE STUDY OF VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGY USED BY MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS IN MTSN 1 PATI

(A Case Study of Eight Grade Students MTs N 1 Pati)

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I hereby confirm that the publication article entitled "**A CASE STUDY OF VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGY USED BY MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS IN MTSN 1 PATI (A Case Study of Eight Grade Students MTs N 1 Pati)**" is an original and authentic work written by myself and it has satisfied the rules and regulation of Muhammdiyah University of Surakarta with respect to plagiarism. I certify all quotation and the sources of information have fully referred and acknowledge accordingly.

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Surakarta, September 24th, 2020

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A CASE STUDY OF VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGY USED BY MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS IN MTS N 1 PATI

Abstract

This research was qualitative research with a case study design on vocabulary learning strategy used by male and female students in MTs N 1 Pati. The objectives of this research were, 1) to clarify the vocabulary learning strategy used by eight grade students, and 2) to describe the factors that contribute to the vocabulary learning strategy. This study involved 10 male and 10 female of eight grade students. In this study, the researcher used open-ended questionnaires, interviews and observation checklist based on Schmitt (2000) taxonomy. The finding revealed that first, students in junior high school applied vocabulary learning strategy. The strategies that the students used were memory strategies, cognitive strategies, meta-cognitive strategies, determination strategies, social strategies. Collaborative activity in learning vocabulary was the most convenient way for them. Students preferred to use their English in their daily activities. Second, learning environment, programs and teacher in boarding school allowed them to obtain many vocabularies and they could practice their English.

Keywords: *Vocabulary Learning Strategy, Factors, Collaborative*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif dengan rancangan studi kasus tentang strategi pembelajaran kosakata yang digunakan oleh siswa pria dan wanita di MTs N 1 Pati. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah: 1) Untuk mengklarifikasi strategi pembelajaran kosakata yang digunakan oleh siswa kelas delapan. 2) Untuk menjelaskan faktor-faktor yang berkontribusi pada strategi pembelajaran kosakata yang digunakan. Penelitian ini melibatkan 10 siswa laki-laki dan 10 siswa perempuan dari kelas delapan. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti menggunakan daftar pertanyaan terbuka, wawancara dan observasi berdasarkan taksonomi Schmitt (2000). Temuan ini mengungkapkan bahwa; para siswa di sekolah menengah pertama menerapkan strategi pembelajaran kosakata. Strategi yang digunakan siswa adalah strategi memori, strategi kognitif, strategi meta-kognitif, strategi penentuan, strategi sosial. Aktivitas kolaboratif dalam belajar kosa kata adalah cara yang paling nyaman bagi mereka. Siswa lebih suka menggunakan bahasa Inggris mereka dalam kegiatan sehari-hari. Kedua; Lingkungan, program kegiatan bahasa dan guru di sekolah dan asrama memungkinkan mereka untuk mendapatkan banyak kosa kata dan mereka dapat berlatih berbahasa Inggris.

Kata kunci: *Strategi Pembelajaran Kosakata, Faktor, Kolaboratif*

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning second language is arguably one of the most cognitively challenging to take for most people will go through in a life time. Learning vocabulary is perhaps the most challenging aspect to become proficient in the target language when learners were in the school. Some characteristics that distinguish vocabulary learning from other language skills include the fact that vocabulary learning is incremental, potentially limitless, and heavily constrained by the learners' experience (Swain & Carroll, 1987, p. 193). One area of second language learner vocabulary acquisition research that has been gaining attention in recent years to help the difficulties some second language learners encounter when learning vocabulary is the focus on vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) in particular.

However, as one of the core elements of language learning is vocabulary comprehension which presents various obstacles. Students tend to become passive learner during English classes because they lack of vocabulary, which affect their behavior in learning English. In addition, Goulden as cited in Olmos (2009) explained that measurement of academic particular vocabulary size was an important indicator of the ability of second language learners to achieve academic success. Mc Carthy (1990, p. 265) stated that no matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered. Without words, to express a wide range of meaning, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way.

There are many ways of students in learning second language. The use of the student's strategy of learning language contributes to language learning. Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs) have its roles in facilitating students' learning become more independent in learning language. Cameron (2001, p.:92) defined vocabulary learning strategies as "Action that learners take to help them understand and remember vocabulary". Vocabulary is the basic important things when people want to learn languages. Vocabulary will have an actual effect on students' language proficiency. Wilkins (1972, p.9-10) stated that without grammar people understood the little message of communication, but without vocabulary people can not understand it. Therefore, speaking, listening, reading

and writing are the basic element to learn is vocabulary. By having the large size of vocabulary will help students to improve their language proficiency.

VLSs are important for junior high school students, because they help students to understand new words and increase their wealth of vocabulary, and encourage them to become independent learners. However, English lessons in junior high school do not provide specific classes on technical vocabulary. The students cannot always rely on their teachers. They need to master their own strategies to determine the meanings of unknown words independently so they can better understand their class materials.

Vocabulary learning strategies have a prominent part in learning language successfully. They are resources that students employ them to improve their vocabulary knowledge to solve their problems in language learning. Gu (2010, p.116) claimed that VLSs are an indispensable tool to describe and to explain the vocabulary development of a foreign language. VLSs are also a tool to empower learners to make a wise decision in terms of what to learn and how to learn.

Some previous study revealed that understanding the vocabulary learning strategies is very important. It helps students to be aware the benefit of the use of strategies in learning English. Yunhao (2011) revealed that good language learners were found to employ learning strategies more frequently than poor learners. Waldvogel (2003, p. 209-219) revealed that inexperienced language learners were not always aware of the benefits of conscious and continuous use of effective learning strategies for making learning quicker and more effective. Many teachers did not understand on language and vocabulary learning strategy instruction and/or techniques at different levels of proficiency.

Second language learning had been expanded rapidly during the last few decades in Indonesia. English courses were offered from primary to advanced levels at many schools. Investigating some of the various factors which influence individual students in their choice of learning strategies can be the alternative way to conduct this cause. According to recent research studies, there were several factors that influence strategy choice; such as awareness, personality traits, stage of learning, task requirements, teacher expectations, age,

general learning style, purpose for learning language, motivation level, nationality, gender, etc. One factor that influenced the strategy choice was the degree of awareness. Learners who were more aware of themselves and understand the process, seem to use strategies more efficiently (Oxford, 1990). Also, task requirements help to determine the strategy choice. To illustrate, different strategies were used when rehearsing a grammar rule and trying to communicate with other parties. Their cognitive level, which was interdependent to biological development and social experiences, played an immense role in their preference of strategy choice (Oxford, 1990).

The point that made the researcher interesting to do the research is based on the students' obstacles in learning vocabulary. Most of students in MTsN 1 Pati have practiced their English by mixing Indonesian accents and Indonesian grammatical. Students tend to become passive learner during English classes because they lack of vocabulary, which affect their behavior in learning English. Students tend to the teacher in learning English. The gender differences were also interested to investigate how the students use the vocabulary learning strategies.

According to the background study, the researcher identified the objectives of study: 1) to clarify the vocabulary learning strategy used by eight grade students of MTsN 1 Pati, and 2) to describe the factors that contribute to the vocabulary learning strategy. That was why the study, which was explored in this study entitled: "A Case Study of Vocabulary Learning Strategy Used by Male and Female Students of MTs N 1 Pati".

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The current study employed qualitative with a case study design. The object of the study was a vocabulary learning strategy of eight grade students. The subjects of the study were 10 male and 10 female of eight grade students in MTs N 1 Pati. The researcher used open-ended questionnaires, observations and interview as the instruments to obtain the students' vocabulary learning strategies. The questionnaire and interview were based on Schmitt (2000) taxonomy, which consisted of 31 questions. The questionnaire and interview were translated into Indonesian in order to avoid misunderstanding. The

collected data were analyzed based on Miles and Huberman (1994) theory which begun by series step of: 1) data reduction, 2) data display, 3) drawing conclusion or verification. The technique of triangulation was projected to aid the credibility, transferability, conformability, and dependability (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p.181). The researcher used data triangulation in which open-ended questionnaire, interview and observation to validate the data.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the data acquired from questionnaires, interviews and observation result based on Schmitt's taxonomy; 1) Vocabulary learning strategy used by male and female students of eight grade students in MTs N 1 Pati, 2) Factors contribute to the choice of VLS.

3.1 Results of Finding

The researcher classified the categories of vocabulary learning strategies used by male and female students. The classification of vocabulary learning strategy was described in the following description.

3.1.1 Determination Strategy

Schmitt (2000) had clarified that determination is the strategies used when learners faced with discovering a new words' meaning without recourse to another person experience. In determination strategy, The similarity of the terms of Indonesian language and English can be the factors in the students choose their strategy in determination strategy. Some students understood English terms that are similar to those in Indonesian. For instance, the students were already familiar with the word doctor which in English means someone who maintains or restores human health through the practice of medicine (Woodford, 2005). Students revealed that the resemblance between Indonesian and English words helped them to guess the meaning of words.

> *"........maknanya sama tapi penulisannya berbeda. Jadi klita bisa ,mengartikan kata itu hampir sama dengan bahasa Indonesianya"*
> "The meaning is similar but different on how to pronounce it. Therefore, we can understand English terms that are similar to those in Indonesian language".
> *Interview January 10th, 2020*

The data of determination strategy we can see in the table (see appendix), described that the female of eight grade students were often (38.3%) applied determination strategies and the male of eight grade students were often (37.1%) applied determination strategies to discover new meaning of word. The number of look up the word in English – Indonesia dictionary, guess word's meaning from the context, check the word's form; whether it belongs to verb, noun, adjective, have the high frequency as always.

The researcher found that the students were classified the word based on part of speech in learning activity. The students were writing the word that they got from the book and English vocabulary activity into the special book for vocabulary. Students choose to rewrite the word than underlining the word that they don't understand in their book.

3.1.2 Social Strategy

Schmitt (2000) proposed that there were the strategies in which the other intervention was needed. Social strategies were the strategies used by implementing the interaction with other people to improve language learning. One possible reason why statement of asking teacher for definition in social strategy is the common belief that teacher is correct in English. Teachers are generally considered to be credible source. The students explain that their teacher could provide a clear and correct definition of new word. Nation (2008, p.12) "some word are commonly found in certain area but rarely found in other areas". The use of English as media of instruction in classroom provides opportunities for students to ask their teacher about the meaning of a new word.

> *"……..Penjelasan guru itu lebih pasti dan jelas dari pada kita mencari sendiri di kamus karena biasanya ada kata-kata yang punya perbedaan makna yang kadang tidak bisa kita temukan di kamus."*
> " …..the teacher explanation is more specific and suitable than the one in the dictionary because sometimes the words have different meanings or cannot be found in a regular dictionary".
> *Interview January 10th, 2020*

In social strategies that described in the table (see appendix), the researcher found that the female of eight grade students were often (47.5%) applied social

strategies to discover new meaning of word. Whether the male of eight grade students were sometimes (43.2%) applied social strategies to discover new meaning of word. The result of questionnaire indicated that the strategy of ask the teacher for definition has the position as 'always'. There are 7 students who implemented the strategy of asking the teacher for definition.

The researcher followed the teaching and learning process in the class. The researcher found that students were asking the teacher about the meaning of words that they haven't understood. The students raised their hand and asked the teacher about the meaning and sometimes teacher use their Indonesian to explain the students about English. The students confused about the change of irregular verbs. They asked about the simple present of the word. The students also asked their classmate when teacher was in the questions section of learning activity. The researcher also found that students were asking their friends about how to say in English in their daily activity. Sometimes they corrected each other about what they said.

3.1.2 Memory Strategy

Memory strategies were referred as relating the word with some previously learned knowledge. It was done by using some form of imagery of grouping which called as memory strategies as it was written by Schmitt (2000). In learning English, paying attention to the spelling or the pronunciation made learners feel confident to say the word correctly and easily to remember the word itself. In other case, pronunciation helped student to remember to write the word correctly. Gu (2003) stated that to know a word is to know its form. Understanding a word doest not only mean knowing its meaning but also knowing its form.

> *"...Saya juga belajar cara mengucapkannya juga. Jadi, jika nanti saya menemukan kosakata yang baru lagi, akan memudahkan saya untuk mengingat artinya juga".*
> "…..I learn the pronunciation also. So, if next time I find the new word again, I will easily to remember the meaning".
> *Interview January 10th, 2020*

The questionnaire data of memory strategy can be seen from the table (see appendix). The female students of eight grade students were often (47%) applied

memory strategies to discover new meaning of word. Connect the word with their previous experience had positioned as 'sometimes' frequency. There are 4 students who use 'connecting the word with their previous experience'. This item has the highest respondents of the female students. Whether the males students of eight grade students were often (38.2%) applied memory strategies to discover new meaning of the word. The result of questionnaire indicated that the strategy of connecting the word with their previous experience, and remember the word by studying and paying to its spelling, has the position as 'always'. There are 6 students who implemented the strategy of connecting the word with my previous experience, and remembering the word by studying and paying to its spelling.

Based on the result of observation, the researcher found that teacher facilitated students by giving the example of the correct pronunciation. Not all the words were translated by teacher. Sometime teacher made group to discuss the text in order to find out the meaning of the text. Beside the discussion section, students were also try to find the meaning of word by using regular dictionary. Students were trying also to make the sentence using the vocabulary that they had known. The steps of vocabulary activity were asking the students about the vocabulary yesterday, delivering new vocabulary, pronouncing the word repeatedly, asking the students about the meaning and trying to make sentences. But the memory strategies that male and female students didn't do much were grouping the word based on its affixes, making your own definition for the word. They realized that they think those strategies of grouping the word by affixes is difficult.

3.1.3   Cognitive Strategy

Cognitive strategies exhibit the common function of manipulation or transformation of the target language by the learner. It is similar to memory strategies but they are not focused on manipulative mental processing. They include repetition and using mechanical means to study vocabulary (Schmitt,2000). In cognitive strategy, the researcher found that the students were saying the word repeatedly to memorize in the memorizing day. Memorizing day conducted one day per week. Students were also taking note when they had

been punished. The caretaker gave the punishment of language for whom breaking the law of language. The students were asked to take note about a vocabulary in the dining room, bathroom or other. The students were also bringing their notes everywhere they were going. They always copied their new vocabulary that they found in the notes. In the classroom activity, the teacher ordered the students to ask the word that they don't know from the texts in the module. The students wrote the new vocabulary into the books.

> *"………Saya menulisnya (kosa kata) berulang kali. Dengan begitu saya medapatkan kata beserta artinya ketika menerima kosakata baru. Saya dapat dengan mudah mengingat arti sebuah kata."*
> ":………..I write it (vocabulary) repeatedly. It makes me got the point of the words effortlessly while receiving. I could easily remember the meaning of the words.
> *Interview January 10ᵗʰ, 2020*

This study resulted that the female students of eight grade students were sometimes (30%) applied cognitive strategies to discover new meaning of word. The table above indicated that the strategy of take notes, and keeping a vocabulary notebook wherever they go, have the same position as 'always'. There are 2 students who implemented take notes, and keeping a vocabulary notebook wherever they are going. Whether the male of eight grade students were sometimes (46.1%) applied cognitive strategies to discover new meaning of word. The table indicated that the strategy of take notes has the position as 'always'. There are 6 students who implemented the strategy of take notes.

3.1.4   Meta-Cognitive Strategy

The vocabulary learning strategies also involved what was called as meta-cognitive strategy. It involved a conscious overview of the learning process and making decision about planning, monitoring, or evaluating the best way to study. It includes improving access to input, deciding on the most efficient method of study or review, and testing oneself to measure improvement (Schmitt,2000). English media supported the students to learn and retain new words. The interview result show that by using English media such as English-language internet pages, videos and English article, students remembered English vocabulary more easily. English media provided clear context if the sources were credible. So, the students can learn certain word correctly. The Internet

helped students to become more independent in their vocabulary learning, as stated by Brahja (2013).

> *".... Ada beberapa kata basa inggris yang unik dan kadang membingungkan. Saya biasanya menggunakan media lain seperti youtube dan website pembelajaran bahasa inggris untuk ngecek kebenaran makna dan cara membacanya dari sebuah kata tersebut."*
> "There are some English word which are unique. Therefore, I use other media such as youtube and and English internet pages to check the correct meaning and pronunciation."
>
> *Interview January 10th, 2020*

This study resulted that the female students of eight grade students were sometimes (40%) applied meta-cognitive strategies to discover new meaning of the word. The table indicated that the strategy of using English media (news, news broadcasting, internet, magazine, video, etc.) has the position as 'always'. There are 4 students who implemented the strategy of using English media (news, news broadcasting, internet, magazine, video, etc.). Whether the male students of eight grade students were sometimes (45.4%) applied meta-cognitive strategies to discover new meaning of the word. The table above indicated that the strategy of test myself with the word test has the position as 'always'.

The researcher found that another activity in learning language was watching the film. Sometimes the caretaker gave the student film in the Saturday night when they were not coming home. The caretaker facilitated this activity by ordering the students to take the summary of the film. While the students watching the film, they also took notes. The caretaker played English song every evening. But it is not stable every evening. The researcher found that students also sang the song which is played. The students also had a vocabulary examined every semester. The test was based on the vocabulary which is delivered every morning. The result of test was included in the boarding report.

3.1.5 Factors that Contribute to the Choice of Vocabulary Learning Strategy Used by Male and Female Students

The researcher found that students added their vocabulary based on their language proficiency. They knew their ability so they choose to use their language proficiency level as the strategy to improve their vocabulary. Male and

female students were usually watching movies and listening song to add their vocabularies. While they were watching and listening music, they also tried to practice their pronunciation.

> *"......Biasanya kalo pas liburan saya noton film yang berbahasa inggris. Tapi yang ada translation nya bahasa Indonesia. Dari situ saya sambil mendengarkan mereka berbicara, kan ada artinya, saya mendapatkan kosa kata baruya dari situ".*
> "…….Usually when I'm in the holiday, I watch English language films with Indonesian translation. From there I listened to them talking, it meant that I got a new vocabulary from there and also knew the meaning.
> *Interview January 10th, 2020*

The researcher found that students' motivation came internally and externally. They needed to study English because they prepare with the condition they should use English wherever they are. Because of English became the international language, they learn English. Their motivation can be the factors in their vocabulary learning strategies. Students had many language programs that support the academic and daily life conversation. It means that the environment influences them to their choice of vocabulary learning strategy.

Students stated that teacher, friend and caretaker had role model in developing their English ability. It means that teacher and caretakers (parents) influence them to their choice vocabulary learning strategy. The researcher concluded that students added their vocabulary by asking their friends, teacher, and their caretakers. They used their social strategies to improve their learning English vocabulary.

3.2 Discussions

From theoretical perspective, the findings of this study are in accordance with Schmitt (2000) theory in which the theory explains that the students use some strategies in learning vocabulary. In term of learning strategy, vocabulary learning strategy is one of the specific learning strategy. There are many many vocabulary learning strategies. Schmitt (2000) proposes the taxonomy of VLS which provides a vey useful overview of the rise in importance of strategy use in learner's active role in learning process. If we refer back to the definition of VLS, Schmitt (2000) defined VLS as an action which affects the process.

Cameron (2001:92) defined vocabulary learning strategies as an action of the students to understand and remember the vocabulary. There were two discussions that the researcher conducted from this case study research; the discussion of the vocabulary learning strategy used by male and female students of eight grade students of MTsN 1 Pati, and factors contribute in their vocabulary learning strategies. The discussion of VLS in this study divided into five categories; determination, social, memory, cognitive and meta-cognitive strategy.

The finding in social strategy was confirmed by Dwi (2018) study. In social strategy, the researcher found that students are asking the teacher about the meaning of words that they didn't understand especially the change of irregular verb. The current study supports the theory by Gu (2003) and confirmed the previous study of Akbari (2011). Memory strategy will help the students to remember easily, to write correctly and to know the correct meaning in learning vocabulary. In contrast, Dwi (2018), Hassanvand et al. (2012) study found different findings. Students were using dictionary phone application in their smart phone in facilitating the students learning. The current study found that students are forbidden to bring their smart phone because it was the rule of school management.In contradiction, students also stated that underlining the word can help the students in guessing and recognizing new words. The students will have a significant understanding of the words. This indicated that underlining new words not only helps students to understand new words, but also helps students to remember them as well.

The findings showed that the factors that contribute the choice of vocabulary learning strategy are, level of language proficiency, cognitive style, attitude and motivation, language learning environment, social and situational factors. It is in line with the Oxford & Nyikos theory. But, most of male and female student dependent teacher in language learning. Teachers needed more effort in teaching learning English.

The findings showed that most of female students preferred to use their English in their daily activities. Their environment and programs in boarding school allowed them to obtain many vocabularies and they can practice their

English. The male students were mostly using their memory strategies to find the meaning of word,whereas the lowest strategy that students used by male students is cognitive strategy. The male students are mostly using their memory strategies and determination strategies to find the meaning of word. The role of teacher and caretaker mostly influence students in learning English vocabulary.

4. CONCLUSION

The present study concluded that students in junior high school applied vocabulary learning strategy. From the five categories of vocabulary learning strategy, the students preferred to use their English in their daily activities. Their environment and programs in boarding school allowed them to obtain many vocabularies and they can practice their English. It can be one factor contributed in learning strategy. The strategies that the students used were memory strategies, cognitive strategies, meta-cognitive strategies, determination strategies, social strategies. Collaborative activity in learning vocabulary was the most convenient way for them. The male students were mostly using their memory strategies to find the meaning of word. Whether the strategies that the most female students used were memory strategies, and determination strategies whereas the lowest strategy that students used by male students was cognitive strategy. The male students were mostly using their memory strategies and determination strategies to find the meaning of the word. The role of teacher and caretaker mostly influence students in learning English vocabulary. The students were aware about the globalization era. This was what the students being motivated in learning English. The general conclusion from this study is that the teacher can take the account of most and the least frequently strategies used by the students in order to find the ways of increasing the least strategies used by students. The male and female students used a different strategy. Teacher should be aware students' differences in learning vocabulary to make learning activity were better. Media can be the problem in students' learning. Students were always facilitated by teacher in learning vocabulary. Those problems will not make students independently in learning vocabulary. The rules of boarding school can be discussed with management of *Madrasah* in order to make the effective policy in learning language.

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