

INVESTIGATING VOCABULARY ACQUISITION OF SECOND SEMESTER STUDENTS OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

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Abstract: Learning English is very important in this modern era. In learning English, there is an important part that is the main key to understand language, namely vocabulary. Vocabulary is the basis of a language, therefore learning vocabulary is very important, because the language will not have meaning without vocabulary. This research examines how the second semester students of English Education Department Unisma obtain vocabulary to get a high score in reading. The instruments used to collect the data was semi-structured interview. The researcher asked questions via WhatsApp and the participants answered them via voice note. After conducting interviews with the participants, the data were transcribed and arranged into written form. Then, the results were arranged into a description. The finding of this research showed that the students improved their vocabularies by watching movies using English subtitles, reading online, reading articles, listening music, and using dictionaries. Based on the finding of the study, vocabulary acquisition can be obtained by the habit of carrying out activities such as reading text, listening music, watching movies using English subtitles.

Key words: Language Acquisition, Vocabulary, Vocabulary Acquisition

INTRODUCTION

Learning English is very important in this modern era, especially for students. English can also be used as a way to get information, new knowledge, or exchange ideas. In learning English, there is an important part that becomes the main key in order to understand the language, namely vocabulary. According to Richards (2002:

255), vocabulary is the basic and main component in language and is useful for students in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Students can understand English if they can use the appropriate vocabulary. Hence, vocabulary is very important and becomes the core in English.

Vocabulary is defined as words from a language, including single words, or consisting of several words that have meaning (Lessard-Clouston, 2013). Richards & Rodgers (2001: 181) states that acquisition is "an unconscious process that occurs naturally through language understanding and through language to obtain meaningful communication". One of the skills in English is reading, reading is one of the most important skills because through reading we can obtain information or knowledge from written texts. Reading is a window to the world. Reading is an indispensable communication tool in society. Secondly, old reading material or history books can expand their knowledge.

Based on Putra (2014) films using English subtitles can motivate students to learn vocabulary from the film. Furthermore, Collins (2013) stated that storybooks are proven to increase student vocabulary. This indicates that films and story books are beneficial for students vocabulary development. The study conducted by Kong (2018) showed that vocabulary acquisition that students acquire more vocabulary from reading compared to listening. Varshney (2003: 307) stated that language acquisition is the process of children achieving smooth control of their mother tongue. According to Chomsky (2009:101-102) language acquisition is growth and maturation of relatively fixed capacities, under appropriate external conditions. This means that the learning of language is dealing with the naturalistic manner in which children learn, create and perceive language as the medium of their social communication from the beginning to the end of their language acquisition.

First language acquisition is the natural language acquisition process, which is usually referred to as mother tongue. Based on Noam Chomsky's (2004) theory, the Innateness Hypothesis, every human already has a special capacity for language. Yule (2010:7) explained that "The innateness hypothesis proposes that human infants

are born with a special capacity for language not shared with any other creature". The acquisition of a second language is usually done through intensive teaching and learning activities and is obtained in a natural and unconscious way. Second Language refers to any language taught after mother tongue. Thus, this can refer to the third or fourth language learning language carried out naturally without coercion or learn it in class with instructions, not infrequently speaking in general about mastery of a second language (Ellis, 2007: 3).

Vocabulary refers to words and phrases that people know and use. it has to do with understanding how words can be used to another and in certain contexts. Richards & Renandya (2002) stated that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency as a basis for students in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. There are two theories of vocabulary acquisition, namely implicit learning and explicit learning. Implicit learning is the acquisition of unconscious or indirect vocabulary and reading is very effective than deliberate learning of vocabulary (Krashen (1987) and Wesche and Paribakht (1999) and Rieder (2003).

Vocabulary Acquisition is one of the important features in estimating someone's language proficiency or new vocabulary that is acquired and obtained from the environment by memorizing it in their brain. From the definition above, it can be concluded that vocabulary is the knowledge of words and the meaning of words. It's about words in the language used to express meaning. Therefore, learning vocabulary is very important in developing language. Vocabulary acquisition can be obtained from several sources and methods, such as reading text based on Ponniah (2011) to students from the Indonesian National Institute of Technology in Trichirappalli India, the students who read sentences in English are easy to understand than students who read vocabulary from a dictionary.

The researcher provides some previous studies related to the topic that has been conducted in various educations which specifically provide complete information on vocabulary acquisition. First, the research finding by Schmitt and Pigada (2006) showed that knowledge of 65% of the target words was enhanced in

some way, for a pickup rate of about 1 of every 1.5 words tested. Spelling was strongly enhanced, even from a small number of exposures. Meaning and grammatical knowledge were also enhanced, but not to the same extent.

The second study from Browne (2003), he tried to investigate the effectiveness of two teaching methods generally used in the language classrooms to teach new vocabulary words, through reading-based and activity based tasks, and compared them to a third approach, through writing-based tasks. The result showed Learning activities using push output or writing techniques were more effective than using project-based learning. Related to reading was not effective in this study, but there were other advantages that provided significant results and simple tools that can attract attention such as: underlining and marking the reading so as to increase the benefits of reading.

Third, the study from Zeeland and Schmit (2013), they did research to postgraduate students at a British University who were the objects of this study. This study examined the acquisition of L2 students from three dimensions of vocabulary knowledge in listening: form recognition, grammar recognition, and meaning recall. The result showed that the vocabulary and grammar were developed before they understood the meaning of the form. The acquisition of word meanings was very much unaffected by frequency, a finding that was reminiscent of research from incidental reading.

Next, a research by Putra (2017), this research was conducted at Santo Yoseph Public Senior High School in Denpasar, Bali. The results of this study were watching movies using subtitles had an influence on vocabulary understanding and obtaining new vocabulary. In addition, watching films using English texts also improved students' abilities, such as the ability to read, listen, and speak in English.

Another previous study was done by Kong (2018). The result showed that researchers conducted experiments and studies in obtaining a second language from reading and listening focused on words. Students acquired vocabulary by reading

rather than listening. Reading was more focused on vocabulary and more effective at acquiring second language vocabulary.

The last previous research was done by Maulidya (2019). To collect the data of this study, the researcher used interviews, and the object of this study was students from kindergarten students Dewi Sartika Surabaya. The researcher tried to describe the strategies used by children and the factors that influenced the acquisition of English vocabulary. The results of this study showed that students can understand vocabulary using cognitive or translation strategies, so after changing the word in English, then change it to Indonesian. On the other hand, internal and external factors were also factors in acquiring vocabulary. Internal factors such as motivation from oneself, age, and learning model, while external factors were class situation, curriculum, culture, and child motivation.

METHOD

This study used qualitative research. According to Ary et al (2010: 648), qualitative research is generic term for a variety of research approaches that study phenomena in their natural setting, without predetermined hypothesis. In this study, the researcher tried to observe the information about the problem being discussed. Ary et al (2010: 454) believed that a case study is focus on a single unit to produce an in-depth description that is rich and holistic. As indicated, case study provides an in-depth description of a single unit. The “unit” can be an individual, a group, a site a class, a policy, a program, a process, an instruction, or a community. According to Fraenkel & Wallen (1990), this design emphasizes photographing individual experiences in their daily lives with activities using observation and interviews. With the statement above, a case study is a process of gathering information about population responses. Researcher describes all phenomena that are consistent with facts on the ground and several theories. Therefore Researchers use this qualitative case study research design to find out the factors by which they master foreign

languages. mastery of foreign languages using interviews, observation and documentation.

The participants of this study were 5 students of second semester from class D, English Department University of Islam Malang. They were students who had the best vocabulary knowledge in reading subject. It was indicated from the average score of reading test, which is above 90. These five students were interviewed to obtain the data about their vocabulary acquisition. The instrument used in this study was an interview using voice notes that were sent through WhatsApp to the students. Having an interview to the students is one of the ways to get the accurate research data.

The Interview questions were adopted from book entitled Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Foreign Language Acquisition. There were 12 questions being asked to the students. Interview was used to find out how students obtained the vocabularies, what habits used to obtain the new vocabularies, how they remembered the new vocabularies, how they got the high score in vocabulary test, etc. The researcher used a semi-structured interview, in which the researcher gave some questions flexibly or can add additional questions depending on the responses given by students. The purpose of this study was to find out what strategies used by students to obtain the vocabularies. Related to the research objective, the researcher collected the data by selecting the participants, doing interview, interpreting, verifying, and obtaining the data. After the participants were selected, it continued to the interview session. The researcher delivered questions through voice notes, and students responded the questions with voice notes as well, and they were automatically recorded. In this study, the researcher used technique of data analysis based on Miles and Huberman (1994) cited in Sugiyono (2014: 247-252) which involving three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/ verification.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data that have been collected through indirect or online interviews, participants were asked to answer questions that have been sent via WhatsApp and answered them using Voice Note. After conducting interviews with the participants, the data were transcribed and arranged into written form. Then, the results were arranged into a description. Below is the detailed description of a semi-structured interview about students' vocabulary acquisition. The interview consisted of 12 (twelve) questions raised by researcher to participants.

The current study was conducted to investigate the vocabulary acquisition of second semester students of English Department at Unisma. After collecting the data through online interview via WA voice notes, the researcher obtained the data about how the students got the vocabularies in order to achieve the high scores in Reading test. In this study, the researcher found that the students improved their vocabularies by watching movies using English subtitles, reading online, reading articles, listening music, and using dictionaries.

In this study, the researcher found that watching movies using English subtitles, reading online and offline, listening to music and using dictionaries can improve vocabulary. This finding is consistent with Kocaman (2016) who stated that learning vocabulary through song encourages respondents to want to know about the vocabulary of the song, besides that, through the song the respondent can easily use pronunciation, the meaning of words, and their use. The related finding was also reported by Li and Brand (2009) that through songs, respondents can obtain various kinds of vocabulary. Based on pre and post tests conducted by Ponniah (2011) to students from the Indonesian National Institute of Technology in Trichirappalli India, the students who read sentences in English are easy to understand than students who read vocabulary from a dictionary.

Newspapers influence the acquisition of vocabulary, by providing a variety of themes such as politics, technology, sports, entertainment, educations, etc., besides that the language used in the newspaper varies and changes every day, Rao (2019).

Furthermore, magazines play an important role in obtaining vocabularies because they provide an understanding of language use, provide information, entertainment, and make the learning environment more interesting, Rao (2019). Novels can also improve vocabulary, according to Schez, and Schmittán (2010) stated that reading novels in foreign languages helps add vocabulary because various words support vocab acquisition. Watching movies and reading subtitles can acquire vocabulary Fage's study (2017) which found that participants have a significant increase in vocabulary after they watched films using subtitles. Translation has potential value in the language acquisition process and helps students to understand words, Vanderplank (1988:272-273). Koolstra and Beentjes (1999) which showed that students must watch subtitled films above that level to get vocabulary from the subtitle films. Students can watch films that have just been released and have never been watched before, to get vocabulary Putra (2014) also supported the finding of the current study, the result showed that the learners who watched the movie with more than one subtitle might affect their vocabulary awareness.

In addition, students can obtain vocabulary from songs. According to Li and Brand (2009) that through songs, respondents can obtain various kinds of vocabulary. learning vocabulary through song encourages respondents to want to know about the vocabulary of the song, besides that, through the song the respondent can easily use pronunciation, the meaning of words, and their use Kocaman (2016). E-source can also improve vocabulary. A study of 18 participants by Wilson (2003) showed that 16 participants agreed that reading digital sources affected their development of vocabulary besides reading online easier and more enjoyable. When students have difficulty understanding a sentence, many students look for the word in the dictionary. De Schryver (2003) described the strengths of dictionary are user experience, readability, potential to process physical notes, reliability without risk of any damage or loss of functionality, no device need to be turned on, and etc. Students can also search e-dictionaries according to (De Schryver 2003) E-Dictionary also offers several of the strengths with online dictionaries, such as the accessibility of

audible spelling assistance, fast data access and capabilities to search unclear words. e-dictionary was used by the participants to master new words, Abraham (2008). Wang (2013) revealed that e-dictionaries help students to interpret the first language so that students understand the meaning of reading and improve their understanding or using Google translate based on (De Schryver 2003) Online dictionaries are some remarkable things, such as instant data updates, connections to many other websites and apps, outstanding information selection and costless. According to Yildirim (2011), who stated that using an English dictionary can improve students' vocabulary mastery. If the students know the meaning of the word they are looking for, students can remember it. According to UKEssay (2008) and Yang (2011) stated that memorization is an inseparable part of vocabulary acquisition.

Students can classify words to improve vocabulary In a study of 8th grade, MTs Islamiyah Palangka Raya by Masyriqi (2018) claimed that teaching vocabulary using a group of words list can help students in acquiring vocabulary. Thornbury (2004) stated that to obtain vocabulary of a language categorizing words are needed. Like adjectives with the adjective, verb with verb, and adverb with adverb make it easier for students to improve vocabulary. Highlighting words can also increase vocabulary based on research conducted by Hasanabadi, Biria, and Kassaian (2016) of two schools in the districts of Isfahan shows that groups that apply to highlight unfamiliar words get better results than groups who do not apply to highlight. Students obtained vocabulary from memorizing highlighted words. Hilliker explained that Highlighting unfamiliar words gives long-term memory and gives an understanding of how the word is used including the meaning of the words.

This finding is also in line with Fage's study (2017) which found that participants have a significant increase in vocabulary after they watched films using subtitles. So, using subtitles in watching movies can improve vocabulary compared with without using subtitles. These results supported the previous research by Vanderplank (1988:272-273), translation has potential value in the language acquisition process and helps students to understand words, and Koolstra and

Beentjes (1999) which showed that students must watch subtitled films above that level to get vocabulary from the subtitle films. Another study by Putra (2014) also supported the finding of the current study, the result showed that the learners who watched the movie with more than one subtitle might affect their vocabulary awareness. The finding also showed that using Google translate and dictionary can improve the vocabularies. This is related to the study by Yildirim (2011), who stated that using an English dictionary can improve students' vocabulary mastery, Wang (2013) revealed that e-dictionaries help students to interpret the first language so that students understand the meaning of reading and improve their understanding. Abraham (2008) also found that e-dictionary was used by the participants to master new words.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

According to the finding and discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the acquisition of vocabulary can be obtained by the habit of carrying out activities such as reading books, magazines, newspapers, e-books, captions, journals, etc. Listening to music can also improve vocabulary because when students listened song in English, they will look for the song's lyrics and explore the song lyrics meaning. Watching movies using English subtitles also increased the students' vocabulary, when they did not know the subtitles meaning, they will look up for them, which resulted in improving their vocabularies. Based on the finding of this study, the students are suggested to read books, magazines, newspapers, e-books, captions, journals, etc, watching movies using English subtitles, listening music with lyrics, and using dictionary to improve their vocabularies. It is hoped that future researchers can develop this study by investigating vocabulary acquisition through digital media or internet, using different level of students and different research design to enrich the research about vocabulary acquisition.

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