STUDY ON VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY HIGH ACHIEVERS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF UNIVERSITY OF ISLAM MALANG

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Abstract: This article aims to describe the vocabulary learning strategies used by high achievers. The research design used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The subjects in this study were fourth semester students who were high achievers in the English Education Department. The subjects in this study were 10 students. To collect data in this study, the researcher using questionnaires to get validity of the data and interviews as supporting instruments. The questionnaire consisted of 25 multiple choices which included 6 kinds of vocabulary learning strategies according to Oxford (1990). The results of this study are high achievers using memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategy in learning vocabulary. Meanwhile, the strategy most often used by high achievers is the compensation strategy. The researcher offer suggestion as follows: 1) For teacher, this research can provide information related to various strategies in learning vocabulary so that it can be used to improve vocabulary skills in students also it can facilitate the teaching and learning process. 2) For students, the students are suggest to use more strategy in learning vocabulary especially compensation strategy. 3) For readers, this research can help readers to increase knowledge about vocabulary learning strategies. 4) For the other researchers, this research can be a reference and can help other researchers to develop similar research so that it is expected to find new findings from the research conducted.

Key words: High achievers, advanced vocabulary, vocabulary learning strategies

INTRODUCTION

The main key in learning English is vocabulary. Richard (2002:255) stated that vocabulary is the core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how learners speak, listen, read and write. It means

vocabulary is a supporting component of four English skills. With this, it makes easy for someone to be able to communicate with foreigners and be able to master English easily. It can be concluded that vocabulary is the first step to make it easier for someone to understand and apply English in the world of communication and education.

Thornbury (2002:13) concludes about the importance of learning vocabulary by saying "without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed." Therefore there are several reasons why vocabulary is the main key in learning English. First, in speaking when someone wants to convey an idea, it requires vocabulary to explain what is being conveyed. Second, in reading with the amount of vocabulary mastered by someone the process of understanding reading will be easier because it can understand every word contained in the reading. Third, in writing someone can use vocabulary to compose ideas that are owned. Fourth, in listening someone will easily find out the meaning of what is heard with a collection of vocabulary that has been understood.

Mastery of vocabulary in learning languages is important, especially in learning English. In learning English, learner will easily understand the language well if masters a lot of vocabulary, because the main key in learning a language is knowing the meaning of a word and sentence. Vocabulary mastery will provide benefits when learning languages, it will provide convenience for students in learning English. The more vocabulary possessed by a learner will provide a great opportunity to master English easily.

English is not easy to master, even more vocabulary is considered as one of the most difficult elements when learning English. Without mastering vocabulary students will find it difficult to express their ideas in English. Oxford (1990) suggests that language learners must be able to use strategies in their process of learning. Therefore a strategy in mastering vocabulary is needed so that it will facilitate students in learning.

A learner needs a strategy in learning vocabulary, the strategy is certainly different between one students with another students. The learning strategy is

believed to make the learning process more effective. Oxford (1990) said that "language learning strategies are specific actions, behaviors or techniques that students employ, often consciously, to improve their own progress in internalizing, storing, retrieving and using the target language". It means the learning strategy is considered as a step taken by the learner to achieve something that has been learned. A good strategy that is owned by the learner in learning vocabulary will make learners easily understand English, because in learning that language requires vocabulary to understand the meaning.

The English language curriculum at the university is English language skills which include writing, reading, speaking, and listening. At the University of Islam Malang, especially in English language education majors, the four courses are taught in semester one to semester four. In studying these four courses, vocabulary mastery skills are needed to learn them so that it will be easier for students to understand each material that will lead to satisfying results.

Vocabulary learning strategies are categorized as general learning strategies that are used with the aim of mastering a second language. Knowing the importance of vocabulary learning strategies will make it easier for learners to learn the strategies and find out what strategies are suitable to use to help learners build vocabulary. Vocabulary learning strategies are very important for a learner because it can help learners to improve vocabulary mastery and understand new words. Students at universities are required to be independent learners, students cannot always rely on their lecturers. Therefore they are required to be able to understand each material in their own way, in this case the vocabulary learning strategy has an important role in the learning process of a student.

Students must be able to take advantage of vocabulary learning strategies because it can help students in the process of learning new vocabulary. Whenever students study words they use strategies to help vocabulary learning work well. Students have the free opportunity to choose the right strategy to use, but beforehand students must know about a good and efficient strategy. Strategies that are suitable and work well for one student might fail in another

student, it means that in certain learning situations one strategy happens to be better than another.

METHOD

In this research, the researcher uses descriptive research. Suryana (2010:14) explained, "Descriptive research is focused to make a description systematically and accurately based on facts about a certain object". The purpose of descriptive research according to Fox & Bayat (2007) is aimed at casting light on current issues or problems through a process of data collection that enables them to describe the situation more completely than was possible without employing this method. Fraenkel & Wallen (1993: 23) said that "descriptive method is a method used to explain, analyze and classify something through various techniques, survey, interview, questionnaires, observation, and text. In other word, data collection in descriptive research is by reporting the facts".

In this study, the researchers chooses the subjects by selecting the subject first. In selecting subjects, researchers looked at scores especially scores in English language skills through student report cards. From the selection, the subjects were students who had an A score in English proficiency courses and had a high grade point average. Subjects that are specialized in this research are fourth semester students.

To get the data in this research the researcher used questionnaire and interview. In this research, a 4 likert-scale questionnaire was used to collect the data. The 4 likert-scale questionnaire consisted of twenty-five statements of vocabulary learning strategies. Participants must choose an option: 4 (Strongly Agree), 3 (Agree), 2 (Disagree), or 1 (Strongly Disagree) to respond to the given statements. I interview session the researcher prepared six questions related to vocabulary learning strategies. Interviews were carried out after distributing and processing data obtained from the questionnaire.

In carrying out a research must have clear steps so that research can be succeeded. The first step, the researcher chooses the topic to be studied. The next step, formulating the research problem. There are two instruments used in getting data in this study, namely questionnaire and interview. In the formation

of questionnaires and interviews based on related books. Next, the questionnaire was distributed to high achievers in the fourth semester of the English Language Education program. After collecting and processing data, interviews were held with five students to verify the data obtained through a questionnaire. Data from the questionnaire were analyzed using the Microsoft Excel program and SPSS.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the results of data analysis are described and discussed to solve the problem in research. In this case, the discussion is based on six strategies according to Oxford's taxonomy (1990) which include memory strategy, cognitive strategy, compensation strategy, metacognitive strategy, affective strategy, social strategy.

a. Memory Strategies

In memory strategies, there are five categories in this strategy in learning vocabulary namely learn by using in sentences, connect the sound and the image, use body movements, using rhymes, and use flash card. The result of memory strategy were presented in table 1. The most commonly vocabulary learning strategy applied by high achievers were learn by using in sentences (M=3,40). However, the frequency of 60% showed that high achievers agree learn vocabulary in English by using it in sentences. Meanwhile, use body movements to learn new vocabulary reached the mean score of 2,50. The frequency of 10% showed that high achievers strongly disagree to use body movements.

Table 1 Memory Strategies

No.	Strategies	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Mean
1.	I learn new vocabulary in English by using it in sentences.	4 40%	6 60%	0 0%	0 0%	10 100%	3,40
2.	I connect the sound of an English word and the image of that word to help me remember the word.	2 20%	7 70%	1 10%	0 0%	10 100%	3,10
3.	I use body movements	0	6	3	1	10	2,50

	to learn new vocabulary in English.	0%	60%	30%	10%	100 %	
4.	By using rhymes I can easily learn English vocabulary.	1 10%	5 50%	4 40%	0 0%	10 100 %	2,70
5.	I use a flash card to learn English vocabulary.	3 30%	1 10%	5 50%	1 10%	10 100 %	2,60

b. Cognitive strategies

According to cognitive strategy in the table 2, these strategies consisted of five strategies, namely say and write new vocabulary repeatedly while learning English, try to speak English like a native speaker, tried to have a conversation in English, love reading English books, and learn English by watching television shows or films in English. Strategies number seven, eight, and ten were commonly vocabulary   learning strategies applied by high achievers in this category. All three strategies had the similar mean score at 3,40. In the strategy number nine, the high achievers did not always apply this strategy, as could be seen the mean score were 3,00.

Table 2 Cognitive Strategy

No.	Strategies	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Mean
6.	I say and write new vocabulary repeatedly while learning English.	4 40%	4 40%	2 20%	0 0%	10 100%	3,20
7.	I try to speak English like a native speaker.	4 40%	6 60%	0 0%	0 0%	10 100%	3,40
8.	I tried to have a conversation in English.	5 50%	4 40%	1 10%	0 0%	10 100%	3,40
9.	I love reading English books.	2 20%	6 60%	2 20%	0 0%	10 100%	3,00
10.	I learn English by watching television shows or films in English.	4 40%	6 60%	0 0%	0 0%	10 100%	3,40

c. Compensation Strategies

Table 3 showed that strategy numbers 11 to 14. Strategy numbers 11 was the highest rank in compensation strategy which has mean score at 3,50. While. Strategy numbers 12 was the lowest rank in this strategy which has mean score at 2,60. In using body language the frequency 60% showed that the high achievers agree using this strategy. However, most high achievers agree used guees the next word if hear people speaking in English with the frequency of 40%.

Table 3 Compensation Strategies

No.	Strategies	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Mean
11.	I guess the meaning of the word that I don't understand.	5 50%	5 50%	0 0%	0 0%	10 100%	3,50
12.	I read an English book without seeing the meaning of each word in the dictionary.	1 10%	5 50%	3 30%	1 10%	10 100%	2,60
13.	When having a conversation in English and I don't know a few words, I will use body language.	3 30%	6 60%	1 10%	0 0%	10 100%	3,20
14.	If I hear people speaking in English, I will guess the next word.	3 30%	4 40%	3 30%	0 0%	10 100%	3,00

d. Metacognitive Strategies

The results from the table 4. The strategies were made a schedule, think of the progress, looking for people who can speak English, pay attention to people who are speaking English, have a clear goal to improve English skills, and try to correct when made a mistake in speaking English. The frequency of 50% in strategy number 15 the high achievers disagree using this strategy. Strategy numbers 16 and 17 had the similar mean score in metacognitive strategy (M=3,10). According to the score, most high achievers agree using strategy think of the progress in English lessons and looking for people who can speak English.

Strategy numbers 18 and 20 also had the similar mean score in metacognitive strategy (M=3,20). In strategy pay attention to people who are speaking English the frequency of 80% stated that the high achievers agree using this strategy.

Table 4 Metacognitive Strategies

No.	Strategies	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Mean
15.	I made a schedule so I could study English.	2 20%	3 30%	5 50%	0 0%	10 100 %	2,70
16.	I think of my progress in English lessons.	2 20%	7 70%	1 10%	0 0%	10 100 %	3,10
17.	I'm looking for people who can speak English so I can learn to communicate in English.	2 20%	7 70%	1 10%	0 0%	10 100 %	3,10
18.	I like to pay attention to people who are speaking English.	2 20%	8 80%	0 0%	0% 0%	10 100 %	3,20
19.	I have a clear goal to improve my English skills.	3 30%	4 40%	3 30%	0 0%	10 100 %	3,00
20.	If I know I made a mistake in speaking English, I will correct it.	3 30%	6 60%	1 10%	0 0%	10 100 %	3,20

e. Affective Strategies

It can be seen in table 5 that the highest item in this strategy is question number 21 which has mean score 3,10. While, the lowest item in this strategy is question number 22 which has mean score 2,70. The frequency of 60% in encourage myself to speak English stated that the high achievers agree using this strategy.

Table 5 Affective Strategies

No.	Strategies	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Mean
21.	I calm myself when I will use English.	3 30%	5 50%	2 20%	0 0%	10 100 %	3,10

| 22. | I give a gift to myself when I can speak English well. | 1 10% | 6 60% | 2 20% | 1 10% | 10 100% | 2,70 |
| 23. | I encourage myself to speak English even though I am afraid to use English. | 2 20% | 6 60% | 2 20% | 0 0% | 10 100% | 3,00 |

f. Social Strategies

From table 6, both strategies have the same mean score (M=3,30). In question number 24 "I ask question in English" the frequency of 70% stated that the high achievers agree using this strategies. Meanwhile, in question number 25 "I practice English with other students" the frequency of 50% stated that the high achievers strongly agree using this strategies.

No.	Strategies	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Mean
24.	When I don't understand someone speaks in English. I will ask the person to repeat the word or ask him/her to say it slowly.	3 30%	7 70%	0 0%	0 0%	10 100%	3,30
25.	I practice English with friends.	5 50%	3 30%	2 20%	0 0%	10 100%	3,30

Table 6 Social Strategies

To get data from the field, researchers used a questionnaire to get data validity. Questionnaires are used to find out the strategies mostly used by high achievers. A summary of the vocabulary learning strategies used obtained from the questionnaire is presented in the chart above. Figure 1 shows that compensation strategy (M=3,50) were the most frequently used by high achievers. The second and third strategy most frequently used by high achievers in learning vocabulary were memory strategy and cognitive strategy, both strategies have the same mean (M=3,40). The fourth strategy used by high achievers were social strategy (M=3,30). It is followed by metacognitive strategy (M=3,20), and finally the least frequently used strategy were affective strategy (M=3,10).
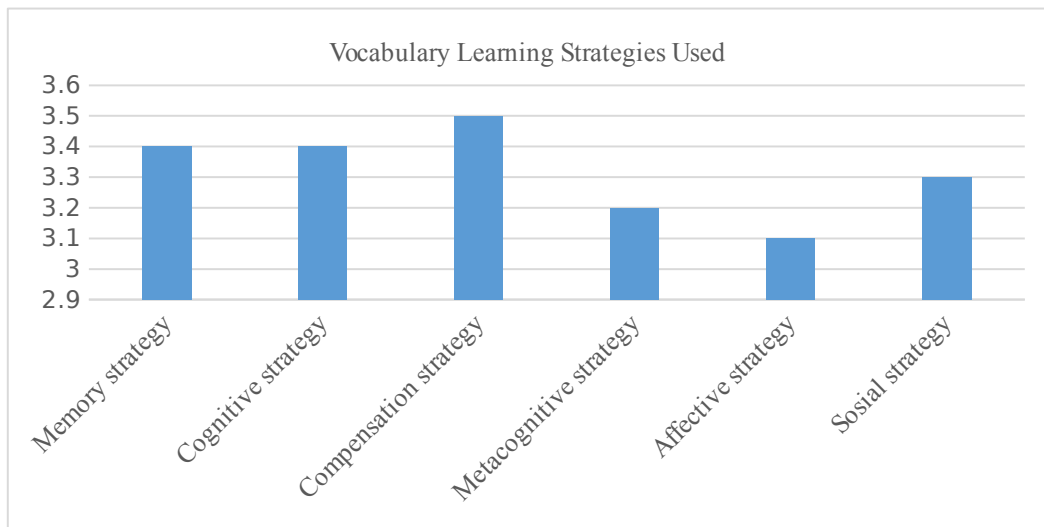
Figure 4.1 Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used

There are many kinds of strategies in learning vocabulary used by students. In this study, researchers took the classification of vocabulary learning strategies by Oxford. According to Oxford (1990) there are six types of learning strategies. These strategies are memory strategy, cognitive strategy, compensation strategy, metacognitive strategy, affective strategy, and social strategy.

By conducting interviews and distributing questionnaires to the subject, the results of the data collection are compared with the six strategies described

above. The strategy mostly used by high achievers is the compensation strategy. Guessing the meaning of a word is included in the compensation strategy. According to Oxford (1990) compensation strategy refer to the learner finding synonyms from the context of the reading and relying on non-verbal communication, such as gestures, to communicate meaning when the exact meaning of a statement is not understood. Compensation strategy enable learners to use the new language for either comprehension or production despite limitations in knowledge. The high achievers prefer to use this strategy because when they try to guess the meaning of a word that they do not know it can provide challenges for them when learning.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

The strategies used in this study are memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. These strategies were applied by high achievers at the fourth semester of English Education Department of University of Islam Malang.

The result of the study showed that between those strategies the most frequently used vocabulary learning strategies by high achievers is guessing the meaning of words. The strategy is included in the compensation strategy. The strategy is considered effective in increasing vocabulary because guessing the meaning of words is a challenging way of learning vocabulary so that it can provide motivation for high achievers. And also guess the meaning of words included in the exercise in learning so that the vocabulary obtained can always be remembered. Therefore, it can be concluded that vocabulary learning strategies are basic for a student to be successful in learning vocabulary. To improve vocabulary learning strategy requires more practice on how to use learning strategies itself. Students must also continue to develop their vocabulary learning strategies so that the learning process becomes more effective.

The suggestion for the teacher, this research can provide information related to various strategies in learning vocabulary so that it can be used to

improve vocabulary skills in students also it can facilitate the teaching and learning process. For the students, this research can make students more creative to find out what strategies are suitable for use in the learning process so that it can influence learning achievement. The students are suggest to use more strategy in learning vocabulary especially compensation strategy. For the readers, this research can help readers to increase knowledge about vocabulary learning strategies. The readers had better employ a variety of strategies in learning vocabulary to achieve success in learning. For the other researcher, this research can be a reference and can help other researchers to develop similar research so that it is expected to find new findings from the research conducted.

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