

STUDENTS' STRATEGIES IN LEARNING VOCABULARY FOR ELEVENTH TKJ GRADE STUDENTS AT SMK 4 JENEPONTO

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the dominant strategies used by class XI TKJ students at SMK 4 Jeneponto in learning vocabulary. The researcher used a mixed method, namely a quantitative method using 31 questions adopted from Afidah (2022) with a total of 85 student respondents. Then from the results of the quantitative data analysis, the researcher used interviews as an instrument for the qualitative method. The categories for the interview are high, medium, and low scores, with three representatives each for each class IX TKJ. The results of the first problem formulation research on the dominant strategies used by students show that the determination strategy is 43.92%, the most frequently used strategy. Next is the memory strategy at 40.35%, the social strategy at 39.41%, and then the metacognitive strategy at 37.35%, and the strategy that is least frequently used is the cognitive strategy. Furthermore, the results of the second problem formulation are the difficulties faced by students in learning English. There are several factors that make it difficult for students to learn English: activeness in class, material delivered by the teacher, learning strategies, pronunciation, and grammar. The researcher suggests that students' vocabulary mastery be improved with the right strategy. By using the right strategy in the learning process, it can be more enjoyable so that difficulties do not arise. The implication of this study is to find out the strategies used by students. In addition, through the instruments distributed, students reflect back on the strategies they use in vocabulary learning.

Keywords: Learning strategies, vocabulary, vocational school

INTRODUCTION

English is an international language that can make it easier for students to interact with other people. Tan et al (2020) stated that professional language users must shift their focus from the native speaker model to gain a real picture of how English can be used for purposes in the various intercultural relationships of English language learners. English is not only an international language, is also used as a tool for intercultural communication.

In Indonesia, English is not a second language students use in daily interactions. However, English in Indonesia is still considered a foreign language so learning an international language is quite difficult for students. This is in line with what was explained by Yusriyah et al. (2021) that the mother tongue greatly influences the process of learning a foreign language so that it is very difficult for students to learn the language. Even, in Indonesia it is known that students do not only use Indonesian in daily interactions, but students also still use local language.

Goundar (2019), explain that vocabulary is a building element in a language because it can describe objects, behavior, opinions, allowing people to convey information. In

addition, vocabulary is very essential in developing four language skills, namely reading, writing, speaking and listening. When language learners want to deepen these four skills, the basic thing that must be done is mastery of vocabulary. First, Vocabulary development correlates with speaking proficiency; greater speaking ability enhances language skills, which fosters increased confidence in students' speaking capabilities. Second, listening exercise can be used to teach language. Learning a language has several advantages. For example, studying vocabulary can help students understand phrases and word meanings, which is necessary knowledge for listening comprehension. Additionally, listening can help in understanding word meaning, and pronunciation. Thus, by engaging in active listening activities, students can enhance their language proficiency and expand their vocabulary. Third, the higher the students' vocabulary mastery, the greater the influence on the students' speaking, listening, and even writing abilities. On the other hand, inadequate vocabulary mastery makes it difficult for students to convey emotions in ideas conveyed through written or oral exercises as a form of human interaction. Fourth, the ability to understand the use of vocabulary can facilitate the process of communication with other people so that there are no misunderstandings of meaning.

Mastery of English depends on understanding the vocabulary used to help understand the ideas conveyed. In line with that, M. Al Zahrani et al (2022) stated that there is no point in producing grammatical sentences when you are unable to acquire the vocabulary needed to convey the ideas you want to convey. Without grammar a message can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. One of the problems that often occurs with second language learners is when second language learners demand the use of grammar. This strategy used makes second language learners find it difficult to use English. For example, when students try to speak English using grammar, their fluency level looks different if they speak directly without paying attention to grammatical rules in their sentences. Another learning strategy that is usually used is for students to memorize vocabulary words one by one, which makes students feel bored. Not only strategies like that, but students are inconsistent in memorizing and applying them in everyday life. To support students' mastery of the second language learning process, language learning strategies are needed. Strategy is a method used by students as an alternative to improve their learning. According to Tan et al. (2020), a learning process that uses the right strategy can increase greater self-confidence.

Possessing a learning plan is crucial in language learning. Many researchers have stated that language learning using strategies can be more enjoyable and effective for students. In addition, it is important to determine the right learning approach so that students can easily determine the right learning style to apply. For example, there are students who like to watch. then from the favorite activity can be used as a method to learn English. By using watching western films as a method to improve listening, pronunciation or even while watching students learn by writing every new word they hear. So, with a method like this does not make students bored in learning. As stated by Anggarista et al. (2022), that language learning strategies are deliberate activities used by students during the learning process to help in remembering, organizing, and analyzing new knowledge. Therefore, the research entitled Students' Strategies in Learning Vocabulary for Eleventh TKJ Grade Students at SMK 4 Jeneponto is important to be conducted. In addition to providing students with an understanding of the importance of strategies in vocabulary mastery. In addition, to inform that increasing vocabulary mastery

can be done easily and interestingly if the strategies used are in accordance with students' daily activities.

METHOD

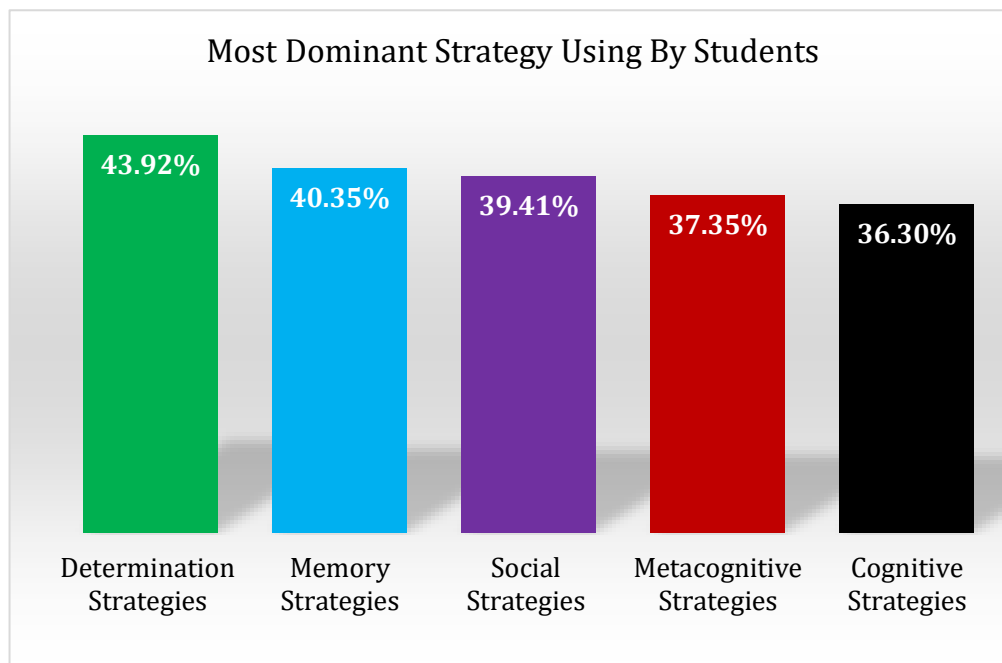
The best method that can be used in this study is a mixed method, namely quantitative and qualitative methods. Researcher use this method because both methods are involved in the analysis to be carried out. As stated by Putri (2019) that the mixed method used two combined approaches, namely quantitative and qualitative, which causes the mixed method to be present between the two. According to Putri (2019) Qualitative research tries to see the details of an event to find definitions, concepts, meanings, characteristics, and descriptions. Therefore, this study looks at the obstacles that students encounter when learning vocabulary. In addition, quantitative research can make it easier for researcher to find strategies that are often used by students by using the average score of the questionnaire answer (Putri & Wahyuni, 2019).

The type of mixed method in this study is the explanatory sequential mixed methods. According to Mackiewicz (2018) the explanatory sequential mixed methods is an approach that involves two-phase data collection. Researcher conducted quantitative research in the first phase of data collection, then calculate the results to conducted the second phase of data collection, namely qualitative data. The challenge in this type of research lies in the planning that must be right on the qualitative results to be followed up on the participants in the qualitative stage. The point is the collection of qualitative data based on the results of quantitative. In addition, the subject in qualitative is based on the quantitative subject as the same individual in order to explore the results in depth. Next, the researcher connects the results of quantitative data with qualitative data. This is the integration part of this research design, that quantitative results not only explain the sampling procedure but determine the type of qualitative questions. Because one database can interpret other data and data collection can be done easily.

In the process of collecting data needed by researcher, this study uses two instruments in the form of questionnaires and interviews. The first instrument used close-ended questionnaires with a total of 31 vocabulary learning questions according to Schmitt's Taxonomy then adapted from Bakti (2018). To complete the second and third problem formulation, interviews are also conducted. Five students with the highest, medium and lowest ranking strategies. There are 6 interview questions adopted from Afidah (2021) with interview techniques using Indonesian.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The strategies are used by the eleventh TKJ grade of students in learning vocabulary at SMK 4 Jeneponto.



According to the total data collected by the researcher utilizing the questioner, students most frequently employ the determination strategy (43.92%), memory strategy (40.35%), social strategy (39.41%), and metacognitive strategies (37.35%) and the least used is the cognitive strategy at 36.30%. Students use various strategies depending on the material being studied. This can be seen from the difference in percentage results starting from the number determination strategy, which is not much different from the memory strategy, to the strategy that is least used by students, namely the cognitive strategy. As stated Woodeson K. et al. (2023), although learning strategies can improve students' vocabulary skills, not all strategies are suitable for each individual. In this situation, teachers play a crucial role in selecting the best course of strategies to satisfy the demands of their students. focusing on weak points before enhancing the skills of other students.

Based on the results of this study, it shows that the determination strategy is the strategy that is most in demand by students. In contrast to the results of research from Putri (2019), the results of her research show that the strategy that is always used in developing their vocabulary is the cognitive strategy. This is very different from the findings of researcher in the field. Where in this study the cognitive strategy is the strategy that is least used by students. One of the things that influences is the level of education of the research subjects. The learning methods of students with students certainly have significantly different learning styles. Students are more likely to guess words or refer to context, even more interested in learning using pictures. While at the student level, the learning style used is the process of evaluation and thinking.

Le et al. (2024) in their research found that students usually use the most metacognitive strategies to improve their vocabulary. Using metacognitive strategies allows students to plan learning to produce deeper understanding. Planning, monitoring, self-evaluation, adjusting strategies and using context are part of metacognitive strategies. Meanwhile, the least used strategy is the cognitive strategy because students feel it is less suitable among students to bring open notes so that a deeper understanding is dominantly

applied. This is different from the results of the current study, where students tend to use dictionaries, pictures and guess words so that the determination strategy is most often used by students.

Anggarista et al(2022), in his research showed that the dominant strategy used by students was metacognitive strategy. The results of this study are in accordance with the results of current research where metacognitive strategies are most often used. This shows that the subject of the study is not the only reason for the differences as in other research results.

Comparing results with previous studies shows that vocabulary-improvement strategies depend on context. The difference in the results of these studies is related to the research subjects; the results of research from Anggarista et al. (2022) and Le et al. (2024) show that respondents are interested in using metacognitive strategies. Judging from the research subject, it is students at universities. Hence, this is one of the factors that differentiates the learning styles and interests of students at the school and university level. This provides new knowledge to researcher deeper considerations are needed in vocabulary improvement strategies. In addition, consistency and persistence in learning English, especially vocabulary, are the main keys. Using the right strategy can make it easier for users to learn vocabulary. Therefore, researcher, teachers, students, and readers should know the various strategies that can be applied to the process of learning.

Different from previous research results that showed different results. According to Astika (2016) in her research results showed that the strategy most often used by high school students is the determination strategy. This has similarities with the subjects of this study, namely that some of the subjects are high school. So, it can be understood that the use of strategies is related to the level of education of the subjects studied.

The obstacles faced by the eleventh TKJ grade of students in memorizing vocabulary at SMK 4 Jeneponto

No	Question	Answer	Coding
1.	Do you behave actively in learning English?	S1: I am active in learning English, because I like learning English.	Active learning
		S2: I am quite active, because I have always liked learning English.	Quite active
		S3: Sometimes it's active, sometimes it's not.	Sometimes active
		S4: Yes, I am active in learning English. Because I think learning English is very fun.	Active learning
		S5: Sometimes it's active, sometimes it's not. Because usually, teachers are not fun.	Sometimes active
		S6: I am rarely active in learning English.	Rarely active
		S7: Yes, I am active in learning English, because I like the lesson.	Active learning
		S8: Sometimes, depending on my mood.	Sometimes
		S9: Yes, I am quite active in English subjects because my grades are all complete.	Quite active

2.	Are you able to understand the material presented by the teacher?	S1: I can understand the material presented by the teacher, because besides me I also take an English course so there is a connection.	Understand
		S2: Sometimes it is possible, because the teacher explains in detail.	Sometimes
		S3: Capable, sometimes the way the teacher explains.	Sometimes
		S4: From the way the teacher explained, I was able to understand what my teacher said.	Able
		S5: Sometimes I understand, because the English lesson is the last hour. English should be the first hour because it's a bit difficult. Sometimes sleepy.	Sometimes
		S6: Depends on the material, if the material is easy, I understand quickly.	Depends
		S7: Very understand, because the formula is also easy in my opinion.	Very understand
		S8: Sometimes, it's because you have to explain it many times before you understand.	Sometimes
		S9: Yes, I can because I like the lesson.	Yes
3.	Are you able to understand the material presented by the teacher?	S1: I can understand the material presented by the teacher, because besides me I also take an English course so there is a connection.	Understand
		S2: Sometimes it is possible, because the teacher explains in detail.	Sometimes
		S3: Capable, sometimes the way the teacher explains.	Sometimes
		S4: From the way the teacher explained, I was able to understand what my teacher said.	Able
		S5: Sometimes I understand, because the English lesson is the last hour. English should be the first hour because it's a bit difficult. Sometimes sleepy.	Sometimes
		S6: Depends on the material, if the material is easy, I understand quickly.	Depends
		S7: Very understand, because the formula is also easy in my opinion.	Very understand
		S8: Sometimes, it's because you have to explain it many times before you understand.	Sometimes
		S9: Yes, I can because I like the lesson.	Yes
4.	Are you able to understand the material presented by the teacher?	S1: I can understand the material presented by the teacher, because besides me I also take an English course so there is a connection.	Understand
		S2: Sometimes it is possible, because the teacher explains in detail.	Sometimes
		S3: Capable, sometimes the way the teacher explains.	Sometimes

		S4: From the way the teacher explained, I was able to understand what my teacher said.	Able
		S5: Sometimes I understand, because the English lesson is the last hour. English should be the first hour because it's a bit difficult. Sometimes sleepy.	Sometimes
		S6: Depends on the material, if the material is easy, I understand quickly.	Depends
		S7: Very understand, because the formula is also easy in my opinion.	Very understand
		S8: Sometimes, it's because you have to explain it many times before you understand.	Sometimes
		S9: Yes, I can because I like the lesson.	Yes
5.	Are you able to understand the material presented by the teacher?	S1: I can understand the material presented by the teacher, because besides me I also take an English course so there is a connection.	Understand
		S2: Sometimes it is possible, because the teacher explains in detail.	Sometimes
		S3: Capable, sometimes the way the teacher explains.	Sometimes
		S4: From the way the teacher explained, I was able to understand what my teacher said.	Able
		S5: Sometimes I understand, because the English lesson is the last hour. English should be the first hour because it's a bit difficult. Sometimes sleepy.	Sometimes
		S6: Depends on the material, if the material is easy, I understand quickly.	Depends
		S7: Very understand, because the formula is also easy in my opinion.	Very understand
		S8: Sometimes, it's because you have to explain it many times before you understand.	Sometimes
		S9: Yes, I can because I like the lesson.	Yes
6.	Are you able to understand the material presented by the teacher?	S1: I can understand the material presented by the teacher, because besides me I also take an English course so there is a connection.	Understand
		S2: Sometimes it is possible, because the teacher explains in detail.	Sometimes
		S3: Capable, sometimes the way the teacher explains.	Sometimes
		S4: From the way the teacher explained, I was able to understand what my teacher said.	Able
		S5: Sometimes I understand, because the English lesson is the last hour. English should be the first hour because it's a bit difficult. Sometimes sleepy.	Sometimes

		S6: Depends on the material, if the material is easy, I understand quickly.	Depends
		S7: Very understand, because the formula is also easy in my opinion.	Very understand
		S8: Sometimes, it's because you have to explain it many times before you understand.	Sometimes
		S9: Yes, I can because I like the lesson.	Yes
7.	Do you have difficulty using grammar?	S1: <i>Alhamdulillah</i> , it's not that difficult. Because I'm taking an English course and coincidentally this month, I'm studying grammar.	Not difficult
		S2: It's quite difficult, because English is not an everyday language so it's quite difficult.	Quite difficult
		S3: Honestly, I do not know what grammar is.	Do not know
		S4: I think grammar is difficult.	Difficult
		S5: It's difficult, because the sentence formula is negative and positive.	Difficult
		S6: I think it's difficult, I'm usually confused.	Difficult
		S7: Easy, I learned the formula independently.	Easy
		S8: Pretty easy.	Easy
		S9: Sometimes I find it difficult because I forget the formula.	Sometimes

Student activities in class can increase student learning motivation. According to Bell et al. (2006, in Seemanath, 2024), active student involvement in the learning process can build awareness of skills, ideas, and facts through tasks provided by the teacher. One of the strategies used by teachers in the learning process is focus group discussion. According to Hati (2019, in Seemanath, 2024), the implementation of the active learning process in the classroom can be done with discussion groups, and teachers involve students to be part of the learning process. Thus, communication skills, students' analytical thinking, and keeping students focused during learning develop and keep students focused during learning. According to Tiang-uan, (2024) in his research with foreign language students in Thailand, one of the most commonly used approaches is the teacher-centered approach. This strategy is even widely used in Indonesia; teachers become the centre of learning rather than students. As a result, students become passive in communicating, causing inactivity in class due to loss of motivation. One strategy that can increase student activity is the social strategy of implementing focus group discussions.

Students' understanding of the material depends on the strategy and how the teacher explains it. Considering the findings of the interviews with Class XI TKJ students of SMK 4 Jeneponto, students can understand the material if the teacher can explain it well (Teacher method), and on the level of difficulty of the material presented by the teacher. Another factor is the appropriate time or learning hours because English is one of the lessons that requires high concentration so it requires the right learning time. According to Afidah (2021) several external factors cause students to have difficulty learning English;

teachers, media, and classroom environment. Teachers in the classroom are role models for students, this can motivate students' enthusiasm for learning.

Smith (1997, in Le, 2024) categorizes; determination strategy, social strategy, memory strategy, cognitive strategy, and metacognitive. The strategies used by teachers are social strategies, memory strategies and determination strategies. Making videos using English can improve vocabulary, speaking skills, and students' ability to remember. The more often students are provided assignments, the more opportunities they have to improve their skills in creative ways. Focus group discussions, this strategy focuses on student activity in class so that the teacher is not central in the class. By using this strategy, teachers and students act as subjects, not teachers as subjects while students as objects. In addition to students doing assignments provided by the teacher, students use dictionaries and note down new vocabulary acquired to enrich vocabulary. Le et al (2024) research results show that foreign language learning is successful if it has the right strategy.

One of the obstacles for foreign language learners in learning urban vocabulary is pronunciation difficulties. This can cause misunderstandings that make learners embarrassed and afraid to pronounce words. Like students in remote areas who are learning English, apart from using Indonesian as their daily language, they also have their own regional languages and dialects. This is also explained by Abd Elwahab (2020), the reasons why students make mistakes in pronouncing English vocabulary; certain sounds do not exist in the mother tongue, so sometimes students replace sounds that are similar to the mother tongue. Furthermore, sounds exist in the mother tongue but not as single phonemes. Students do not know the differences and their uses. Although learning vocabulary sounds easy. Teaching vocabulary pronunciation can be done with several points according to Scrivener (2005, in Abd Elwahab 2020),). First, students must be aware of learning vocabulary in order to understand the context of use. Second, teachers must be able to draw students' attention to the differences between local accents and foreign language accents. The next obstacle is that students have difficulty distinguishing between writing and sound. As explained, the factor that causes students to have difficulty producing words is that some sounds in their mother's tongue do not exist in a foreign language.

Grammar is a crucial component in learning a foreign language. Mastery of grammar plays an important role in writing skills. This was conveyed by Schmidt (2010, in Fiqh, 2024); grammar is a description of the grammatical structure and language units, such as words and phrases, then formed into one sentence. However, based on the results of student interviews, it showed that many students had difficulty using grammar, and there were even students who did not know what grammar was. According to Fiqh et al (2024), mistakes in the use of grammar are a fear of learners. Every time they want to speak, they are worried of using incorrect grammar, so that it becomes an obstacle in improving speaking skills. Then, self-confidence is a supporting factor for the success of a language. But sometimes students are afraid of making grammar mistakes and embarrassed by others' responses. The study also produced student responses where they did not agree with grammar learning. According to them, grammar is a difficult and time-consuming lesson.

Researcher can conclude that students still have different obstacles in learning vocabulary. Each student has different difficulties; vocabulary pronunciation, grammar and spelling. In addition, there are two other factors that are obstacles for students to learn vocabulary, namely; external factors and internal factors. Lack of motivation, enthusiasm so that students feel bored learning vocabulary. In addition, external factors also have an influence such as inadequate learning environment, inappropriate class hours. However, by using the right strategy, students can enjoy learning vocabulary more. In addition, teachers have an important role to guide students. English is currently important to be taught to students from an early age. English is a soft skill that can help students in the future to compete in the outside world. Therefore, there needs to be follow-up early on so that students are ready in the future.

Because the researcher only examined student strategies and obstacles, this research is limited. The researcher hopes that future researchers can examine more deeply why the determination strategy is most often used and why the cognitive strategy is rarely used. In this study, researcher only looked at the difficulties faced by students in learning vocabulary. Future researchers can provide solutions to the difficulties faced by students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis, it shows that the strategy most often used by students is the determination strategy with a percentage value of 43.92%. However, it does not mean that other strategies are not used. This is shown that the difference in percentage is not much different. Researcher can conclude that the use of strategies is based on the context of use. Based on the interview results, there are several factors that make it difficult for students to learn English. First, student activity: some students are active if the strategy used by the teacher is interesting. Second, the material, students find it difficult to understand what the teacher is saying if the material is complicated. Third, the strategies used by the teacher are social strategy, memory strategy, and cognitive strategy. Fourth, pronunciation of vocabulary, to produce words, students find it difficult to pronounce words. Fifth, the difference in writing words with the sound of words, because there is a difference in sound in English with the mother tongue alphabet. Sixth, grammar; in fact, there are still some students who do not know what grammar is.

After conducting this research, the researcher would like to provide some suggestions for further researchers, teachers, students, and readers. For students, students should know the suitable and interesting strategies for them to use. With that, learning English, especially vocabulary improvement, is easier. For teachers, teachers should be able to know the strategies that students like so that students can be active in the classroom. Finally, for further researchers, the researcher highlights examining more deeply why the dominant determination strategy is used by students and why cognitive strategies are rarely used.

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