

The Students' Difficulties in Enriching Vocabulary and Its Techniques to Overcome the Difficulties

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Abstract:

Enriching vocabulary looks easy, but it is possible that students encounter difficulties in enriching vocabulary. The purpose of this study is to find out the difficulties faced by students in enriching vocabulary, and also to investigate what strategy can be applied to overcome those difficulties. Researcher used qualitative-descriptive method as method in describing the data by applying three methods and the instruments. They are observation, interview, and documentation. The result of study showed students complained about pronunciation, unfamiliar words, and memorize as their difficulties in enriching vocabulary. While techniques to overcome that difficulties, they are word list and song that is applied by students and modification of memorize that is applied by teacher. Students are expected to manage the way of learning, and also what will they do to avoid the possibility of difficulties they can face.

Keywords: Difficulty, Techniques, Enriching Vocabulary

Introduction

English as first foreign language and the compulsory subject that is taught to Indonesian student, absolutely has own difficulties for student. Not all the difficulties of student are same, sometimes they get difficulty in one aspect, instead some student get difficulty to comprehend this language. It means that the student not only get difficulty in one aspect but also in the other aspect. English has 4 skills, they are listening, speaking, reading and writing. They also must be mastered by student, and it is not easy. During the process of learning itself, student may encounter some difficulties to achieve the goal, and the role of the teacher is very important for student in learning English. So that, they will feel interesting and comfortable in learning.

Vocabulary is one important aspect in learning English. Because with vocabulary that we have, it will make us easy in learning and comprehending English. According to Lotfi Ghazal (Vol.: 1(2), pp.84-91), vocabulary is central to language and is of great significance to language learners. According to Hornby (1994:1425), vocabulary is total number of words that make up a language. While according to Oxford (2008:495), vocabulary is all the words that a person knows and uses. Vocabulary will ease us in learning and comprehending English. Without a proportional amount of vocabulary anyone will get trouble in listening, reading, speaking and writing. To retell a story or news we hear, comprehending text in English, expressing our idea directly, and composing and developing idea, we need rich vocabulary to do that.

Enriching vocabulary looks easy, but it is possible that the student will find difficulty. The problem is that the students get difficulty in enriching vocabulary. Such as, they seldom bring dictionary. So that, they are difficult to look for a meaning of a word. In fact, dictionary is one of guidance in looking for a meaning of a word. This is contrary with students that dictionary is ineffective technique.

Due to the fact about student's difficulties, the researchers are eager to study deeply about their difficulty and also its effective strategy in enriching vocabulary.

Review of Literature

Vocabulary

Vocabulary learning is one of the major challenges foreign languages learners face during the process of learning a language. Vocabulary means list of words that have a meaning and it is used to produce sentences of a language for communication., where a word, in most linguistic analyses, is shown as a set of properties, or features, where it is also the combination of its meaning, register, association, collocation, grammatical behavior, written form (spelling), spoken form (pronunciation) and frequency (Alizadeh, 2016).

Vocabulary is one element of the language that should be learnt and taught. It will be hard to master the language without mastering or understanding a certain number of vocabularies. Vocabulary is the first step to be taught before teaching other aspects of language. Without having good enough vocabulary, a language learner will no longer be capable of grasp the language skills. The that means suggests that vocabulary mastery has crucial roles in verbal exchange (Setiawan, 2010).

Types of Vocabulary

Haycraft as cited by Setiawan (2010) divided vocabulary into two, receptive and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary is phrases that the students recognize and comprehend after they occur in context, but which cannot produce efficiently. It's miles vocabulary that the students recognize after they see it in reading context however do no longer use it in speaking and writing. The receptive vocabulary is likewise known as a passive procedure due to the fact the learner only gets idea form others.

Productive Vocabulary is the words, which the newcomers understand, can pronounce correctly, and use constructively in speaking and writing. It entails what is needed for receptive vocabulary plus the ability to speak or write the appropriate time. Therefore, productive vocabulary can be addressed as an active procedure, due to the fact the students can produce the words to express their idea to others.

Difficulties in Vocabulary Enrichment

When enrich vocabulary, students must find difficulty or constraints in gaining it. There are some difficulties that possible to find by students, such as difficulty in pronunciation, unfamiliar words, and memorizing. For pronunciation, the students' ability in pronouncing English words was influenced by some factors such as interference. The interference of the first language effected their pronunciation of the sounds of target language. The students are accustomed with their first language. The Second factor is phonological understanding that the students had difficulties in the aspect of phonetic transcription because they have to pronounce the English words correctly based on its phonetic transcription, they forget the phonetic symbol.

It can be said that they replaced those sounds with the closest sounds they are familiar with. While third is motivation. Although not all the students have low motivation, most of the students show that they do not eager to repeat or remember when they pronounce incorrectly (Maiza, 2020)

Unfamiliar words are also created difficulty in vocabulary enrichment. On the whole it is better if students learn to read on and focus on the overall meaning of the text before working on vocabulary (Pouwer). Clarification of unfamiliar words should therefore happen after reading the text as a whole. Words are the building blocks of language and extending students' vocabulary aids their ability to comprehend a variety of topics. Regularly encourage students to work on word meaning, for example games using subject related words.

Third is memorizing. In general, the brain tends to select the information that it receives, discarding what it considers unnecessary. Imagine remembering every single detail that enters our brain: we would thousands of words effortlessly, but would also be paying a terrible price: our brain would be constantly fighting against a permanent, unwanted and annoying interference of useless information. Fortunately, our brain works on its own rhythm and it "self-regulates" when it comes to organizing information. Language learners want to remember as many words as possible and they often cannot. They come to the conclusion that they simply do not have a good memory and thus language learning is not for them. This is another myth that must be dispelled.

Techniques in Teaching Vocabulary

There are some techniques that can be applied in teaching vocabulary, they are as follow:

a. Word List

Baleghizadeh & Ashoori (Vol.30, pp. 251-261:2010) stated that one of the old- fashioned vocabulary learning strategies is called list learning. It consist of a sheet of paper on which learners write both the second language and its meaning. A word list is in its most common form a list of words in a target language with one translation of each word into another language, here called the base language. However you can use short idiomatic word

combinations instead a single words, or you can give more than one translation into the base language, and it will still be a word list.

b. **Song**

Song as kind of art work that are intended to be sung either with or without instrumental accompaniments. Songs have great tendency to attract attention of the students. Listening to the songs is also fun, in accordance with improving vocabulary it can be great help. At the time we listen to the music automatically we can sing it together with the singer of the songs.

Another reason for using songs in teaching vocabulary that music is effective and helpful in teaching learning process. Teacher however must look for more effective technique to make learning vocabulary easier and more pleasant so the students become easier in understanding and learning English. Songs and lyrics are provided as a tool to predict the sentence so that the students can glean the meaning of particular sentence with their own interpretation

c. **Memorizing Technique**

Memorization can seem to be a tedious, laborious and an almost impossible task, but there are means of making the process of memorization more simplistic and manageable. The most important piece of information is to find the memorization method that works for students, and the second most important thing is to relax so that the information can be better retained. There are some ways in doing this technique such as Traditional Read and Repeat, Memory Tricks, and Memory Triggers.

Method

Research Design

Based on the content and some informations which was obtained, this research employed descriptive-qualitative design. Moleong (2005:6) stated that qualitative research is a research that is aimed to comprehend phenomenon about what is gotten by the subject of the research such as attitude, perception, motivation, action, etc. Descriptive is the data prediction that is related to evident, conditions, variable, and phenomenon that happened when research is running and preserve as it.

Data and Source of Data

Sources of data is the subject where the data obtained (Arikunto, 2010:172). Data that needed was to explain the main focus of the research and answer the problem from this research. The data would be obtained by using some methods, they were observation by using checklist, interview by using list of questions and documentation by identifying the guidance book, the materials, daily notes from teacher to student, the assignments, and test questions that related to the research focus, to make sure that the data is real. The subject of the research was the students at eleventh grade of MA Tanwirul Islam Tanggumong Sampang. In collecting data, the researcher only used three instruments. They were observation, interview and documentation. The three instruments helped the researcher in finding difficulties of student in learning and enriching vocabulary.

Data Analysis method

In obtaining the data, researcher used three instruments. They are observation, interview and documentation. The applying of these three instruments aimed to collect the data needed and related with the focus of this research which are students' difficulties in enriching vocabulary and strategy to overcome that difficulties. After all of the data obtained, researcher classify the data obtained. Researcher classified it based on by what instruments that data was obtained.

Next, researcher analyzed the data. Based on the data obtained, researcher analyzed the data which refer to the first problem statement about the difficulties students face in enriching vocabulary and second problem statement about the strategy to overcome the difficulties. The researcher made a conclusion after the data collected. Conclusion was made by describing the data into a descriptive writing based on the evidence of the data collected and possible occurrence when the research was conducted.

Results and Discussions

The Difficulties in Enriching Vocabulary

Based on the result of observation, interview and documentation that is done by researcher to the students and teacher, it couldn't be taken some important points that was tended to the students' difficulties in enriching vocabulary.

Pronunciation

According to the result of observation that is done to students at XI B class that their main difficulties is about pronunciation. According to the result of observation that is done to students at XI B class that their main difficulties is about pronunciation. These are the incorrect pronunciation pronounced by students.

Word	Correct Pronunciation	Incorrect Pronunciation
Which	/wɪtʃ/	Whech
Know	/nəʊ/	Naw
Question	/kwɛstʃən	Kuesyen
Garbage	/gɑːbɪdʒ	Garbej

Table 1. Pronunciation Problems

Unfamiliar Words

Unfamiliar words mean words that exist in the Oxford and other dictionaries but not common to use in general text or speech. Usually, these words are words that exist in the terms, so that seldom to meet and of course to remember. Usually, they also complain because when they learn about text, they told that the words in that text are too difficult. So that in their comprehension, teacher must make a match between their level with what they learn. And it will make them easier to comprehend the material even though it is in English.

One of student told that if the unfamiliar words are seldom to find, moreover have difficult to pronounce, it can be an obstacle for them to remember that words fast. As interview below:

“Researcher : In your opinion, what is your problem about enriching vocabulary?

Student : Words which is I never hear.

Researcher : Do you mean unfamiliar word?

Student : Yes. Moreover words in terms. Sometimes I can not understand the meaning.

Researcher : What kind of text do you mean?

Student : For example, text about medicine and I ever got text of music.”

Memorizing

It is in contradiction with the statement of student that memorize is one of their difficulties in enriching vocabulary. Moreover, if there are so many words that must be memorized, sometimes it can decrease student’s motivation to remember and memorize the words. It happened because this student is type of student that has problem with memorizing. So, the teacher can also make a match between student’s character with the technique that teacher used to help students in enriching vocabulary, so that it will make students easier to learn English.

The techniques that can be applied in enriching vocabulary

From interview that the researcher have done to the students, found some ways or techniques that they used to solve the difficulties in enriching vocabulary. Below are the explanation:

Word List

The application of the word list is very easy, because it does not need any special direction. Student only need to gather the difficult and unfamiliar words that they pretended also the meaning. The management of word list can be written randomly or in sequence.

Almost all of students apply this technique. According one of student, stated that word list is the easiest way, because she only need to write the word that she heard first and then note it in the book and also the meaning. So that, when she confused to look for the meaning of a word, she only opened the book and saw the list of words that she have written. So, this student think that this technique is easier than open a dictionary and look for the meaning in the thick book.

Song

To memorize the lyrics of song to increase the knowledge of vocabulary is one effective way in enriching vocabulary. Because in the lyric of song, there are so many words so that indirectly student can enrich vocabulary, usually, students are teenager that tend to sing western song. So that, western song here is one of medium for student to enrich vocabulary.

According to the female student, if she often read the lyric of a song, unconsciously it will make her memorize the words in that lyric. Because she really love western song, so it is not difficult to this female student to enrich vocabulary although in the big amount of words. She told that english is more interesting if she learn it by song.

Memorizing

To stimulate student's interest, teacher must have his or her own method to stimulate students, where the method itself must be interesting. Teacher used memorize as the way to help students in enriching vocabulary. But memorize here, teacher modified it by practicing than apply memorize by using conventional way. Because the conventional way can make students feel bored and it will influence students' learning.

Teacher and students, both of them can have their own way to overcome any difficulties in enriching vocabulary. There are two ways as the most techniques that used by students, word list and song. These two techniques are simplest techniques according to their opinion. Because most of them applied these techniques without any instructions from their teacher. And it make them easier to enrich vocabulary. Word list, it can be done by writing words and the meaning of that words. S

Second, by song. We can say that this technique is interesting, because has two roles. First, this technique as their solution to enrich vocabulary. Second, as their entertainment when they get bored. Based on their statement, they more enjoy when they learn while listening music. It can help them remember many words without they must memorize them.

Memorize is technique that teacher applied in helping students to enrich vocabulary. Actually, teacher has same opinion with students that memorize is very bored. But, teacher change a little bit of the way to apply memorize. Teacher modify memorize where the modification of memorizing here prefer practice than theory. According to the teacher, it can train students to remember words easily.

Conclusion

Students get three main difficulties that become constraints to enrich vocabulary. they are pronunciation which is the way of how to pronounce a word coorectly, second is unfamiliar word that involve words that exist in oxford but seldom to use in general text. It can be said that these words often found in definite text, such as about science, politics, or economics. And the last is memorize, that actually is a technique but a difficulty that become constraint to enrich vocabulary.

There are two kinds of technique that is applied by students. They are word list that is list of English words and also the meaning where the using of it does not need any guidance from tecaher, and then song. Which is the most famous technique. Based on the interview to students, English can be more interesting if it is learned by English songs. Because beside as solution, song also can be as their entertainment. And then technique that is applied by teacher, that is modification of memorize. But, teacher applied different way in applying memorize.

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