FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF DAILY ENGLISH VOCABULARY

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Abstract

This research aims to find out what factors affect students' understanding of daily English vocabulary, how they acquire vocabulary, the difficulties and convenience in understanding vocabulary, how to deal with problems if they find new vocabulary, and how they solve problems related to English vocabulary. This research applied a descriptive qualitative method. The data collection in this research was conducted by interviewing 7 students at the State University of Makassar as the participants in this research. The results of this research found that there are several pluses such as Google Translate and E-dictionary are the platforms most often used in understanding daily English vocabulary, finding similarities is an effective way according to students when looking for the meaning of new vocabulary. As for the drawbacks, the drawbacks of this research are when students find words that are almost the same but have different meanings. It can be concluded that external factors (because they are English students) are factors that affect students' understanding of daily English vocabulary.

Keywords — *Factors, Students' Understanding, Daily English Vocabulary.*

INTRODUCTION

English has overtaken other tongues as the preferred method of cross-cultural communication as human interaction expands globally. In over 100 countries around the world, English is the language that is most often taught as a foreign language. The course plan of study covers Western culture, the use of English in various fields and society, and the four basic communication skills in English (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). In Kirisi's study from 2003, personality characteristics have the greatest influence on English proficiency, alongside factors of peers, schools, teachers, and peers' families.

Vocabulary as one component in English, has an important role in developing 4 skills in English. One of the most important components of defining one's language proficiency is vocabulary acquisition (Henriksen, 1999; Huckin & Coady, 1999; Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001;

Paribakht & Wesche, 1996). In his book How to Teach Vocabulary, Thornbury (2004) states that vocabulary is mostly a collection of items. Knowing a word at its fundamental level involves comprehending both its form and meaning. The terms of a vocabulary are various. Knowing a word at its most fundamental level involves knowing both its form and meaning.

Language details that have been mentioned include the fact that "vocabulary acquisition is central to language acquisition, whether the language is first, second, or foreign" (Decarrico, 2001, p. 285). If students struggle with vocabulary, they soon find it difficult to communicate with others or express themselves clearly (Decarrico, 2001; Nation, 2001). Many colleges deal with the problem of improving vocabulary proficiency among English language learners (ELLs). The things that contribute to the level have been associated with numerous of concerns and limitations. This setting has been a loop for some time now.

Mastering a vocabulary plays a major role as you learn a language. A learner who lacks sufficient vocabulary will struggle to master every aspect of language. Many college students are still having difficulties recognizing their English textbooks, according to accordance Yang (1997). Students in college who fail to read widely tend to possess limited vocabulary. A deep understanding of the teaching of vocabulary is crucial for serving learners in the learning process. Also, several issues relevant to the growth of learners' vocabulary are brought up. Concerns are also submitted and conducted over fields such as what to teach and how to teach.

Daily, within and out of educational settings, the relevance of vocabulary is pointed out. The top performers in the classroom have the widest vocabulary. Researchers such as Laufer and Nation (1997), Nation (2001; 2005), Maximo (2000), and Susanto (2016) have shown that the acquisition of vocabulary is essential for competent use of a foreign language and is essential in the building of complete spoken and written texts. All language skills, like listening, speaking, reading, and writing, rely entirely on learning vocabulary (Nation, 2001).

Language learners need a vocabulary to rely on when they write in order to express the ideas or concepts they want. Dictionary use is more prevalent among language learners than grammar books, according to Nation (2001). Many academics argue that learning the vocabulary of a foreign language is one of the most crucial—if not the most important—steps in the learning process. Reading has been investigated as an effective strategy for learning vocabulary from written text (Tekmen & Daloglu, 2006; Krashen, 1989). Learners come across a range of familiar and foreign words while reading. Learners can elaborate on and retain those

words based on their reading condition.

Lubis (2017) stated that before practicing vocabulary, students prefer to translate it into Indonesian first, then just practice it with the English lecturer. Apart from translating, they also like to see the results of their friends' work, then change it a little so it doesn't look the same and only when conveying it to the lecturer. Learners of second languages know of this; they often state that the primary problem is a lack of vocabulary so they carry dictionaries instead of grammar books with them. On the other hand, vocabulary has been recognized as a primary source of problems for language learners (Meara, 1980). This remark may indicate that learners perceive a vocabulary system's open-endedness as a source of difficulty.

From previous related findings, the researcher discussed the factors in vocabulary acquisition through reading in her research. Her research investigates the factors that affect the acquisition of vocabulary during reading. Her research has two primary objectives: to assess the literature on spontaneous vocabulary acquisition through reading and to explore the factors affecting the acquisition of vocabulary. As an example, educators have no reliable information on students' performance in learning vocabulary and other language abilities as vocabulary is needed. Even in some situations, the student's language abilities and weaknesses were undiscovered (Sothan, 2015).

Pradhana (2016) stated in his research that daily vocabulary understanding is still lacking in English learners in our country, moreover English is a foreign language so the use of the language is only in a few things and places. This shows that the English learning model implemented in Indonesia has not been implemented properly. Learning in Indonesia is still conventional or ancient. The implementation of learning with the 'face to face' model that is widely implemented in Indonesia is evidence of the ineffectiveness of learning activities. Based on the results of observations, it is known that from 29 students it is known that as many as 12 students (41.38%) are declared complete and the remaining 17 students (58.62%) are declared incomplete.

From the explanation above, people still use media such as books, films, and music to understanding their vocabulary. But in recent years, there are many modern platforms that can be used as a medium to improve vocabulary understanding besides books, music, movies, and dictionaries. One example is an application for reading comics or novels online. There are some people who already use e-dictionary in their vocabulary understanding. However, the appearance of this application is quite different from the appearance of e-dictionary. This can

be a medium for someone's understanding of vocabulary if there is no e-dictionary on their mobile phone.

In addition, this online reading application also has a new atmosphere that is clearly different from the appearance of e-books and e-dictionaries, thus making someone feel comfortable while reading. Currently, the online reading application is almost available on everyone's mobile phone. This online reading application can also make it easier for students when they are traveling, so they don't have to carry their books or dictionaries. That is why the author conducted the research about factors that affect students' understanding of daily English vocabulary. This study aims to find out what factors affect it.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Factors in General

Factors are things (circumstances, events) that contribute to (influence) the occurrence of something. The factors that influence the emergence of interest, which in general can be grouped into two, those that come from within the individual concerned and those that come from outside include the family environment, school environment, and community environment. The factors that the researcher regulates in an experiment in order to determine their effect on the response variable are known as factors. There are two kinds of factors: internal and external. Internal factors included affective and cognitive skills such as use, intelligence, anxiety, risk-taking tendencies, etc. While the term "external factor" can be used to refer to variables such as social class, first language, teachers, going to school early, L2 curriculum, etc., (Mahmoudi, 2015).

2. Factors that affect the understanding of vocabulary

Factors that affect vocabulary understanding are a) internal factors, including age level, children's abilities and motivation and b) external factors, including the family environment and school environment. According to Brewster (1961), aspects of vocabulary mastery are form, pronunciation, word meaning and usage. A person's vocabulary understanding is said to be good if they are able to pronounce vocabulary correctly.

3. Definition of Vocabulary

A list or collection of words and phrases that is usually alphabetically arranged, explained, or defined is a vocabulary. A person's language's set of common words is known as its vocabulary. One of the hardest challenges of learning a second language is establishing an extensive vocabulary. Vocabulary, according to Hatch and Brown (1995: 1), is a list or set of terms applied in some languages by particular language speakers.

4. The Importance of Vocabulary

Students need to have a good understanding of the language in order to master all of those skills. Being able to master English abilities quickly depends on the student's capacity to acquire the correct number of words. Students who have an extensive knowledge of vocabulary will find it simple to communicate ideas orally and in written form, and also to comprehend what people are saying.

5. Types of Vocabulary

As stated by Hibert and Kamil (2005:3), vocabulary can be classified into two categories: productive vocabulary and receptive vocabulary. They are receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary, accordingly. Hiebert and Kamil (2005:3) defined a productive vocabulary as a person's collection of words that they may use when speaking or writing. Receptive vocabulary, as defined by Hiebert and Kamil (2005:3), is a collection of words that a person may interpret when reading or listening.

6. The Advantages of Vocabulary

The more exposure students have to a word, the more expected it is that they will be able to articulate, understand, and remember it. All aspects of communication—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—benefit from a strong vocabulary.

METHODS

1. Research Design

Based on Sugiyono (2010), who claims that qualitative research is descriptive, the research method used in this study is descriptive qualitative research. It indicates that the data was collected using words rather than numbers.

2. Research Place

The place where the research has been conducted is Universitas Negeri Makassar English Education.

3. Population & Sample

English Education Study Program Students from Universitas Negeri Makassar take up the sample in this research. Random sampling was the selection technique used in this research. In the English Education Study Program, the researcher used the students from the population as a research sample.

4. Instruments of the Research

Interviews are indeed sorts of the research instruments used by researchers. The researchers did a short interview before starting the research.

5. The Procedure of Collecting Data

In collecting data, the researchers use several steps, as follows: 1) the researchers will choose the proper students to be the subject of this research, 2) the researchers will ask students who are willing to be interviewed, 3) the researchers then explain what this research is about, 4) the data collection procedure consists of interview questions. The questions will be asked to the students in due to know how they understand daily English vocabulary, and 5) the researchers record or take notes during the interview.

6. Technique of Data Analysis

The researcher will use a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data. A researcher will hold an interview and give students open-ended questions. The technique that will be used in data analysis for this research is narrative analysis.

RESULTS

1. Ways of Acquiring Vocabulary

a. The Acquisition of Daily English of Vocabulary

The researcher found that there were kinds of answers given by the students based on the question "How do you acquire vocabulary in your daily life?".

Extract 1 (Student 1): *Biasanya saya menggunakan YouTube, sosial media, video game, dan membaca apapun yang berhubungan dengan Bahasa Inggris.* "Usually I used YouTube, social media, video games, and read anything related to English."

Extract 2 (Student 2): I usually watching on YouTube, like the BBC, and from that I got my vocabulary.

Extract 3 (Student 3): I acquire vocabulary in my daily live through reading novels, reading Webtoon, and also watching English movies and also watching videos on YouTube.

Extract 4 (Student 4): Usually I get vocabulary when playing social media such as Instagram, TikTok and Twitter.

b. The Origin of Vocabulary Acquisition

The researcher found that there were kinds of answer given by the students based on the question "Do you get it from listening, reading, or even watching a movie?".

Extract 1 (Student 1): I think I get it from 3 of them. Listening in YouTube, reading the English textbook, and watching movie with English subtitle too.

Extract 2 (Student 2): *Ya. Dari ketiganya, yang paling sering itu dari listening. Karena kita kan mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris. Jadi, kadang saat dosen mengajar itu kebanyakan menggunakan Bahasa Inggris. Jadi kita bisa tahu kosakata apa yang mereka ucapkan.* "Yes. Of the three, most often it was from listening. Because we are English students. So, sometimes when the lecturers teach mostly use English. So we can know what vocabulary they speak."

Extract 3 (Student 3): I get it from reading and watching a movie. But also if we watching, we actually listening. So I get it from the three of this.

Extract 4 (Student 4): I usually get it by watching short videos and also reading mostly from Twitter.

Extract 5 (Student 5): Yes. I acquire new vocabulary mostly from reading, listening, or watching movies. I also like watching English content on Instagram and YouTube, for example the

Sideman, MrBeast and TED channels. Because I like playing games, I also often get new vocabulary in the game.

c.   Supporting Media

The researcher found that there were kinds of answer given by the students based on the question "What media usually support you in understanding vocabulary?".

Extract 1 (Student 2): Handphone dan book.

Extract 2 (Student 2): Books, movies, music, audio, and sometimes I heard what people said and write the new vocabulary down on notebook.

Extraxt 3 (Student 3): Reading materials such as books, articles, and online content, as well as podcasts, news and educational videos usually support me in understanding vocabulary.

2.   Factors Affecting the Understanding of Daily English Vocabulary

The researcher found that there were kinds of answer given by the students based on the question "What factors that affect your understanding of vocabulary in your daily life?".

Extract 1 (Student 1): *Pertama, karena saya adalah mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris. Ini adalah hal yang wajar. Kedua, karena memang dibutuhkan untuk keperluan jangka panjang. Siapa tahu saya nanti akan ke luar negeri. Ketiga, untuk memahami teknologi. Karena rata-rata teknologi zaman sekarang ini menggunakan settingan Bahasa Inggris.* "First, because I'm an English student. This is normal. Second, because it was needed for long-term needs. Who knows I will be abroad later. Third, to understand the technology. Because on average today's technology uses English settings."

Extract 2 (Student 2): *Di luar dari karena saya adalah mahasiswa jurusan Bahasa Inggris, ada tujuan lain ketika saya telah keluar dari status sebagai mahasiswa. Saya ingin apply pekerjaan misalnya di BUMN atau perusahaan-perusahaan lainnya yang sangat membutuhkan skill Bahasa Inggris.* "Apart from being a student majoring in English, there are other purposes when I leave my status as a student later. I want to apply for a job, for example in BUMN or other companies that really need English skills."

Extract 3 (Student 3): Because I'm an English student. And the second is, I tried to understand what other people said with the new vocabularies. And also because we are in 5.0 era, so we should know how to speak English. Also if we have a lot of vocabulary, we can speak more easy at that point actually

Extract 4 (Student 4): *Karena saya adalah mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris. Selain itu, saya juga ingin lancar dalam berbahasa Inggris agar saya dapat berbicara Bahasa Inggris dengan baik dan benar dengan orang lain.* "Because I am an English student. Besides that, I also want to be fluent in English so that I can speak English properly and correctly with other people."

Extract 5 (Student 5): Because I'm an English student. Besides that, because of course I want to be fluent in speaking English and I want to understand more for example if native speakers speaking, so I can understand it better if I learn a lot of vocabulary in my daily life.

Extract 6 (Student 6): The factor is because of course I am an English student. Also because of my curiosity about some of the posts on social media using English and I didn't even know until I looked up the meaning of the vocabulary through Google translate.

Extract 7 (Student 7): Factors that affect my understanding of vocabulary are because I'm an English student, besides that, the context when and where the word is used, my familiarity with the word being discussed, and my level of language ability and proficiency.

3. Difficulties and Convenience in Understanding Daily English Vocabulary

a. Difficulties in Understanding Vocabulary

The researcher found that there were kinds of answer given by the students based on the question "What are your difficulties in understanding vocabulary?".

Extract 1 (Student 1): *Kesulitannya itu paling dari kosakatanya sendiri yang biasanya hampir sama, penulisan dan pronunciation yang hampir sama. Tapi jika cara menyebutnya beda, maka artinya juga pasti akan berbeda. Dan mengingatnya juga akan sulit.* "The most difficulty comes from the vocabulary itself which is usually almost the same, the writing and pronunciation are almost the same. But if the way of calling it is different, then the meaning will also be different. And remembering it will also be difficult."

Extract 2 (Student 2): *Kesulitannya itu mungkin saat menonton film. Saat tidak ada subtitle, saya tidak akan paham maksud dari kata yang mereka ucapkan, jadinya sering miskomunikasi. Saya juga tidak bisa membedakan entah itu aksen British atau Australia tanpa ada subtitle.* "The difficulty may be when I watched the movies. When there are no subtitles, I didn't understand the meaning of the words they are saying, so there are frequent miscommunications. I also couldn't tell whether it's a British or Australian accent if without subtitles."

Extract 3 (Student 3): My difficulties in understanding vocabulary are when I can't find the words in my application (e-dictionary) because it has limited vocabulary, so I have to find it in another platform, such as Google translate. And many English words are the same, have the similarities. Sometimes it has the same writings and also the same pronunciation, that's why it's a little bit confusing, because I can't distinguish from a word to another. That's are my difficulties in understanding vocabulary.

Extract 4 (Student 4): When I find a slang word that's usually translated on Google translate, it will produce a different translation.

b. Things that Make it Easier in Understanding Daily English Vocabulary

The researcher found that there were kinds of answer given by the students based on the question "What things make it easier for you to understand vocabulary in your daily?".

Extract 1 (Student 1): *Pertama adalah membaca kosakata tersebut secara terus-menerus agar dapat mengingatnya dengan mudah. Kedua, mempraktikkannya langsung, misalnya menghafal satu atau dua kosakata dalam sehari.* "(The first is I read the vocabulary continuously so that I can remember it easily. Second, practice it directly, for example memorizing one or two vocabulary a day."

Extract 2 (Student 2): Because there is, yeah we can find more vocabulary in internet, we can search it in internet, and there is also books that contains a new vocabulary, and the last but not least, because there is also technology that we can use to find out and to hear what is the pronunciation about the vocabulary.

Extract 3 (Student 3): *Menggunakan kamus dan Google translate.* "Using e-dictionary and Google translate."

Extract 4 (Student 4): If I want to make it easier, I have to find a way to make my memories are longer in memorize the vocabulary. For example, if I find a new vocabulary, I have to know how to pronounce it and then I have to write, and the read it, so it can be saved in my memory longer.

Extract 5 (Student 5): What makes it easier for me to understand and remember vocabulary is by remembering or associating it with the context in which the word is commonly used.

4. Dealing with the New Words that Come Across in Reading Materials

The researcher found that there were kinds of answer given by the students based on the question "How do you deal with the new words that you come across in reading materials?".

Extract 1 (Student 1): *Biasanya jika ada kata baru, saya mencari sinonimnya lebih dulu, seperti apa persamaan dari kata ini, atau ternyata persamaan katanya memiliki arti yang sama... Mungkin.* "Usually when there was a new word, I looked for synonyms first, what were the similarities of these words, or it turned out that the synonyms had the same meaning... Maybe."

Extract 2 (Student 2): *Kadang saya membuka kamus, lalu saya mengingat dan menghafal kosakata tersebut. Selain itu, saat saya membaca sebuah buku atau cerpen, saya mengelompokkan kosakata baru tersebut, misalnya mana yang termasuk kata sifat atau kata kerja, dan sebagainya.* "Sometimes I opened the dictionary, then I remember and memorize the vocabulary. Besides that, when I read a book or short story, I classify the new vocabulary, for example which includes adjectives or verbs, and so on."

Extract 3 (Student 3): When I find the new words that I don't know, I immediately look the words in the online dictionary, then find the meanings and then go back to my reading materials so I can read it from the start and understand the meaning.

Extract 4 (Student 4): Usually I asked my friend directly who is smarter than me and the second option was by searching it on Google Translate.

5. Problem Solving

The researcher found that there were kinds of answer given by the students based on the question "How you solve the problems when you forget the vocabulary?".

Extract 1 (Student 1): *Paling saya baca ulang kosakata tersebut, atau memeriksanya di internet secara berulang-ulang sampai saya ingat.* "Most I re-read the vocabulary, or check it on the internet repeatedly until I remember it."

Extract 2 (Student 2): *Caranya itu dengan kembali membuka kamus.* "The way was by opening the dictionary again."

Extract 3 (Student 3): If I suddenly forget the vocabulary that I previously memorized, I usually open Google Translate or not I ask my friends if my friends are around me.

DISCUSSIONS

This research was done by the researcher at the University of Negeri Makassar's Faculty of Languages and Literature. It is required for the interview.

1. Ways of Acquiring Vocabulary

From the analysis result, on the first question about vocabulary acquisition in daily life, 5 out of 7 students gave the same answer, they acquired their vocabulary from reading and listening. This means that reading and listening are important in understanding English vocabulary in daily life.

On the second question about whether they get the vocabulary from listening, reading, or even watching movies, the students gave exactly the same response as the answer in the previous question. This reinforces that reading and listening are indeed very influential in understanding daily English vocabulary. At this point, listening is a skill used by 6 out of 7 students. This shows that listening is the most influential skill.

On the third question about supporting media in understanding their daily vocabulary, all of them use mobile phones. Some didn't specifically mention mobile phones, but they admitted that they accessed English-related applications using mobile phones.

2. Factors Affecting the Understanding of Daily English Vocabulary

From the analysis result, on the fourth question about the factors that affect students' understanding of daily English vocabulary, all participants answered that their main factor was an external factor because they were English students. According to them, it was their duty to understand daily English vocabulary, because it related to their learning as English students. Apart from that, the other factors they have mentioned are internal factors, which they wanted to understand today's technology, as student HAR said. Other factors that from internal factors were because they wanted to work in BUMN as student WNM said, they wanted to speak English fluently with native speakers as student A said, and because they were curious about the meanings of the vocabulary in social media as student RA said.

3. Difficulties and Convenience in Understanding Daily English Vocabulary

From the analysis result, on the fifth question about the difficulties in understanding daily English vocabulary, students gave various answers based on their experience and obviously they experienced different experiences. Students HAR, RRI, and NS said that the difficulty came from the pronunciation whereas student MAF had difficulty with the new words they found. Student WNM said that the difficulty came from watching movies that don't have subtitles. It's hard to tell vocabulary and accent apart without looking at the subtitles. Student A said that the difficulty came from e-dictionary. the vocabulary in the e-dictionary is very limited, so she still has to look for it on other platforms. Student RA said that the difficulty came from Google Translate which resulted in an erroneous translation.

On the sixth question about the convenience of understanding daily English vocabulary, students gave various answers based on their experience and obviously they had different experiences. Students HAR, A, and MAF said that the convenience came from rereading the text. Students WNM, RRI, and NS said that the convenience came from Google Translate.

4. Dealing with the New Words that Come Across in Reading Materials

From the analysis result, on the seventh question about dealing with the new words that come across in reading materials, students gave various answers based on their experience and obviously they experienced different experiences. Students HAR and RRI said that they deal with the synonyms when they find new words in reading materials.

5. Problem-Solving

From the analysis result, on the eighth question about problem solutions when students forget the vocabulary, they went to the dictionary and Google Translate.

CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded that students use listening and reading for their vocabulary acquisition, but listening is the most important skill that is used in understanding daily English vocabulary. Supporting media in understanding daily English vocabulary is mobile phones. Factors that affect the understanding of daily English vocabulary are because they are English students, they want to speak well with native speakers, and they want to understand today's technology. The difficulty in understanding daily English vocabulary is about the pronunciation and the convenience that comes from accessing it through Google Translate. Students deal with new vocabulary in reading materials by looking for synonyms for the words. When students forget the vocabulary, they solve the problem by opening the dictionary and Google Translate.

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