A CASE STUDY OF VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGY USED BY MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT IN IAIN SALATIGA

Submitted to the Department of Language Studies, Graduate School of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

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The board of examiners certifies that the thesis is eligible for submissions.

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I hereby confirm that the thesis entitled “A CASE STUDY OF VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGY USED BY MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT IN IAIN SALATIGA” is an original and authentic work written by myself and it has satisfied the rules and regulations of Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta with respect to plagiarism. I certify that all questions and the scores of information have been fully referred and acknowledged accordingly.

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ABSTRACT

This research was a qualitative case study research design on vocabulary learning strategy of male and female students majored at English department in IAIN Salatiga. The objectives of the research were aimed: 1) to describe the Vocabulary Learning Strategy used by male and female students of IAIN Salatiga, and 2) to describe the gender difference pattern in the application of VLS done by students of English department of IAIN Salatiga. This study involved 22 female and 13 male students of IAIN Salatiga majored at English Department and they were in the second year of university study. In this study, the researcher used open-ended questionnaire and interview to collect the students’ Vocabulary learning strategies. The questionnaire and interview items were adapted from Schmitt taxonomy (2000) which is in English version. The finding revealed that the gender difference was only existed in the application of social strategies for discovery, cognitive strategy for consolidation and metacognitive strategy for consolidation. The other strategy namely determination, social strategy for consolidation and memory strategy was indicated no difference in term of gender.

Keywords: Vocabulary Learning Strategy, English Department Students

ABSTRAK

seperti determinasi, strategi social untuk konsolidasi dan strategi memori tidak menunjukkan adanya perbedaan dalam hal gender.

Kata kunci: Strategi belajar kosa kata, Mahasiswa jurusan Bahasa Inggris

1. Introduction

For most foreign language learners, the crucial aim of language learning is to be able to use the language fluently and to communicate effectively. In learning a foreign language also, the the number of known vocabularies is always critical in order to become a successful speaker (Cameron, 2002). Although, vocabulary knowledge is not prerequisite to language skills performance, knowing a large number of vocabularies surely help language learner to make a conversation more valuable and meaningful. Furthermore, vocabulary knowledge enables language use, while language use enables the increase of vocabulary knowledge, and so on (Nation, 2001). In essence, the more exposed a learner to new vocabularies, the faster the learner would gain the language.

According to Zimmermann (1997), native speakers of English can better understand ungrammatical utterances with accurate vocabulary than those with accurate grammar and inaccurate vocabulary. It is clear that actually both vocabulary and grammar are of great significance for successful communication. However, to compare between grammar and vocabulary, it can be explained that vocabulary is more central than grammar and more attention on vocabulary should be paid to vocabulary instruction. That is why Levelt (1989) also claimed in Gass and Selinker (2001: 373) that vocabulary errors tend to obstruct comprehension more than grammatical errors. In a simple case, students may expert in grammar, but if they are in the low size of vocabulary, some of their language skill might be interrupted. For example in writing an essay, a student may expert in composing the right order sentences, but he face difficulties in choosing the words that will be composed in his essay because he has limited English vocabulary in his mind. It therefore, the vocabulary research has the same prominent position after the grammar case study. The case also supported with the idea that compared with the changes of grammar and pronunciation, the amount of vocabulary is also keeping
on changing and enlarging, thus teachers should help students to adopt effective 
ways to learn vocabularies more efficiently.

To be added more, an adequate vocabulary is also essential for successful 
second or foreign language use. It is because without extensive vocabulary, people 
will be unable to use structures and functions which they have learned for 
comprehensible communication (Fauziati, 2015: 133). It describes that by 
mastering vocabulary people can express their ideas and understand the other 
basic competence well. However, it is difficult to master the other competences 
without understanding the vocabulary, because vocabulary is the basic 
competence that must be reached by students in order to obtain other 
competencies like reading, writing, listening, and speaking. In consequence, 
vocabulary is the aspect that is not to be left to be learned by the second or foreign 
language students.

As the focus has shifted from language teaching to language learning, the 
independence of learning has come to the front. Elaborating on the independence 
of the students, it is not appropriate for the teacher to dictate everything to 
students, take all the important decisions about the language learning process 
since students have the potential and the skills to cope with all the challenges in 
the language classroom (Cook, 2008). Thus, students are needed to be forced as 
independent language learners who apply their known language learning strategy 
which focused in this case is vocabulary learning strategies.

Based on the explanation above, the attention is drawn up to make a study 
regarding to the case of Vocabulary Learning Strategies of EFL learner. The case 
was decided due to the observation that the teachers infrequently monitor their 
student English vocabulary development. It was also because of the short 
interview with some of the English Department students in IAIN that they were 
not acknowledged enough about the VLS.

According to the background of study, the researcher identified the 
objective of the study: 1) to describe the Vocabulary Learning Strategy used by 
male and female students of IAIN Salatiga, and 2) to describe the gender 
difference pattern in the application of VLS done by students of English
department of IAIN Salatiga. That was why the study which was explored in the study entitled: “A Case Study of Vocabulary Learning Strategy used by Male and Female Students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga”

2. Research Method

The type of the research used in this study was qualitative with the case study. Cresswell (2007) described that case study is an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g. an activity, event, process, or individuals) based on extensive data collection. The object of the study was the vocabulary learning strategies of English Department Students of IAIN Salatiga. The subjects of the study were the 22 female and 13 male student of IAIN Salatiga majored at English Department and they were in the fourth semester. In this study, the researcher used open-ended questionnaire and interview to collect the students’ Vocabulary learning strategies. The questionnaire items were adapted from Schmitt taxonomy (2000) which is in English version. According to Schmitt (2000) Vocabulary Learning Strategies were classified into: 1.) Discovery Strategy and 2.) Consolidation Strategy. Each of the strategy was divided into its’ strategy Group. The Discovery Strategy consists of: 1.) Determination Strategy and 2.) Social Strategy. On the other hand, Consolidation Strategies consists of: 1.) Social Strategies, 2.) Memory Strategies, 3.) Cognitive Strategies, and 4.) Metacognitive Strategies. All of the collected data was later analyzed based on Miles and Hubberman’s Model (1994) which begun by the series steps of: 1) data reduction, 2) data display, and 3) conclusion drawing or verification. In order to make the valid research, triangulation was applied to gain account information through a variety of sources. The technique of triangulation was projected to aid the credibility, transferability, conformability, and dependability (Mackey and Gass, 2005: 181). The researcher used data triangulation in which open-ended questionnaire, interview and the test were taken.
3. Research Findings

This part elaborates two major parts namely: 1) The Vocabulary Learning Strategy used by Male and Female Students of IAIN Salatiga and 2) The Gender Difference in the Pattern of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) used by English Department Student of IAIN Salatiga.

3.1. The Vocabulary Learning Strategy used by Male and Female Students of IAIN Salatiga

Schmitt (2000) had clarified that determination is the strategies used when learners faced with discovering a new words' meaning without recourse to another person experience. Learner try to discover the meaning of a word by guessing it with the help of structural knowledge of language, guessing from first language cognate, guessing from context, or using reference material. From the research findings it can be concluded that the male student of English Department in IAIN Salatiga who studied at fourth semester were often (40,18%) applied the determination strategies. In term of female students, it can be summed up that the female student of English Department in IAIN Salatiga which was studied at fourth semester were often (35,35%) applied the determination strategies too.

Schmitt (2000) proposed that there were the strategies in which the other intervention was needed. Social strategies were the strategies used by implementing the interaction with other people to improve language learning. Students ask teacher or classmates for information about a new word and they can answer in a number of ways such as synonym or the translation. The findingindicated that the male students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga which was studied at fourth semester often (44,61%) applied the social strategies for discovering the meaning of new English word. The next finding explained that the female students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga which was studied at fourth semester sometimes (42,72%) used the social strategies for discovering the meaning of new English word.

In term of social strategy for consolidation, cooperative learning group defined by Schmitt (2000) as one of the way for the learner to practice
consolidating the meaning of new words. Based on the following table, it is showed that the male students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga which was studied at fourth semester sometimes (43.59%) applied the social strategies for consolidating the English word. The other finding was showed that the female students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga which was studied at fourth semester sometimes (34.85%) applied the social strategies for consolidating the English word.

Memory strategies were referred as relating the word with some previously learned knowledge. It was done by using some form of imagery of grouping which called as memory strategies as it was written by Schmitt (2000). The research found that the male students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga which was studied at fourth semester were sometimes (40.74%) applied the memory strategies for consolidating the English word. The other research result described that female students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga which was studied at fourth semester were sometimes (36.36%) applied the memory strategies for consolidating the English word.

Cognitive strategies exhibit the common function of manipulation or transformation of the target language by the learner. It is similar to memory strategies but they are not focused on manipulative mental processing. They include repetition and using mechanical means to study vocabulary (Schmitt, 2000). The study resulted that the male students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga which was studied at fourth semester were sometimes (41.03%) applied the cognitive strategies for consolidating the English word. This study also explored that the female students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga which was studied at fourth semester often (37.37%) applied the cognitive strategies for consolidating the English word.

The vocabulary learning strategies also involved what was called as metacognitive strategy. It involved a conscious overview of the learning process and making decision about planning, monitoring, or evaluating the best way to study. It includes improving access to input, deciding on the most efficient method of study or review, and testing oneself to measure improvement (Schmitt,
The investigation showed that the male students of English Department in IAIN Salatigawho studied at fourth semester were sometimes (43.08%) applied the metacognitive strategies for consolidating the English word. Meanwhile, the female students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga which was studied at fourth semester were often (29.09%) applied the metacognitive strategies for consolidating the English word.

The conclusion that could be drawn up based on the collection of the findings above was that the male students of English Department Students of IAIN Salatigaoften applied the determination strategies for discovering the meaning of new English word (40.18%). In consolidating the word, they sometimes applied the social strategies (43.59%). On the other hand, the female students of English Department Students of IAIN Salatiga often applied the determination strategies for discovering the meaning of new English word (35.35%) to discover new meaning of English word. On the other finding, female students often applied the cognitive strategies for consolidating the meaning the English word (37.37%).

3.2. The Gender Difference in the pattern of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) used by English Department Student of IAIN Salatiga

It could be implied that there was a gender difference on the Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) used by English Department Student of IAIN Salatiga. To clarify in detail, the results were presented in the following description. The description involved the collection of graph and chart result of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) used by English Department Student of IAIN Salatiga to figure out the gender difference.
The first was the gender difference result on the determination strategy. It was the activity of the strategy in which the users do not need others to help them discover new English word (Schmitt, 2000). According to the graph above, the gender difference in part of the determination strategies was not seen from the percentage frequency result of the high frequency of the VLS. In part of male students, they often applied the determination strategies (40.18%). On the other side, the female students often used the determination strategies (35.35%). It therefore, no gender difference in the amount frequency usage of the determination strategies. It was due to the same position of high number percentage of determination strategy frequency located in the ‘often’ frequency.
The first was the gender difference result on the social strategy to discover new meaning of English word. It was the strategies used by implementing the interaction with other people to improve language learning (Schmitt, 2000). Based on graph above, the gender difference in part of the social strategy to discover new meaning of word was seen from the percentage frequency result of the high frequency of the VLS. In part of male students, they often applied the social strategies to discover new word meaning (44.61%). On the other side, the female students sometimes used the strategy to discover new meaning of English word (42.72%). It therefore, there was gender difference in the amount frequency usage of social strategies to discover new meaning of English word. The usage of social strategies to discover new word meaning which was executed by the male students was higher than female students.

Figure 3. The Gender Difference of the Social Strategies for Consolidation

The third was the gender difference result on the social strategies for consolidating word. These strategies involved the Cooperative learning group which learner practice the meaning of new words in group to consolidate a word (Schmitt, 2000). In keeping with the graph above, no gender difference in part of the Social Strategies for Consolidation noticed at the percentage frequency result of the high frequency of the VLS. In part of male students, they sometimes applied the Social Strategies for Consolidation (43.59%). On the other side, the female students sometimes used the Social Strategies for Consolidation too
(34.85%). It therefore, no gender difference in the amount frequency usage of the Social Strategies for Consolidation. It was because of the same position of high number percentage of Social Strategies for Consolidation placed in ‘sometimes’ frequency.

**Figure 4. The Gender Difference of the Memory Strategies**

The fourth was the gender difference result on the memory strategies. Memory strategies referred as relating the word with some previously learned knowledge by using some form of imagery of grouping (Schmitt, 2000). From the graph above, no gender difference in part of the memory strategies signed at the percentage result of the high frequency of the VLS. In part of male students, they sometimes applied the Memory strategies for consolidating word (40.76%). On the other side, the female students sometimes used the Memory strategies for consolidating word too (36.36%). It therefore, no gender difference in the amount frequency usage of the Memory strategies for consolidating word. It was because of the same position of high number percentage of Memory Strategies for
Figure 5. The Gender Difference of the Cognitive Strategies

The fifth was the gender difference result on the cognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies exhibited the common function of ‘manipulation or transformation of the target language by the learner. They include repetition and using mechanical means to study vocabulary. (Schmitt, 2000). Looked at the graph above, there was gender difference in part of the cognitive strategies mentioned at the percentage result of the high frequency of the VLS. In part of male students, they sometimes applied the cognitive strategies for consolidating word (41.03%). On the other side, the female students often used the Memory strategies for consolidating word (37.37%). It therefore, there was gender difference in the amount frequency usage of the cognitive strategies for consolidating word. The usage of cognitive strategies to consolidate word which was executed by the female students was higher than male students.
The fifth was the gender difference result on the metacognitive strategies. Meta-cognitive strategies involve a conscious overview of the learning process and making decision about planning, monitoring, or evaluating the best way to study. It includes improving access to input, deciding on the most efficient method of study or review, and testing oneself to measure improvement (Schmitt, 2000). Looked at the graph above, there was gender difference in part of the metacognitive strategies mentioned at the percentage result of the high frequency of the VLS. In part of male students, they sometimes applied the metacognitive strategies for consolidating word (43,08%). On the other side, the female students often used the Metacognitive strategies for consolidating word (29,09%). It therefore, there was gender difference in the amount frequency usage of the metacognitive strategies to consolidate word which was executed by the female students was higher than male students.

4. Discussion

There were two discussions resulted from this case study research. They are the discussion of 1) The Vocabulary Learning Strategy used by Male and Female Students of IAIN Salatiga and 2) The Gender Difference in the Pattern of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) used by English Department Student of
IAIN Salatiga. All of the research findings were discussed with the previous research that had been collected in this study.

4.1. The Vocabulary Learning Strategy (VLS) used by Male and Female Students of IAIN Salatiga

The finding descriptions on this study were discussed with other previous research. From the study who involved Korean students, the result indicated that Korean University students preferred to apply dictionary to use bilingual dictionary to discover new meaning of English word. Korean students preferred to use determination strategy rather than social strategy. In part of consolidation strategy, Korean students preferred to use cognitive strategy in term of verbal repetition (Lee, 2007). Related to this case, the male students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga generally applied the determination strategy the identical to Korean University students. Different from Korean students, the male students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga would rather use the social strategies for consolidation rather than cognitive strategies. On the other hand, the female students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga would rather use the cognitive strategies for consolidation rather than metacognitive strategies.

In Algeria, the study related to the VLS had done in the University of Tizi. It later resulted in the conclusion that in term of consolidation, metacognitive were dominantly implemented by the students (Nacera, 2010). The supportive study to Algerian University, the EFL University Learner in Mediterranean University where metacognitive played its high frequency usage (Kalajahi and Purshahian, 2012). Compared to this case, the social strategies were mostly used by the male students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga to consolidate the English word. Analyzed with this case, the cognitive strategies were mostly used by the female students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga to consolidate the English word.

Taking a closer look to the country near to Indonesia also had done the study which engaged Thai University students revealed that the determination strategy were preferred to be used by them to discover new meaning of English word. On the other side, in part of consolidation strategy, the most frequently
applied by them were metacognitive strategy, where using English media were chosen by them (Nirratisai and Chiramanee, 2014). To be discussed with this case, the Thai students were equal to the male students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga in which the strategy of determination were chosen by them to discover new meaning of English word. The different was only on the usage of consolidation strategy in which the social strategy received higher frequency rather than metacognitive strategy. The Thai students, Algerian students, and Mediterranean University students preferred to use metacognitive strategy, while the male students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga preferred to use social strategy. On the other side, the female students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga preferred to use cognitive strategy.

The University students in Turkey who engaged in a research of vocabulary revealed that the usage of bottom up strategies and note taking strategies were commonly taken by them to consolidate new English word (Kirmizi, 2014). Thus, the cognitive strategy to consolidate English word commonly chose by Turkish students were same to Korean students. To be related to this case, the Turkey and Korean students were different to the male students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga in which the strategy of social were chosen by them to consolidate English word. It was also different to the female students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga in which the strategy of cognitive were chosen by them to consolidate English word.

Based on those collected discussed previous study above, it was presented that determination for discover and social strategy for consolidation were played the highest amount of VLS usage for male students of English Department in IAIN Salatiga. Determination strategy was chosen by male students because most of the male students did not prefer to be intervened with other in discovering new meaning of English words. One of the most found in this study when the interview was conducted was that the dictionary phone application in their smart phone played the prominent role in facilitating the strategy of determination. They do not need to ask friend or teacher about the meaning as the first step of discovering meaning of English word.
The second category of consolidation part, the strategy of social for consolidating English word were mostly used by the male students because based on the interview, the collaborative activity in learning of vocabulary were the most convenient way for them. Noticed by the slight observation, most of them preferred to make a group inside and outside the classroom. On the other side, the strategy of cognitive for consolidating English word was mostly used by the female students because systematic way in learning English was preferred by them. Taking notes, verbal repetition, written repetition, word lists, putting English labels on physical objects, and keeping a vocabulary notebook were systematic and include mental process in their mind.

4.2. The Gender Difference in the Pattern of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) used by English Department Student of IAIN Salatiga

Many researchers provided the Catalans’ study (2003) as started study of VLS which reveal the assumption that the gender difference was found in term of its implementation. Related to this study, it was correspond that the difference pattern existed on the strategy on the discovery and consolidating strategies. In part of discovery strategies, there was gender difference in the amount frequency usage of social strategies to discover new meaning of English word. In fact, there was no gender difference in the determination strategies.

In part of consolidation strategies there were also differences in the strategies. The strategy namely social strategy for consolidation and memory strategy was indicated no difference in term of gender. Lee (2007) explained in his study that Korean students in term of hypotheses, the gender differences of VLS usage were rejected. Compared to this study, where there were 3 gender differences in part of social strategy for discovery, social strategy for consolidation, cognitive strategy, and metacognitive strategy.

The opening study that the writer found in Iran revealed that by analyzing independent sample of t-test, no significant difference were shown from both male and female undergraduate EFL learner (Khatib et al, 2011). To be discussed with this study, that Iran investigation were related to this case study which explored
that some of the strategy such as determination, social strategy for discovery, and memory strategy were not found differences in the gender.

In pre-university school of Iran, the study which had done by Nemati (2013), it was presented that the female students were not in line to this study in which the application of social strategy or grouping activity were mostly used by Iranian female students. This study presented that female students mostly applied the cognitive strategy to consolidate English word. It therefore, the Iran study were not correlated to this study.

In the same country, Iran, a study revealed that female students of high school prefer to use cognitive strategy (Ahour and Salamzadeh, 2014). To compared with this study, it was presented that female students in Iran and one of this Indonesian area were in line in the highest result of the application of the cognitive strategy to consolidate English word.

In Morocco country, the university students of English Department exposed that the VLS application was different from the gender. Female students mostly applied memory, metacognitive, and social strategies more than male students (Seffar, 2014). The result from Morocco were not correspond to this study where the gender difference was existed in term of social strategy for consolidation, cognitive strategy, and metacognitive strategy. The memory strategy were not resulted any differences in term of gender.

In Thailand context, it was found the gender difference in statistical analysis result that the female students executed more VLS than the male students (Siriwan, 2007 and Boonkongsan and Intaraprasert, 2014). This resulted that the gender difference could be one of the factors that influence the amount usage of VLS, and it was supported by this Indonesian university study area. In fact, this gender difference was not showed in all of the type of VLS frequency usage and some of them resulted in the similar amount of frequency usage in this case of Indonesian university context.

Gu and Johnson (1996) gave his view that in China area the academic major was less potent a factor than gender in determining the learning result and strategies in vocabulary. This study indicated the supportive report that gender
was resulted in some differences in the amount frequency of VLS usage. The determination strategy were not resulted the differences in the gender because both of male and female students of English department in IAIN Salatiga were mostly adapted with this strategy such as using dictionary to discover meaning of new English word as the first step in learning vocabulary. In part of consolidation, the memory strategy was not resulted differences because the students were mostly not familiar with those items of memory items. It could be seen from the interview that most of the students where clarified brief description on it. Gender differences were inconclusive to be taken and they were varied depend on the situation, context area that students face.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

It can be asserted that students not only know about the VLS, but they need to have the skill in using them. The students’ vocabulary learning strategy process should be taken into consideration. The students have their obligatory role to expose such kind of learning strategy not only tied in the class. The implementation of VLS actually not only tied to the classroom activity, but it should be enhanced outside the classroom. By understanding the type of the strategy that was used by the students seen from the result of this study, the learner could independently apply the strategy outside the classroom. The variation gender result in the strategy described the general picture of the VLS application in IAIN Salatiga. Each student actually possessed the different characteristics in implementing the VLS strategy and it was not only tied to the gender difference. All of the VLS type strategy should be taken into the consideration to be acted out in order to support the learning English process especially the vocabulary development.

The study not only brought to a standstill that the students knew their degree of their Vocabulary Size but also how was the implementation of their of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) impacted on it. The study figured out that the students need improvement in taking the proper execution of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS). To arrive at the proper execution of VLS to develop
the Vocabulary Size, the students should acknowledge all of the Vocabulary Learning Strategies. There was the requirement of the autonomous activity in using the Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) done by students, so that the activity was not only tied to classroom learning activity. The students should realize that this strategy could be taken as home study activity.

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