

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

One of the key skills that individuals worldwide must develop to thrive in the 21st century is the ability to communicate effectively in English for diverse purposes. Proficiency in understanding and conveying information from English texts is crucial. As a globally dominant language, English serves a vital function in facilitating meaningful interactions across cultures and various contexts (Aini, 2020). English is also important to be taught in early age in the reason that English is an international language that will become an important device for the student to receive, to process and to share ideas and information with every people from around the world who have different cultures and point of view (Syarfuni, 2012)

In mastering English, vocabulary emerges as a crucial component, particularly in understanding lesson materials and enhancing communication skills. Hilaliyah (2018) and Syafryadin et al. (2020) emphasize that vocabulary is a fundamental element in expressing ideas or thoughts during conversations. To communicate effectively, precisely, and politely, mastery of a rich and varied vocabulary is indispensable. Students with a broader vocabulary repertoire demonstrate superior language skills, further highlighting the importance of vocabulary knowledge in achieving proficiency in English communication.

Consequently, given that vocabulary serves as the foundation for language acquisition, prioritizing vocabulary learning has become essential in education. The demands of the contemporary era are swiftly evolving across various fields and for

individuals. It is imperative for them to keep pace with technologically advanced changes, encompassing the development of English language proficiency.

In addition, vocabulary-learning strategies assist EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners in reaching their learning objectives and fostering independence in their learning journey. Schmitt in Bakti, (2017) classifies strategies into several specific groups, namely Determination strategies, Social strategies, Memory strategies, Cognitive strategies and Metacognitive strategies.

Determination strategies in vocabulary learning include making guesses based on existing language knowledge, seeking clarification from the teacher, using a dictionary to look up definitions, and seeking help from peers or native speakers. This strategy, students actively engage in problem solving to decipher and understand foreign vocabulary, thereby contributing to a more effective language learning process (Damari, 2019).

Next, according to Permatasari (2021), social strategies help learners work with others and understand the target culture as well as the language. The strategies might be asking questions to get verification, asking for clarification of a confusing point, asking for help in doing a language task, talking with the native-speaking conversation partner, exploring cultural and social norms.

Moreover, these memory strategies, often referred to as memory aids, employed for recalling previously studied vocabulary. Learners utilize techniques such as grouping words based on form or topic, creating mental associations, employing physical actions, linking new words to past experiences, focusing on word spelling, and verbalizing words aloud during study sessions. These strategies

leverage memory triggers to enhance the retention and retrieval of vocabulary, facilitating a more effective and personalized approach to language learning (Bakti, 2017).

On other hand, Cognitive strategies are similar to memory strategies but do not focus on mental processing. They include repetition and mechanical methods such as word lists, flash cards, wordbooks to study vocabulary. The basic rule of this strategy is repetition (Baskin et al, 2017).

Lastly, metacognitive strategies, as outlined by Schmitt in Nugroho, (2023) pertain to the methods students use to regulate and evaluate their own learning, allowing for a comprehensive grasp of the overall learning process. The application of metacognitive strategies geared towards ensuring the successful and efficient acquisition of new words.

In the context of SMAN 9 Banda Aceh, understanding the vocabulary learning strategies used by students in English education is very important to optimize the learning process. Although the importance of vocabulary in language acquisition is well known, the specific strategies used by students and their implementation during English lessons at SMAN 9 Banda Aceh are still a topic of research. The main focus is to uncover the types of strategies that students commonly use and gain insight into how these strategies are implemented in the English learning environment. Specifically, this research seeks to identify which vocabulary learning strategies are determination strategies, social strategies, memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and meta-cognitive strategies that are most commonly and least frequently used by students. Next, the aim is to find out which

of the five vocabulary learning strategies are most widely used by students at SMAN 9 Banda Aceh.

In addition, earlier previews study by Permatasari, (2023) with entitled “Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by Students at Smp Negeri 1 Rambah Hilir”. This study explores the vocabulary learning strategies used by students at SMP Negeri 1 Rambah Hilir. The results of Permatasari's (2023) study show that the total score of vocabulary learning strategies used by students at SMP Negeri 1 Rambah Hilir is 3,900, with an average score of 156. The dominant strategy used is the social strategy, with a total score of 604 and an average of 3.45. Overall, students' vocabulary learning strategies are classified as very low, with social strategies being the most dominant in learning English.

Secondly, previews study by Bakti, (2017) this study aims to investigate the Vocabulary Learning Strategies used by junior high school students in learning English. The study show that junior high school students prefer practical, simple, and fast strategies for learning vocabulary. These strategies include checking whether the word is also an Indonesian word, guessing the meaning from context, asking the teacher for a definition, studying with classmates, remembering words by paying attention to spelling, underlining words, and using English media.

Both studies provide relevant insights into students' preferences for vocabulary learning strategies. Therefore, this research at SMAN 9 Banda Aceh can benefit from these findings had better understand how students at higher education levels adopt these strategies. Related to this research, further understanding of the dominance of social strategies and practical strategies can help design a more

effective English learning approach at SMAN 9 Banda Aceh. By involving these strategies in the learning context, it hoped that it could improve students' understanding and mastery of vocabulary at the high school level.

Based on this, this research aims to determine the Vocabulary Learning Strategy (VLS) used by high school students at SMAN 9 Banda Aceh. The aim is to explore the strategies used and understood their implementation in English language learning. The expected results aim to reveal practical, simple and fast strategies that students like in learning vocabulary, explaining their approaches such as checking whether the word is also an Indonesian word, guessing the meaning from the context, looking for definitions from the teacher, studying with friends class, memorization techniques, attention to word spelling, underlining words, and use of English media.

Overall, research on "Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by High School Students (Study at SMAN 9 Banda Aceh)" aims to identify the strategies used by students and understand how these strategies applied in the context of English learning.

1.2 Research Problem

The problem of this research as follows: what vocabulary learning strategies are most commonly and least frequently used by students at SMAN 9 Banda Aceh in terms of determination strategies, social strategies, memory strategies, cognitive strategies and meta-cognitive strategies?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The main objectives of this research as follows; identify the most common and least common vocabulary learning strategies in the categories Determination strategies, social strategies, Memory strategies, Cognitive strategies and Metacognitive strategies among students at SMAN 9 Banda Aceh

1.4 Scope of the Research

This research focuses specifically on senior high school students at SMAN 9 Banda Aceh and their utilization of vocabulary learning strategies within the context of English language education. The study investigates the various strategies employed by these students in acquiring and retaining vocabulary, including determination strategies, social strategies, memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and meta-cognitive strategies.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The significance of this research underscored by its potential contributions across various educational dimensions. Firstly, it offers valuable educational insights by uncovering and analyzing the vocabulary learning strategies employed by students. Such insights are crucial for educators and administrators as they strive to gain a deeper understanding of the diverse approach's students undertake in their language-learning journey.

Secondly, the research holds the potential to enhance the existing curriculum. By evaluating the alignment between students' vocabulary learning strategies and the predetermined language learning objectives of the school, the findings may guide adjustments or enhancements in the English language

curriculum. This, in turn, can ensure a more tailored and effective approach that better addresses the unique needs of the students.

Moreover, the study carries pedagogical implications by shedding light on how students engage with vocabulary learning. This understanding can inform educators about the varied methodologies and strategies students employ, enabling them to customize their teaching approaches. The result is an improved and more targeted delivery of language instruction that aligns with the preferences and learning styles of the students.

Lastly, the research outcomes have the potential positively affect student performance in English language studies. Through the identification of effective vocabulary learning strategies, the study can recommend adjustments to current language learning practices. This, in essence, contributes to a more conducive learning environment that fosters improved proficiency and success in English language studies.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

a. Learning Vocabulary

Learning vocabulary refers to the process of acquiring, understanding, and effectively using words in a language. It involves not only memorizing the meanings of words but also understanding their correct usage, pronunciation, and spelling. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), vocabulary learning is essential for developing language skills, enabling learners to communicate their ideas clearly and efficiently (Hilaliyah, 2018; Syafryadin et al., 2020).

b. Strategies in Learning Vocabulary

1. Determination Strategies

These strategies involve independent learning, where students determine the meanings of new words on their own (Damari, 2019).

2. Social Strategies

Students learn vocabulary through interaction with others, such as asking teachers or peers for clarification, discussing word meanings, and practicing language in conversations and group activities (Permatasari, 2021).

3. Memory Strategies

Also known as mnemonic techniques, these strategies help students retain vocabulary through visualization, association, categorization, linking words to personal experiences, and repetition to reinforce memory (Bakti, 2017).

4. Cognitive Strategies

These involve structured and repetitive learning techniques, such as using flashcards, word lists, and repeated exposure to new words through reading and writing exercises (Baskin et al., 2017).

5. Metacognitive Strategies

These strategies focus on self-regulation in vocabulary learning, including planning study sessions, setting goals, self-assessment, and monitoring progress to improve learning efficiency and autonomy (Nugroho, 2023).