

THE STUDENT OFFICERS' VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES AND THEIR VOCABULARY TYPES MASTERY

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Abstract

This study investigates the student officers' vocabulary strategies, vocabulary mastery types and their strategies tendencies. The type of maritime English vocabulary can be divided into academic and technical words type. The instruments used Schmitt's taxonomy and maritime English vocabulary test. The result found that the students who used determination strategies were not able to master academic and technical words types. The students who used social strategies tended to master technical words type. Then, the students who used memory strategies tended to master technical words type. On the other hand, the students who used cognitive strategies tended to master academic words type. Meanwhile, the students who used metacognitive strategies tended to master two vocabulary types which consist of academic words and technical words.

Keywords: *student officers, vocabulary learning strategies, maritime English vocabulary type mastery.*

Introduction

English is an effective language to communicate with other people around the world who have different languages. In order to be able to speak English we should know English vocabulary so that we can understand what people say and we can respond to it well. Nowadays, most people perceive English vocabulary as the crucial element in communication. When people learn a foreign language, most people have feelings toward words. In language learning, the students are asked to acquire some vocabularies which is one part of language learning. One crucial factor is the amount of vocabulary one possesses as vocabulary forms the biggest part of the meaning of any language (McCarthy, 1990). Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read and write. It means that if the students know a lot of words, so they will be able to hear and to read, and they will be able to say what they want. When they are studying English there are many new English words. They also find those words in the dictionary when they are translating to their language. In learning English as a foreign language, the important role of vocabulary is

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inevitable. It means that without vocabulary mastery they cannot communicate effectively.

Since vocabulary is a part of language learning and teaching, it is important to investigate vocabulary learning strategies which are suitable with the students' capability and learning situation in the classroom. In learning vocabulary items, it is useful and necessary for language learners to be taught vocabulary learning strategies in order they can learn how to discover the meaning of new words, how to store them in their memory, and how to use them by practising and expanding their vocabulary. In shipping industry, one of the requirements to be a qualified seafarer, as the student officer should have proficiency in using and understanding maritime English which influence the safety life at sea. It means that, the student officers are asked to acquire some vocabularies which one part of language learning.

Most researchers have specified a large number of vocabulary learning strategies used by the learners. A vocabulary strategy is a special instructional tool and way of going about directly or explicitly as well as the independent word learning skills required to learn words independently. According to Nation (2001), vocabulary learning strategies make learners able to take more responsibility for their own learning. He believes that a large amount of vocabulary can be acquired by using vocabulary learning strategies. He proposes that a large number of vocabulary learning strategies are helpful at all steps of vocabulary learning and can be used to an extensive range of vocabulary. In addition, he points to the fact that language learners by help of these strategies can control their own learning without the presence of a teacher. In addition, Nation (2001) reveals that learners are very different in the proficiency that they apply strategies with. In this case, the language learners should be instructed to use of vocabulary learning strategies.

Learning new vocabulary has always been challenging for the student officers. It may not be possible for them to learn all new vocabulary items only in the classroom setting. It is the task of the teacher to help students learn how to acquire new vocabulary on their own by using different strategies. Nation (1990: 2001) states that the most important way to learn vocabulary is learners using strategies independently of a teacher. According to Schmitt and Schmitt (1995) "the best teaching plan may be to introduce a variety of learning strategies to students so that they can decide for themselves the ones they prefer". This is one of the student officers need to develop their different strategy knowledge especially in learning vocabulary.

The study of vocabulary learning especially in maritime English is challenging since several problems still exist. Regarding the problems which still exist in vocabulary learning and the number of vocabulary recognition, the researcher aims to follow Schmitt's (1997) suggestion by identifying what learning strategies employed by the learners in learning English vocabulary and their tendencies to use strategies. The present

study is focused on exploration of vocabulary learning strategies used by the seafarers who study in maritime institution especially in Surabaya Merchant Marine Polytechnic (POLTEKPEL) which is related to the vocabulary type mastery.

Relating with the research title and the background of the study, three research questions are analyzed as follows:

1. What are the vocabulary learning strategies used by the student officers of Surabaya Merchant Marine Polytechnic (POLTEKPEL)?
2. What vocabulary types have the student officers mastered in learning maritime English vocabulary?
3. What are the student officers' tendencies in using vocabulary learning strategies to master vocabulary types?

Research Methodology

Based on the research title, this study is a descriptive study. There were several steps to get the data. Firstly, the subjects were given maritime English vocabulary test including the academic words and technical words to classify their ability in mastering vocabulary. Secondly, the questionnaire was given in order to identify the students' vocabulary learning strategies used when learning English. The questionnaire which was adapted from Schmitt (1997) consisted of 40 items. Thirdly, after getting the result of the student officers' vocabulary test and questionnaire, the researcher analyzed those results by categorizing the student officers' vocabulary test mastery, and then explored their tendencies in using vocabulary learning strategies to master vocabulary types.

The subjects of this study were the student officers who take a short course program to upgrade their proficiency certificate on level V which is called DP (Diklat Penjenjangan) – V in Surabaya Merchant Marine Polytechnic (POLTEKPEL). The total number of the DP – V class was fourteen classes. The average number of students from each class was thirty students. The subjects were chosen randomly from three classes of nautical class. All of them must have sailing experiences for at least 2 years in different types of ship with the rank position as able seaman. The subjects were male in the age ranging from 20 to 45 years old. They also had different educational background. Most of them graduated from senior high school.

In this study, there were two instruments. The first is vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire (VLSQ) which was adapted from Schmitt's questionnaire (1997) as seen in appendix 1. The vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire was used to answer research question 1. It was used to find out the student officers' vocabulary learning strategies used, the frequency, the mean and the standard deviation. Mean (\bar{X}) was used to range the subjects' use and opinion. Then, standard deviation (SD) was used to find out some significant differences of the subjects' use

and opinion from the mean value. In addition, they were asked to fill in the form of questionnaire which are divided into 5 categories consisting determination, social, memory, cognitive and metacognitive strategies then the students also were asked to rate each strategy on six rating scales (levels) including 1 = never, 2 = seldom, 3 = occasionally, 4 = often, 5 = usually, and 6 = always.

The second instrument was a maritime English vocabulary test. Communication at sea involves communication between ship to ship and ship to shore which is called “sea speak”. Sea speak is the most recent improvement of the IMO standard vocabulary for use in maritime communication which is used for safety, navigational, commercial, and miscellaneous purposes. Maritime navigational English is important for the seafarers to use maritime navigational English correctly and efficiently when communicating on board which influences sea safety. In this case, the student officers were expected to already have knowledge of some words which are related to the maritime terminology which are used to communicate on board ship. Therefore, maritime English vocabulary test which taken from ready to use word list based on lexical study of maritime navigational English materials by Jean (2010) was administered to answer research question 2 to find out the student officers’ mastery of vocabulary types which were categorized into academic words and technical words which can be seen in Appendix 2

Findings and Discussion

The Vocabulary Learning Strategies

In order to answer research question 1, 30 subjects of 3 nautical classes was chosen randomly to identify their strategies used in learning maritime English vocabulary. The subjects had to choose one of six ratings scale (level) directly to know their strategy in vocabulary learning.

Table 1
The Student Officers’ Vocabulary Learning Strategies

No	Students' Name	Vocabulary Learning Strategies				
		DET	SOC	MEM	COG	MTCG
1	IGB	4	3.29	3.91	3.67	4.13
2	IA	2.38	2	3.55	2.67	1.38
3	1RW	4.5	1.86	2.64	2.33	2.75
4	JP	2.13	2.71	2.36	3.5	2.5
5	JUN	3.88	3.86	3.73	3.67	3.63
6	KMK	4.88	4.86	4.45	4.33	4.5
7	KB	3.5	4	3.73	4.33	4.5
8	KYS	4.25	3.29	3.36	3.17	3.75
9	LS	3.5	1.43	1.91	2.17	1.75
10	MR	3.38	4.14	3.82	4.17	3.88
11	MSH	3.5	3.14	2.82	3	2.13
12	MNA	2.75	3.57	2.55	3.17	2.13
13	MM	2.13	1.43	2	3.5	1.75
14	MZ	3.38	3.57	3.82	3.17	3.75
15	MSN	4.25	2.14	1.82	2.5	2.63

16	MH	2.25	4.43	3.55	3.5	2.75
17	NMR	3.88	3.71	3.55	4.33	4
18	OAEP	4.25	3.43	4.18	3.83	4.88
19	PH	4	3.57	4.27	4.83	4
20	PR	3.5	1.57	1.36	2.17	1
21	RU	4.88	5.14	4.73	3.67	4
22	RH	3.13	3.29	2.91	3.5	3
23	RKH	4	3.14	3	3	3
24	RS	3.63	2.43	3.18	4	2
25	RYS	2.25	1	2.18	3.83	2.75
26	SB	2.75	3.57	2.64	2.67	2.75
27	SS	3.13	2.71	3.55	3.17	3.25
28	SL	3.63	3.43	3.27	3.67	2.25
29	SR	3.63	4	4.09	4.33	4
30	SJ	3.63	4.57	4.18	4.5	3.25
	Total	9	5	3	10	3

The table 1 above shows that there were 9 students who applied determination strategy, they were students numbered 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 15, 20, and 23. On the other hand, 5 students applied social strategy, they were students numbered 12, 16, 21, 26, and 30. Besides, 3 students applied memory strategy, they were students numbered 2, 14, and 27, while 10 students applied cognitive strategy and they were students numbered 4, 10, 13, 17, 19, 22, 24, 25, 28, and 29. Whereas the student numbered 1, 7, and 18 applied metacognitive strategy.

In addition, the most and least vocabulary learning strategies used by the student officers were identified as follows: there were 11 students out of 30 students (36.7%) who applied this strategy with mean 3.93 and standard deviation 1.39. However, 15 students (50%) occasionally listed vocabulary and reviewed it with mean 3.17 and standard deviation 1.05. In social strategies, 8 students (26.7%) often asked classmates to discover and understand the meaning of a new word with mean 4.1 and standard deviation 1.52 which can be found in item no. 12 in the questionnaire, whereas 15 students or 50% never interacted with the native speakers to study English with mean 2.07 and standard deviation 1.39.

Based on the memory strategies, there were 7 students (23.3%) who often learned words by paraphrasing the meaning of words, so that this part of strategy became the most frequently used strategy with mean 3.70 and standard deviation 1.62. On the other hand, 10 students (33.3%) occasionally used physical action when learning a word in memory strategy with mean 2.63 and standard deviation 1.42. In cognitive strategy, 13 students (43.3%) often took notes in class with mean 4.77 and standard deviation 1.22 which was revealed in item no. 29. Then, 12 students (40%) never kept a vocabulary notebook wherever they went. It was interpreted as the least frequently used strategy in cognitive strategy with mean 2.47 and standard deviation SD 1.52. In addition, in meta cognitive strategy, there were 5 students (16.7%) who often translated the meaning of the words from Indonesian into English with mean 3.63 and standard deviation 1.38. In contrast, there were 11 students (36.7%) who

occasionally played vocabulary games as their vocabulary learning strategy with mean 2.63 and standard deviation 1.07. Based on the description above, the result of the most vocabulary learning strategies use, least vocabulary learning strategies use, percentage (%), mean (X), and standard deviation (SD) can be seen in table 2 below:

Table 2
Most and Least Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used

Vocabulary Learning Strategies	Level of Opinion	Item	Number of Students	Percentage (%)	Mean (X)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Result
Determination Strategies							
Look-up a word in English – Indonesian dictionary	Most frequently used	6	11 students	36.7%	3.93	1.39	Often
List vocabulary and review it	Least frequently used	8	15 students	50%	3.17	1.05	Occasionally
Social Strategies							
Ask classmates for meaning	Most frequently used	12	8 students	26.7%	4.1	1.52	Often
Interact with native speaker	Least frequently used	15	15 students	50%	2.07	1.39	Never
Memory Strategies							
Learn the words by paraphrasing the words' meaning	Most frequently used	25	7 students	23.3%	3.70	11.62	Often
Use physical action when learning a word (e.g., the students will go to radar simulation room to know the function of radar)	Least frequently used	26	10 students	34.1%	2.68	1.12	Occasionally
Cognitive Strategies							
Take notes in class	Most frequently used	29	13 students	43.3%	4.77	1.22	Always

Keep a vocabulary notebook wherever they go	Least frequently used	32	12 students	40%	2.47	1.52	Never
Metacognitive Strategies							
Translate the meaning of the word from Indonesian to English	Most frequently used	35	5 students	16.7%	3.63	1.38	Often
Play vocabulary games	Least frequently used	39	11 students	36.7%	2.63	1.07	Occasionally

The Students' Vocabulary Type Mastery

The students who were classified having mastery of academic words had to have at least 12 correct answers which belonged to the threshold of correct items. Based on the result above, there were 12 students who mastered academic words, they were students numbered 1, 4, 7, 10, 17, 18, 19, 22, 24, 25, 28, and 29. 9 students were able to correctly answer 12 items and they were students numbered 1, 4, 7, 10, 17, 19, 22, 24, and 29. Then, student number 28 correctly answered 13 items, student number 18 correctly answered 14 items, and student number 25 correctly answered 15 items. From 18 items they could answer vocabulary which represented academic words such as *communication*, *route*, *precede*, *available*, *crew member*, *life raft*, *area*, and *transmit*. While, there were 18 students who had no mastery on academic words because they correctly answered below 12 items, they were students numbered 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, and 30.

Meanwhile, the students who were able to answer 12 items on technical words type correctly were considered that they had mastery of this vocabulary. There were 10 students who were able to correctly answer at least 12 items. They were students numbered 1, 2, 7, 14, 16, 18, 21, 26, 27, and 30. They could answer items that represented technical words such as mess room (rooms for having meals on board), reefer (other name of refrigerated ship), mayday (kind of signal used to announce a distress message), derrick (a device for handling cargo), starboard (the right side on vessel), and seafarer (all crew who work on board). On the other hand, 20 out of 30 students had no mastery on technical words type. In addition, there were only few students who had mastery on both academic and technical words type, they were students numbered 1, 7, and 18. Whereas, 11 students had no mastery of both academic and technical words type, they were not able to master the vocabulary well so that they got below 12 points of correct answers.

Based on the explanation above, the result of students' vocabulary mastery test can be seen in table 5 below:

Table 3
The Student Officers' Performance on Vocabulary Test

No	Students' Name	VOCABULARY TEST		Total Correct Answer
		Academic Words	Technical Words	
1	IGB	12 items	12 items	24 items
2	IA	10 items	12 items	22 items
3	IRW	11 items	10 items	21 items
4	JP	12 items	10 items	22 items
5	JUN	10 items	9 items	19 items
6	KMK	10 items	11 items	21 items
7	KB	12 items	13 items	25 items
8	KYS	7 items	8 items	15 items
9	LS	10 items	8 items	18 items
10	MR	12 items	11 items	23 items
11	MSH	10 items	11 items	21 items
12	MNA	10 items	11 items	21 items
13	MM	11 items	11 items	22 items
14	MZ	8 items	12 items	20 items
15	MSN	11 items	7 items	18 items
16	MH	7 items	13 items	20 items
17	NMR	12 items	11 items	23 items
18	OAEP	14 items	15 items	29 items
19	PH	12 items	10 items	22 items
20	PR	11 items	10 items	21 items
21	RU	11 items	12 items	23 items
22	RH	12 items	5 items	17 items
23	RKH	10 items	11 items	21 items
24	RS	12 items	7 items	19 items
25	RYS	15 items	10 items	25 items
26	SB	11 items	12 items	23 items
27	SS	10 items	12 items	22 items
28	SL	13 items	7 items	20 items
29	SR	12 items	8 items	20 items
30	SJ	9 items	13 items	22 items
	Total	12 students	10 students	0

The Tendencies in Using Vocabulary Learning Strategies to Master Vocabulary

Referring to the result of students' vocabulary learning strategies used and their vocabulary types mastery, it was found that the students who used determination strategy were not able to master both academic and technical words because from 9 students no one student who were able to master at least 12 correct answers. In determination strategy, the student officers most preferred finding the new words by using dictionary

especially English-Indonesian dictionary which is often used to find out the meaning of unknown words. The conclusion is English-Indonesian dictionary is an easy way to find out the meaning of new words. Dealing with other similar study, Schmitt's (1997) surveyed Japanese learners' strategies and reported the use and helpfulness of each strategy. The results of his study indicated that good learners have a strong preference for bilingual dictionaries and put emphasis on word forms to discover the meanings and consolidate learning. The learners perceive looking up words in bilingual dictionaries as a useful and helpful strategy. It is the most-frequently used strategy of all and it is widely used in Japan.

In social strategy, the students most preferred discussing new vocabulary with their friends than asking their teacher or native speaker to study new vocabulary. They liked asking their friends to exchange their ideas to handle some difficult words. Working in groups seems to help the students figure out the meanings of words faster than working independently. As seen in Schmitt and Schmitt's work (1995), the students who have opportunities to share vocabulary knowledge with other people can learn and remember the meaning of new vocabulary more effectively than students who study vocabulary individually. In memory strategy the student officers often learned English by paraphrasing the meaning of words. They often learned words by paraphrasing the words meaning which was expected could increase their knowledge about the new words meaning in vocabulary learning including words of maritime English and other words that seldom occur in any text.

In cognitive strategies which assigned as the most frequently used by the students (10 students or 33,33%) represented learn the word through verbal repetition, learn the word through written repetition, take notes in class, use the vocabulary section in the book, listen to a tape of word list, and keep a vocabulary notebook wherever the students go. However, based on the students' mean score there were 13 students who usually took notes in class with mean 4.77 and standard deviation 1.22. Meanwhile, there were 12 out of 30 students who never kept vocabulary notebook wherever they went. Presumably, the students may prefer taking notes after acquiring information about new words from their instructor. They paid more attention to the lesson when the teacher was teaching than listening to a tape of word lists. They might take notes while the instructor was teaching on different forms of materials, such as word lists and vocabulary notebooks. Schmitt (1997) points out that taking notes in class invites learners to create their own personal structure for newly-learned words, and also affords the opportunity for additional exposure during review.

Compared to cognitive strategy, metacognitive strategy was the least frequently used by the student officers (3 students or 10%) which represented the use of English media (e.g., song, movie, newspapers, magazines, internet, etc), test the students with the word tests, translate

the meaning of the words from Indonesian to English, translate the meaning of the words from English to Indonesian, continue to study the word overtime, practice by doing vocabulary exercises, playing vocabulary games, and trying to speak or describe things in English. There were 5 students who often translated the meaning of the words from Indonesian to English. Moreover, when the student officers worked on board ship, they were forced to read manual book concerning navigational terminology. In this case, it makes them forced to know the meaning of English words so that they could understand not only instructions but also operation of the navigational system on board ship. In fact there were 11 students who occasionally play vocabulary games as their vocabulary learning strategy which was considered as the least frequently used. The student officers occasionally used this strategy due to insufficient time in vocabulary learning in the classroom. There were only 3 students who tended to master both academic and technical words type. In all, dictionary is one of way to help the student officers to translate the meaning of new words from English into Indonesian or Indonesian into English.

Conclusion

The primary concern of this study was to analyze the vocabulary learning strategies used, vocabulary type mastery of the student officers as well their tendencies in using vocabulary learning strategies to master vocabulary types. Based on the results of vocabulary learning strategies used by the student officers of Surabaya Merchant Marine Polytechnic, it can be concluded that from the overall of five vocabulary learning strategies used, cognitive strategy was the most frequently strategy used by the student officers. Cognitive strategy is the strategy which is concerned with mechanical aspects of learning vocabulary. Based on students' categorization on vocabulary learning strategies used, there were 10 students (33.333%) who implemented cognitive strategy. They might prefer taking notes after acquiring information about new words from the instructor. In this case, the instructor plays an important role and will be the model in the classroom to help the students in learning vocabulary. They also had mastery of academic words type. There were 3 students (10%) who applied memory strategy which are considered as the least frequently used strategy by the student officers to learn maritime English. The students preferred learning the words by paraphrasing the meaning of words and they were able to master academic words type.

In determination strategy, the students often looked up the words from an English-Indonesian dictionary to find out the meaning of unknown words than other kind of strategy. Schmitt's study (1997) revealed that good learners have a strong preference for bilingual dictionaries and put emphasis on word forms to discover the meanings and consolidate learning. The learners perceive bilingual dictionaries as a useful and helpful strategy. On the other hand, in determination strategy,

there was no one who had mastery on academic and technical words type. There were 5 students or 12.09% of 91 students who used social strategy. Social strategies are the strategies which can be used to determine the meaning of words by asking teachers, classmates, and native speakers. This strategy can encourage the learners to interact and learn with each other. Besides, in social strategy the student officers tended to master technical words type vocabulary. In metacognitive strategy, 5 students (36.7%) often translated the meaning of the words from English to Indonesian. Metacognitive strategies are the strategies which can be used by the learners to find opportunities to learn and evaluate their own vocabulary learning. On the other hand, there were 11 students (36.7%) who occasionally played vocabulary games due to insufficient time in vocabulary learning and this strategy considered as the least frequently strategy used by students.

In short, the students who implemented determination strategies were not able to master academic and technical words type. The students who implemented social strategies tended to master technical words type. Then, the students who implemented memory strategies tended to master technical words type. On the other hand, the students who applied cognitive strategies tended to master academic words type. Meanwhile, the students who applied metacognitive strategies tended to master two vocabulary types which consist of academic words and technical words. The result of this study was described based on the real condition of the subjects with different age, prior knowledge, and educational background.

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Appendix 1
A Taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Strategy Group	
Strategy for the discovery a new word's meaning	
Determination	Analyze part of speech
Determination	Analyze affixes and roots
Determination	Check for L1 cognate
Determination	Analyze any available pictures or gestures
Determination	Guess from the textual context
Determination	Bilingualdictionary (e.g. English-Indonesian dictionary)
Determination	Monolingual dictionary (e.g. English-English dictionary)
Determination	Word List
Determination	Flash cards
Social (discovery)	Ask teacher for an L1 translation
Social (discovery)	Ask teacher for paraphrase or synonym of a new word
Social (discovery)	Ask teacher for a sentence including the new word
Social (discovery)	Ask teacher for meaning
Social (discovery)	Discover new meaning through group work activity
Strategy Group	
Strategies for consolidating a word	
Social (consolidation)	Study and practice meaning in a group
Social (consolidation)	Teacher checks students' flash cards or word list for accuracy
Social (consolidation)	Interact with native speakers
Memory	Study word with a pictorial representation of its meaning
Memory	Imagine word's meaning
Memory	Connect word to a personal experience
Memory	Associate the word to its synonyms and antonyms
Memory	Use semantic mapping
Memory	Use "scales" for gradable adjectives
Memory	Peg method
Memory	Loci method
Memory	Group words together to study them
Memory	Group words together spatially on a page
Memory	Use new word in sentence
Memory	Group words together within a storyline
Memory	Study the sound of a word

Memory	Study the spelling of a word
Memory	Say new word aloud when studying
Memory	Imagine word form
Memory	Underline initial letter of the word
Memory	Configuration
Memory	Use keyword method
Memory	Affixes and roots (remembering)
Memory	Part of speech (remembering)
Memory	Paraphrase the word's meaning
Memory	Use cognate in study
Memory	Learn the words of an idiom together
Memory	Use physical action when learning a word
Cognitive	Use of verbal repetition
Cognitive	Use written repetition
Cognitive	Use of word lists
Cognitive	Use of flash cards
Cognitive	Take notes in class
Cognitive	Use the vocabulary section in the textbook
Cognitive	Listen to tape of word lists
Cognitive	Put English labels on physical objects
Cognitive	Keep a vocabulary notebook
Metacognitive	Use English-language media (songs, movies, newspaper, etc)
Metacognitive	Testing oneself with word test
Metacognitive	Use spaced word practice
Metacognitive	Skip or pass new word
Metacognitive	Continue to study word over time