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TEACHING STRATEGY IN ENRICHING THE EFL STUDENTS' VOCABULARY THROUGH LITERATURE

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Abstract

Vocabulary acquisition is one of the important elements that can support the students' language proficiency. It helps students to follow and enjoy the teaching content delivered by their teachers. The educator of the EFL context, particularly at lower secondary school, attempts to design the teaching material which is oriented to enrich the students' vocabulary acquisition. The research discovers that various ways can be used to build students' vocabulary. One of them is literature. Therefore, this research aims to investigate can English literary works be integrated with the teaching strategies to develop the EFL students' vocabulary. To observe it, the researchers use library research to find and analyze some sources (e.g. articles, proceedings, books) as the collected data, which discuss enriching English vocabulary through literature. The result shows that two things must be considered if teachers would like to incorporate literary works in their content. 1) Types of literary works used by teachers to enhance their learners' vocabulary, 2) Teacher's teaching strategy to make the EFL learners memorize the unrecognize words.

Keywords: EFL Students, English literature, English vocabulary, teacher's teaching strategy

Introduction

Vocabulary plays a crucial role in expressing ideas. Besides, vocabulary can be expressed through both written and oral language. Having various vocabulary can be a guide for students to read and understand the textual sources e.g. books, articles, essays, etc. It can also help people to obtain information written on the news media. Vocabulary acquisition also helps people to maintain a good interaction that affects their social network. Therefore Al-dersi (2013) states that

the more vocabulary people have, the better they communicate with their interlocutor.

Besides, utilizing vocabulary in communication depends on the social situation (Baharuddin et al., 2021). It is because language is inseparable from the speakers' social or academic background. For instance, people who present their research material at a particular conference or a scholarly seminar will express thousands of academic vocabulary rather than utter everyday words.

On the other hand, when they socialize with their friends at the restaurant, café, or gym place, they prefer using general vocabulary rather than the academic lexicons which are usually used informal communication. The linguist indicates that in language studies, this phenomenon is called Sociolinguistics (Lomotey & Csajbok-Twerefou, 2021).

Furthermore, Bagiyan et al. (2021) state that the use of vocabulary in communication represents the speaker's social class level. They argue that in a real interaction, the language receivers might rate or at least guess the senders' social identity, whether they are from the upper social class or the opposite class, through their vocabulary use. This means there is a significant difference between those who are in the upper social class and bottom class in applying vocabulary for their communication (Hardini & Sitohang, 2019).

Moreover, the use of vocabulary also can relate to the political interest of politicians in persuading their voters (Thomas & Wareing, 1999). This case can frequently be seen through the speech of a politician or presidential candidate to win the presidential election which is broadcast on the national TV program. This situation pushes all candidates to enrich numerous vocabulary which are powerful, persuasive, and agitative to campaign their program in front of the public.

These all explanations above inform the readers how important vocabulary are in expressing thought and speech especially for those who study for academic purposes. In English Language Teaching (ELT) field, transferring English content should consider the learners' vocabulary acquisition (Nation & Mecalister, 2010). It indicates that teachers should apply Need Analysis (NA) approach to discover their students' strengths or lacks such as the learners' grammatical understanding or learners' vocabulary acquisition.

If teachers perceive that students are lack vocabulary, then teachers should focus on enriching their students' vocabulary while at the same time delivering their teaching content (Lestari & Isma, 2019). Ensuring students' have sufficient vocabulary is important, because how can they receive the teaching content/information if they just have minimum words. Besides, it might hamper students to vocalize their notions whether in or out of class. That is why, Cahyono & Widiati (2015) argue that vocabulary, in the ELL field, is the crucial ingredient for receiving the English curriculum.

Improving students' English vocabulary either for the L1 or L2 students, certainly, have a different method with the English as Foreign Language (EFL) students (August et al., 2005). The latest type of English student should be taught with a unique teaching approach when desire to enrich their learners' words. One of the recommended ways to build the EFL students' vocabulary is by applying either an intensive reading or an extensive reading of the literary works (Gibson, 2016). However, in providing the appropriate literary works as the reading

passage, the teacher should be more selective in giving types of literary works that are suitable to their learners' level. Therefore, from this case, the researchers focus on elaborating some points which are objectified as the research problems as follow;

1. What types of literary works are effectively used by the teacher to enhance the English students' vocabulary?
2. What are the teachers' teaching strategies to make the English learners memorize the unrecognized words?

Literature Review

Teaching Strategy in Improving Students Vocabulary

Andi & Arafah (2017) states that the pedagogical model depends on the teachers' ability in delivering the teaching content. Many teaching instruments can be applied for improving students' vocabulary. The teaching model can be seen as follow;

a. Baharuddin et al. (2021) perceive that a good instrument that is recommended to use for vocabulary enhancement is English songs. By using song teachers might train students' ability in recognizing new vocabulary written in the lyric based on their learners' favorite song.
b. Hashemifardnia et al. (2018) claim that to enrich students' vocabulary, teachers might use picture books.
c. Sari & Aminatun (2021) explain that movies could be another effective instrument in building vocabulary for foreign language learners.

From the three above instruments, it can be perceived that there are both advantages and disadvantages things gained by English learners if teachers apply them. For instance, by using the song as a pedagogical instrument, students are not only obtaining vocabulary but also training their listening and pronunciation skills. Furthermore, constructing teaching content for enriching vocabulary through the picture book is also good advice, because it can train students' memory to memorize the vocabulary of objects shown through books. The last, applying movie scene basically can represent both previous instruments, because while acquiring lots of words produced by the movie character, students also train their listening sharpness. These are the benefits that students can gain if teachers apply these instruments in their pedagogical content.

Nevertheless, using these three instruments also have some lacks which the researchers perceive as a critic of these three teaching tools. For instance, using the song for vocabulary enhancement, cannot train the learners' grammatical ability. Because, in the song lyric there are many grammatical mistakes, idioms, and Slang that can hamper the young learners to understand the context of vocabulary use (Squires, 2019). Therefore, enriching students' vocabulary through English songs is not effective for academic purposes.

Thereafter, integrating the picture-book expected to increase students' vocabulary is renowned for the elementary school context or especially for the EFL primary students' level. Yet, it is ineffectual for the EFL intermediate students' level. Finally, incorporating movies in designing pedagogical content for vocabulary development is surely favorable when there is a targeted language subtitle of the conversational sentence. However, if the teacher continually utilizes

this instrument on their pedagogical content, then students will always be dependent on using subtitles for gaining unfamiliar vocabulary instead of guessing the meaning from its context.

Therefore, the researchers, in this point, argue that one of the effective instruments for enriching vocabulary either for young learners or intermediate learners is applying literature. Through literature, students can gain numerous and varied vocabulary that can support their academic purpose (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019). Because, in literary work, provides some linguistics variable e.g. morphology (lexicon and vocabulary), syntax (grammatical form), semantic (meaning of words), and pragmatics (meaning in socio-cultural context). The explanation of literature is comprehensively elaborated in the below point.

Defining Literature and Literary Work

The definition of literature is varied. It can be perceived through some literary experts' explanations. Baharuddin & Arafah (2021) define that literature as an imaginative writing art that seeks to portray the author's social and political circumstances. Sturges (2010), on the other hand, states that literature is an art that contains comedy purposed to entertain people. It means that literature is an enjoyable instrument that can amuse people.

Furthermore, Feinberg & Willer (2019) enhance that literature also describes the moral value that can be educative media for the literary readers. This statement amplifies that in literary content, there is a social message and ethics that can be shown through the characters' conversations. For instance, the conversation between the older character who often time express a wise term or beautiful words to the youngest character who obey and respect the older character. This certainly indicates the social ethic when interacting with the respected or older person in real life.

Literature also can be a good approach to increase the readers' critical thinking (Bobkina & Stefanova, 2016). In gaining information written in the literary text, readers might sometimes correlate the characters' social circumstances in the literature to the readers' real situation. Readers might wonder some critical questions by stating "is the story true? does this story relate to my situation? What should I do if I were the character in this story?". Therefore, reading literature consciously or unconsciously will automatically trigger the readers' curiosity.

Moreover, in foreign language teaching, many teachers utilize literature to develop the foreign language students' vocabulary. It is because, literature consists of numerous types of vocabulary from everyday words to academic words (Ferey & Brown, 2004). This means literature could also be described as language teaching media. From all of these literary experts' explanations, it can be concluded that literature can provide various insights such as increasing critical thinking, knowing social ethics through the story, and enriching new vocabulary.

Types of Literary Work

The type of literary works consists of three works i.e. Prose, Poetry, and Drama (Pradopo, 2011). Prose regards the literary story which does not need to consider rhyme. The story represents the author's thoughts which describe social phenomena, experience, ideology, etc. prose should consist of some intrinsic

elements such as character, plot, setting, and theme. The prose could be exemplified as fiction, novel, short story, autobiography, and others.

Furthermore, Poetry also refers to the art of writing style which is concerned with rhyme and tone (Simecek & Rumbold, 2016). Poetry has a similar idea with prose which is also concerned about the author's thought authority. It can be a medium for vocalizing ideology, social phenomena, and even critics. However, this type of literary work does not need some intrinsic elements as prose. Poetry strictly uses beautiful words, that seek to represent the author's feeling, instead of paying attention to grammatical forms. This is what a literary expert called "poetic license" (Veling, 2019).

The last type of literary works is drama which also relates to performing art (Dewi, 2017). The drama concerns social reality that depicts human life e.g. conflict, emotion, relationship, etc. Nevertheless, the story is demonstrated on stage where people can watch it directly. This is the distinction between drama and other types of literary work.

Method

Research Design

The design of this paper is library research. In conducting this library research, the researchers apply qualitative research methodology to gather information or related sources as a research data procedure. Besides, the qualitative methodology used in this research also helps the researchers to investigate how literary works are applicable and objectified as a pedagogical strategy for enriching the EFL students' vocabulary.

Instrument

Furthermore, in collecting data, the researchers firstly separate two types of data i.e. primary data & supporting data. The primary data represent the idea of using literary works as a teaching instrument in enriching the EFL students' vocabulary. It can be gained from scholarly journals e.g. articles, proceedings, and previous research which have a relevant topic with this research. Another type of data i.e. the supporting data refers to some additional sources e.g. books, articles, and literary texts which support the argument of this research in answering the research problems.

Data Analysis

After gaining both primary and supporting data, the researchers seek to analyze them with several variables. Those variables analyzed for the result of this research are linguistic aspects, social or moral value, and entertaining aspects. By elaborating on these three variables, the researchers expect that it can be presenting the advantageous things for integrating literature for pedagogical content. So that the learners are not only obtaining a variety of vocabulary for supporting their academic purpose but also gaining other benefits beyond the vocabulary enrichment.

Findings and Discussion

As has been discussed before, many scholars have demonstrated some pedagogical instruments for building the EFL students' vocabulary. Those instruments have strength and lack. Therefore, this research proffers another teaching instrument that effectively can develop more vocabularycabu that might be applied for the students' academic purpose namely literary works. To elaborate more detail about it, these research results are separated into two substantial parts i.e. 1) What types of literary works are effectively used by the teacher to enhance the EFL students' vocabulary? 2) What are the teachers' teaching strategies to make the English learners memorize the unrecognized words?

Types of Literary Works Effectively Used by Teacher to Enhance the EFL Students' Vocabulary

Fundamentally, all types of literary works can be used for vocabulary enhancement (Mart, 2018). It is because literary works provide thousands of words whether it is general vocabulary or academic vocabulary. For instance, teachers might apply poetry for enhancing their learners' English words. This case is reasserted by Özen & Mohammadzadeh (2012) that poetry is the most powerful instrument for building EFL students' vocabulary. Özen & Mohammadzadeh state as follow;

> *" ..., it is verified that the learners enhance more extensive vocabulary knowledge by means of poetry-based vocabulary teaching activities"* (Özen & Mohammadzadeh, 2012, p. 70).

The above statement clarifies that by using poetry in the teacher's teaching content, students can gain more vocabulary which is useful both for teaching and learning activities. Besides, Özen & Mohammadzadeh argue that one of the reasons why poetry is still recommended to be used for the EFL teaching content is due to the simplicity of the sentence which allows the EFL students to recognize and become familiar with the words. In poetry, most written texts are shorter than prose, so students do not have to spend much time reading words (Simecek & Rumbold, 2016).

Moreover, Deepa & Ilankumaran (2018) presume that through poetry students can gain beautiful and romantic words which is a good social capital for practicing their communicative competence to their special relationship. In other words, it can be proper for maintaining their communication with their lovers, friends, etc. Nonetheless, there is an unfortunate thing if poetry is used for the students' vocabulary enhancement i.e. the existence of poetic license terms. This term means poetry writing is an authority of authors whether they want to write their poetry using the syntactical form or not. Therefore, at some point, applying poetry is sometimes ineffective especially if the teaching content tries to combine vocabulary enhancement and grammatical form (Ariyani, 2019).

Despite that, Snowber (2005) surely believes that using poetry as a pedagogical instrument in a foreign language context can help students to sharpen their listening skills. Because, when a student expresses their favorite poetry in front of their classmate, then their classmate can listen attentively to every word vocalized by the student. Besides, if this teaching instrument is linked to

phonetics, as a part of linguistic aspects, the student also can materialize the pronunciation of words when expressing the poetry due to its rhyme and rhythm that also relate to the English accent (Khaleghi et al., 2020). By vocalizing the words loudly, the teacher can notice whether students spell or misspell the words. Both points mean a teacher can assess their learners' ability both for the listening skill and words pronunciation.

Furthermore, in transferring the English content, especially for enhancing students' vocabulary, drama is also presumed as a crucial instrument (Ilyas, 2016). In the language skill teaching context, drama provides both productive and receptive skills that can be possessed by the EFL students. It is because drama regards the performing art which shows language practicing on the stage. Educators, who incorporate drama in their teaching content, can invite their students to involve in the drama showcase. So that can be practicing students' productive skills (particularly for speaking skills) and receptive skills (listening skills). Moreover, by applying drama as a teaching method, students will have varied benefits such as being good at acting as a drama character (creativity), able to increase critical thinking, understanding the value, etc. These things can be seen as follow;

> *"…, its effectiveness in English language teaching and its relation with improving language skills (reading, listening, writing, speaking) and language component (vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, etc). Besides this, studies on drama in EFL could be connected to the teaching of democracy, critical thinking, and creativity,…"* (Ilyas, 2016, p. 205).

The above statement shows that applying drama for the language skill context is complex. It is applicable to train the language skill both productively and receptively. However, if drama is used to enhance students' vocabulary, then it is slightly difficult, especially for the EFL young students.

Therefore, the last type of literary works (prose) is a great approach for developing the EFL students' vocabulary. Prose, especially novel or short story, is a literary text which contained a story (based on the author's psychological perception, imagination, and social circumstance) and it is written with varied vocabulary and language grammatical form (Setyowati & Sukmawan, 2018).

Arafah & Kaharuddin (2019) furthermore state that one of the logical reasons why studying English using prose fiction is enjoyable is because it provides some intrinsic elements such as character, plot, theme, and setting (nevertheless, this research just focuses on elaborating character, plot, and theme). For example, through character, the EFL students who are also objectified as literary readers can learn some discourses from the main character (protagonist) or the opposite character (antagonist). Besides, from the character, learners gain that the goodness that exists in the protagonist character's inner will always defeat the evil character. So that students will be enthusiastic to continue their literary reading.

Furthermore, through literary plot students can follow every scene or occurrence inside of the prose (novel or short story). According to Tevdovska (2016), psychologically this situation motivates students to finish the story due to its interesting plot of the literary prose. In other words, if students are motivated and also curious to see what happens from the conflict situation to the climax

scene, students/readers will continually fasten their reading. Tevdoska objectifies that this situation is one of the benefits that students can gain from learning English through literary prose.

The third element of literary prose intrinsic is the theme which is importantly discussed in the ELT. Theme simply refers to a central topic, the main idea of works, and the message. The theme does not only come from the author's authority. The theme also can be interpreted and developed by readers (Kurtz & Schober, 2001). It means through critical thinking, readers can determine the theme of their reading.

In regards to the ELL, students can independently choose what kind of literary prose or story they want to read. This means, if students are interested to read about the romantical issue in literary prose, then they can have the story which talks about that e.g. novels of *Madame Bovary* written by Flaubert Gustave (originally published in 1856), *It Ends with Us* written by Colleen Hoover (2016), *Forgiving Paris* written by Karen Kingsbury (2021), etc. On the other hand, if they are interested to have political and social discourse in the story, then they can read the novel *Animal Farm* & *1984* which both written by George Orwell (1945 & 1949), a novel of *Hard Time* written by Charles Dickens (1854), etc. By providing both of these themes to the English learners, teachers can train their students to be independent in doing their extensive and intensive reading.

From the intrinsic elements of literary prose explanation above, it can be reiterated that integrating prose in ELT provides many outputs for students such as enthusiasm, motivation, and interest-based on the literary themes. These three things are factors that encourage students to read. The consequence of reading literary work a lot will make them acquire numerous vocabulary and grammatical understanding. Therefore, it can hypothesize that to enhance the EFL students' vocabulary, teachers might utilize prose as a type of literary work in their teaching content. However, this does not mean that other types of literary works cannot be used in increasing students' words.

Teacher's Teaching Strategies to Make the EFL Learners Memorize the Unrecognized Words

In the language teaching process, the teacher plays an important role in planning, delivering, and assessing the teaching material. Djigic & Stojiljkovic (2011) utter that these three things should be unified as a teaching management strategy. However, at this point, the researcher just focuses on elaborating two strategies i.e. planning and delivering the teaching material.

Planning the Teaching Material for the Vocabulary Enhancement

In planning the material, the teacher should analyze the students' needs in terms of lacks, necessities, and goals (Nation & Mecalister, 2010). By analyzing the students' needs, the teacher can design the teaching content based on their learners' skill level or their type of needs. Besides, conducting the NA approach will inform the teacher about students' personalities. Djigic & Stojiljkovic (2011) argue that knowing students' personalities is important to build good communication emotionally between teachers and students.

Besides, concerning teaching planning, Cerit (2011) states that planning/preparing material is the notable teaching strategies to deliver the

teaching content. He furthermore states that in planning the teaching content, the teacher can do preservice-class to investigate every obstacle that has been hampering students to follow the subject e.g. lacks learning facilities, lacks of language competence, or lacks learning motivation. To conduct the teaching planning, the teacher might do several important strategies i.e. observing (using questionnaires) and interviewing.

Observing (using a questionnaire) is a good way to seek numbers of percentages of learners' learning satisfaction. The numbers of percentages will inform teachers who like or do not like the previous teaching method. If the teacher perceives that most students do not like the previous teaching method, then it will be the appropriate way to transform the teaching style.

Furthermore, the second strategy is also required to design or plan the teaching material. This strategy aims at inviting students to express their thought, idea, or suggestion in planning material through interviews. Widodo (2017) perceives that this strategy is a chance for both teachers and students to negotiate the teaching model. Widodo also argues that this strategy is opposite to the classic teaching model where the teacher is the only one who plans and designs the teaching curriculum. In negotiating the teaching content, both teachers and students deserve the right to voice their educative agendas where they can plan the topics of the subject, conduct the learning process, and evaluate it.

Widodo furthermore states that by conducting this model, especially in planning the teaching material, students are motivated to follow the lesson because the content is based on their interests. For example, in terms of vocabulary enhancement, teachers and students can negotiate what kind of literary work that can be used for a class activity. Learners can give a variety of suggestions and teachers can decide those students' suggestions. The researchers perceive that if this mothed is integrated with the teaching plan, students are easier to memorize the words because they can follow the content gradually.

Delivering the Teaching Material for Memorizing Vocabulary

As has been mentioned in the previous point that in transferring the teaching content, both teacher and students should negotiate in designing the lesson. In terms of vocabulary enhancement, if both teacher and students agree in selecting a particular story of literary work (drama), then the teacher can encourage students to practice the act of character in the story, scene of the story, reading the characters' conversation in the story, and even message of the story. Afterward, teachers can make a drama showcase to make them apply and memorize all the new words that they acquire.

Miccoli (2003) states that this activity above is a good strategy that can help students to memorize all the new words. He furthermore gives an additional perspective that drama is an applicable art that is not only increasing and helping students to memorize the vocabulary but also can train their confidence when expressing the words in front of the public.

In addition, to help students to memorize their English vocabulary, the teacher can also ask students to apply extensive reading. Jacobs & Renandya (2015) state that in doing extensive reading, students are asked to pay attention (concentration) and focus on the literary text that they are reading. Extensive reading leads students to read a lot. Students can select the reading topic based on

their interests. For example, students can choose what genre of the novel they would like to read. It could be a romantical topic, social prose topic, religious topic, etc.

The researcher enhances that to make students memorize the new vocabulary, the teacher should integrate the technological devices (e.g. computer, laptop, or mobile phone) and internet access in their teaching content (Ratika et al., 2021). As has been known that the rapid development of technology and the internet help both teacher and students to conduct e-learning especially during the covid-19 pandemic.

Anas (2019) states that teacher plays a crucial role in encouraging students to have technological knowledge (TK). Through TK, students can operate both technology and the internet to find out some sources related to their lesson. Students also can become independent learners in improving their vocabulary. For example, through their smartphone, they can access some English learning strategy videos on Youtube or any channel. Besides, through their mobile phone, they can also download English literature applications on the Playstore that can provide many literary works in terms of prose, poetry, and drama script).

Conclusion

Vocabulary acquisition is one of the important elements that can support the students' language proficiency. Having numerous English words can help students to follow each of the lesson sessions in every meeting. In the ELT field especially at the secondary school level, the EFL teachers have been trying to design the teaching curriculum and their content which is oriented to enrich students' vocabulary. Some teachers apply Song or picture-book in their teaching content. However, the above result shows that employing literature/ literary works (Prose, Poetry, and Drama) in the teacher's teaching material is positively effective to improve students' vocabulary. Moreover, the use of literature in teacher's material not only enhances students' vocabulary but also students know the context of expressing the words. Besides, they also can gain other benefits, out vocabulary enrichment, such as reading comprehension skills, the message of the story, and cultural understanding.

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