

## **Strategies Used by English Teachers in Teaching Vocabulary**

Endah Fauziningrum<sup>1\*</sup>, Mike Nurmalia Sari<sup>2</sup>, Sofia F Rahmani<sup>3</sup>, Rinda Riztya<sup>4</sup>, Syafruni<sup>5</sup>, Pria Mitra Purba<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Maritim AMNI, Jl. Soekarno Hatta No.180, Palebon, Kec. Pedurungan, Kota Semarang, Jawa Tengah,

<sup>2</sup>STKIP Muhammadiyah Sungai Penuh, Jl. R.E. Martadinata No.2, Ps. Sungai Penuh, Kec. Sungai Penuh, Kota Sungai Penuh, Jambi,

<sup>3,4</sup>Institut Bisnis Nusantara, Jl. Pulo Mas Timur No.3a, RT.1/RW.16, Kayu Putih, Kec. Pulo Gadung, Kota Jakarta Timur, Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta,

<sup>5</sup>Universitas Bina Bangsa Getsempena, Jl. Tanggul Krueng Lamnyong No.34, Rukoh, Kec. Syiah Kuala, Kota Banda Aceh, Aceh,

<sup>6</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Jl. William Iskandar Ps. V, Medan Estate, Kec. Percut Sei Tuan, Kabupaten Deli Serdang, Sumatera Utara.

endah.amni@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

English-language higher education instruction in non-English-speaking nations is now a reality in a number of locales. Teachers that are leading the way in teaching English need to have the best teaching methods, particularly when it comes to teaching vocabulary. To meet learning objectives, techniques and their justifications must be obvious. To address these issues, the researchers employed a qualitative technique and a descriptive research design. English instructors were the study's subject. based on examination of the documentation, interview, and observation. According to the study's findings, (1) both of the English teachers at MTsS Siulak Gedang employed dictionaries and translation techniques to teach their pupils vocabulary. (2) The explanations provided by teachers for their usage of the translation approach include the methods suit their teaching materials and it is easy to conduct.

**Keywords:** Teacher, Teaching Strategy, Vocabulary

### **Abstrak**

Pengajaran pendidikan tinggi berbahasa Inggris di negara-negara yang tidak berbahasa Inggris kini menjadi kenyataan di sejumlah negara. Para pengajar yang menjadi pelopor dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris harus memiliki metode pengajaran yang terbaik, terutama dalam hal pengajaran kosakata. Untuk mencapai tujuan pembelajaran, teknik dan justifikasinya harus jelas. Untuk mengatasi masalah ini, para peneliti menggunakan teknik kualitatif dan desain penelitian deskriptif. Berdasarkan studi dokumentasi, wawancara, dan observasi, peneliti menemukan bahwa para pengajar bahasa Inggris adalah subjek penelitian. Berdasarkan temuan penelitian, (1) kedua guru bahasa Inggris di MTsS Siulak Gedang menggunakan kamus dan teknik penerjemahan untuk mengajarkan kosakata kepada siswa mereka. (2) Penjelasan yang diberikan oleh para guru mengenai penggunaan pendekatan penerjemahan termasuk bahwa metode tersebut sesuai dengan materi pengajaran mereka dan mudah dilakukan.

**Kata kunci:** Guru, Strategi Pengajaran, Kosakata

Copyright (c) 2023 Endah Fauziningrum, Mike Nurmalia Sari, Sofia F Rahmani, Rinda Riztya, Syafruni, Pria Mitra Purba

---

Corresponding author: Endah Fauziningrum

Email Address: [endah.amni@gmail.com](mailto:endah.amni@gmail.com) (Jl. Soekarno Hatta No.180, Palebon, Kec. Pedurungan, Kota Semarang, Jawa Tengah)

Received 17 May 2023, Accepted 24 May 2023, Published 24 May 2023

## **INTRODUCTION**

In various situations, instruction for higher education in English is provided in countries where English is not the native language. Teaching English as a foreign language is distinct from teaching English as a first language, relating to instructing individuals, such as Indonesian students, whose primary language is not English. In Indonesia, English is a mandatory course in the 2013 curriculum. Teaching English as a second language under the curriculum 2013 includes mastering several

proficiencies, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Acquiring these skills necessitates a fundamental comprehension of the fundamentals of language learning, particularly vocabulary. Vocabulary is critical for effective communication, and individuals must acquire and understand many vocabulary words

Students must acquire a thorough understanding of vocabulary when studying a language. Knowledge of vocabulary is pivotal in gaining proficiency in a foreign language and is vital to language learning. To communicate effectively in a foreign language, it is essential to possess a sufficient vocabulary. This element connects the four domains of language skills; speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Therefore, students must acquire many words and master their precise usage. Wilkins in Thornbury states that with grammar, more can be conveyed; with vocabulary, something can be conveyed.

Teaching vocabulary for junior high school is not easy because students of junior high schools are teenagers, so it is essential to introduce English, especially vocabulary, with appropriate strategy. Some strategies can be used in teaching vocabulary; they are: (1) Lesson strategy, find the problematic word in the textbook, (2) Picture or object strategy, the teacher could draw a picture of a wheelchair on the board and use a picture, (3) Mime or gesture strategy, (4). Different Context Strategy, (5) Explaining the meaning of word strategy, (6) Dictionaries Strategy, (7) Summary Strategy, and (8) Game Strategy. The other strategies that can be used in teaching vocabulary are translation, explanation, enumeration, realia, mime, content, and presentation strategies.

According to the field notes from the researchers, the teacher at MTsS Siulak Gedang encountered a challenge when teaching English due to students' limited understanding of the language. The challenge resulted in a lack of focus and motivation during class, making it difficult for the teacher to choose effective teaching strategies and materials. To overcome this issue, the teacher must understand students' needs and preferences and involve them more in learning. Currently, the teaching style is very one-dimensional, which leads to monotony and a lack of progress in the student's English proficiency, as evidenced by their hesitancy when questioned on specific topics.

Numerous investigations have been conducted on methods of imparting vocabulary knowledge, focusing on the research by Al-Khresheh and Al-Ruwaili, which delves into An Exploratory Study on Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by Saudi EFL learners. Results indicate that seven of the study's subjects favoured the memory strategy. This study examines an instructor's techniques in teaching English vocabulary to the Eight Grade pupils at MTsS Siulak Gedang. Does this paper tackle two main issues: (1) What methods are used by the teacher to impart vocabulary knowledge to the Eight Grade students of MTsS Siulak Gedang? And (2) The reasons behind the teacher's use of vocabulary teaching strategies in this particular age group at MTsS Siulak Gedang.

## **METHOD**

The study employed a qualitative approach that incorporated descriptive research. The researchers used observation, interviews, and documentation techniques to gather data from individuals, objects, and organizations that could provide relevant information. Specifically, the study focused on two English teachers from MTsS Siulak Gedang as the informants. The data obtained were then analyzed using various techniques such as data collection, reduction, display, and conclusion/verification. To ensure the validity of the research instruments, the researchers sought expert judgment from an English lecturer through face validity. To validate the data, triangulation was conducted by combining information from observation, interviews, and documentation.

In terms of data analysis, the initial step involved data reduction, which entailed summarizing the interview and field note data by extracting the key elements related to the research problems. The researcher selectively included only the interview data that pertained to the teaching vocabulary strategies used by the English teacher. The detailed classroom observation data was organized according to the teaching activities (pre-activity, while-activity, and post-activity) and categorized based on predefined criteria and characteristics of teaching activities. The strategies employed by the English teacher were identified based on this data.

The subsequent step involved presenting the data, which included providing information about the teacher's vocabulary teaching strategies based on the interview data and teachers' responses. The field note data was presented in a table matrix format to facilitate the identification of the most commonly used approach by the teacher in teaching English vocabulary. The gathered data were then interpreted and edited for use in the study.

Finally, a provisional conclusion was drawn based on the findings from the interviews and field notes. The researcher compared the results obtained from both sources to determine whether the strategies used by the teacher in teaching English vocabulary were consistent with the implemented classroom teaching strategy. Once the conclusion was reached, the researchers addressed the research questions posed at the beginning of the study.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. The strategies used by English teachers in teaching vocabulary to Eighth Grade Students' of MTsS Siulak Gedang**

The interview revealed that the English teachers at MTsS Siulak Gedang utilized a translation strategy when teaching vocabulary to their students. Classroom observation demonstrated that both teachers relied heavily on translation, often translating all the material used for learning. This approach occasionally resulted in students remaining silent and not responding to questions posed by the teachers, either due to a lack of understanding or knowledge of the answer. Though translation can be a convenient and quick method of conveying meaning, it has drawbacks. Difficulties can arise in translating words, which may deter students from engaging with the language.

Furthermore, the English teachers at MTsS Siulak Gedang admitted to using dictionaries as a strategy. Dictionaries are a helpful resource that both teachers and students can utilize. When reading or listening to English, students may encounter unfamiliar vocabulary, and a dictionary can assist in defining the words. As English boasts a vast lexicon, it is impractical to know all the words and a dictionary can provide more information about specific words.

Based on observations in their classrooms, it was determined that both of MTsS Siulak Gedang's English instructors employed the Translation Strategy, in which they translated the vast majority of the texts used in their lessons. Many pupils choose to remain silent in response to a teacher's query. The kids either do not comprehend the questions or do not know the solutions. The next step in the course involves the instructor translating the questions and the material directly.

Nonetheless, the instructors should have employed alternative approaches when teaching the students vocabulary, despite the abundance of available strategies. Suyanto (2010: 65) indicates that when teaching vocabulary, educators ought to furnish learners with visual aids to provide direct comprehension of the words. An instance of this is the provision of pictures by instructors to serve as visual aids, making the content more comprehensible. To enhance English vocabulary teaching, teachers should present words in a contextual form to simplify the instructional process and provide tangibility to the material presented.

## 2. The reasons for using strategies used by English teachers in teaching vocabulary to Eighth Grade Students' of MTsS Siulak Gedang

From the interview, it was found that the teachers stated that the strategy is suitable for teaching vocabulary to the students. The first teacher said that she applies the strategy because many students struggle to understand the text in English, so the translation strategy and a dictionary strategy can help them understand the vocabulary better. The second teacher also agreed that applying the translation strategy is good because the students can understand the text and do the exercises after translating it together, whether the teacher explains it to them or asks them to check the problematic words in their dictionary.

From the interview, it is found that the teachers stated that the teacher would try to use another strategy. For example: at first, the teacher uses an explanation strategy. She will explain the words or give the synonym or the antonym words of the unfamiliar vocabulary. If the students still need to learn the vocabulary, the teacher will ask them to check it in their dictionary. If they still need clarification, the teacher will translate it directly. So, the teacher will give them an understanding by translating the whole sentence where the unfamiliar words are found.

The teachers also mentioned consistently using the Translation strategy in their classes. They instruct students to search for difficult words in a dictionary, explain the material for better understanding, and have them write down the words for future reference. However, when observing the teachers I encountered, they did not encounter any difficulties teaching English due to their consistent use of the monotonous Translation strategy. Alqahtani (2015) stated that teaching

vocabulary in English requires different approaches based on the student's age, needs, competencies, and cognitive skills. Another study by Sanusi investigated various techniques and activities used in vocabulary development and related them to student achievement (10). On the other hand, Julianti's research found that the English teacher's strategy in teaching vocabulary was games using cards and cutting words. Lastly, Wahidah's study identified direct teaching, mastery learning, cooperative learning, and problem-based learning strategies but did not use the Translation strategy found in the present research.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the analysis of an interview and research findings, it has been observed that both English teachers at MTsS Siulak Gedang employ the translation strategy and dictionaries to teach vocabulary to their students. The teachers justify using the translation strategy by stating that many students struggle to comprehend English texts, and employing translation and dictionary strategies aids their understanding of vocabulary. The second teacher supports the use of the translation strategy as it enables students to comprehend the text and complete exercises after translating the text collectively with the teacher. The teacher explains the difficult words or encourages students to check them in their dictionaries. The research concludes that English teachers in the eighth grade of MTsS Siulak Gedang utilize the translation strategy and dictionaries to teach vocabulary, as these strategies align well with the tool's context. Finally, the researchers recommend employing the translation strategy and dictionaries and exploring other supportive media in vocabulary instruction.

## **REFERENCES**

- Saputri YA, Rizal S, Afriani ZL. An Analysis on English Teacher Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension. *Jadila J Dev Innov Lang Lit Educ.* 2021;1(3):353-361. doi:10.52690/jadila.v1i3.125
- Dean J. Meeting the Learning Needs of LI Children. Cambridge University Press; 2006.
- Vol OFS, Makhmudovna KG. Creative Strategies to Improve Vocabulary Teaching. 2022;9626(10):259-261.
- Thornbury S. How to Teach Vocabulary. Longman; 2002.
- Richard, Jack C., & Reynandya WA. Methodology in Language Teaching: An Analogy of Current Practice. Cambridge University Press; 2002.
- Harmer J. The Practice of English Language Teaching. 3rd Editio. Longman; 2007.
- Al-Khresheh MHLearnersaili SF. An Exploratory Study into Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by Saudi EFL Learners. *J Hist Cult Art Res.* 2020;9(2):288. doi:10.7596/taksad.v9i2.2616
- YULIANTI, Y. (2018). TEACHER'S STRATEGIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH VOCABULARY (A CASE STUDY AT SECOND GRADE OF MTSN 2 MATARAM) (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Mataram).

Wahidah, F. I. (2015). TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT MUSLIM WITTAYA PHUKET SCHOOL.

Sanusi, E. (2009). The techniques of teaching vocabulary. Ittihad Jurnal Kopertis Wilayah XI Kalimantan, 7(11), 20.

Alqahtani, M. (2015). The importance of vocabulary in language learning and how to be taught. International journal of teaching and education, 3(3), 21-34.