# THE STUDENTS' ADVERSITIES IN MEMORIZING VOCABULARY

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## ABSTRACT

This research aims at finding out the students' obstacles in memorizing vocabulary due to some factors especially in the aspect of pronunciation and meaning. The researchers investigated the students' difficulties in memorizing vocabulary in one of state universities in Makassar, South Sulawesi. The participant of this study was the third semester students of English Education Department. Qualitative analysis was applied in this research. The researchers collected the data by conducting interviews which then transcribed into a script and documenting several important data that support this research. Based on the data collection, the researcher concludes that the difficulties faced by English students in memorizing vocabulary are; 1) difficulty in utterance 2) difficulty in differentiating the meaning of the words 3) pronunciation problem of the different meaning words but have similar sounds 4) learning words that are not suitable to their needs. Using the dictionary, expressions, and gestures that will help them to boost the vocabulary up easily.

**Keywords**: Students' Adversities, Memorizing, Vocabulary

## INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is the body of words that arrange the language. Nugroho (2015) stated that the aspect of vocabulary is not only about meaning but also related to how to spelled, pronounced, influenced, and how it can change if it is a verb, noun, or adjective and so on. It is in line with Tsuraya and Silaturahmi (2021) mentioned that many experts argued that vocabulary is one of the fundamental aspects in language learning because it can influence and develop an individual ability to communicate both in verbal and writing form. The teacher should create an effective way or technique to help the learner in memorizing vocabulary. It will help the learners to express their thoughts and it will enable them to communicate clearly and speak with great precision with the other.

According to Tsuraya and Admowardoyo (2018) mostly reading texts in Indonesian school use authentic materials such as newspaper, articles, novel, and so on which contains many vocabularies. Authentic materials are the materials which taken from students' environments. If students do not know the meaning, it will affect their understanding and comprehension which relates to their academic achievement at school or university. There are some aspects can affect the students' difficulties vocabulary in learning, especially the ability in memorizing the words. For example, undesirable material, teaching method, technique, and the learning of atmosphere vocabulary. The environment can be one of the causes of students to be able to improve their ability in learning English.

Besides, the role in creating suitable and desirable vocabulary learning is also important. Bjork and Kroll (2015) indicated that vocabulary errors in learning and the role of creating and arranging the condition in learning process of the learning during. The possible of interference between separate to be learned material and external sources are needed to maximize not minimize.

The researchers define each focus of this research to give comprehensible meaning. The first is pronunciation, difficult to learn words that are difficult to pronounce and spelling, sounds-spelling mismatches are likely to be the cause of the error, either of pronunciation or spelling and also it contributes to a word's difficulty and meaning is if there are two words overlap in meaning, learners are likely to confuse them.

Yang and Dai (2012) discovered that students prefer to engage in the vocabulary learning strategies that would be most appealing to them and that would entail less manipulation of the language. The four of memorizing vocabulary strategies cited in the study, students tended to favor structural associations and semantic strategies, though rote repetition remains appealing to some of them. Mnemonic devices like the keyword method were rather unpopular to most of them because they would involve the learners in the more active performance of the target language and most of the conventional forms of rote repetition as listed in the questionnaire have been out of the students favor though some remain to be frequently used by the students.

Rohmatillah (2014) in her research found that the students still faced the problem or difficulties vocabulary learning, kinds of difficulties faced by the students in vocabulary learning various. The difficulties Faced by the students were: almost all of the students have difficulties in pronouncing the words, how to write and spell, the different grammatical forms of a word known as inflections were one of the causes of students' difficulties in learning vocabulary.

Layli (2018) explained that students still feel difficulties remembering vocabulary. There are several difficulties of students faced in remembering their vocabulary, those are difficult to remember vocabulary in the long run, difficult to remember the meaning vocabulary, relating to pronunciation difficulties, and due to language English has many of the same meanings on one word. And there are some students' efforts to overcome difficulties in remembering vocabulary, including Use objects, listings or enumeration, gestures, and expressions.

Syarifuddin et al. (2014) concluded that the classification of the category is poor to average which means that vocabulary of the seventh-grade students of MTs IKA PGA at the low average level for achievement in English mastery vocabulary that shows mastered by students. The writer suggests that English teachers should have some technique to teach the students about vocabulary for example the teacher can use the real object to show the meaning of the words.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Research Type

The type of this research was qualitative, According to Mills and Gay (2019), qualitative research was the collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual (i.e., non-numerical) data to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest. Besides, qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.

In this research, the researcher used a phenomenological approach. According to Cresswel (2014) phenomenological design inquiry coming from philosophy and psychology in which the researcher describes the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants. This description culminates in the essence of the experiences for several individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. This approach was taken in natural situations and there was no limit in interpreting or understanding the phenomenon under study. Therefore, the researcher was free to analyze the data obtained.

### Data Source

Primary Data Sources were data sources that directly provide data to the researcher. The data source was where the data was obtained. In this research, the researcher took two data sources. In this study, data obtained directly from the informants who are closely related to the problem in the research Sugiyono (2008). The data primary sources were the students' in the third semester that have a lower score in the vocabulary subject at one of state universities in Makassar.

Secondary Data sources were data sources that did not directly provide data to the researcher such as from the other people or documents. The secondary data in this research was documentation which is containing students' scores in the vocabulary subject (Sugiyono, 2008).

Here, the researcher took a data source by using purposive sampling. The criteria are the students who have a lower score in vocabulary subject. According to Mills and Gay (2019), Purposive Sampling also referred to as judgment sampling, was the process of selecting a sample that believed to be representative of a given population.

**Instrument**

In this research, the researcher determined some instruments to help her in obtaining data:In qualitative research,the researcher collected qualitative documents. According to Mills and Gay (2019), qualitative researchers examined various types of recorded or documented, included archival documents, journals, maps, video, digital recordings, email, and artifacts. Many of these data sources were naturally occurred in educational settings and require only that the researcher locates them within the research setting. Documentation in this research means information about students' scores in the vocabulary subject. It purposed to identify students who have some difficulties in memorizing vocabulary. After the researcher finding the students documents. The researcher conducted face to face interviews with participants. It aimed to get their deep explanations, reasons for difficulties in memorizing vocabulary. Therefore, I interviewed these participants, the researcher used a semi-structured interview to ask some questions using the open-ended question.

**Procedures**

During the research process, the researcher collected qualitative documents to help ensure data validity. Because this research analyzed the difficulties experienced by each student in memorizing vocabularies, therefore documents needed by her is related to students' score in vocabulary subject and picture. In this way, the researcher can determine the sample that she wanted to use Yaumi (2013) and in this research, an interview was a way to collect data from the students. The researcher conducted face to face interviews with participants. It aimed to get their deep explanations, reasons for difficulties in memorizing vocabulary. Therefore, I interviewed these participants, the researcher used a semi-structured interview to ask some questions using the open-ended question. According to Yaumi (2013), a semi-structured interview is an interview that asks general questions of participants and is followed by some selection questions.

**Data Analysis**

After collecting the data, the next step of the research was analyzing the data. The data were analyzed qualitatively using Miles and Huberman (2018) analysis.

*Data Condensation*

The researcher selected and chose the data relevant to the theme. Data condensation referred to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in the full corpus (body) of written-up field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and other empirical materials (Miles and Huberman, 2018). Firstly, the researcher had to gate score from the students, and gave the interview guideline and then transcripts of the interview. After that researcher categorized the meanings or understandings that emerge from these data, it purposed to get an initial sense of data.

This categorization was needed in this research based on Mills and Gay (2019) the categories provided the basis for structuring the analysis and interpretation, without data that are classified and grouped, the researcher had no reasonable way to analyze qualitative studies.

*Data Display*

In the next step, the researcher summarized the information collected. It is important to try to summarize the information that the researcher collected in an appropriate meaningful format that she can share with readers. To do this, the researcher needed to think display because it can also state as displaying data. Mills and Gay (2019) stated that display can include matrix, charts, concept maps, graphs, and figures-whatever works as a practical way to encapsulate the finding of the study. The researcher shares the findings of students' difficulties in memorizing vocabulary.

**FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

**Students Documents**

The researchers used the documents to get information about the students' difficulties in memorizing vocabulary. The researchers started this research by collecting the students' documents. The documents of this research were the students' score in vocabulary subject. The students with the low score were chose to be participants in this research to get information about their difficulties in memorizing vocabulary.

**Interview Guideline**

The participants were given the interview guideline before the researcher conducted the open-ended question in the next step. The researcher asked some questions to the students

based on the interview guideline that were measured through seven questions. The students' answer can be "**YES**" or "**No**".

Interview data showed that the students' difficulty in memorizing vocabulary in the third semester of English Education Department UIN Alauddin Makassar was medium. The result in PBI 1-2, there were 6 students. Who had allowed score for the students learning vocabulary subject. The result of the interview, the researcher got the perspectives of the students' difficulties in vocabulary. Based on the students' opinion, there were some problems that students got in memorizing vocabulary. The first is the students were not interested in learning vocabulary due to the use of strategy and the difficulties in pronunciation the words, so they are unable to utter the words correctly. The second is that the students are lazy to memorize the vocabulary due to its complexity, because one word can have several meanings. The third is that two different words can be pronounced the same, but their meanings are different. Fourth is that the students could not remember the vocabulary well due to its necessary are not suitable for their needs.

The problem of difficulties in memorizing vocabulary, based on the research finding from the interview, it is that there were some problems occurred in the third semester from PBI 1-2 at English Education Department Uin Alauddin Makassar. The finding shows that when the students learning English lessons including all aspects (speaking, listening, reading, and writing), they encountered some problems because of their lack in English vocabulary. The factors are the difficulty in differentiating the words which has different meaning but similar to pronounce, or problems in using words that has many meanings.

Most of students were worried on making mistake when they faced pronunciation due to its complexity. The result also shows that most of the students did not completely master the four primary elements of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Another problem that students faced in building up English vocabulary is the interference of grammar in mastering vocabulary. In pronouncing English words, the research found that students' do not have and interest to memorizing due to some aspects in pronunciation just like stress and the like. It is hewed that when students were memorized vocabulary the pronunciation just made them difficult to remember the vocabulary, while the important factor in learning vocabulary is focusing on intelligible pronunciation. The main problem in learning English vocabulary was the different ways of pronouncing the words and the written words. It makes students more confused in learning. Therefore, students need more practice in pronouncing each word well to make them more familiar with the English

pronunciation. Different cases with language, in language the word written in the way it is read that word still the same and had more meaning.

This problem is similar to pronounce the basic problem in learning spelling English words that was the way in reading the word is different. One syllable has more than one way in utterance and it is vice versa language. So, that's why students were hard to memorizing vocabulary. This difference causes confusing and difficulties in memorizing the words.

Based on previous findings, the theory from Bai (2018) that most students pay more attention to those words that are considered or reminded as frequently used-words. The reason why selective attention is used highest is the students often selectively pay attention to some words or types of word knowledge. This can be traced to the teaching methods adopted most English teachers by. The explanation above shows that the difficulties in memorizing vocabulary is mostly the same every student. Even though, every student has his or her strategies to overcome their difficulties in building up English vocabulary. The learners who can find their ways or strategies for their learning are nominated as good language learners.

**CONCLUSION**

The result of interview showed that students' adversities in memorizing vocabulary were varied. The problem in pronunciation, meaning and the word was until in short-term memory. The lack of similarities between the first language and the second language in some aspects such as pronunciation, meaning for the students and there were some efforts to overcome these difficulties such as using the dictionary, expressions, and gestures that will help them to remember vocabulary easily.

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