

## **Teacher's Strategies in Improving Students' Mastery of English Vocabulary in Class VII A at Junior High School (SMPN) 2 Lempuing Jaya OKI**

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### **Abstract**

**Abstract:** Vocabulary is considered a lesson that actually needs to be delivered first compared to other lessons. This is indicated because students tend to have difficulty understanding language learning without being accompanied by sufficient vocabulary supplies. Therefore, this condition certainly becomes the main task of teachers to be able to contribute to the development of their students' vocabulary skills. This study has several objectives, including (1) to determine the strategies used by teachers to improve the ability to master English vocabulary of students in class VII A SMPN 2 Lempuing Jaya. (2) To determine the factors that influence teachers in implementing these strategies to improve the ability to master English vocabulary of students in class VII A SMPN 2 Lempuing Jaya. The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative which aims to explore the object of study realistically where the results of the study show that teachers use dictionary strategies, use reality and memorization strategies. Meanwhile, other factors that are quite influential for teachers in implementing these strategies are teacher preferences and student abilities.

**Keywords:** teaching strategies, vocabulary, vocabulary teaching.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Since birth, humans have been bound by nature to learn language at a certain time and in a certain way. Language is a tool for communication that is organized in the form of units, such as words, groups of words, clauses, and sentences that are expressed both orally and in writing (Chairil Anwar Korompot et al, 2025). Language is built by words. Without words, language would not exist, so humans would not be able to express their ideas to others. In education, language learning is very important; language makes it easier to improve learning and memory, solve problems, and draw conclusions. Therefore, good language skills are needed to facilitate the transfer of knowledge.

In this era, human resources are needed to master all aspects of life. One of them is mastering English. English is one of the most popular languages and one of the most important languages in the world today, and most people in the world use it (Gusmaizal Syandri, 2023). English language learning is compulsory at all levels of education, from elementary school to university. Foreign language learning, especially English, is certainly new for students after their mother tongue. So, there

is a need for certain strategies and habits for students to use English.

Language learning objectives consist of four aspects, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills (Retno Purwandari, 2020). Similarly, in learning English, four aspects must be mastered: reading, listening, reading, and writing. Mastering these skills will make it easier to achieve learning objectives and indicators in each existing English learning material (Nur Rosita, 2020). Having a wide vocabulary helped to understand the texts and can convey ideas more clearly and persuasively by using different types of vocabulary. Overall, mastering vocabulary is an important foundation for a person's success.

Therefore, by mastering English, in addition to increasing knowledge, one can communicate with millions of people around the world. In addition, by mastering English, one can have many opportunities in the world of work. Realising that English is important in the future, learning it is expected to help me become a person who can compete in the international arena.

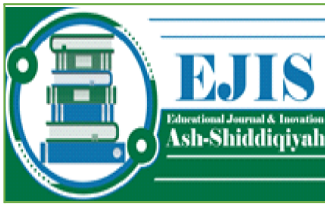
In English language learning, vocabulary was the first material to be taught before other materials. That is a reason why students will have difficulties learning a language without sufficient vocabulary. Because mastering this material is the basis for learning further English materials. Vocabulary is an important element in language activities concerned with conveying ideas, thoughts, information, and opinions by the speaker to the interlocutor (Cecep Wahyu Hoerudin, 2022). Learners with rich vocabulary will find it easier to speak and other skills in using language. Vocabulary is the number of words that, when combined, will form a language (Khairul Anwar, 2020). In addition, vocabulary mastery is a key factor in language fluency; without vocabulary, students will not be able to use language to communicate (Iwan D. Gunawan, 2025).

In learning English in junior high school, vocabulary mastery is very important for students. This is because vocabulary mastery is important in their early years' language development. As a foreign language was included in the education curriculum in Indonesia, this is done to increase human resources.

Schools are one of the means that can provide English language teaching, and teachers have an important role in achieving learning goals; as an educator, a teacher must have professionalism and competence to educate students. Common challenges faced by a teachers who teach English, are students still low language proficiency, lack of resources, lack of enthusiasm and participation, in addition to unfavourable environments such as rural environments where no one uses English and helping other individuals to obtain communication gaps between teacher and students are problems that are not easily solved (Alwisia Meo, Maria Patrisia Wau, 2021).

Therefore, to get good results in learning English, a teacher needs to have effective strategies in teaching English. Connected to the learning process, strategies can be interpreted as a general pattern of teacher and student activities in realising teaching and learning activities to achieve the goals outlined (Mukhammad Bakhrudin, 2021). In the teaching and learning process, teacher must have a strategy so that students can learn actively and efficiently to achieve the expected goals. Teachers who have a good strategy can apply a more cooperative and interactive way of teaching so that students are active in participating in all learning.

Based on the researcher's observations at SMPN 2 Lempuing Jaya, teaching English to different student backgrounds significantly influences achieving predetermined competencies. One of the obstacles for students in learning English is



because there is no English learning at the elementary school level, which results in a lack of vocabulary mastery and student understanding related to learning. As a result, they tend to be passive and hesitant to practice it. In addition, family conditions and the environment are less supportive, such as the absence of English language course institutions that can help with learning. This concerns the researcher that if students cannot learn well due to a lack of mastery of vocabulary, they can fail to achieve learning objectives. Therefore, because students can only learn English at school and teachers are educators, teachers must have certain strategies to improve students' vocabulary mastery.

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in conducting research with the title "Teacher' Strategies in Improving Students' Mastery of English Vocabulary in Class VII A at Junior High School (SMP N) 2 Lempuing Jaya OKI". This research described the teacher's strategy in learning English at SMPN 2 Lempuing Jaya. This research explained two things. The first, about the teacher's strategy in improving students' mastery of English vocabulary, and the second, the things that influence the teacher in implementing the strategy.

## **2. METHOD**

In this study, the researcher was used a method with qualitative research. Qualitative research is a method that aims to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subject. Qualitative research seeks to find answers to problems or questions (Iba & Wardhana, 2023). The research design that was used in this study is descriptive qualitative. This research was located at SMPN 2 Lempuing Jaya which is located at Jalan Lintas Timur Km. 110, Muara Burnai I, Muara Burnai Lempuing Jaya District, Ogan Komering Ilir Regency, South Sumatra Province. In this research, the data collection techniques that have been used are observation, interview, and documentation. This research emphasises on qualitative descriptive analysis where the data was obtained using observation, interview and documentation techniques was described. This descriptive analysis can present and explain the teacher's strategy in improving students' mastery of English vocabulary (Rasyid, 2022).

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **a. The Teacher's Strategies in Improving English Vocabulary Mastery of Class VII A Students**

Vocabulary is a necessary basis in language, from research results conducted by Heater Lee M. Buron from Union City shows that vocabulary is very important for the success of language learning, as well as quotes from Tarigan the more words a student has the more words that will be understood when reading. this can help students in reading fluency and hone the insights gained (Randi Stone, 2023).

Based on the data found by the researcher based on observations and interviews, vocabulary learning was very important and necessary for students of class VII A SMPN 2 Lempuing Jaya, because the more vocabulary students master, the greater the ability of students to be able to write, read, and speak well.

Strategy was an outline of direction for action in an effort to achieve predetermined goals. If it was related to teaching and learning, strategy can be interpreted as general patterns of teacher and student activities in the realisation of teaching and learning to achieve the goals outlined (I Putu Saka Arsa, 2015).

Researcher found the strategy of using dictionaries through observations and

interviews, the strategy of using dictionaries found in the classroom was:

- i. The teacher ensures that all students in class VII A bring a dictionary, this aims to make all students fully responsible for their respective obligations.
- ii. The teacher forms into groups of 4-5 people, in order to improve students' social skills, then the teacher gives paper containing some new vocabulary for students, they learn how to interact with fellow friends and cooperate.
- iii. The teacher gives instructions to find the meaning of the word using a dictionary.

In addition to the use of dictionaries, the researcher also found that the teacher of class VII A also used memorization strategies to improve students' vocabulary mastery.

Because most students have just learned English in the first year of junior high school. So memorization was a strategy that was quite effective in improving students' vocabulary. Sometimes learning a foreign language requires extra intention because something that is foreign to us takes a long time to understand. Even now, English has become a mandatory standard in the educational curriculum in Indonesia from the junior high school level. Several methods used by teacher with class VII A students include:

1) Understand Basic Words

The understanding process carried out by students in memorizing was by finding basic words, which basic words were able to make students memorize easily, apart from being easy, they also remember from basic words to special words, both verbs and nouns and word characteristics.

2) Copy English Sentences

Apart from that, students also translate English into Indonesian in textbooks so that they were able to interpret and memorise every word they write in the book. This step was expected to improve students' ability to improve their English.

In addition the researcher also found that the teacher of class VII A also used realia media strategies to improve students' vocabulary mastery. Realia means the use of real objects that can be seen by students, meaning that the teacher provides something real in the classroom. Realia includes objects, actions, concrete materials, tangible factors, and activities from each category (Ni Made Ratminingsih, 2017). Some of the methods used by teacher with students in class VII A include:

1) Objects around the classroom

The teacher forms several groups and then each group writes the vocabulary of objects around the unknown objects and then searches for them using the dictionary media.

2) What is it?

This activity by using objects around the classroom, the teacher holds a pen and then asks what this object is? then students guess the English language.

**b. The Factors that Influence Teacher to Apply Strategies in Improving Vocabulary Mastery of Students in Class VII A**

Teacher preferences influence teacher to apply the strategies of using a dictionary

and using realia media. So, the reason why teacher chose these strategies was based on the ease of the media used. These strategies can be applied with prior preparation, with students being required to bring a dictionary. There needs to be a special strategy, so a method needs to be implemented so that students' abilities can increase optimally. One way was to increase English vocabulary so that students can remember and memorize the meaning of English. Among the things that influence teacher in improving students' English vocabulary skills were: by using a dictionary was believed to mean that every student was able to interpret easily using a dictionary so apart from looking for English meanings, students were also expected to remember every word they search for.

Student ability was one factor. So some of the students in class VII A still have problems, including in learning English, especially in mastering of vocabulary. By using the strategies that have been mentioned, it was hoped that students can learn more easily. Among the students' abilities that can be seen as an increase in their ability to interpret English were:

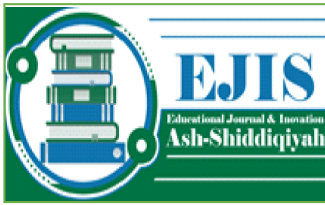
- i. Students were able to understand any English material provided easily and quickly.
- ii. By using a dictionary, using realia media, and memorizing English vocabulary, students will be more active in following the lesson.
- iii. A large vocabulary will help students have an easier time learning and speaking and writing English.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the data findings gathered by the researcher in SMP Negeri 02 Lempuing Jaya, the findings and discussion were found to answer the two problems in this study, including the following: In English language learning, vocabulary was the first material to be taught before other materials. That was the reason why students will have difficulty in learning the language without sufficient vocabulary. Because the mastery of this material is the basis for learning the next English material. Vocabulary was an important element in language activities related to the delivery of ideas, information, and opinions by the speaker to the interlocutor. Schools are one of the means that can provide English language teaching, and teachers have an important role in achieving learning objectives, as an educator, a teacher must have an effective strategy in the teaching and learning process. The researcher identified two teaching strategies used by English teachers in teaching vocabulary to students in class VII A of SMP Negeri 02 Lempuing Jaya. The strategies were using dictionary, memorisation and using realia media. the results of this study can be one of the information about the need to review the use of strategies relevant to students' needs. So that efforts made to improve student mastery can be successful.

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