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## ENRICHING VOCABULARY SIZE OF EFL LEARNERS THROUGH DELIBERATE VOCABULARY LEARNING

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### **Abstract**

*This research is a quantitative study which aims to enhance the speaking fluency of English Department' students, State Polytechnic of Padang (PNP) through vocabulary deliberate learning. It was established by implementing linked word's game as one of ways to enrich the student's vocabulary size. The data was taken from the fresh year students who took Speaking 1 subject. It consisted of 2 intact classes; 1A with 26 students, and 1B with 27 students. The 1A class was set as experimental group, on another hand 1B class was set as control group. The analysis compared by the score perceived on their Pre-Test by using the Vocabulary Size Test (VST) designed by Paul Nation to the score on their Post-Test right after the treatment. The data were analyzed by using T-test for independent sample test in comparing between experiment group and control group. The result of this research displayed that control class showed that  $t(24) = -.834$ ,  $p = .413$ . So, it can be concluded that no significant change in post test score compared with pre test score in control class because  $p > 0,05$ . Meanwhile in experimental group  $t(22) = -1.937$ ,  $p = 0.066$ . P value in experimental group closed to 0.05 which means that there was significance change from 27.13 (pre-test score) into 32.35 (post-test score). Shortly, this game influenced the enrichment of the students vocabulary size.*

**Keywords:** *Deliberate vocabulary learning, Vocabulary Size Test (VST), Linked-Word Game*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background Information**

English is one of foreign languages which has been studied by students in Indonesia besides other foreign languages such as German, French, and Japanese. Although they have studied English for years in formal educational institutions since Junior High School to Higher Education, but most of them still have constraints and difficulties in using good English which can be understood by their listeners. Actually, with this long period of English learning process, the students are considered for having abilities and enough skills to interact in English. However, it does not guarantee that they are able to achieve an ideal personal capability for communicating in English, especially how to speak and deliver the messages that they want to say in a good way. Mostly, it is caused by the lack of English vocabularies amount which affect their abilities in finding the precise equivalent words that they want to convey. Therefore, they need longer time to speak in English in order to convey their message. Sometimes they stay quiet as their response of avoiding to give feedback from the questions or statements that they receive.

Most of the media that has been used in foreign language learning is through the book whether comes from formal education or informal daily life. Apart from English textbook that have been provided by school, actually there are plenty of media that the students can use to increase their knowledge about English. Movies, advertisement, news on television, magazines, and English story book are some example of media that can be utilized by students for learning English. Due to the technology and time advancement, the ability in mastering a foreign language like English in Indonesia today is an absolute thing owned by generations of the nation. If they want to have progress and compete with other countries in term of knowledge and proper life, they should increase their foreign language competency, especially English. Furthermore, Indonesia is now being intensively in

developing its human resources to face Asean Free Trade Area (AFTA) which do require English Speaking capability for communicating with other AFTA corporate states.

The same condition has also been experienced by students of English Department of State Polytechnic of Padang (PNP). During these five semesters of the English learning period, they are provided with all English knowledge which includes four skills of English to help them in mastering the language. These skills consist of writing, listening, reading and speaking. The knowledge is not limited to these four skills only, but also accomplished by other subjects such as speech, translation, public speaking, grammar, and many more. In fact, at the end of their study, the students are yet able to speak fluently in English, in order to express their ideas and opinion precisely and concisely.

This obstacle is not only becomes the students' problems, but also it is problematic for the lecturers of the English Department. How to find the way of learning and how to get the result as expected which is the students are able to speak well and fluently in English has become main concern of these lecturers. One of effective ways which is assumed in helping students to overcome this problem is by enriching students' vocabularies. This activity can be done by giving deliberate vocabulary learning to the students. Some comprehensive approaches that have been done that prove someone will not be able to speak or motivated to speak if the receptive ability and knowledge of the language system, such as vocabulary, have not been sufficient, and it is in agreement of what has been highlighted by Nation and Newton (10). Therefore, the students are expected to comprehend new vocabularies that they have learned without sticking to the grammar (Swain, 2005). It means that indirectly the more vocabularies they have, the more fluent they speak and respond in conversation, which is the main purpose of this study.

### **1.2 The Purpose of Study**

This study is aimed at helping students of English Department, PNP, especially first year students to enrich their vocabulary size in order to develop their fluency in speaking. A method implemented that can increase their ability in speaking and add their confidence to speak is by using vocabulary size enrichment.

### **1.3 Research Question**

Based on the background and purpose of this study above, then the research question of this study is: *Does the vocabulary deliberate learning, which is done in this study, help English Department's students, PNP to increase their speaking fluency by using developing and enriching vocabulary size technique through the linked word game?*. This research question is conducted based on the statement that the more fluent they speak in English means that they will have more confidence to speak besides encouraging them to grow more vigorously in learning other subjects such as Listening, Public Speaking, Speech, and others.

This study is implemented in Speaking 2 classes which are taught by the researchers in order to concentrate on this study and to facilitate the researcher in data retrieval as well. This activity is done with the consideration that by doing research in classes taught by researchers, it is hoped that it will not affect the learning process which have been conducted in advance.

## **2. REVIEW OF RELATED THEORIES**

### **2.1 Vocabulary Learning**

Learning a language, as stated by Nation (2001) consists of four purposes, they are Language, Ideas, Skills and Text (LIST). Here, vocabulary is one of the most significant components in the discussion of language items besides pronunciation and grammatical construction. In designing a language learning, suggested by Nation (1999) should cover a well-balanced four strands approach which are learning through meaning-focused input (listening and reading), learning through meaning-focused output (speaking and writing), deliberate language-focused study, and fluency development across the four skills. Correspondingly Gathercole and Baddeley (1983) design one-quarter of the time spent focusing in fluency development to have this balance within the strands. They show that meaning-focused input is more onto listening and reading skill whereas language-focused learning and meaning-focused output strand are more onto teaching-and learning vocabulary which are applied in speaking and writing skills .

In the same way to the two studies mentioned above, Long (1988) and Ellis (1990)'s studies also come up with the idea that there are a great number of improvement about the learning vocabulary in this language-focused learning strand. They say that the vocabulary learning should be conducted in deliberate taching atmosphere thus learners can plan their learning; deliberate learning. For meaning-focused output strand, the major concern within this learning is on how the information can be conveyed well. Therefore, 'Speaking' dan 'Writing' can be considered as appropriate media for the learners to develop their vocabulary. It is because in these two skills, they focus more on words which they cannot do in 'Listening' and 'Reading' (Nation, 2001).

### **2.1.1 Deliberate Vocabulary Learning**

One of factors which is important in learning vocabulary shown in the ability of a learner in restoring one word in their short-term memory (Gathercole and Baddeley, 1983). The memory is based on words they have met and familiar through their leaning, so they can recall the words at anytime needed. This vocabulary learning has not happened incidently but also deliberately. Deliberate vocabulary learning applies the instruction that focuses on the word as part of the system than as part of a message. In this learning, Nation and Newton (2006) agree that one of the attentions is to the range of clues to the word's meaning provided by context. There is considerably amount of values on this learning, as it can raise up the vocabulary learning (Nation and Newton, 2009) and can result to implicit as well as explicit knowledge (Elgort, 2007 cited in Nation and Newton, 2009, p. 133).

#### **i. Word Game**

Vocabulary learning activity through the word game should pay attention on the technique used, whether it has fulfilled the learning goal. It should question its goal either the learning focuses on spelling some words or on pronunciation, or perhaps the goal focuses to recognize a word form and link it to its meaning (Nation, 2001).

There are three important processes that can make a learner remember a word, they are: Noticing, Retrieval dan Creative or Generative use (Nation, 2001). Consequently, this study applies 'Word game' which is part of the retrieval process; recalling learner's memory on words they have met and understood. It can be words which they perceive during the activity of listening or reading (receptive) yet being used as maximal as possible within their activity of productive; speaking and writing.

#### **b. Speaking Fluency**

Talking about speaking fluency means dealing with a speaker's fluency in conveying their thought or opinion to their listener. It is also dealing with providing appropriate respond in a conversation which is indirectly becoming an outcome of English knowledge that they have. According to Nation and Newton (2009), there are three major characters which have to appear in speaking fluency, they are 1) When the learner conducting meaning-focused activity and concerns more to convey the message well with the 'real time' speed, 2) When the learner make use of all the knowledge on language items that they have, and 3) When the learner put less effort in talking and give higher level performance than their normal level.

#### **i. Spoken Word Form**

Nation and Newton (2009) highlight that a larner knows and understands the spoken form of a word when he/ she can recognize the word while listening to it, and is able to say it again in a scale of receptive and productive of the lesson they perceived. The receptive process which is indirectly received from listening can be continued to the next process; productive. To this matter, productive process means that they can say the word based on their understanding of it.

Moreover, Brown dan McNeill (1966)'s research cited in Nation (2001) say that when a learner is not able to recall their memory for a word, they will ask their brain to look for the word by using tip of the tongue phenomenon. This phenomenon is only could be done when this learner has been restoring their memory on words which they have known the meaning of these words.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Conceptual Framework

This study is a quantitative study because it is implied interpretive analysis. This analysis is used when the researchers basically the interpretation of the result received after conducting their study. In another word, the result of this study is the subjective interpretation of the researchers over the taken data (Dornyei, 2007), likewise mentioned by Miles and Huberman (1997, p.7), “The researcher is essentially the main ‘measurement device’ in the study”.

This study takes students from two different classes that learn the same subject; Speaking. The students in each class is grouped into one group with the same population. The two groups called Experiment Group and Control Group. Furthermore, these two groups are differentiate from the given treatment, experimental group is the group that except the treatment whereas control group is the non-treatment one. At the end of the study, the result of these two groups are compared to get the final result (MacKey and Gass, 2005).

Accordingly, Pre-test and Post test are set up to the two groups in order to make sure the comparability of the participants and the effect of the treatment between both groups. Pre-test is delivered prior to the treatment and Post-test is after the treatment without delayed. Each test is done one time with the same format for every question, or with equal meaning for the reason to get the proportional result from each group (MacKey and Gass, 2005)

The treatment which will be applied to experimental group is “deliberate vocabulary learning” that is in the form of ‘ Linked word’s game’. The treatment for this game is planned to be given for 20-30 minutes for each session. In this study, treatment will be applied for two months with invariance a week pause interval referred to the students’s schedule for ‘Speaking’ subject. In total, there are eight until 10 sessions used for this ‘linked word’s game.

All of the procedures, purposes and desired result of this study will be pointed to the samples by using Bahasa. It is with the consideration that by using the language that they really mastered, the comprehension toward this study is attained more satisfactorily.

#### 3.2 Sample and Population

The population of this study is the students of Speaking 2 class in the second semester of English Department, PNP. There are two paralell classes for this Speaking 2 class named Speaking 1 A/ 1B with the number of students around 25 per each class. The reason for choosing this sample is because the result of this study can be implemented to their further learning process later on.

The sample as confirmed by Dornyei (2007) is categorized by the year of their study and the subject background of their study. This is because by grouping the sample particularly becomes effective method for those who conduct a research with a specific focus. Reverse approach in the quantitative method is designated as it can have a sample at least of 25 participants. It refers to the sample size that is necessary to be used to detect the effect or the desired outcome of the study (Dornyei, 2007).

#### 3.3 Data Collecting

The data can be collected in short periode of time before and after the treatments given to the experimental group. Surely, it all depends on the researcher planning; sample’s question and the questions themselves should be prepared properly in detail (Paivio and Begg, cited in McDonough and McDonough, 1977, p. 155).

In this study, the data taken from the experimental group are applied in two steps; 1) Prior Step (Pre-Test) which is done before the treatment, and 2) Final Step (Post-Test) which is given after the treatment without delayed. Pre-Test and Post-Test are exactly the same test which is utilized Vocabulary Size Test (VST) (Monolingual 20,000, version A) by Paul Nation that is retrieved from his website <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/paul-nation>. VST is given into the sample to measure their vocabulary size before and after the treatment. This is aimed to find out whether there is significant change on the experimental group after the treatment is given.

VST which is established by Paul Nation is also used by Laufer and Nation (2001) and have been tested in their study about “*Passive Vocabulary Size and Speed of Meaning Recognition: Are They Related?*”. Their study examined about the correlation between speaking fluency and the vocabulary size. It was also about focus on the relationship between fluency and vocabulary size, and

also between fluency and word frequency level. As has been proven by their study that fluency is obtained when the learner knows the meaning of the words which is given from different level of frequency.

#### 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

##### 4.1 Data Analysis

The data derived from pre- and post- test are then processed by using SPSS for Independent-samplest test; t-test. This test significantly assist this study in comparing the result of the two groups; experimental and control group over their VST result to get the valid data and hypotesa. As Dornyei (2007, p. 215):

If we take any two sets of scores, we are bound to some difference in the raw scores, but we cannot automatically assume that the observed differences reflects any 'real' difference; thus, we need t-test statistic to check whether we have got generalizable result or whether the score is likely to be merely an artifact of random variation.

Similarly, McKey and Gas (2005) also mention that t-test is utilized when the researcher wants to compare the result of pre- and post-test.

##### 4.2 Findings and Discussion

The T-test data can be administered when the assumption has been made prior to the analysis and there is no occurrence of outliers. The result of both pre-test and post-test will then be analyzed by applying *Shapiro Wilk* test as the sample is less than 50 respond. The assessment of normality by using *Shapiro Wilk* test as seen below.

Table 1

##### Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre1a	.206	23	.013	.927	23	.094
Post1a	.147	23	.200*	.954	23	.358
Pre1b	.127	23	.200*	.954	23	.350
Post1b	.131	23	.200*	.947	23	.254

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

Furthermore, based on the result from pre- and post-test of experimental and control group, the result of dependent sample t test is divided into two focuses; paired sample statistic, and paired sample test:

Table 2

##### Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Grup Eksperiment al	Pre test	27.1304	23	8.65660	1.80503
	Post test	32.3478	23	9.98002	2.08098
Grup Kontrol	Pre test	37.0000	25	8.18026	1.63605
	Post test	37.8800	25	8.16660	1.63332

Table 3  
Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Grup Eksperimental	Pre test - Post test	-5.21739	12.91566	2.69310	-10.80254	.36776	-1.937	22	.066
Grup Kontrol	Pre test - Post test	-.88000	5.27826	1.05565	-3.05876	1.29876	-.834	24	.413

The data shown above initially began with the pre-test figure of both groups. They have reached slightly different in score with the 'mean'/average of 27.1 for 1 A and 37 for 1 B. The first group had more lower 'mean' score than the second group. It can be said that the ability of the students in the first group was relatively "poor" than the second group. Here it meant that they had low motivation to study because lack of vocabulary size therefore they were not too fluent in speaking.

Moreover, the data shown on table 1 explained that Sig value in Shapiro Wilk test is greater than 0.05, it means that all groups of data have been distributed normally. First, from the t-test sample, it is found that control class  $t(24) = -0.834$  and the value of p in control group's score is higher than 0.05 ( $p = 0.413$ ) which means that there is no significant change in post-test score compared to pre-test score in this group. Even though, the average score of this group is higher than another group, but it describes that the students' vocabularies size does not improve and there is no dramatic different score of pre-test and post-test in control group. As it has been explained before, actually this group does not get linked word game treatment during its speaking class material.

On the other hand, the post-test score of experimental class has improved compared to its pre-test score,  $t(22) = -1.937$  (as seen on table 3). After receiving vocabulary deliberate learning through the linked word game, the score average increased from 27.13 to 32.34 and the t-test showed that its p value is 0.066 ( $p$  is near to 0.05). It means that there is a major improvement of vocabulary size in this group. Furthermore, this study proves that the linked word game, as an applicative way of vocabulary deliberate learning, can improve and enrich the vocabulary size of the students in English Department, PNP.

## 5. CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Conclusion

Linked word game, in this study, is utilized as an applicative way in implementing vocabulary deliberate learning which set to experimental and control group. Independently-samples t-test is then used to compare the result received from these two groups with regard to find the effect of vocabulary deliberate learning toward the improvement of students' speaking fluency. Furthermore, well planned linked word game has been proved effective to enrich students vocabulary size. In addition, by having a variety of vocabulary indirectly can grow the confidence of learner to learn other skills of learning English beside speaking.

### 5.2 Suggestion

Vocabulary deliberate learning can be one of an effective way to enrich and improve students' English ability. It is suggested to the lecturer to elaborate the game besides this linked word game in order to catch students' interest. The goal of language learning should be still focused on the vocabulary improvement and enrichment for the students. Regarding to the next study that will be done by other researchers, there can be consideration to concern on implementing *vocabulary deliberate learning* to enrich the vocabulary size of EFL learners.

1. This vocabulary deliberate learning can be applied to other English skill besides speaking subject, for example writing, reading and listening class. Therefore, there will be advance result in different environment.

2. The technique can be varied based on the students' ability and background since different condition will need different treatment. Thus, linked word game is not the only way to apply vocabulary deliberate learning and it can be extended to other techniques.
3. The next study or research can be implemented in a bigger data and wider sample so the result will be more valid.
4. All aspects of the language learning process should be included to enrich and improve students' fluency in English.

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