Vocabulary Teaching and Learning Strategies Used by Lecturers in a Private University in Central Java

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Abstract

Vocabulary is one of the crucial things in language learning. Wilkins (1972, pp. 111-112) said that “… while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.” However, the great number of vocabulary items makes it hard to be learned. Fortunately, there are vocabulary learning strategies that can make the learning of vocabulary become feasible and easier. Here, this study examined how the lecturers in a Faculty of Language and Literature (FLL) deal with vocabulary teaching and the strategies in non-vocabulary classes, which could be called as incidental vocabulary learning, in which the vocabulary being learned is a by-product of learning other skills. The purpose of this study is to help the lecturers discover deeper about how they could implicitly tell the vocabulary learning strategies to the freshmen, and help the students enrich their vocabulary effectively. To this end, four lecturers of FLL, one of each English skill courses (i.e., speaking, reading, writing, and listening), were selected by using convenience and quota sampling. To obtain the data, this study employed a semi-structured interview. Next, the findings were analyzed based on Nation’s (2008) four strands of planning vocabulary teaching, which are meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency development. The result of the analysis showed that lecturers had actually incorporated incidental vocabulary learning into their classes based on Nation’s (2008) four strands. This study also discussed the pedagogical implications of the findings.

Keywords: Vocabulary, Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS), incidental learning, implicitly, Faculty of Language and Literature (FLL), teaching planning.