UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

EFFECTS OF THREE VOCABULARY LEARNING TECHNIQUES ON VOCABULARY RETENTION OF ESL UNDERGRADUATES IN A MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITY

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By

ZURAINA BT ALI

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Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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March 2012

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Faculty: Educational Studies

This study investigates the effects of three vocabulary learning techniques, which are Contextual Clues, Dictionary Strategy and TMM Vocabulary, in retaining words learnt among ESL learners. Conducting the study serves several purposes. Firstly, it aims at finding which of the vocabulary learning techniques may result in the highest number of words retained, as measured in the immediate and delayed recall tests. Secondly, it investigates the students' attitudes after they are exposed to the vocabulary learning techniques. Finally, it seeks to find out students' preferences and difficulties of using the techniques in retaining words learnt.

The results of the study support Ellis' Model of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in that instructions need to match L2 learners' aptitude of helping them to retain the words learnt using the vocabulary learning techniques taught to them. Social Constructivist Learning Theory is also used to explain the findings. The theory describes that the construction of knowledge inside the classroom depends on the

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inter-dependence of social and individual processes. While learners interpret the learning in their own ways, they also need to be dependent on their friends and be facilitated by their teachers in their attempt to retain the vocabulary learnt in class.

The study has adopted both quantitative and qualitative methods in collecting its data. A quasi-experiment that tested the effects of retaining vocabulary using Dictionary Strategy, Contextual Clues and TMM Vocabulary involved 123 first-year university students. A survey gauged their attitudes after being exposed to the techniques. Qualitative procedures included the collection of data from interviews, which were conducted to identify both their preferences and the hindrances they encountered in using the techniques.

Results from the study showed that there was a significant difference ($p = .033 < .05$) in Immediate Recall Tests when students were exposed to Dictionary Strategy, Contextual Clues and TMM Vocabulary. The finding for the Delayed Recall Post-test, however, was not supported ($p = .735 < .05$). There was also evidence that students' attitudes were found to be significant ($p = .002 < .05$) when they were exposed to the three vocabulary learning techniques. Finally, students' preferences and hindrances relating to the use of the respective vocabulary learning techniques were dependent on the treatments as well as their proficiency levels.

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Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

KESAN TERHADAP KEBOLEHAN MENYIMPAN PERBENDAHARAAN KATA PARA PELAJAR YANG MEMPELAJARI BAHASA INGGERIS SEBAGAI BAHASA KEDUA MENGGUNAKAN TIGA TEKNIK PEMBELAJARAN PERBENDAHARAAN KATA DI SEBUAH UNIVERSITI DI MALAYSIA

Oleh

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Kajian ini menyelidik kesan terhadap tiga teknik mempelajari perbendaharaan kata iaitu petunjuk konteks, strategi menggunakan kamus dan pembelajaran bahasa menggunakan bantuan komputer di kalangan para pelajar yang mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris sebagai Bahasa Kedua. Kajian yang dijalankan ini mempunyai beberapa tujuan. Pertama, ianya bertujuan untuk mencari teknik mempelajari perbendaharaan kata yang dapat menyumbang kepada jumlah perkataan paling tinggi mampu disimpan sebagaimana diukur dengan menggunakan ujian ingatan terus dan ujian penangguhan ingatan. Kedua, ianya menyelidik sikap para pelajar setelah didedahkan kepada teknik-teknik tersebut. Akhirnya, ianya bertujuan untuk mengetahui kecenderungan dan halangan menggunakan teknik-teknik ini untuk menyimpan perkataan yang dipelajari di dalam ingatan para pelajar.

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Dapatan kajian menyokong model Penerimaan Bahasa Kedua Ellis di mana pengajaran perlu sesuai dengan kebolehan para pelajar yang mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris sebagai Bahasa Kedua, agar dapat membantu mereka menyimpan makna perkataan Bahasa Inggeris menggunakan teknik-teknik yang dijelaskan. Teori Pembelajaran Konstruktivisme Sosial juga digunakan untuk menjelaskan dapatan-dapatan kajian. Teori tersebut memerikan bahawa pembinaan ilmu di dalam kelas bergantung pada proses kesalingbergantungan sosial dan individu. Selagi pelajar mentadbir pembelajaran dengan cara mereka, selagi itulah mereka bergantung pada rakan sebaya, dan bantuan guru dalam usaha mereka untuk menyimpan perkataan yang dipelajari di dalam kelas.

Kajian ini menggunakan kedua-dua kaedah metodologi terdiri dari kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Satu eksperimen kuasi yang menguji kesan menyimpan perkataan Bahasa Inggeris menggunakan petunjuk konteks, strategi menggunakan kamus dan pembelajaran bahasa menggunakan bantuan komputer telah melibatkan 123 pelajar universiti. Satu kaji selidik juga digunakan untuk mengukur sikap para pelajar setelah didedahkan kepada teknik-teknik tersenarai. Kaedah kualitatif yang digunakan termasuk pengumpulan laporan secara lisan yang bertujuan untuk mengetahui kecenderungan dan halangan yang dihadapi oleh para pelajar di dalam menggunakan teknik-teknik ini.

Dapatan penyelidikan mendapati bahawa terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan (p = .033< .05) di dalam ujian Ingatan Terus bila pelajar telah didedahkan kepada petunjuk konteks, strategi menggunakan kamus dan pembelajaran bahasa menggunakan bantuan komputer. Dapatan ujian penangguhan ingatan, walau

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bagaimanapun, tidak disokong ($p = .735 < .05$). Terdapat juga bukti bahawa sikap para pelajar berbeza ($p = .002 < .05$) apabila mereka didedahkan kepada ketiga-tiga teknik pembelajaran perbendaharaan kata tersebut. Akhirnya, kecenderungan dan halangan yang berkaitan dengan penggunaan teknik pembelajaran perbendaharaan kata adalah bergantung kepada rawatan serta peringkat kemahiran para pelajar.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the supervisory committee members were as follows:

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or other institutions.

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ZURAINA BT ALI

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BNC	The British National Corpus
CAI	Computer Aided Instruction
CALL	Computer-Assisted Language Learning
CAVOCA	Computer Assisted Vocabulary Acquisition
CCECD	Continental's Concise English-Chinese Dictionary
CMLHS	Centre for Modern Languages & Human Sciences
COCA	The Corpus of Contemporary American English
EDA	Exploratory Data Analysis
EFL	English for Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
IIUM	International Islamic University Malaysia
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet
IRT	Immediate Recall Test
KR-20	Kuder-Richardson Formula 20
K-S Test	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LDCE	Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English
LEI	The Longman Interactive
LLS	Lexically Less Skilled
LS	Lexically Skilled
MUET	Malaysian University English Testing
MYTO	The Malaysian Theses Online

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OALD	Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary
PLSP	Perceptual Learning Style Preferences
SAV	Subjective Approach to Vocabulary
SCL	Student-Centred Learning
SD	Standard Deviation
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SPSS	Statistical Package of Social Sciences
TESL	Teaching English as A Second Language
TMM	Tell Me More
UiTM	Universiti Teknologi MARA
UKM	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
UMP	Universiti Malaysia Pahang
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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