The Impact of Topic Interest on EFL Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui apakah terdapat pengaruh minat topik terhadap perolehan kosakata insidental EFL atau tidak. Sampel penelitian ini terdiri dari 39 siswa, 19 siswa pada kelas eksperimen dan 20 siswa pada kelas kontrol. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kuantitatif dengan desain Quasi Eksperimental. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan SPSS 26.0. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa terdapat pengaruh minat topik terhadap perolehan kosakata insidental EFL. Hal ini dibuktikan dengan nilai t hitung lebih tinggi dari nilai t-tabel($-13.419 < -1.734$). Dengan demikian Ha diterima dan Ho ditolak. Hasil nilai rata-rata pre-test kelas eksperimen adalah 78,94, sedangkan nilai rata-rata post-test adalah 91,84. Oleh karena itu, nilai rata-rata siswa meningkat 12,9.

Kata Kunci: EFL, Minat Topik, Akuisisi Kosakata.

Abstract

This research was conducted to find out whether there is an impact of topic interest on EFL incidental vocabulary acquisition or not. The sample of this research consist of 39 students, 19 students in experimental class and 20 students in control class. The method used in this research was quantitative with Quasi- Experimental design. The data was analyzed by using SPSS 26.0. The result showed that there was an impact of topic interest on EFL incidental vocabulary acquisition. It was proved by the t count value higher than t-table value ($-13.419 < -1.734$). Thus, Ha was accepted and Ho was rejected. The result of the pre-test mean value for the experimental class is 78.94, while the mean of post-test is 91.84. Therefore, the mean value of students increased 12.9.

Keywords: EFL, Topic Interest, Vocabulary Acquisition.

Introduction

Vocabulary is one of the most important aspects in language learning, it is the primary basis to learn a new language. Vocabulary knowledge provides a valuable foundation for both language learning and practical communication at later stages, enabling learners to communicate effectively and develop all relevant listening, speaking, reading and writing skills help you succeed in language learning (Ghalebi et al, 2021).

In addition, (Ong & Zhang, 2018) stated that adequate vocabulary knowledge is needed in order to be able to express ideas in the form of expressions or writing, listening and reading learning process can also be easily understood with sufficient vocabulary. However, language learners often experienced difficulties because the process of vocabulary learning is boring and demands conscious concentration on key nuances of meaning (Zou et al, 2021).

Learners also report being discouraged when reading and listening due to their limited vocabulary (Ghalebi et al, 2020). One of the main reasons for the special attention given to vocabulary learning is that when learners are

processing texts (and languages) they are confronted with a myriad of new and unfamiliar terms, especially in comprehension. It is an experience that leads to difficulties (Namaziandost et al, 2020).

Vocabulary is one of the most important aspect in learning, especially in language learning. Becker in (Arifudin, 2024) identified vocabulary as the core basis in academic achievement, lack of vocabulary knowledge can also be the cause of failure in academic achievement. Words definition is needed to build more knowledge. (Nassaji, 2004) found learners with more vocabulary knowledge to be more successful in reading comprehension learning.

Ellis in (Nuary, 2024) learning a new word is never been a simple process, to learn a new word we should at least identify it as a word and put into our mental lexical. In vocabulary acquisition learning there are two types learning, intentional and incidental. Huckin & Coady in (Sappaile, 2024) the focus in intentional learning is to acquire a new vocabulary. Whereas in incidental learning, vocabulary acquisition is not the main focus of learning but a by-product. (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001) stated that incidental vocabulary learning is an activity of learning that carried out without informing students that a test will be held after the activity is carried out.

Topic interest has a significant positive effect in language learning, increase the level of students' persistence and thus affect reading comprehension directly. (Akbulut, 2020) stated that the positive effects of topic-related reading activities that facilitate second language vocabulary acquisition. The level of topic interest in reading can increase incidental acquisition and vocabulary knowledge in learners. (Lee & Pulido, 2017) also reported that students acquired more new vocabulary from stories and texts they found more interesting, they pay more attention to the meaning and the vocabulary in the text, this results in more new words being learned.

Additionally, (Shakourzadeh & Izadpanah., 2020) stated that students pay more attention to textbook-assigned based on their topic interest.

Fryer in (Arifin, 2024) interest is described as an activity that stimulates feelings of pleasure of individual. Dewey in (Djafri, 2024) in learning, interest is an impactful aspect to boost a motivation, make learning meaningful, and store knowledge of learning material in the long term. Moshinsky in (Rifky, 2024) interest affects learning in concentration and pleasure, where students can engage deliberately in learning. Bernstain in (Ramli, 2024) found that the relationship between interest and comprehension has been observed in students with both high and low reading abilities, as well as those who are intellectually challenged and those who are not.

Krapp and Hidi in (Sanulita, 2024) stated that individual interest is focused on one particular topic which is associated with a relatively stable increase in knowledge. Schiefele in (Hoerudin, 2023) stated that topic interest is an important motivation for text comprehension. According to Walker, Noland, and Greenshields's study, topic interest has a significant impact on reading comprehension, as the participants exhibited superior comprehension of passages that portrayed more engaging topics than those that portrayed less interesting ones (Baldwin et al, 2014). Stevens in (Rohimah, 2024) also stated that topic interest has a significant effect on reading for students with a high ability.

Previous studies found that topic interest has a positive significant impact on incidental vocabulary learning. However, most of previous studies were conducted on English Second Language (ESL) Learner context and the study on EFL context is limited. Thus, the focus of this study is to investigate the impact of topic interest on incidental vocabulary learning through reading on EFL learners.

Research Question : 1) Is topic interest effective in EFL students' incidental vocabulary acquisition?

Research Objective

The aim of this study is to find out whether there's an effectiveness of topic interest toward EFL students' incidental vocabulary acquisition or not.

Research Hypothesis

Ha = Topic interest is effective in improving students' incidental vocabulary acquisition

Ho = Topic interest is not effective in improving students' incidental vocabulary acquisition.

Methodology

Sutanto Leo in (Arifudin, 2023) explains that quantitative research is research that is based on collecting and analyzing data in the form of numbers (numerics) to explain, predict and control phenomena of interest. Meanwhile, according to (Arifudin, 2022), quantitative research emphasizes analysis on numerical data processed using statistical methods. With quantitative methods, the significance of the relationship between variables will be obtained.

In this study, the researcher uses a quantitative method with Quasi-experimental design. Experimental is a research design in quantitative method search the influence of used treatment under controlled conditions (Sugiyono, 2019). In addition, (Maciejewski, 2020) stated that Quasi- experimental is a study conducted on two groups using different treatment to find out the effectiveness of the treatment.

1.1 Instrument

The instrument of this research is 39 tenth grade students from 2 pharmacy classes. The experiment group consist of 19 students and control group consist of 20 students.

1.1 Data Collection

In collecting the data, the researcher utilizes vocabulary test through topic interest by using quasi-experimental design.

Table 1.1 Research Design of Pre-test and Post-test

Class	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental	✓	✓	✓
Control	✓	.	✓

On the first meeting, pre-test was conducted to measure students' vocabulary knowledge on both control and experiment class. The vocabulary test consisted of 20 vocabulary items. In this test, the students will have to write the definition of the words given to Bahasa Indonesia. Students was given time to fill out the test in 30 minutes. On the second meeting, the experimental class was given 'Richest Indonesian Businessman' reading passage which was chosen as the high interest topic on topic inventory (M = 3.18, SD = 1.00), while control class was given 'Famous Dangdut Singer' reading passage which was chosen as the low interesting topic passage (M = 1.84, SD = 0.97). Then, post-test was conducted on both groups to investigate the impact of topic interest on students' incidental vocabulary acquisition after treatment applied on experimental group. The post-test form is similar to pre-test, students will have to explain the definition of the words given in Bahasa Indonesia. The vocabulary items consisted of 20 vocabulary items in different words with the same meaning as a distraction to prevent students' familiarity on words items. The time allocation of the test was 30 minutes.

1.3. Data Analysis Technique

According to Muhadjir in (Fitria, 2020) states that data analysis is the activity of carrying out, searching for and compiling records of findings systematically through observations and interviews so that researchers focus on the research they are studying. After that, make the found material for other people, edit, classify and

present it. To analyze the collected data, computing mean and t-test were calculated to measure the effect of topic interest on incidental vocabulary acquisition by using SPSS 26.0 on vocabulary test of pre- test and post-test.

Findings and Discussions

Table 2.1 displayed the mean score of the experimental class. In pre-test the score was 78.97 and the post-test the score was 91.84. The post-test in experimental class shown that post-test mean score was higher that pre-test mean score, it increased by 12.9 after the treatment given. It means there is an improvement after the treatment given. Meanwhile, the mean score of the control class in pre-test the score was 71.75 and the post-test the score was 80.50. The post-test in control class shown that post-test mean score was higher that pre-test mean score, it increased by 8.75.

Table 2.1 Mean Score of Experimental Class and Control Class

Mean Score Experimental Class and Control Class			
Class	Students	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Experimental	N = 19	78.94	91.84
Control	N = 20	71.75	80.50

Normality test was conducted to find out whether the data is distributed normal or not normal. The result declared distributed normal if the significance value is > 0.05. The result of the normality test can be seen below.

Table 2.2 Tests of Normality

Tests of Normality

KELAS		Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.
HASIL	Pre-Experiment	.929	19	.167
	Post-Experiment	.902	19	.054
	Pre-Control	.946	20	.307
	Post-Control	.909	20	.061

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

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

From the table above, it can be seen that the result of experimental class and control class distributed normal because the result value is > 0.05.

To test the hypothesis, paired sample t-test was employed. The result can be seen in the table below.

Table 2.3 Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	
Pair 1	Pre-test Experiment - Post-test Experiment	-12.89474	4.18854	.96092	-14.91355	-10.87593	-13.419	18	.000
Pair 2	Pre-test Control - Post-test Control	-8.75000	4.25348	.95111	-10.74069	-6.75931	-9.200	19	.000

Based on the table 2.3, it shows that the level of trustworthiness is Sig. 0.05. In addition, t count of experimental class was -13.419 while t table was -1.729. The t test of experimental class pre- test and post-test described on the table below.

Table 2.4 The Result T Test of Experimental Class

	T count	T table	Sig. (2 tailed)
Pre-test Experimental Class	-13.419	-1.734	.000
Post-test Experimental Class			
Pre-test Control Class	-9.200	-1.729	.000
Post-test Control Class			

According to t test on table 2.4, it is shown that t test obtained t count of -13.419 and t table of - 1.734. Therefore, -t count <

-t table (-13.419 < -1.734). From the data above, it can be concluded that there is a significant increase on students' score learning result on experimental class. Meanwhile, t count of control class was -9.200 while t table was -1.729. It is shown that t test obtained t count of -9.200 and t table of -1.729. Therefore, -t count < -t table (-9.200 < -1.729). From the data above, it can be concluded that there is a significant increase on students' score learning result on control class. To analyze the data and to test the hypothesis, the researcher uses on the value of t count by concerning both of the value. In this case, t count is compared to t table whereas if negative t count (– t count < – t table or t count > t table, so null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected and if – t table ≤ t count ≤ t table, so null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted (Nuryadi et al., 2017). Based on the result of t test showed that there is a significant effect of topic interest on incidental vocabulary acquisition on experimental class, because there is an improvement on students' vocabulary knowledge on experimental class. It was also proved by the t count value in experimental class (-13.419) lower than t-table value (-1.734). Thus, Ha was accepted and Ho was rejected.

This finding is in line with (Lee & Pulido, 2017) and (Akbulut, 2020) researches which report that topic interest was effective on incidental vocabulary acquisition. Students' vocabulary knowledge increase after the reading passage based on their topic interest given. In this research, students are interested in the topic of reading about 'Richest Indonesian Businessman' which affects students' interest in understanding the meaning of the text and also the new vocabulary encountered. Before the treatment given, students experienced difficulties in understanding a few vocabularies during the pre-test. However, during the reading activity of 'Richest Indonesian Businessman' passage, students become more active in finding the meaning

of the new vocabulary they've found. Thus, students acquire new vocabulary in the process of reading passage and their scores on post-test increased. (Akbulut, 2020) found that topic interest shown to has a good impact on incidental vocabulary learning for learners. The research was conducted with experimental and control group, it was later found that the experimental group was more successful in gaining new vocabulary knowledge.

The findings also supported by (Lee & Pulido, 2017) research which stated that the use of topic interest makes students more interested in the reading passage given, in their study 'Psy's Gangnam Style' reading passage make students more persistent in trying to understand and paying attention to the texts meaning. In addition, (Akbulut, 2020) in her research found that participants with reading passage "The Social Network" significantly acquired more new vocabulary since the reading passage topic was their interest. Similarly, Ainley, Hidi and Berndorff's also found that incidental vocabulary acquisition process can occur because it is facilitated by topic interest which also affects reading comprehension (Pulido, 2004).

Compared to the control class, the experimental class with the reading topic 'Richest Indonesian Businessman' acquire more new vocabulary. Students in the experimental class are also more focused and paying attention to the reading passage given, while the control class tends to pay less attention to the reading text given. Students' reading interest influenced their ability to comprehend the meaning of the text (Fahrurrozi et al, 2020). Students with high interest tend to be more motivated and attentive, so students can contribute to the learning process and the knowledge they need (Asgari et al, 2019). (Akbulut, 2020) suggested that using interesting topic makes students confident they will get knowledge from the reading passage and it also boost students' motivation. In addition, Tobias in (Hanafiah, 2022) interest has a significant impact on students' motivation which is

also related to student learning abilities. Schiefele in (Paturochman, 2024) also stated that interest can direct students to get learning motivation which also determines the level of understanding.

Using topic interest to improve students' vocabulary knowledge through reading was more effective. Students can be more focused and enjoying the process, so that their score in learning English increased. Thus, the purpose of teaching and learning activity achieved. Implementing topic interest can also motivate students in reading activity and especially in vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, based on the data result in this research, it was indicated that topic interest increased students' vocabulary acquisition.

Conclusion

Based on data analysis, findings and discussions in this research, researcher draws conclusion that topic interest is effective on students' incidental vocabulary acquisition because there is an improvement on students' vocabulary knowledge. It can be seen from the result of t-test. T count is -13.419 and t table is -1.734. It is clear that -t count is lower than -t table. In addition, the result of the pre-test mean value for the experimental class is 78.94, while the mean of post-test is 91.84. Therefore, the mean value of students increased 12.9. However, the result of the pre-test mean value for the control class shows a result of 71.75, while the mean value of the post-test shows a result of 80.50. The mean value of students increased 8.75. Thus, the increase in the mean value of students in the experimental class is greater than the control class in which difference from the increase in value is 4.15. The limitation of this study is the lack of participants, students' level, and various different topic. Thus the researcher suggest for the next study conducted on different level with wider participants.

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