A Study on the Effectiveness of Teaching and Learning Vocabularies by Making Sentence for EFL Undergraduate at Tertiary Level

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Abstract: *A rich vocabulary range shows great assistance for EFL university students in their learning English at school and in their future jobs and lives. There are many different ways for learners to learn vocabulary, among which making sentences with new vocabularies, especially learning vocabulary on themes is mentioned in this study. Qualitative research is employed at Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade, in which a class learned English in traditional way while another class learn vocabulary by making sentences on themes. Interview sections with the teachers of both classes and 6 randomly chosen students in the experimental class to understand more about the effectiveness of this method. The study shows that making sentences on themes effectively enhances students' understanding of the meaning as well as how to use the vocabulary in context that helps them remember the words and phrases better. Although there are some challenges during this activity, including the number of students in the class, limited time, students' different English level, or the number of new vocabularies in each unit, both the teacher and students prefer this learning vocabulary method. The students are engaged in this activity partly thanks to their teacher's support, encouragement, and positive feedback.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In second language acquisition, vocabulary plays a significant role because without it, learners find it hard to master language skills and understand the message (Wilkins, 1972; Coady and Huckin, 1997; Schmitt, 2008; Macedonia, 2014; Macedonia et al., 2014; Eskandari et al.,2004). Therefore, both teachers and learners are always seeking better methods to enhance the students' vocabulary. At lower-level education, students seem to have more time for learning vocabulary because their main job is study. However, at university level, students learn English for different purposes: passing a single subject in their curriculum for non-English majors or enhancing English to learn other subjects in English for English-majored students. Besides learning at school, most university students are busy with their part-time job and their own lives, which can be obstacles for them to learn vocabulary like when they were in high school. This research focuses on English-majored students at the second semester of their curriculum. At Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade, English-majored students are required to learn main skills, including reading, listening, speaking, and writing before they study main subjects in their university training program. Although vocabulary is important, teachers mainly focus on skills more than the vocabulary provided in each subject because their targets are assisting students develop their techniques to do well in language skills. Vocabulary exercises are done quickly, and students are required to learn by themselves outside of the classroom, which can be challenging for busy students or students without appropriate learning vocabulary learning methods.

There are many techniques to learn vocabulary, such as incidental and intentional vocabulary learning (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001). Each has its own benefits and drawbacks, so that it is not easy to help find out a better way to learn vocabulary along with other skills. Normally, students can remember the vocabulary better when they can see the words often (National Reading Panel, 2000; Stahl, 2005). It does not mean that the students repeat the vocabulary until they remember it but try to see it in different situations or contexts. Therefore, this study focuses on learning vocabulary by making sentences to see how this method can help them along with learning writing skill.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Importance of Vocabulary Learning

No one can deny the importance of vocabulary in language acquisition. Vocabulary is considered as the core part of understanding and use of language (Hunt & Belag, 2005), and that is why Lewis (2000) mentions that acquiring a large number of vocabularies is the most important task for language learners. To be successful, learners cannot just try to remember the spelling and meaning of the vocabulary; they need to practice and take time to continually repeat the words in order to learn them (Nakata, 2006).

First, the learners need to learn high frequency words which are the most common words in the language. And then, they learn low frequency words, defined by Nation (2005), which are used in academic contexts or technical vocabularies instead of daily speech words.

2.2. Methods of learning vocabulary

There are many studies on vocabulary learning strategies. Several researchers argue that multimedia input is essential for learning vocabulary. Yanguas (2009), Yoshii (2006) and Yoshii and Flaitz (2002) claim that using visualized aid to demonstrate the definition of words is more useful than just using text.

Teachers need to find out the most appropriate ways to help students to learn vocabulary effectively because Kamil (2004) claims that students will learn quickly once they understand what they have to do in the vocabulary tasks. Schmitt (2000) emphasizes the importance of assisting learners to find the necessary strategies to learn vocabulary by themselves. Nation (2000) also agrees that learning independently of the teacher is one of the most important ways of learning vocabulary. These strategies allow students to be involved in their own learning and take control of their learning speed so that they learn better when they take responsibilities for their learning (Nation, 2001; Scharle & Szabo, 2000)

Learning vocabulary through context is another option. According to Day et al. (1991), Dupuy and Krashen (1993), and Hulstijn (1992), learners can gain the meaning through incidental reading contexts while Gipe and Arnold (1979) prove that intentional reading tasks are helpful for learners to get the meaning and forms of vocabulary. In other studies, Griffin (1992) and Laufer and Shmueli (1997) add that explicit learning from contexts and word pairs are effective methods for learners to learn vocabulary. Griffin (1992) mentions learning vocabulary in contexts is most beneficial for advance learners while Laufer and Shmueli (1997) show that there is little or even no correlation between contexts and vocabulary learning. Bamford and Day (2004), Day and Robb (2015), Suk (2017) and Nation and Waring (2020) claim that extensive reading helps learners learn more vocabulary. However, to learn vocabulary through extensive reading, the students have to read substantial amount of reading sources to learn the meaning and improve the retention rate (Cobb,2007; Nation & Waring, 2020). Additionally, many researchers agree that learning a word is more than just getting its meaning and form (Miller, 1999; Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2000).

Gaming is also mentioned as an effective method of learning vocabulary because it boosts the students' motivation and engagement. Chen and Hsu (2019), De Wilde et al. (2019), Mohsen (2016), and Sundqvist (2019) agree that video games playing enhances students' vocabulary learning. Like reading books, this incidental vocabulary learning method allows students to learn vocabulary better because they come across the same words and phrases many times through the texts, which improves the retention rate.

Most of the mentioned studies focus on receptive vocabulary knowledge, which means learners use strategies to gain the meaning and forms of vocabulary. According to Nation (2001) and Schmitt (2014), productive vocabulary knowledge relates to learning how to use the word correctly and express the meaning of a word effectively in productive skills like speaking and writing.

Webb (2005) mentions that making sentences with the new words under the condition of high engagement, students would learn the words more effectively. Using sentence frames to learn science terms is proved to be effective (Block, 2020); Swain (1995) agrees that using sentence frames to learn vocabulary is a tool for comprehensible output.

Additionally, Talebzadeh and Bagheri (2012) emphasize the effectiveness of using the making sentences method to learn vocabulary in their study. They studied 102 students learning English in an institute in Iran. In their research, three types of writing, namely sentence making, composition writing, and cloze-

test task were used to learn vocabulary. Besides the analysis of the results of one-way ANOVAs and three paired t-test, the interview also confirmed the effectiveness of these writing tasks on learning vocabulary. Keshavarz and Estaji (2006) also agree that writing composition is an effective way to learn vocabulary. Another research done by Panah Dehghani (2006-2007) also proves the effectiveness of using sentence making to learn vocabulary. In this study, the students were required to write two sentences for each word at home. Writing the sentence helped students learn vocabulary better than just saying the words.

According to Coomber et al. (1986), there are three reasons why writing tasks enhance vocabulary learning. The first reason is that sentence making allows students to use the word in meaningful contexts. Secondly, cognitive functions are employed at a high level when the students make their sentences. Finally, during the writing process, the students have time to elaborate many aspects of language, especially lexical items, into their work.

2.3. Difficulties in teaching vocabulary

According to Suardi and Sakti (1999) and Rohmatillah (2014), teaching vocabulary encounters many challenges, including the number of new vocabularies, the difference of students' English ability, classroom management, student's motivation, teaching method, and evaluation. Particularly, English level of students is different and there are many new words make it hard to choose the necessary vocabulary to teach. In addition, the noise prevents students from listening to their teachers' explanation. The students are not motivated to learn vocabulary, either.

Dinh (2023) studies difficulties related to linguistic features in learning vocabulary. Learners face challenges including "Pronunciation, Spelling, Sound and spelling misidentification, Range, connotation and idiomaticity" (p109). Furthermore, Sumaia (2021) agrees with linguistic difficulties and also adds more difficulties in learning vocabulary such as lack of teaching method, correct use of grammar, word choice in specific contexts, and motivation.

In general, it is not easy to decide which method is more appropriate than the others. In the context of this study, university students need vocabulary to improve language skills, but vocabulary is just a small part of the main skills. It is hard for students to learn vocabulary outside of the classroom because of their thick learning schedule and part-time job. The teacher tries to find out the better way to help busy students learn vocabulary in the classroom effectively but make sure that this activity does not cut the time of reading tasks. To find out the effectiveness of learning vocabulary by making sentence, the study aims to answer the following questions:

How can making sentences help students learn vocabulary better than learning in the traditional method?

What challenges do the teachers and students face when using this learning vocabulary method?

3. METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted at Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade, Vietnam. At this school, English-majored are required to learn main skills, namely reading, speaking, listening, and speaking at three first semesters in their program. Main skills are taught as main subjects including grammar; however, vocabulary is taught through some exercises accompanying skills learning. There are 100 students and one teacher involved in the study; they are divided into two classes: one class study vocabulary in their reading class with a traditional method while in another class, the students learn vocabulary by making sentences. Both the classes use the textbook Q Skills for Success Reading and Writing of Oxford and are taught by the same teacher. In both classes of Reading, the students' English level output is B2 so that most of the vocabulary in the book are quite difficult and various. Units in the books follow different themes, and the vocabulary is also divided into themes like sociology, behavioral science, developmental psychology, science and technology, nutritional science, education, geology, and engineering. There are about 24 to 30 new words and phrases in each unit which the students learn in one to two weeks (two meetings with three periods each). In terms of the structure of the lesson, before the reading section, students are introduced to new words and learn or do exercises about the vocabulary right after the reading. The exercises are various, including multiple choice questions, filling in the gap, or guessing the word based on the sentence context. These types of exercises help students understand the meaning of the words; however, they may not know how to use them correctly.

Therefore, the teachers ask the students in the experimental group to make their own sentences with at least one word for each vocabulary section. There are some requirements for the sentences such as following the theme of the unit, more than ten words for each sentence, and choosing the vocabulary with which you are not familiar.

There are fifteen meetings in each class, and the class observations took place on the first, third, fifth, seventh, ninth, and eleventh meetings. In the other meetings, the teacher focuses on teaching and practicing reading skills which are not the objective of the study. After the midterm test, there are 5 students in the experimental class and the teacher participating in the interview section which aims to know more about the attitudes, the benefits, and challenges in detail when they teach and learn vocabulary by making sentences. This qualitative research aims to find out whether the method of learning vocabulary by making sentences is effective and the attitudes of the teacher and students towards it. Therefore, the interview section employed the following semi-structured questions:

What do you think of this method of teaching vocabulary by making sentences compared to teaching vocabulary in the traditional method?

Can you share some benefits of this teaching and learning vocabulary method?

Do you face any challenges or concerns when applying this method?

The interview was recorded, transcribed, and interpreted along with six classroom observations.

4. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

4.1. Classroom observations

According to the observations, in the first meeting in both classes, the teacher introduced clearly the course content, the rules, as well as the structure of each unit in the book. There were two vocabulary sections in each unit. In the normal class, the teacher just showed the new vocabulary that they were going to learn in each reading and let the students do the vocabulary exercises individually or pair work or groupwork before moving on to the next parts. The teacher focused mainly on reading tips and tasks more than vocabulary tasks, so the students seemed to do the exercises as required. However, in the controlled class, the students knew that besides the exercises in the textbook, they needed to make their own sentences. The theme of unit 1 is "sociology" so that the students were asked to choose the words that are new to them and make a sentence about that topic. In the first vocabulary section, the students had 12 vocabulary words, but in the second section, they would have 24 vocabulary words because the teacher also counted 12 vocabulary words in the first section. As a result, the teacher could review all the vocabulary words in a unit.

It takes the students a long time to make a sentence as required because they do not normally do something like that. When they said their sentences, they were simple and included some basic mistakes like the tenses, the article, preposition. For example, "In this new year, I will incline to do new things like learn how to cook." The student should say "in this new year, I incline to do new things like cooking/ learning how to cook." Or they just try to imitate the sample sentence in the textbook like "My brother embodies the quality of honesty; he never tells a lie" while the sample sentence is "My father embodies the quality of honesty; he never tells a lie." The teacher encouraged her students to try their best and she patiently corrected the mistakes and helped them improve their sentences. She also gave bonus contribution points for all the efforts, which made the students happy, and tried to make their sentences.

In the class studying with the traditional method, the students finished the reading task and continued to do vocabulary exercises in the textbook before moving to the Reading Skill part. They looked up the meaning of the vocabulary to do exercises. Although many students volunteered to answer the exercises, the learning atmosphere was not engaging. It still follows the old teaching method, in which the teacher gives the lecture, and the students do exercises. As predicted, the learning atmosphere became heavier in some next meetings because the students feel bored and demotivated to do exercises.

In the next observations, the students in the second class get familiar with this method of learning vocabulary by making sentences, and they actively and creatively make their sentences. Some students tried to use many words in sentences, which got praise from the teacher and became a challenge for his classmates. Some students made many sentences, but the teacher could not give feedback for all because

there were more than 50 students in the class. To save time, the teacher gave them 5 minutes to make their sentences and 10 minutes for them to present their sentences in front of class. The other sentences were written on the word link that the teacher sent to her class. She read and gave feedback on the link later for all the students to have a look after the class.

Interestingly, even when the students are familiar with this method, they still struggle to make their own sentences because the topic is rather new, or the vocabulary is complicated. On the contrary, they are eager to make sentences when coming across familiar topics like education or technology. Moreover, the students actively look up the new words in the dictionary and figure out different meanings of the words. Some of them tried to make sentences with the meaning they preferred, which might differentiate from the one in the textbook. This is a good sign of active learning which shows that the students are engaged into this vocabulary learning method. Moreover, when the learners make their own sentences, the words are stored in their memory better. Especially, there are some vocabularies repeated in some units; and when they see the word and the definition, they can easily remember they saw them in which unit. Some students went back some pages to see their previous sentences to check if they remember the meaning of the word correctly. Take the word "alleviate" in unit 4 and "alleviation" in unit 8 as an example. The students were engaged and delighted when they found out that they were correct when looking at their own notetaking. They also remembered that they had learned another word having the same meaning. For example, in unit 8, they learned the word "vague" which has the same meaning as "ambiguous" that they had learned in unit 6.

Additionally, in last observations, the teacher seemed to be successful when the students created their good habit of learning vocabulary through their creative "masterpiece" and the teacher did not give much support as initial meetings. The anxiety of a few weak students reduced, and they could keep up with their classmates and complete their sentences on time and naturally. When everything is on track, this activity boosts the students' learning motivation, and they learn vocabulary better as a result.

4.2. Teacher's interview

The teacher shares that she prefers this vocabulary teaching method more than the traditional one because it is very helpful and effective. She said that "my students are really into this activity, not only because they want to get bonus points, but they also find it interesting and useful." The teacher feels positive about this method when she emphasizes that it engages students into the lesson and try their best to improve their vocabulary as well as their English proficiency. She is delighted when seeing her students learn and practice vocabulary actively and put more efforts into their learning.

She also mentions that compared to the class using traditional method, the students in the controlled class do better in their tests, especially tasks involving applied vocabulary. Particularly, she shares "my students in the experimental class remember the vocabulary better and that helps them a lot when they do the reading comprehension tasks. Their final results of tests are much higher than those in my normal class."

In the second question, she points out many benefits of this method. Firstly, "my students enjoy creating their own sentences to apply the vocabularies that are new to them," she said. At tertiary level, the students should actively learn and apply what they have learned into a real-like context, and "thanks to this learning method, my students learn actively and improve day by day." Secondly, making sentences enhances the students' creativity. The teacher claimed that "I see a better version of my students through the sentence they make unit by unit." The students surprise their teacher when she listens to their sentences because their sentences are meaningful and well expressed. She also mentions "they can show me what they really want without or with a little help." Additionally, one of the reasons why she likes this method is that it boosts her students' confidence. According to the teacher, many students were shy and refused to share their sentences because they were not sure whether they understood the vocabulary correctly and they were scared that they might make mistakes. She noticed that and encouraged them by letting them write the sentence or say their sentences and giving positive feedback to improve her students' sentences. As a result, the learning atmosphere is not as serious as it was in the first few meetings.

She said, "making sentence enhances my students' vocabulary learning," and also explained that sometimes she checked their memory by asking randomly words in the reading tasks, they could immediately tell her the meaning of any vocabularies that they had learned in previous units. This method seems to be a good way to turn short term memory into long term memory. Finally, the teacher

shared, "this method is a useful tool because students can develop many different skills at the same time. They learn vocabulary meaning, do exercises to understand how to use it correctly, and have chance to apply it into their own context." The teacher's feedback helps them know if they use the vocabulary correctly or not. She shared that "I know that my students can make better sentences, but they are just not confident enough to say their work in front of their classmates." Finally, she was delighted and confident to confirm that this vocabulary learning helped her students remember the vocabulary better. She added, "when they come across the words, their own sentences remind them better than the sample sentences."

Besides benefits, there are some drawbacks when applying this method. The most significant challenge is time. According to the teacher, most teachers focus on reading tasks because the students have to improve their reading skills, and in the regular tests or final exam, reading questions account for 80% while vocabulary just takes 20%. The students should learn vocabulary outside of the classroom to save time for other reading activities. However, like in the traditional teaching method class, students do not remember most of the new vocabulary and cannot achieve good grades for reading tasks because of obstacles related to new vocabulary. Deciding to apply this vocabulary learning method, she carefully prepares her lessons and modifies other tasks to keep in track with the given time. After each class, she always takes some time to reflect on the pros and cons of this method to make the next lessons better. She said, "although I have a rather busy teaching schedule, I really want to help my students enhance their vocabulary. Therefore, it is worthy for me to invest into this method."

The difference in English level among students causes another challenge. She claimed that "students with better English proficiency always think and make their sentences quicker than their classmates," and if she called many good students first, it would be pressure on the others. In some cases, the teacher needs to support and encourage weak students instead of forcing them to give their sentences immediately. Besides classroom management and time management, feedback giving choice is particularly important because she said that the appropriate feedback encouraged the learners while the negative one might cause anxiety for them.

The last difficulty is the size of the class. There are more than 50 students in each class, it is very difficult for all of them to have a chance to say their sentences in about 10 to 15 minutes. The teacher had to let them write their sentences in the link and gave feedback later. She said that "giving feedback right after they present their sentences is better because the others can listen and also learn from their classmates' mistakes." After the class, the students are busy with other subjects, jobs, and other personal problems, so it is hard for them to learn vocabulary in friendly and comfortable environments like in the classroom. That is why the teacher tries her best to help them.

4.3. Students interview

In terms of the attitudes toward using sentence making to learn new vocabulary, all 5 interviewed students show positive attitudes. They like to make their own sentences with some challenges. Particularly, one student said, "making sentence helps me remember the words better and it's easy for me to recall them in reading tasks," or another student claim that he could not be lazy when his classmates were active and engaged into the activities so that he also tried his best to be better than the others. Most of them like the learning atmosphere during that section because each of the students makes a different sentence and sometimes it is very funny or weird. One student claimed that "sometimes, my teacher keeps asking "really? Are you sure?" when she heard a funny sentence or crazy ideas. And, my class laugh joyfully, too." Although the vocabulary in the textbook is rather difficult because most of them are in level B2, C1, and C2, all the students did not feel nervous or stressed when studying them by making sentences.

The students also shared some benefits that this learning method provides them like "it is easier to remember vocabulary", "I can understand the reading better when I know the vocabulary", "the sentence helps me recall the meaning quicker than when I have to look it up again in the dictionary." Moreover, they claim that at first they were not confident with their sentences, but thanks to the teacher's encouragement and feedback, they e gained more confidence and improved their sentences a lot.

It is surprising that all students considered making sentences to be an effective method of learning vocabulary. One student shared that "Actually, making sentence is the best way to learn vocabulary," and another student explained that by making sentences, she "get used to the vocabulary," "find

comfortable with the words" and remember them longer. Additionally, one student reported that by looking at the sample and doing exercises in the book, she understood the meaning, but just when "creating my own sentence, I definitely know how to use it correctly." One student seriously shared that "The final target of learning vocabulary is to use the word in the situation that I want." He explained that this method saved time to learn words because with a busy schedule of learning at school, students like them did not have enough time to self-study at home or apply basic methods of learning by heart like repeating the words.

Moreover, making sentences on given themes is also useful. Most of the students agree that themes of the unit narrow the topic, so it is easy for them to make sentences. One student added that learning vocabulary by making sentences on theme helped them enlarge their vocabulary. "Although at first I find difficult to express my idea on a theme because I rarely do something like that before, with the teacher's support, I can do it and then actually do it by myself." However, for strange themes, it is rather challenging and time consuming because sometimes they do not have enough vocabulary to express themselves or need time to recall the word like one of them said "I remember it somewhere and try to go back some unit to find it. When I see the word, I am so happy because I came across it and made a crazy sentence with it."

The benefits are sometimes accompanied by the challenges. They are English-majored students, but the difference in educational background causes them some specific challenges. One student mentioned that "It takes me a lot of time to think in English and make an English sentence because I always translate English words into Vietnamese and learn Vietnamese meaning of the words." However, she knew that practicing thinking in English is good for English learning, so she put more efforts and practice at home. She also made a list of words she learned; she tried to make one or two sentences for each word-one sentence in the class and one at home if the word was too difficult for her. She felt positive towards this learning method because it also helped her a lot in other subjects like writing or speaking. She happily shared that "I can apply many C1 level words to improve my writing tasks," and "having variety of word on themes help me enrich my word choice for speaking, too." Furthermore, one girl said that she struggled a lot when being asked to make a sentence because her English level was not good; therefore, she had to look for Vietnamese meaning before making a sentence. At first, she thought the sentence in Vietnamese and translated it into English, so it took her a lot of time. As a result, she rarely volunteered to share her sentences to get bonus points in class; however, "I try to complete my own sentence at home and ask for my teacher's comments in the next meeting."

The number of new vocabulary and the themes also bring challenges to learners. Many of them agreed that "about 24 words in each unit is rather too many for us to consume in one or two weeks," and "strange topics sometimes make me confused." Without revision, it would be hard for them to remember the vocabulary, especially difficult words on unfamiliar themes like psychology or geology. They said that the teacher explained the theme to make it close to them and advised them to make a little bit crazy or true to them sentences. One student said that "crazy ideas work for me. I can find the learned vocabulary and its meaning easily because I remember which theme it belongs to."

5. DISCUSSION

How can making sentences help students learn vocabulary better than learning in the traditional method?

Based on the classroom observations and interview results, it is undeniable that learning vocabulary by making sentences is an effective method. This method enhances the student's understanding as well as applying vocabulary into contexts, specially making their own sentences on the given themes. Moreover, it is such a useful method for university students who have thick learning schedule with more than 10 subjects and busy life of learning and working. In the traditional learning classroom, the students do exercises as a requirement instead of learning vocabulary; therefore, it is hard for students to remember and know how to use the vocabulary. On the contrary, making sentences creates a positive learning environment in which the students learn vocabulary actively and remember the words more effectively. With a rich vocabulary range, the students find it easy to understand reading tasks and even can apply these vocabularies into other subjects like writing and speaking. By creating good discipline, this method can be an effective way for the students to learn vocabulary by themselves. The classroom observations also show that this method create positive learning environment in which the students are

engaged into the making sentence activity and put more efforts to learn vocabulary while the teacher manages and supports the students when in need. At tertiary level, the students are required to work and master the knowledge actively while the teacher's role is to give instructions. This method of learning vocabulary is useful and meets that demand. Additionally, like learning other skills, there are pre-, mid-, and post- stages, and in the final stage, learners perform their products as the output to prove that they understand and know how to use it. Therefore, making sentences is a great way for students to show their understanding and application. That is the reason both the teacher and her students have a positive attitude towards this method of learning vocabulary. This result confirms what other studies like Webb (2005), Block (2020), Talebzadeh and Bagheri (2012) or Panah Dehghani (2006-2007) said about the effectiveness of making sentences on learning vocabulary. The class observation and interview give more evidence for three reasons that Coomber et al. (1986) used to explain the effectiveness of this method. The students are engaged in learning vocabulary by making sentences, and both the teacher and her students show enthusiasm towards this teaching and learning vocabulary method.

What challenges do the teachers and students face when using this learning vocabulary method?

According to the sharing of the teacher and the students, there are several obstacles. Firstly, the size of the classroom, the limitation of time for making sentence activity, and the classroom management during the activity cause the teacher several difficulties. During the activity, the teacher has to keep track of the time while encouraging her students to make their own sentences with new vocabulary. The teacher put a lot of effort to make the activity work well because she gives weak students more support and gives as many students the chance to present their sentences as possible, giving positive feedback is also a need. This result confirms some of the difficulties in teaching vocabulary that Suardi and Sakti (1999) or Rohmatillah (2014) stated. The number of new vocabularies in each unit is a real challenge for the students to master in one or two weeks. Thanks to the effort that the teacher put into her lesson, the students are supported and encouraged to make their own sentences although their English levels are different and the time for this activity is limited. However, learning vocabulary by making sentences in this study engages students to actively participate in this activity, which is different from what Suardi and Sakti (1999) or Sumaia (2021) claimed in their studies. In general, the benefits outweigh the drawbacks so that making sentences is an effective method of learning vocabulary for university students.

6. CONCLUSION

The qualitative research on the impact of using making sentences on learning vocabulary for busy university students at HUIT employs the classroom observations and interviews with the teacher and her students in two classes, one studying vocabulary with traditional method and one learning vocabulary by making sentences as their output. The findings show much fruitful evidence for the effectiveness of this method. Although the teacher and students are required to put a lot of efforts and collaboration during 45 minutes of this activity, their vocabulary knowledge has been improved, and they can apply new vocabulary into their sentences on specific theme of each unit. This learning method is suitable for students of all levels, but the teacher has to support and give necessary feedback much more than when she teaches vocabulary in traditional method.

The study mainly focuses on the attitudes of the teacher and students towards learning vocabulary by making sentences, the benefits and challenges they face during the activity. Therefore, there is a need for future research to have deep insight into this method because making sentences is just the last stage of learning a new vocabulary which enhances the memory and makes sure the students know how to use it correctly. Future studies can investigate the effectiveness of a combination of making sentences along with exercises in the textbook and reading tasks. Furthermore, quantitative research could be a great tool of measuring the success of this learning vocabulary method, which can be a question for other researchers in the field.

In general, learning vocabulary by making sentences is an engaging and effective method for university students to enhance their vocabulary. Teachers can apply this method into their class to help students create a good habit of learning vocabulary as well as learning autonomy inside and outside the classroom.

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