

Factors Becoming The Students' Problems in Learning English-2 As Seen on Their Sentences. (A Diagnostic Research on Semester-2 Students of Business Faculty, Buddhi Dharma University, Academic Year of 2017 - 2018)

P.C. Sudarmadi ^{1)*}

¹⁾Universitas Buddhi Dharma
Jl. Imam Bonjol No.41. Karawaci Ilir, Tangerang, Indonesia

¹⁾pc.sudarmadi@ubd.ac.id

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Abstract

Learning foreign language, specifically English language as the international language, may make some students feel bored. The feelings emerge because of some factors experienced by the students. The factors are lack of interest to learn it, lack of basic knowledge of it, or lack of motivation to learn it. All of the factors reasoning may be caused by the late to build and have motivation to learn the language. For students of higher education institutions, the students have to have enough basic knowledge of the language learned because actually the students have learned the language since they were in high schools. Even, some students might have learnt English language since when they were in junior high schools. The basic knowledge can actually give very dominant influence on their learning continuity. Many students taking English-2, in Faculty of Business, Buddhi Dharma University, seem to feel the significance of having basic knowledge in order that they could improve their English mastery. Therefore, those who don't have enough basic knowledge got some problem to improve their English. Meanwhile those who have got enough basic knowledge could continue improve their skills in the use of the English language. Relating to the learning activities, Edgar Dale (1962) stated that there are two kinds of learning; they are passive learning and active learning. The best way to improve the learning must be about activating the both, active and passive learning. However, to activate the both is not a simple thing. There are some factors that the general students face like the students of Semester-2, Business Faculty have faced. The factors that make problems are the motivation to learn, the opportunity to practice, the lack of basic knowledge, etc. Some students may have good enough basic knowledge, while some other students may have not enough basic knowledge to improve their skills. Indeed, problems can disrupt the students to improve their capability to learn English as a foreign language. This condition creates another problem for the teachers to improve the class activity as it should be.

I. INTRODUCTION

Every learner, whoever they are, will face problems when they learn something. In facing the problems, everyone will use different ways and strategies. One will say on the problems as handicaps, meanwhile the others will say on it as something challenging. Learning foreign language is much better if it is started at the young ages. It is because young ages are usually easier to imitate sounds, and remember words. Then, together with their growth, they can improve their grammar structure in order that they can learn the language more comprehensively. It is because, besides speaking, the language learners must have to learn how to write and make good sentences as language is not only used for speaking but also for writing.

* Corresponding author

Learning is a process of changing behavior. Meanwhile, learning language at young ages can also be the basic for the next learning activities meaning to improve more their skills and knowledge. In this case, the basic of English knowledge would really help the students to step ahead to improve their mastery of the English language. Because of that, if the students do not have enough basic knowledge, they would face problems more than the other students having enough basic knowledge. Different from those who have enough basic knowledge, students who are lack of basic knowledge would face handicap that can slowdown their learning activities.

Learning needs total concentration of the minds in order that the learners can catch the information and knowledge of the subject and topic they learnt. When the students fail to concentrate, they will fail to learn. Even, the failure to concentrate – to prepare their minds to learn – would make their presents in the classroom in vain. Nothing would be remembered by their minds. Such cases happen not only because of the students’ condition, but also because of the learning programs as, in fact, there are too many subjects to learn by every student of higher education institutions (Handika, 2015).

A German philosopher, (Ebbinghaus, 2016) states that the amount of a learning depends on the time the learners spend to learn. “The amount you learn depends on the time you spend trying to learn it. Study something longer will make learn something more thoroughly.” It means, the students who have learnt the language longer, they would have better knowledge of it. However, some problems may have kept them to not seriously learn. As a result, their basic knowledge do not improve well.

Relating to the learning activities, (Dale, 1962) stated that there are two kinds of learning; they are passive learning and active learning. Each of the learning activity, like reading, hearing, seeing, saying, and writing, brings different levels of impact to the learners’ minds. More over, Edgar Dale explains the learning activities as follows:

Table 1. Learning Activities

Learning	Learning Activites: Students generally remember:	Learning Outcomes. Students are able to:
Passive Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10 % of what they read - 20 % of what they hear - 30 % of what they see - 50 % of what they see and hear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define - Describe - List - Explain
Active Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 70 % of what they say and write - 90 % of what they do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply - Practice - Analyze - Evaluate

Adapted from (Dale, 1969), Audio visual Methods in Teaching

To make the students learn, the fasilitator, in this case the teachers or lecturers must do create the situation or the environment conducive to learn. The environment that is usually conducive to learn is when and where the students can force themselves to work on their brains.

Conducive environment may involve the arrangement of many aspects, such as room’s condition (the chairs, the lights, the color of the walls, the air circulation), the students’ intention, and the teachers’ management themselves. All of the aspects will support each other to make the goal reached during the activities of learning and teaching process run for every minute of the session.

The teachers as facilitators have significance positions and roles to create the conducive environment. Teachers’ preparations will help the process of learning run well. It supports the students to receive information delivered. However, the environment is not just the only factor supporting the teaching-learning process. There must be an appropriate strategy taken and implemented by the teachers to make successful activities which make the information remembered and comprehended by the students. The well prepared materials and topic, including the time allocation for each activity, such as explanation, exercise, etc., that is very strategic, will help the students learn very much and more seriously.

Facilitators must not only deliver information to the students during the class. They have to remember the time allocation stated in their program. (Slavin, 2015) in his “Educational Psychology” stated that teachers must allocate time for rehearsal during lessons. Teaching too much information too rapidly is likely to be ineffective because unless students are given time to mentally rehearse each new piece information, later information is likely to drive out of their working memory.”

Working memory is an important part of the memory to learn. From working memory, the brain decides where to put the information, in the short term memory or will be kept in the long term memory. Wikipedia.com states that

working memory is a cognitive system with a limited capacity that is responsible for temporarily holding information available for processing. Working memory is important for reasoning and the guidance of decision-making and behaviour.

Some people think that working memory is the similar part with short-term memory. However, some theorists consider the two forms of memory are different, They assume that working memory allows for the manipulation of stored information, while short-term memory only refers to the short-term storage of information.

According to (Miller, 1996) human's working memory is believed to have a capacity of five to nine bits of information. It means, the memory can receive 5 – 9 distinct information at a time. Working memory is like a bottle neck through which information from the environment reaches long term memory.

To make the information remembered, facilitators must make sure that there must be enough time to rehearse the information they get. Making the students very busy with receiving various information, or concept, or theories without giving enough time to rehearse will make them difficult to improve their understanding, to implement the information or knowledge into practise, or, even, to improve their cognitive skills.

Moreover, (Slavin, 2015) states that teachers or lecturers cannot present students with many ideas at once unless the ideas are so well organized and well connected to information already in the students' long-term memory. Learning subjects which are not correlated each other, or have difference targets and objectives may make the learning outcomes confusing. Therefore, teachers must always remember to limit certain topic of discussion for most of the time, whereas they could take the other differently types of teaching activities.

English as A Foreign Language

For Indonesian students, English is a language learnt as a foreign language. English is learnt specifically at their schools, starting from elementary schools with limited time allocation, usually four (4) times 40 minutes per week. The class is usually participated by 20 – 40 students learning together.

Foreign language is a language learnt after their mother tongue. For certain students, frankly, for most of the students; however, this language has created problems growing together with their learning activities. Because of the problems, many students in the class cannot take part the class activities actively. This situation can create another different problem for the class since those who don't have the basic knowledge can do little things and, therefore often disrupt the activities.

Problems that are often faced by the students are writing sentences, pronouncing words or utterance, to name a few. The problems of writing sentences may come from their lack of vocabulary knowledge and their poorly mastered grammar-structure. When these basic elements are not mastered, the problems will be accumulated to be more complex since in higher education, the students learn not only English knowledge, but also the information and message existing in every text of the module.

The influence of the mother tongue may effect the students' way of learning. For example, when learning to write sentences, many the students will write the sentences in Bahasa Indonesia first as it is their mother tongue. Indeed, their mother tongue may become another handicap reasoning that the students have been accustomed to use their mother tongue.

It is known that language is learnt from generation to generation, from parents to children, and to grand children. The sequence of learning language is always started from the adults who help the young to learn. So, it also becomes the adults obligation to train the young to use well arranged language.

Learning language will involve four main areas that need to be learnt all together. They are the syntactic rules (specifying how sentences are built up out of phrases), the set of morphological rules (specifying how words are built up out of morphemes), the set of phonological rules (specifying how words, phrases and sentences are pronounced), and the of semantic rules (specifying how words, phrases and sentences are interpreted).

Base on the above facts, teaching and learning process to guide the students of non-linguistic program will face big problems. The problem begins from the condition of the students who are nearly adult students that must learn English without having enough basic knowledge. When the teaching begins to go back with the basic learning, the other students having enough basic knowledge will feel bored to learn with what they have known. And, actually, it is not the right time to begin with the basic knowledge anymore because the students are actually adult students. So, the teacher, in this case, must be able to implement the right and appropriate method of teaching foreign language to new adult learners.

II. METHODS

Questioners

Actually, there are some factors becoming problems to learn English. However, the writer only took some of them. The identified factors that disrupted the learning activity were Motivation, Vocabulary Knowledge and Grammar Structure mastery, and also the limited time allocation to practice. All of the factors, in one side, can be a great handicap to learn.

The other factors to be a handicap is the number of the students in the class that can also create another problem. The problems may make the time limitations to practice as we know that learning language needs theory and practice. Theory can be learned together in the situation of classical learning activity, meanwhile, learning language also needs to practice. The problem is laid on the time allocation. In a class with more than 20 students would make practice speaking and writing be impossible to be held well. There would be not enough opportunity for each students to do these activities accordingly.

In this research, the writer wanted to know the reasons why the most students seems to have problems in learning English as a foreign language. By giving a test and sheets of questioners, the writer could identify parts of the problems. The problems laid not only on their vocabulary knowledge, but also on their grammar-structure mastery and motivation. However, not all students faced the same problems. Some of them understood better than the other students.

Table 2. The Questioners

No	Aspek yang menjadi masalah	Sangat Setuju	Cukup Setuju	Tidak Setuju
1	Diatas 20 adalah terlalu banyak mahasiswa dalam satu kelas sehingga kelas cenderung ramai dan berisik		16	7
2	Materi / teks bacaan kuliah memiliki terlalu banyak kata-kata sukar (new words) yang belum dipahami oleh mahasiswa	1	12	10
3	Topik materi belajar yang di buku tidak relevan dengan tujuan keahlian (kompetensi) yang ingin diperoleh mahasiswa.		7	16
4	Kekurangan waktu untuk latihan praktik berbicara dan menulis	5	-	18
5	Saat ini, memahami Bhs. Inggris tidak perlu belajar karena bisa menggunakan bantuan "Google Translation."		9	14
6	Motivasi belajar mahasiswa rendah karena banyak pengetahuan dasar bahasa Inggris yang belum dipahami.	2	12	9
7	Dosen kurang menerangkan arti kata-kata yang dibacakan dengan jelas		4	19
8	Dosen kurang menjelaskan Grammar-Structure atau Tata Bahasanya		6	17
9	Dosen mendominasi aktifitas kelas karena terlalu panjang lebar dalam memberikan penjelasan		4	18
10	Dosen berpenampilan tidak menarik		6	17

From the data above, the writer could see that some certain students found more serious problems to learn English. For example, from statement No. 2 saying "Materi/Teks bacaan kuliah memiliki terlalu banyak kata-kata sukar (new words) yang belum dipahami oleh mahasiswa" the writer could find one student or 4.5% got problem with it. Meanwhile the other students or 53 % students found it as a slight problem, though it can also cause another more complex problem if it is not solved yet.

In this research, the writer also found some students that may be "slow learners." In point No. 4, saying "Kekurangan waktu untuk latihan praktik berbicara dan menulis," shows that the students could not make their minds focus and follow the activities soon the learning activity began. They need longer time to match their minds on to the subject being discussed and learnt. The slow learners, around 22% thought that they needed more time in order to make their minds work on the subject being discussed.

The other problem is about the motivation to learn. Motivation is necessary to support the students' mood and spirits. More than 52% students confessed that motivation was really necessary to boost the spirit of learning. Even, some 8.7% realized more seriously that motivation can support much and refresh their spirit of learning activity. When the motivation was low, their spirits to learn would also go low. They really needed motivation from their lecturers as motivation would be able to emerge their spirits to learn something.

III. RESULTS

Data Analysis

This research is aimed to see part of the students problems when they learnt English-2 of the Academic Year of 2017 - 2018. English-2 was given to the students of Semester-2, Faculty of Business, Buddhi University, Tangerang. In this research, they were asked to write sentences as the answers of the questions.

The data was taken while the writer did teaching the students. In the beginning, the writer gave a test to the students. The students had to answer questions. From the students' answers, the writer did identify the sentences and then classified the answers into two kinds of categories. One is about the use of Vocabulary, and the other one is about Grammar-Structure.

After all, base on the students' sentences, it is proved that actually, vocabulary does not the main problem for the most of the students. When asked to answer five questions in complete sentences, most of the students (60 %) can write reasonable and understandable sentences. The most problem seen from the students' sentences is their grammar – structure. It was experienced by 75 % of the students. Students write sentences to answer the questions, though most of their sentences are gramatically incorrect. This condition is related to the students' statement as seen on the questioners' result.

To know more detail and to prove the fairness of the questionares, the writer gave a test to the students. In this case, the writer took an opinion that the correct sentences mean they have to have, at least, the Subjects, Predicates, Objects. This is the criteria the writer used to make analysis.

The sentences were found from the answers of the following questions:

1. "What does go public mean?"
2. "What company can go public?"
3. "How can a company be called as a good and successful company?"
4. "Please, explain the steps of going public."

And, here are some of the students' sentences:

1. For question number 1:
 - a. Change the private company becomes terbuka.
 - b. Go public is mean a successfull company want to memperluas their company with they sell their share to stock exchange.
 - c. Go public means other person or other company can buy your stocks in stock exchanges.
2. For queston number 2:
 - a. Yes, of course, because company can go public can work with result and step company policy.
 - b. The company gets advice form investment bank about how many shares to offer and what prices.
 - c. Only successful company that can go public.
3. For question number 3:
 - a. If their company get profit every year and the financial result is good.
 - b. Because a company be caused as a good and successful company.
 - c. The company must have a good profit and stability financial statement.
4. For question number 4:
 - a. Datang ke investment bank minta saran harga yang ditentukan di awalnya bagaimana.
 - b. The existence of responsibility in a company
 - c. Gets advice from investment bank.

All of the sentences written by the students, as the answers of the questions, are marked as follow:

- "v" for grammar-structure. "v" may happen when the words written is positioned inappropriately due to its meaning, or its part of speech.
- "x" for vocabulary to show the inappropriateness.(due to miss interpretation and misunderstanding). "x" may happen when the words written is interpreted inappropriately, or even written in Bahasa Indonesia
- "-“ is used to show the appropriateness in writing sentences, both the use of words (vocabulary meanings) and their grammar-structure.

Here are the list of the identification of the students' sentences:

Table 3. The identification of the students' sentences

No	Students	Subjcts	Predicates	Objects
1	Student-1	-/-/-/-	-/-/-/-	-/-/-/-
2	Student-2	-/-/√/-/	√/-/√/×	√/-/√/×
3	Student-3	-	-	-
4	Student-4	√/√/-/-	-/√/-/×	×/√/-/×
5	Student-5	-/√/-/-	-/√/-/-	-/-/-/-
6	Student-6	√ /-/√/√	√/-/√/-	-/-/√/-×
7	Student-7	√/√/×/×	√/√/×/×	√/-/×/×
8	Student-8	-/√/-/×	-/×/×/×	-/×/×/×
9	Student-9	√/ -/-/-	√/-/-/-	-/×/-/×
10	Student-10	×/-/-/×	×/-/-×/×	×/-/×/×
11	Student-11	-/√/√/√	-/√/√/-	-/√/√/-
12	Student-12	√/√/×/-	√/√/×/-	√√/√/×/
13	Student-13	×/×/×/×	×/×/×/×	×/×/×/×
14	Student-14	×/×/-/√	×/×/-/-	×/×/-/√
15	Student-15	-/√/√/×	√/√/√/×	√/√/√/×
16	Student-16	√/√/√/√	×/√/√/-	×/-/√/-
17	Student-17	-/-/-/-	√/√/-/-	-/√/-/-×
18	Student-18	-/-/-/-	-/-/-/-	-/-/-/-
19	Student-19	-/-/-/-	-/√/-/√	-/-/-/√
20	Student-20	√/√/√/√	×/√/√/√	√/√/√/×
21	Student-21	-/-/×/-	-/-/×/-	-/-/-/-
22	Student-22	-/-/-/-	-/-/-/-	-/-/-/-
23	Student-23	-/×/×/×	×/×/×/×	×/×/×/×
24	Student-24	-/-/-/-	-/-/-/-	-/-/-/√
25	Student-25	√/√/×/-	√/√/×/-	-/-/×/-
26	Student-26	-/-/√/-	-/-/√/-	-/-/√/-
27	Student-27	√/√/-/-	√/√/-/√	√/√/√/√
28		-	-	-

The table above shows that there were 28 students as the populatioin, but only 26 students participated in the research. This research tried to identify the total number of the students who found difficulties with Grammar – Structure, and the total number of the students who found difficulties with vocabulary.

Here are the condition of the test counted from the table above:

1. “-“ is totalled 151 of 312.
2. “√” is totalled 89 of 312.
3. “×” is totalled 72 of 312.

From the table, we can see that:

1. The correct answers, both the Grammar-Structure and Vocabulary, were totally counted 151 answers or 48.4 %. It means that the students could answer the questions with grammatically corect sentences. When it is compared with the questionares number 8, saying that “Dosen kurang menjelaskan Grammar-Structure atau Tata Bahasanya,” that most of the students, or 17 students, or 74 % did not agree with, the result shows the significantly different. It sounds so unfair.
2. The problems with the Grammar-Structure the students had were totally counted 89 answers or 28.5 %. It means that the students wrote gramatically incorrect sentences. When it is compared with the questioners number 8, saying: “Dosen kurang menjelaskan Grammar-Structure atau Tata Bahasanya,” that some six (6) students, or 26 % slightly agree with, the result shows the significant matching. It sound so fair.
3. The problems with the Vocabulary the students had were totally counted 72 answers, or 23.1 %. It means that the students wrote sentences having incorrect meanings. When it is compared with the questioner number 2, saying: “Materi / teks bacaan kuliah memiliki terlalu banyak kata-kata sukar (new words) yang belum

dipahami oleh mahasiswa,” that only one (1) student or 4% agree, and some 12 students or 52% slightly agree with, it shows that vocabulary, actually still becomes one of the significant problems to be solved.

If we compare the result of the questionnaires and the result of the test, the result is different. It may happen because in the test, the students can use the words they have known or mastered, meanwhile, the reading texts existing in the handbook are usually very specifically new words related to the topics being discussed. Seeing the above result, it is proved that Vocabulary is still one of the significant problem for the students. There were more than 56.2 % students that agree that they have problems with vocabulary. The new words that they have not known yet become problems to write correct sentences. Only 43.5 % of the students stated that they had no problems with the vocabulary. It can also be seen in the table above.

The other problem is related to their mastery toward Basic Grammar-Structure. Grammar-Structure is significant for writing texts or communication purpose. There were more than 52% students still have problems to write correct sentences with correct Grammar-Structure. Only about 39% of the students think that they have no serious problems with Grammar-Structure, especially when they have to write the answers of the test.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

From the analysis above, the writer can conclude that actually there are some problems faced by the students of Semester-2, Faculty of Business, Universitas Buddhi Dharma (UBD) to learn English as a foreign language. However, in this opportunity, the writer could only present and discuss two of them. Based on the sentences the students have written, it can be concluded that some students do not have enough vocabulary knowledge, even the meaning of the high frequency words. High frequency words, such as, “memiliki,” “baik,” “dapat,” “dengan,” “efektif,” “banyak,” etc., must have been mastered even before they passed their senior high schools.

The problem of having very limited vocabulary knowledge can affect the progress of their learning activity. The problems would be more serious when the motivation of their learning activity was very low. It can be seen from the questionnaires that some students thought that Google machine will help them solve problems with foreign language. But, more than 60% students did not agree with the statement.

Related to the questionnaire number 1, saying: “Di atas 20 adalah terlalu banyak mahasiswa dalam satu kelas sehingga kelas cenderung ramai dan berisik,” that some 16 students, or 70 % students slightly agree with, it is rather clear that they need smaller number of students in English class. With a smaller number of students in a class, they hope they could do practice more than they did before. With the large number of students in a class, there will be another problem to manage.

The difficulty of managing a large class might be overcome by making group of three students that allow the members to practice speaking or expressing their idea in English. Hopefully, this way can invite students participate the activity more

Given that large classes with large number of students do not allow for frequent practice, alternatives must be sought. The alternative, for example, is by forming a small group of 3 students per group. In this case there is a new problem, namely about supervision or monitoring related to the compliance of participants or students to try to actively practice.

To make the activity running well, there must be a good and clear planning, especially things related to the goals to be achieved, the topics, and limitations. Therefore, before group activities are carried out, the strategy must be clearly arranged and specified in advance.

Actually, the writer found very complex problems. However, he tried to identify part of the complex problems and still presented the result in very complex cases that must be specified and analyzed more to find the specific problems. The writer thinks that it needs more research to find or identify the specific problems that make the result of research clearer and easy to be implemented to make the class activity run better. Therefore, related to this research, the writer prepared a new modul entitled “MODUL BAHASA INGGRIS-2 (Theory & Practice) that make the students have time to improve their productive skills by learning to practice writing and speaking.

The idea to revise the modul also goes to English-1 course. The modul will have to be renewed and arranged appropriately well and so that:

1. Students are able to develop the knowledge of English they have mastered before. In this case, students get the opportunity to practice regularly, both passive and active English, as the way of learning or learning activities also involve speaking practice activities.

2. Students are able to gain new knowledge from the activity of reading texts written in English, whose topics are about the intricacies of bank operations and other economic activities, which are in accordance with the programs and majors they are taking.
3. To achieve the objectives of the lecture, it is necessary to apply a clear strategy related to the division of the percentage of activities in each semester. In this case, the lecture's module must be prepared early and complete, and it must cover topics that increase knowledge and provide motivation to students.
4. Preparing the materials that give motivation to the students is important, so it is not just material related to their competency only. Indeed, motivation still play dominant roles to help the students learn. Motivation here means to make the students interested to the learning activity, to take part in every part of the learning process, and try hard to understand the material to be discussed.
5. The other problems faced by most of the students were about the meaning of words or vocabulary knowledge. Those who knows more vocabulary can do assignment better, mean while those having less knowledge of vocabulary, only could lower scores in most of the exercise given to the students.
6. In preparing exercises, there must be clear scope and limitation. The exercise must be able to be answered with specific and certain grmmar and structure. The exercise must be able to be answered with simple and correct sentences, and the last important one is, the exercise must avoid ambiguity to be answered.
7. The data that the writer collected is actually incomplete. But by seeing and recognizing the lack of the data, the writer realize that it is important to prepare and specify more focus on the topic of the research which must be done with more accurate methode..

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