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RESEARCH ARTICLE

LEARNING LANGUAGE STRATEGY AMONG PUPILS OF RURAL SCHOOL IN USING VOCABULARY STRATEGY

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Manuscript Info	Abstract

Learning Language Strategy has come out with several of strategies that can be chosen or used among the pupils. Every pupil has also had another potential in using the learning language strategy in many ways. This study was conducted to investigate the learning language strategy by using vocabulary strategy among 19 school pupils at a rural school in Sabah. The survey was carried out among the pupils of Year 4 and Year 6 to find out which strategy they prefer most in language learning strategy. There were choices of strategies that can be chose by the pupils which were listening, vocabulary, speaking, reading, writing and translation. Among those strategies that have been tested, they chose vocabulary strategy as their most preference based on the analysis frequency of the survey that has been distributed. The survey contained the vocabulary test and the vocabulary learning strategy questionnaire. In addition, they least preferred to listening strategies followed by writing strategies. This can be perhaps for the teachers to make a brand-new step to arise the motivation among pupils to expand their vocabulary in many attractive and interesting ways which then affects to many more benefits in speaking, reading and writing.

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Introduction:-
Background:-
        In order to improve the quality of the world of education, there have been lots of steps taken to attract the pupils nowadays. There are certain language learning strategies that can be applied to suit the pupil's needs and make it into the student-teacher learning centred. Since the survey was carried out in a school of rural area, it was quite clear to stress on the vocabulary strategy learning which then will be expanded into other learning skills such as reading, speaking, listening and writing. Another skill that can be stressed on will be translation strategy that was also linked together with the empowerment of vocabulary. Other than that, English language was also an unfamiliar language among Sabahans who lived in rural area as they preferred to speak in their own native language or mother tongue.

Research Problem:
        As can be seen slightly as explained above, the researcher will face some of the problems and gap in this research as English language was clearly not their mother tongue or native language. Other than that, the researcher will definitely face the problems of the pupils on using the vocabulary which the gap existed between the pupils and the people surrounding them. They would not have the chance to speak or use the vocabulary as they learnt day by day due to the limitations to those that will response to them.

Research Objectives:-

This research was aimed to expand the vocabulary among the pupils using the vocabulary strategy in one of the language learning strategies that will be applied among pupils of Year 4 and Year 6.

Literature Review:-

Definitions of Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies have been defined widely in the world of education. Early on, Tarone (1983) defined a language strategy as "attempts to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language to incorporate these into one's inter language competence". Rubin (1987) later wrote that language strategy "are strategies which contribute to the development of the language system which the learner constructs and affect learning directly". In their seminal study, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) defined language strategy as "the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information". Finally, building on work in her book for teachers (Oxford, 1990a), Oxford (1992/1993) provides specific examples of language leraning strategy (for example, "In learning ESL, Trang watches U.S. TV soap operas, guessing the meaning of new expressions and predicting what will come next") and this defines that language learning strategies specifies on actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills. These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language. Strategies are tools for the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability (Oxford, 1992/1993).

Categorizations of Language Learning Strategy

There has been a list of categorizations of language learning strategies that can be applied to suit the pupil's need and most preference in the class. As divided by O'Malley etc. (1985), there are three of categories that are A: Metacognitive Strategies, B: Cognitive strategies C: Socioaffective Strategies.

Metacognitive Strategies

The researcher has stated that metacognitive is including all the strategies which involve the every planning for each learning that is going to take place, thinking about the learning steps that can be taken, observing the production's of one another, correcting our own mistakes, and evaluate the learning after all the activities has been carried out. Based on O'Malley's classification, the major metacognitive strategies are including all the advance planners, directed and selective attention, self-management and self-monitoring, and also the evaluation of self.

Cognitive Strategies

(Brown, 2007) has stated that "Cognitive strategies are limited to specific learning tasks and that involves more direct manipulation of the learning material itself". Other than that, there are some important strategies including in the cognitive strategies which are translating, grouping, transferring, elaborating, repetition, imagery, key word, and inference.

Socioaffective Strategy

(Brown, 2007) has also stated that this strategy has close relationship with the activity of social-mediating and having an interaction with others. This strategy includes having the cooperation and the clarification of questions.

In addition to, Oxford's (1990) has also lists down the categories into direct and indirect strategies. Direct strategies have been divided into memory, cognitive and compensation strategies. Memory strategy has needed the mental process in order to store the new information and memory to be retrieved when needed. Cognitive strategy stresses more on handling the target language and compensation strategy focuses on the ability of learners to use the language whether in speaking or writing even though that learners are facing the gap in the knowledge. While indirect strategies are including the metacognitive, affective and social strategies. Indirect strategies are employing the different strategies such as focusing, arranging, evaluating and lowering anxiety, Oxford's (1990).

According to Stern's (1992) which Language learning strategies have been divided into five categories such as management and planning strategies, cognitive strategies, communicative-experiential strategies, interpersonal and affective strategies.

Management and planning strategies

The learner actually has the ability to control on what he is learning and the capability to improve his own planning as the instructor that only can support him as the adviser. The learner must be able to decide what steps that should be taken to language learning instead of having the clear objectives to be achieved or targeted. Other than that, the learner has also must decide and think on what is the most preferred way that includes the methodology, proper resources, and have the guidance on the progress. After all the steps taken as mentioned earlier, the learner then has to evaluate on his success based on the objectives and also the expectations.

Cognitive Strategies

These strategies include all the capabilities to learners to improve their abilities in remembering the materials, solving the problems faced especially those who used the tasks provided in the classroom. According to Stern's (1992), the cognitive strategies include clarification, verification, guessing, memorization and monitoring.

Communicative- Experiential Strategies

The methods that have to be mastered by the learner in order to converse are including gesturing, paraphrasing, asking for the repetition and explaining. These methods are created to avoid the interruption while keeping the conversation going. As we know that the gesture has played an important part in delivering the speech or to keep the communication effective in its own way as then to get the attraction of the other speaker. The learner has to master in explaining to make sure that nothing interrupts the communication too.

Interpersonal Strategies

According to Stern (1992), interpersonal strategies will give the guidance to the learner in developing and evaluating their performance. Learners must also need to have the conversation with the native speakers as this way will help to get familiar with the target language.

Affective Strategies

In order to learn other language, sometimes it can be upset and quite a frustration to the learners as the good language learners tend to use various kinds of affective strategies. Learners might tend to have the negative feelings built as sometimes they did not get the response from native speakers as the way they wanted to. But, to good language learners, they can definitely relate these situations or cases to aware of these emotional feelings and they will try to rebuild the positive feelings towards the native speakers in order to get to speak or have a communication with them.

Good/ Successful Language Learners

In the world of today, learning a second language can be very important to start looking for a new job, to build a strong connection with other companies, to join the world of different parts of business or yet an education. But, sometimes it can be very demanding to learn the second language as the language itself are not really familiar with us and it hard to be learnt as the people surrounding are also affecting the motivation to communicate. Stern (1975) has stated that the good language learner must try to cope with the three major problems such as the gap that exists between the first and second language, the dilemma of the code in certain communication, and the determination of choosing the between intuition or rational learning. The good learner also must have and use the proper strategies which then lead to accurate acquisition. Rubin (1975) has stated that good learners are willing to make mistakes, be brave to communicate with others and yet become the brave one who started the communication first, and be able to control the speech while talking or conversing to others, use the times and situations wisely to practice, and focusing more on the communication with the native speakers so that it would not be disrupted.

Material and Methods:-

Research Methodology

The research design was a quantitative based on the questionnaire and yet a qualitative on the interview that has been carried out among the pupils of Year 4 and Year 6. The population of the research has taken place in a school of rural area those Year 4 pupils in Sekolah Kebangsaan Lajong, Kudat which is in the state of Sabah. The sample of this research has only included the 19 of the students of Year 4 and added to 12 of the pupils from Year 6 to meet the criteria of the research which requested until 30 of respondents.

Data Analysis:

The qualitative data was collected according to gender and age which were male and female and between pupils of year 4 and year 6. Based on the data, the researcher has come out with the semi-structured interviews. The interview was focusing on the pupils about the most preferred ways to expand their learning language strategy using the vocabulary.

Some of the pupils have also given the comments on why they prefer using vocabulary is because,

It is much easier for me to understand the passage or text given by the teacher if we master the skills of using the vocabulary as guided. (Pupil A, Year 4)

I can always refer to the vocabulary book whenever there is the word that I do not know. (Pupil B, Year 6).

As the teacher has given the guidance much earlier for them, they can easily revise all the words that has been used by referring to the vocabulary book that has been provided since the beginning of the year. During this process, the data has been used by the researcher systematically to determine the strategies that was preferred the most by the pupils.

Results:-
Strategies for Vocabulary Enhancement

It is important and crucial nowadays to enhance the vocabulary as it will help the learners to learn second or third language. The learners will also have to learn to expand the vocabulary and have the proper and suitable strategies to get the most from what have been learnt. There are strategies that can be applied by the learner to enhance their vocabulary. First, look for the synonyms first. Merriam Webster defined synonyms as "a word that has same meaning as another word in the same language". By remembering the synonyms, this is much easier for the learners to remember the things that are attached closely to revise the words. In other words, synonym means new words. The learners will have the opportunities to expand the vocabulary too. Second, the learners will then have to learn by applying the words with the meaning of its context. For every single word, there are ways that can be applied rely on the situations. That is why the learners have to differentiate the words by using those on the exact situation. Third, apply the private speech strategy, which the learners must try to be by themselves alone or in a private situation which can help them to converse instead of practising the pronunciation of the words. The learners also can master the words by having the gadgets with them like the audio that can be downloaded from the internet as the reliable source to help and assure the correct pronunciation of the words. Other than that, the learners may also listen to the short movies that can be looked through the internet such as the platform like YouTube. With the pictures, sounds and animations that are almost can attract the viewers, this will definitely help them to listen to the correct pronunciation of the words. Fourth, have or create the bookmark for the vocabulary search. After successfully finding the words targeted, try to create a bookmark at the words as the learners can easily find for the next time. This will also help to memorize the words much better for every word look for other times. After all these steps are taken, it is much better to proceed in the writing as this way can actually help to memorize the words much better. The repetition of the words used in the writing will definitely help to flourish and can be used often.

Discussion:-
Implications

As the research has been carried out, the pupils really love to expand the vocabulary as they tend to write much shorter in the class. They will also pay the attention attentively if they are asked to find the meanings of the words. Other than that, the pupils also love to use the words repetitively with their peers rather than their teachers as they are more comfortable with them. It should be okay so far, as long as they use the words in order to memorize of the new words learnt every day. When it comes to English Week at the school, they love to tell and spread the new words that they have learnt by participating in the 'Spelling Bee' activity. It has become a great competition between those pupils as in case that they wanted to show the effectiveness of their vocabulary learnt in the class. This will definitely help them to converse in English much better as they are expanding their vocabulary daily or weekly.

Conclusion:-

This research has been carried out among young learners to suit the needs and preference of the pupils to apply the best language learning strategies. Based on the strategies that they have chose that is vocabulary strategy, the teacher then has to prepare with some of the proper materials including all the guidance and the steps that need to be taken wisely to achieve the target among the young learners. From this research, we also know that there are certain and specific steps that comes along with the language strategy. Other than that, expanding vocabulary may help the learners to learn the second or third language much easier and can be connected to the native speakers in a much wider connection as this will lead the learner to be familiar with the culture as long as to acquire the acquisition.

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