THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TECHNICAL VOCABULARY BREADTH, ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY, AND VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES AMONG ENGINEERING UNDERGRADUATES AT UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA PAHANG

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

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ABSTRAK

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) dilaksanakan bertujuan untuk menarik minat atau membantu pelajar mempelajari Bahasa dalam disiplin tertentu. ESP melibatkan perkataan yang direka secara terperinci atau mempunyai maksud yang khusus dalam sesuatu bidang. Apabila pelajar kejuruteraan membaca teks yang mengandungi terma-terma teknikal yang mempunyai maksud yang khusus dalam bidang kejuruteraan, pengetahuan tatabahasa berkaitan terma-terma teknikal amatlah penting untuk memahami sesuatu teks. Walaubagaimanapun, pelajar kejuruteraan didapati menghadapi masalah apabila mereka berhadapan dengan teks yang mengandungi terma-terma teknikal. Maka, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji tahap tatabahasa teknikal dalam kalangan pelajar Universiti Malaysia Pahang. Kajian ini menggunakan metod gabungan penjelasan di mana ia bertujuan untuk menyelidiki hubungan antara tahap terma teknikal, strategi mempelajari tatabahasa dan gaya pembelajaran. Satu ujian tatabahasa digunakan iaitu ujian maksud perkataan dalam kajian ini bersama dengan satu soal selidik berkaitan strategi mempelajari tatabahasa dan suatu temu bual separuh berstruktur. Terma-terma teknikal tersebut di ambil daripada Engineering English Word List (EEWL). Ujian tersebut telah dijalankan terhadap 138 pelajar yang bermajorkan bidang kejuruteraan daripada 5 fakulti kejuruteraan yang sedang mengikuti pengajian tahun ketiga dan keempat di Universiti Malaysia Pahang. Kajian mendapati terdapat satu hubungan antara tahap tatabahasa teknikal dan tahap kemahiran bahasa. Kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa strategi paling kerap digunakan oleh pelajar kejuruteraan untuk mempelajari terma teknikal adalah dengan menonton and mendengar media Bahasa Inggeris. Kajian ini mencadangkan kajian yang lebih lanjut untuk dijalankan dalam membantu para pelajar untuk memperbaiki tahap tatabahasa mereka dalam terma-terma teknikal.

ABSTRACT

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is designed to appeal to learners learning languages in specific disciplines. ESP deals with words that are designed precisely or has its own meaning in specific fields. As engineering students read texts with technical terms that have a specific meaning in the engineering field, the vocabulary knowledge of technical terms is important for them to comprehend the texts. However, engineering students were found to face problems whenever they encounter texts containing technical terms. Hence, this study aims to investigate the vocabulary breadth of technical vocabulary among engineering students at Universiti Malaysia Pahang. This study employs mixed method explanatory design which seeks to explore the relationship between technical vocabulary breadth, English language proficiency and vocabulary learning strategies. A vocabulary test which is a word meaning test is used in this research along with a vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The technical terms were taken from the Engineering English Word List (EEWL). The test was administered to 138 students majoring in engineering from five engineering faculties in their third and fourth year at Universiti Malaysia Pahang. The findings showed that there was a moderate positive relationship was found between technical vocabulary breadth and language proficiency. It was also found that listening to and watching English media is the most preferred strategy to be used among engineering undergraduates in learning technical vocabulary. This study proves the issue in which university students, especially engineering students are facing problem with vocabulary mastery. The current research recommends further research to be done in helping the students to improve their vocabulary breadth on technical terms.

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