STUDENTS' VOCABULARY AND READING COMPREHENSION: IS IT CORRELATED?

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at finding out the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. The study made use of a correlational research design. The sample was 63 eighth-grade students of SMP Wisata Sanur in the academic year 2021/2022. A random sampling technique was used by having paper rolls. The multiple-choice test was used as the instrument for collecting the data. The data were analyzed by using SPSS 25, which consisted of a normality test, homogeneity test, hypothesis testing, and T-test. The result showed that vocabulary and reading comprehension correlated significantly. When the students had a high vocabulary, their reading comprehension showed good criteria. The result of the normality test for vocabulary was 0.112 and reading comprehension was 0.265; the homogeneity test was 0.085; the hypothesis test was 0.602, and the t-test was 0.000. It means that there was a significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. Further study is recommended to be conducted to have deeper data.

Keywords: correlation, vocabulary mastery, reading comprehension

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan antara penguasaan kosakata dan pemahaman membaca. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian korelasional. Sampel penelitian ini adalah 63 siswa kelas VIII SMP Wisata Sanur tahun ajaran 2021/2022. Teknik pengambilan sampel dilakukan secara acak dengan menggunakan gulungan kertas. Tes pilihan ganda digunakan sebagai instrumen pengumpulan data. Analisis data menggunakan SPSS versi 25 yang terdiri dari uji normalitas, uji homogenitas, uji hipotesis, dan uji T. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kosakata dan pemahaman membaca berkorelasi secara signifikan. Ketika siswa memiliki kosa kata yang tinggi, pemahaman membaca siswa menunjukkan kriteria yang baik. Hasil uji normalitas kosakata 0,112 dan pemahaman membaca 0,265; uji homogenitas 0,085; uji hipotesis sebesar 0,602, dan uji t sebesar 0,000. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa adanya hubungan yang signifikan antara penguasaan kosakata siswa dengan pemahaman membaca. Penelitian lebih lanjut disarankan untuk dilakukan untuk mendapatkan data yang lebih dalam.

Kata kunci: korelasi, penguasaan kosakata, pemahaman bacaan

INTRODUCTION

Reading is important as part of English language teaching. It facilitates students learning in English as a foreign language (EFL) context. Reading adds to their knowledge. They can communicate and interact verbally and non-verbally. Having good reading means being able to understand texts well (Castles, Rastle, & Nation, 2018). This confirms the importance of having the ability in reading.

Regarding the notion of reading, the students can get a lot of information and they can enrich their knowledge. As the purpose of reading is to comprehend the idea of the written text, therefore reading will have no meaning without comprehension (Parwati & Pramerta, 2021). Comprehension is the main goal in the reading activity (Larasati, Rais, & Elyono, 2018). As the consequence, if they fail to comprehend a particular text, they will not succeed in language learning as it

acts as the mother of language learning skills (Chandran & Shah, 2019).

Then, reading comprehension is the ability to grasp the meaning, comprehend, and explore the information in the written text (Silalahi et al., 2022). From the statements, it could be concluded that, in order to comprehend a reading text, students must be able to use the information to make conclusions and read critically, understand the figurative, determine the author's purpose, evaluate the ideas presented, and to apply the ideas to actual situations.

Talking about reading, it cannot be taken apart from the vocabulary. Vocabulary knowledge is a crucial element of reading comprehension (Gallagher et al., 2019). It is because having vocabulary mastery, students will succeed in comprehending text (Apriliani, Pramerta, & Sawitri, 2021). Those studies confirm that vocabulary plays important role in reading comprehension and it has a strong correlation with reading (McLean, Stewart, & Batty, 2020).

Vocabulary is key to reading comprehension. Vocabulary should be taught together with reading. Readers cannot understand what they are reading without knowing what most of the words mean. As students learn to read more advanced texts, they must learn the meaning of new words. It is done to master English as a foreign language. Therefore, having a rich vocabulary will help students in English learning (Octaberlina & Anggarini, 2020).

Studies show that vocabulary mastery has a correlation to students' reading comprehension. A study found that vocabulary size supports L2 reading comprehension (Masrai, 2019). It is also found that vocabulary relates to letter and word identification around school entry and to reading comprehension (Suggate et al., 2018). Reading helps in vocabulary acquisition by creating opportunities to infer word meaning from context. It plays a pivotal role in understanding a text. Those studies support the current research that states strong readers were more likely to know the meanings of words (Lawrence et al., 2022).

In short, this study tried to provide a research result from a different context with the status of English as a foreign language. Therefore, the objective of the present study is to figure out whether there is any significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade student of SMP Wisata Sanur Denpasar-Bali, in the academic year 2021/2022.

RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, the researcher used a correlation design to find out the correlation between the two variables: vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. The subjects of the research were the eighth-grade students of SMP Wisata Sanur in the academic year 2021/2022. The population of the eighth-grade students consists of 210 students. Then, as many as 63 students were considered as samples.

Regarding the use of the instruments, there are multiple-choice tests for vocabulary (Noun, Emotive words, conjunctions) and reading comprehension (General Information, Specific Information, Textual Meaning, Textual Reference) used as the instrument. There are 30 items in the test. All the data were analyzed by using SPSS 25.

The researchers used the normality test (to know whether the population or

data involved in the research is in a normal distribution), homogeneity test (intended to make sure that the collected data in the analysis is truly taken from a population that is too different from each other), person product moment (to answer the research problem in the study) and t-test (to distribute on the curve that is based on the number of degrees of freedom).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the vocabulary mastery test and reading comprehension test which were given to the students of eighth-grade students of SMP Wisata Sanur in the academic year 2021/2022. The result can be seen in the table below.

Table 1. The Students' Scores of Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension

Samples	Vocabulary Mastery (X)	Reading Comprehension (Y)
1	93	77
2	77	63
3	83	73
4	73	80
5	90	83
6	63	70
7	93	77
8	97	87
9	67	57
10	77	70
11	90	83
12	73	63
13	60	60
14	77	70
15	87	73
16	93	97
17	90	87
18	73	77
19	93	50
20	70	70
21	57	73
22	67	80
23	90	67
24	90	83
25	97	80
26	80	70
27	83	77
28	73	67
29	77	77
30	80	77
31	83	73
32	80	80
33	73	73
34	83	70
35	83	80
36	87	80
37	93	87
38	100	97
39	80	73
40	87	80
41	90	83
42	100	93
43	77	83
44	100	97
45	80	73
46	87	80
47	93	73
48	87	83
49	97	87
50	80	83
51	77	70
52	93	83
53	97	87
54	73	70
55	80	80
56	90	73
57	80	67
58	83	73
59	97	87
60	80	73
61	87	90
62	77	83
63	67	60
∑	5234	4842

Based on statistical computation by using statistical computation using IBM

SPSS 25 in order to know whether the population or data involved in this research is in a normal distribution, that can be seen from the result of normality with Aiymp of vocabulary mastery is 0.112 > 0.05 and for the reading comprehension is 0.265>0 05. Based on the Shapiro-Wilk test with the provision that if Aiymp. Sig. 0,05 the data used in this research were normally distributed. In this study, based on the calculation data of the homogeneity test the result was 0.085. The data was homogeneity because 0.085> 0.05.

Then, the result of the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Wisata Sanur, result of Pearson Product Moment was 0.602. It means there was a correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Wisata Sanur. Meanwhile, the result of the T-test was 5.603. According to the T-table with df 62 was 1.669 while counted was 5.603, it concluded that 5.603 > 1.669 indicates the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension is significant.

Moreover, from the test results, some students get high scores on the vocabulary mastery test because they have good vocabulary mastery so they can answer questions quickly and correctly. In contrast, some students get low scores on the reading comprehension test because they do not have good vocabulary mastery, which makes it difficult for them to comprehend the reading text it can hinder them from answering the test quickly and correctly. In conclusion, the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

A study revealed that vocabulary was more contributive in helping the students to comprehend particular reading texts (Bahri, 2019). This study is in line with the current research result from Zhang and Zhang (2022). They convincingly found that the number of items in vocabulary depth measures had a positive predictive power on the correlation between vocabulary knowledge and L2 reading comprehension. Those studies show the same direction as the present study results in which was found a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. In other words, having vocabulary will contribute to mastering language skills (Fadi, 2019).

Both of the previous studies clearly supported the research findings of the present study. In other words, these two researchers have proven that vocabulary mastery correlated to reading comprehension. When students master vocabulary, they could try to put in their best efforts, and much easier to learn a foreign language and answer all of the questions, especially short answer tasks. Furthermore, this research could be used as references that help in conducting future research, and these findings clearly supported the present research, and they were in line.

Based on the findings and the data analysis, it has been revealed that there is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the students. Furthermore, the present research data have already proven that vocabulary mastery was significantly correlated with reading comprehension. In addition, the t-test results showed the hypothesis was accepted because the significance value was lower than 0.05. The result implies that having a lot of vocabulary leads to reading comprehension improvement. In a

nutshell, the present research confirmed the directional hypothesis that has been previously stated; there was a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Looking at the results that were obtained in the present research, the study can generate a conclusion that accepts the directional hypothesis. There was a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. However, this is study is limited to finding out the correlation between the two stated variables. Future studies need to be done in more detail and big samples in this area.

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