

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN VOCABULARY MASTERY AND READING COMPREHENSION OF THE EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS OF SMPN 2 UBUD

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ABSTRACT

The present study that used an ex-post facto research with correlation design was intended to figure out the significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Ubud in academic year 2020/2021. The research samples consisted of 38 students who were chosen by means of the cluster sampling method. The data were collected by administering the research instruments in the form of matching cloze procedure tests and short answer task. The obtained data were statistically analyzed by using pre-requisite analysis: normality and homogeneity test and hypothesis testing: Pearson product-moment correlation and t-test. The results of the data analysis clearly revealed the alternative hypothesis was finally accepted. In other words, the research findings have confirmed that there is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Ubud in academic year 2020/2021.

Keywords: correlation, vocabulary mastery, and reading comprehension.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian ex-post facto dengan desain korelasi bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan yang signifikan antara penguasaan kosakata dengan pemahaman membaca pada siswa kelas VIII SMPN 2 Ubud tahun ajaran 2020/2021. Sampel penelitian berjumlah 38 siswa yang dipilih dengan metode cluster sampling. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan pemberian instrumen penelitian berupa matching cloze procedure dan short answer tasks. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis secara statistik dengan menggunakan analisis prasyarat: uji normalitas dan homogenitas serta uji hipotesis: Pearson product-moment correlation dan t-test. Hasil analisis data dengan jelas mengungkapkan hipotesis alternatif akhirnya diterima. Dengan kata lain, hasil penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara penguasaan kosakata dengan pemahaman membaca pada siswa kelas VIII SMPN 2 Ubud tahun ajaran 2020/2021.

Kata Kunci: hubungan, penguasaan kosa kata, dan kemampuan membaca.

INTRODUCTION

Reading, as one of the basic language skills, has an essential role in widening knowledge to access information and make meaning. Reading skill is very important, and students have to master reading beside listening, speaking, and writing. According to Teixeira (2012:1), reading is a key language skill that has a significant place in teaching and learning foreign languages. In addition to this

statement, by reading the students can learn so many things. Reading skill allows students to access ideas that are communicated by people in the form of written or printed material from different countries, so it will give them the opportunity to broaden their horizon and increase their knowledge. Furthermore, there are so many benefits that the students get from reading in learning a language.

Reading is also something crucial

and necessary for the students in learning English because the success of their study depends on their ability to read and find the information in their reading material. The students gain some information by reading, and the information may be affected by a fair reading performance. Through reading, the readers also begin to have a greater understanding of a particular topic. Since reading leads the readers to understand a reading passage, it can be said that reading is a receptive skill in language learning. According to Pollard (2008:45), reading involves students' interaction with visual input of language they need to process and understand in language learning.

According to Pang et al. (2001:6), reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to the spoken language. Comprehension becomes a crucial factor which indicates how well students read. In addition, comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences, and connected paragraphs. Reading will make vocabulary expansion because the more people read something, the more words they gain exposure. As a result, the students must master vocabulary and understand reading comprehension to make it easier to understand the reading text. Thus, those two variables of reading comprehension should be emphasized to make students understand what they have read.

In addition, Wolley (2011:15) states that reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text to get a thorough understanding of what is explained in the text and to get the meaning of words or sentences that have been read. Students develop these reading or representations of the text meaning during the reading process. It means that readers

must understand the meaning of a paragraph from reading because the reading ability is not only reading aloud what is written in a paragraph but also understanding what the reader reads. This makes the ability to understand reading important for students in learning English. To understand the meaning of the reading passages, the readers need to understand some words. Without adequate vocabulary, it will be challenging for the students to understand the reading materials or other written sources comprehensively.

Dealing with the explanation of Weaver (2009:14), reading is a process very much determined by what the reader's brain and emotions and beliefs bring to the reading. From that statement, the researcher concludes that reading is a process that brings information or knowledge to the human brain, emotion, and belief. Reading is an activity where a learner will get many kinds of information knowledge of the reading activities. Through reading, the readers also begin to have a greater understanding of a certain topic. Furthermore, there are various benefits that the students get from reading. One of them is the students can enrich their vocabulary that makes them more eligible in reading comprehension. This is important to improve their language learning results for their future lives.

Vocabulary is an important element, especially in learning English. Students must be able to master vocabulary to have good English. Wainwright (2006:33) states that vocabulary is an important factor in reading. The more a person memorizes vocabulary, the better her/his language will be. Besides, vocabulary is the main aspect of reading. Without a well-developed vocabulary, understanding reading materials will be hampered. It will be increasingly difficult

to understand the information that is stated in a reading text or written sources. From the explanations above, we know how important vocabulary in the reading activity. It shows that they have close relationships because to comprehend the text, the students need a lot of vocabulary. Besides, they must have good interaction with the text and need more attention from the readers to get the exact or close meaning.

A research was conducted by Andriyani (2018) entitled "The Correlation Study between Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension of First-year Students at SMPN 1 Umbulsari Jember". The results of her research showed that vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension were correlated. Moreover, the researcher used sentence constructions and multiple-choice as an instrument to measure vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. In addition, the results of her research also provided an answer key to make the researcher easily in scoring students' work. Based on these research findings, this research has scientifically proven that vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the first-year students of SMPN 1 Umbulsari Jember had a significant correlation.

Reading comprehension and vocabulary mastery have a strong relationship. It is in line with Sedita (2005), who states that vocabulary knowledge is crucial in reading comprehension and determines how well students comprehend the paragraphs. Besides, according to Langan (2002:341), if students have a poor vocabulary, they will have a slow reading speed and limit their comprehension. Furthermore, Cameron (2001:72) states that improving a useful vocabulary is a basic point to learning a foreign language at an early level. Learning vocabulary is

important as it enriches the knowledge of words. Thus, the researcher would like to figure out the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Ubud in academic year 2020/2021.

METHOD

The purpose of a research design is pivotal to make the process of research effective and efficient. Research design is a simple methodical way of finding an answer to questions, and it is used to discover new information or prove scientific theories. The present study dealt with the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Ubud in academic year 2020/2021. It is supported by Mackey and Gass (2005:3), who says the quantitative approach has quantitative data. It analyzes the data and provides results based on statistics. In the present study, the researcher described the overall structure of the present investigation by using an *ex post facto* research design.

Ex post facto research is a systematic empirical inquiry. The researcher does not directly control independent variables because the manifestations have already occurred or are inherently not manipulated. Cohen et al. (2005:205) reveal that *ex post facto* research is a method of teasing out possible antecedents of events that have happened and cannot, therefore, be engineered or manipulated by the investigator. Furthermore, it means the investigation starts after the fact has occurred without interference from the researcher. Cohen et al. (2007:264) add that *ex post facto* research is the method that can also be used instead of an experiment to test a hypothesis about cause and effect in situations where it

is inaccurate to control or influence the dependent variable of the research.

According to Kothari (2004:3), quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It is applicable to phenomena that are able to be expressed in terms of quantity. It means that the researcher analyzes the data that have been collected previously and processes the data with statistics to obtain the results by using a quantitative approach with correlation methods. The correlation method is considered appropriate since this research concerns the investigation to find out the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. Furthermore, Creswell (2012:338) states that correlation is a statistical test to determine the tendency or pattern for two or more variables or two sets of data to vary consistently. Moreover, there is no manipulation of the variables in that type of research. Besides, correlational research is useful in a wide variety of studies.

Using this ex post facto method, the researcher can report only what has happened or what is happening by holding factors constant by careful attention to the sampling. In this ex-post facto research, the researcher cannot control the variable by manipulation. Ary et al. (2010:332) state that ex post facto research is conducted after variation on the variable of interest has already been determined in the natural course of events. This method is concerning the nature of phenomena-what goes with what and under what conditions. The present ex-post facto research consisted of two research variables. They were vocabulary mastery as an independent (X) and reading comprehension as a dependent variable (Y).

This research was to find out the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. The researcher

used ex-post facto research as the research design. The researcher designed this research in an ex-post facto, especially correlational study since this research was aimed to discover the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. Based on Mackey and Gass (2005:145), correlation can be used in diverse ways: for instance, to test a relationship between or among variables and in making predictions. Predictions depend on the results of a strong relationship between or among variables. A correlational study is undertaken to determine the relationship and causation between or among variables which are being researched.

The correlational study is used to determine the range to which two or more variables are related to a single group of people. According to Cohen et al. (2007:265), a correlational (or causal) study is concerned with identifying the previous condition of a present condition. The basic design of correlation research involving nothing more than two sets of scores or variables and computing a correlation coefficient. Based on what has been aforementioned, to investigate the relationship between independent and dependent variables, the present study used ex-post facto research with a correlational design. The researcher simply wanted to know the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Ubud in academic year 2020/2021.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to determine the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students. The present study made use of an ex-post facto as the research design was conducted at SMPN 2 Ubud in

academic year 2020/2021. The total population of the eighth-grade was 304 students and 38 students were selected as the samples of this study. The samples were selected by using the cluster sampling method. In the present study, the research instruments were matching cloze procedure tests and short answer tasks. After the required data were collected by administering the research instruments, the data were then analyzed through pre-requisite analysis and hypothesis testing. The results of the data analysis were discussed as follows.

The findings of the present study indicated that the hypothesis stated there was a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Ubud in Academic Year 2020/2021. Data analysis confirmed that vocabulary mastery had a positive impact on the students' reading comprehension. It can be clearly seen from their scores in vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. If the students have high vocabulary mastery, it may affect or influence their reading comprehension. In other words, the students can be failed in their test when they have low vocabulary mastery. Knowing a lot of vocabulary will help the students to enhance their reading comprehension. Furthermore, those phenomena confirmed that vocabulary mastery is one of the factors that can affect reading comprehension.

This study was supported by Astini (2020) and Meirawati (2020). They convincingly found that there was a correlation between the students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. It was in line with the present study results that vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension were correlated. 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 their best efforts, and much easier to learn a foreign language and answer all of the questions, especially short answer tasks. Furthermore, these researches could be used as references that help in conducting future researches, and these findings clearly supported the present research and they were in line.

In the present study, the researcher found a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Ubud in academic year 2020/2021. These results also supported the existing theory of Kamil and Hiebert (2005:3), who state that vocabulary is the knowledge of word meanings. This theory tells that mastering vocabulary will help the students understand the reading, and the reading comprehension qualities depend on the quality and quantity of vocabulary that the students have. It can be concluded that vocabulary is knowledge of word and word meaning, which plays an important role in learning a foreign language. It means that those theories stated that there is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. In conclusion, the findings have already proven that the students' vocabulary mastery was significantly correlated with their reading comprehension.

Based on the findings and analysis above, 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. After finding out the calculation and the t-test result, it could be considered that knowing a lot of vocabulary makes the students easily catch the meaning of the text to improve their reading comprehension. In other words, the present ex-post facto research finally confirmed the directional hypothesis that has been previously stated; there was a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Ubud in academic year 2020/2021.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESSTION

The present study entitled “The Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension of the Eighth-grade Students of SMPN 2 Ubud in academic Year 2020/2021” was mainly intended to figure out the significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. The data of the present ex-post facto research were collected by administering the research instruments. The required data were gathered through administering the matching cloze procedure and short answer tasks as the research instruments to 38 samples, the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Ubud in academic year 2020/2021, which were carefully determined by using the cluster sampling method.

After getting the samples' scores, the data were statistically analyzed using SPSS 25 version for windows. The hypothesis testing results by using Pearson product-moment correlation and paired-samples t-test clearly confirmed the directional hypothesis. The hypothesis, which stated that there was a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery

and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Ubud in academic year 2020/2021 was finally accepted. Moreover, the significant results occurred since vocabulary mastery was an important factor that affected the students' reading comprehension. The students with higher vocabulary mastery got a higher score in reading comprehension.

In the present study, the researcher used an ex-post facto research design in which the research variables have already taken place prior to this research. Thus, the researcher could only report the study results without giving treatment. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Ubud in academic year 2020/2021 was affected by vocabulary mastery. It is seen from the data that were taken by administering the research instruments. The implementation of ex-post facto research design could be affected by extraneous variables that might affect the findings' validity and reliability; thus, the researcher should be careful to generalize the research findings.

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