

ROLE OF VOCABULARY MASTERY IN STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui seberapa signifikan hubungan antara penguasaan kosakata siswa dan pemahaman bacaan siswa kelas delapan SMPN 2 Denpasar. Desain penelitian *ex post facto* yang berhubungan dengan korelasi digunakan untuk penelitian ini. Sampel sebanyak 46 siswa yang diminta untuk mengerjakan soal pilihan ganda. Peneliti menggunakan SPSS 16.0 sebagai perhitungan statistik. Hasil korelasinya adalah 0,809. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa ada hubungan antara penguasaan kosakata siswa dan pemahaman bacaan. Ini termasuk skala skor interpretasi antara 0,80-1000, dengan derajat signifikansi 5%, skor *t* hitung diperoleh 3,953. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara kedua variabel tersebut. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian ini dapat dinyatakan bahwa hipotesis alternatif diterima. Selain itu, ini menyiratkan bahwa kosakata memiliki peran dalam pemahaman membaca siswa.

Kata kunci: Peran, penguasaan kosakata, pemahaman bacaan

ABSTRACT

*This study aimed at figuring out how significance the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Denpasar was. Ex post facto research design which dealt with the correlation was used for the study. There were 46 students as the sample who were asked to have multiple-choice test. The researcher used SPSS 16.0 as a statistical computation. The result of the correlation was 0.809. It indicated that there was correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. It included the scale of interpretation score between 0.80-1000, with degree of significance 5%, the score of *t*-counted obtained 3.953. The result showed that there was significant correlation between the two variables. Based on the result of this study, it could be stated that the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Moreover, it implies that vocabulary has role in student's reading comprehension.*

Keywords: Roles, vocabulary mastery, reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Reading is the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. Reading requires understanding or comprehending the meaning of the text. Through reading, students acquire new ideas, obtains needed information, seeks support for our ideas and broadens our interest. Especially in the current era which is faced by the COVID-19 outbreak which has resulted in the world of education requiring students to learn online by using online platforms suggested by their teacher, such as Google classroom and WhatsApp. This study

utilized those two platforms as the tools for conducting this study during this pandemic.

Talking about reading, it will have to do with word recognition and comprehension process. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to the spoken language. In addition, comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text. By means of reading, it would be to expand vocabulary expansion because the more people read something, the more words that they gain exposure to. Therefore, through reading

comprehension, someone will be helped in order to develop the academic ability, expertise, and intelligence and also will get a variety of information (Tang et al., 2019).

Regarding on those notion, comprehension is the issue raised in this study. Reading comprehension is a very complex process, which involves a lot of interaction between the reader and what they bring to the text (prior knowledge, use of strategies) and variables related to the text itself (interest in the text, understanding of the type of text.) (Klingner et al., 2007). It means that to comprehend the meaning of a reading text, the reader needs to understand a certain number of words. However, without sufficient vocabulary certainly, it is difficult to understand a reading text. In other words, vocabulary has role in the success of reading comprehension.

Then, in learning English, vocabulary becomes one of the most important things. It is a strong predictor on comprehending a reading text (Mustafa et al., 2019). Vocabulary is one component that relates the four skills, speaking, listening, reading and writing. In order to communicate well in English, students should master a number of words and should know how to use them accurately. A good vocabulary mastery and ability to use it can help students make school work easier and do well in English test. It implies that, acquisition of vocabulary as part of the subskills of the English language is considered a vital part of learning any target language (Hashemi, 2021).

According to Langan & Winstanley (2002), if readers have a poor vocabulary, it would make them have slow reading speed and limit their comprehension. It is in line with the previous study that said

English word reading and vocabulary were longitudinal correlates of poor comprehension in English (Tong et al., 2018). Vocabulary plays a fundamental role in the reading process, and contributes greatly to a reader's comprehension. A reader cannot understand a text without knowing what most of the words mean.

In order to gain specific information, students should be taught how to read effectively and efficiently, such as making predictions about what would like to happen. Another way to help them to understand the text without knowing all the vocabulary is by finding key words. It is important to be able to find them on the text. By doing so, students can cover their vocabulary weaknesses since vocabulary knowledge is one of the major factors that influence reading comprehension. It is because, difficulties in reading are occurred for the sake of lack of vocabulary (Mohammed & Ab Rashid, 2019) and vocabulary knowledge has role in reading comprehension development (Bosch et al., 2020).

Therefore, vocabulary seems to have role in reading comprehension. It is in line with Sedita (2005) who states that vocabulary knowledge is crucial in reading comprehension and determines how well students are in comprehending the texts.

Comprehension is far more than recognizing words and remembering their meanings. However, if a student does not know the meanings of a sufficient proportion of the words in the text (that is, vocabulary mastery), comprehension is impossible. A recent empirical study was in the same frequency with notion on role of vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. It is stated that to have a good mastery of reading comprehension, students should have a good mastery of

vocabulary (Fitri & Rifaat, 2021) and the more vocabulary students have, the better their reading comprehension (Pujiani, 2021).

Henceforth, this study is going to figure out how significance the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Denpasar was.

METHODS

The research design used in this study was an ex post facto research design with a correlation analysis. Correlation research is the relationship between two or more variables under study without any attempt to influence it. According to Arikunto (2011). Correlation is a study to observe whether two variables are related or not. In addition, correlational research is research that aims to figure out the relation of two or more variables.

This study allows to draw conclusions about correlation, about the extent to which two or more variables are related, so that when one variable increases, the other increases or decreases in a somewhat predictable way. Correlation can be divided into independent variables and dependent variables. As the name implies, independent variables are variables whose changes tend to be beyond human control.

While the dependent variable is a variable that can change as a result of changes in the independent variable. This allows the researcher to predict one variable based on his knowledge of other variables which are considered to cause changes in the other variables studied by the researcher to be determined. Correlation research is also referred to as descriptive research because it describes the existing relationship between the two variables. Based on the explanation, it can

be concluded that ex-post facto with the correlational design was a type of research that was intended to look at the relationships between two or more variables.

Ex-post facto with correlational design was used to determine the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. In this research, the researcher was concerned about two variables; they were vocabulary mastery as an independent variable (X) and reading comprehension as a dependent variable (Y). Furthermore, this research was conducted because the researcher wanted to determine whether there was a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eight grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Denpasar in the academic year 2020/2021.

Then, eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Denpasar that consisted of 11 classes as the population of study were selected. In addition, the total number of students is around 460 students as the population of this study and the researcher decided to took 10% of the total population which was 46 students as the sample. In the online learning period, the researcher used Spin the Wheel Application to apply the cluster sampling technique.

The researcher used vocabulary test and reading test as the instrument. Test is a systematic procedure that has been standardized and given to an individual or a group to respond correctly either in written or oral form. Brown (2004:3) states that in simple terms, a test is a method for measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance of a research participant. First, the researcher used tests that related to the student's vocabulary mastery. The student's vocabulary test is a test by asking

students to answer the questions by multiple choice in the correct form.

The data was collected from the sample of the study which were 46 students from the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Denpasar in the academic year 2020/2021. The sample of this study would do the reading test and answer the questions by choosing the correct answer by crossing A, B, C, or D. To do the test, students can access it online in a Google form link sent via WhatsApp which contains two different tests, namely vocabulary test and reading test. The researcher gave 30 questions of a test consisting of nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and prepositions. The subject's answers were scored dichotomously. It means that every correct answer is obtained one point and zero point for every incorrect one.

In data analysis, the test was divided to be two kinds of tests and each test was divided into two tests. Those data were analyzed with the prerequisite analysis (normality test and homogeneity test) and hypothesis testing (Pearson product moment correlation and t-test).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this research was to figure out the significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eight grade students of SMPN 2 Denpasar. The data was collected from 46 respondents by using two instruments namely vocabulary test and reading comprehension test. The objective tests that were given to all students as participants in this research. The students were asked to answer the questions that consisted of the 30 questions of each test by multiple choice in the correct form. The specification of vocabulary test are noun, verb, adverb,

adjective, and preposition. Furthermore, the genre of reading comprehension is descriptive text which comprises the four aspects namely general information, specific information, textual reference and textual meaning. This test was conducted by the researcher via online. This research was conducted by using the Google Form provided through the WhatsApp group.

Based on the calculation, the normality test for vocabulary mastery was $0.154 > 0.05$ and for the reading comprehension was $0.116 > 0.05$, which means that the data distribution was normal. In this study, based on the calculation data of homogeneity the result was 0.516. It means the data was homogeneity because $0.516 > 0.05$. The result of the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eight grade students of SMPN 2 Denpasar, the result of Pearson Product Moment was 0.809. It means there was a correlation between student's vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension of the eight grade students of SMPN 2 Denpasar. Meanwhile, the result of the T-test was 3.953. According to the T-table with df 45 was 2.014 while counted was 3.953, it concluded that $3.953 > 2.034$ it indicates that the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension is significant and from the test results some students get high scores in the vocabulary test because they have a good vocabulary mastery so they can answer questions quickly and correctly. In contrast, some students who get low scores in the reading test because they do not have a good vocabulary mastery and make it difficult for them to comprehend the reading text so that it can hinder them in answering the test quickly and correctly. In conclusion, the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

The result of the data analysis showed that there was significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eight grade students of SMPN 2 Denpasar. The researcher concluded that students' vocabulary mastery has a significant correlation for their reading comprehension. Moreover, it implies that vocabulary has role in student's reading comprehension.

CLOSING

Conclusions

The conclusion could be drawn that there was a significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Denpasar in academic year 2020/2021. Based on computations by SPSS 16.0, score of coefficient correlation, which is obtained 0.809, and this score was compared with the r-table with degree of significant 5%, showed that the r-table which was obtained respectively is 0.291. Therefore, the score of coefficient correlation was very high in comparison with the score of r-table, which meant alternative hypothesis H_a was accepted. In the other words, there was a significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP 2 Denpasar in academic year 2020/2021.

Suggestions

Considering the result that many students lack vocabulary knowledge and its role in reading comprehension development, it is recommended that teachers are required to have many methods to carry out learning in the classroom. Considering the difficulty of

the situation and also the students' interest in learning and reading. So, the teacher must be able to adapt the technique or method used to improve reading comprehension, the teacher must also improve students' vocabulary understanding. Furthermore, the next researchers can focus on other issues in reading, such as reading strategies in improving reading comprehension. Besides, the further researchers can also investigate the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension in more depth to reinforce the result of this research and find out the better result.

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