THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' VOCABULARIY MASTERY AND THEIR ENGLISH READING PROFICIENCY

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This study discussed about the correlation between vocabulary mastery and their English reading proficiency. The researcher's interest on her classroom instruction became the background of this research. By determining descriptive correlational model as the research design, the research got the answer of how students' vocabularies contribute their English reading proficiency. After collecting and analyzing the data gained from vocabulary test and reading proficiency test, it could be concluded that there was a significant correlation between English vocabulary mastery and Reading proficiency of the second year student of SMPN 05 Tambusai Utara.

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is one of the components of language. There is no language without words. Napa (1993:6) says that words are signs or symbols for ideas. They are the means by which people exchange their thoughts. The more words we learn, the more ideas we should have so we can communicate the ideas more effectively. One question that might be occurred is that why should be vocabulary? This question has been answered by Nunan (1981: 118; in Akmal, 2003: 2) says that the consensus seems to be that the development of a rich vocabulary is an important element in acquisition of a language. It means that a rich vocabulary will determine someone success in acquiring a language.

The students cannot master the four language skills without large vocabularies. Say for examples, when they are speaking in the front of people, they will face many difficulties in conveying their ideas because the lack of vocabulary, writing is also as productive skills of language, the students cannot write their idea without having enough vocabulary. Burton (1982:98) states a large vocabulary helps you to express your ideas precisely, vividly, and without repeating yourselves in composition. In listening and reading as the receptive skills of language, they will get difficulties in comprehending the text or a speaker said if they have lack of vocabulary. You cannot do well in comprehension without a large vocabulary. Cohen (1996) says that becoming proficient readers and writers, they need to enrich their vocabulary in addition to building their theatrical skills." It means that vocabulary is the most important thing to be mastered by students who learn English as a foreign language.

Reading is one of the most important language skills that should be developed inside and outside classroom. It is also one of the ways to get information. Many readers can get pleasure in reading since they are able to comprehend and obtain information and content of reading text as they read.

According to Goodman (1967) and Smith (1978) in Marianne Celce-Muria (1991: 197) "reading is complex thinking skills where students reconstruct meaning using only partly the graph phonic, syntactic, and semantic system of the language."

In this case, it is clear that to have good proficiency in reading, vocabulary building cannot be overlooked. Students should develop their vocabulary through reading (Krasen;1986, Tawel; 1973 in Marienne Celce- Muria; 1991).

Junior High School (SMPN) of 05 Tambusai Utara is one of the educational institutions in which rules English as a compulsory subject. It is taught three times a week. Gradually, the second year students of SMPN 05 Tambusai Utara have practiced some techniques given by their English teacher to increase their vocabulary, such as: synonyms technique, antonyms technique, fill in blanks, use dictionary. Unfortunately, based on the researcher's pre-observation at the second year students of SMPN 05 Tambusai Utara who become sample of the research, she responds out that some students still have problem in mastering four language skills, especially in reading skill. They could not achieve the learning objective determined. Some students cannot answer the questions based on reading text discussed, cannot comprehend English text, given by teacher based on English book used, do not know the meaning of the words that have learned, cannot determine the synonym of the English words found from the text discussed and cannot determine the antonym of English words, which is available in the text studied. Based on the background and phenomena above, the write is quite interested in carrying out a research through the following research questions:

  a. How is the students' vocabulary mastery?
  b. Is there any significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and their English proficiency?

LITERATURE REVIEW

a. The Nature of Vocabulary

One of the important aspects in learning language is that vocabulary. It is an important part of language; Nunan (1991:118) states that vocabulary is an important element in the acquisition of a second language. There are some definitions of vocabulary; according to Hornby (1995:1331) vocabulary is the total number of words in a language. Vocabulary is a set of lexemes, including single words, compound words, and idioms (Richard, et al 1992:400). Vocabulary is the major problems confronting in EFL (English as a foreign language).

According to River (1983:125; in Nunan, 1991:117) "The acquisition of an adequate vocabulary is essential for successful second language use. Because without an extensive vocabulary, we will enable to use the structure and function we may have learnt for comprehensive communication. It means that for those who want to communicate in foreign language, he or she should have enough words. The more words students learn, the more they understand and express in the language. It means that the lack of vocabulary bring about the students fell difficult to understand the foreign language especially in mastering four language skills.

c. Vocabulary mastery

Vocabulary has a prominent role in understanding a passage. A reader

can comprehend a passage well if they have enough vocabularies. Burton (1982:90) states that by having a large vocabulary we can do well in comprehension and help us to express the ideas precisely. According to Curriculum book of Junior High School by The Department of National Education (2003:36), teaching English in the term of vocabulary mastery has several objectives, namely; the students can identify synonyms and antonyms, find out the meaning, and identify words function, preposition, pronoun and article of English words discussed.

One of the ways in mastering English vocabulary is that by having Synonyms, antonyms and homonyms for words. According to Harris and Smith (1976:225) by having Synonyms, antonyms and homonyms for words, the students already knows provides another means of vocabulary enrichment. In addition, finding the meaning of words discussed is necessary for the students to understand the passage as Harris and Smith (1976:229) state that one of the ways to appraise students' vocabulary acquisition is that by measuring students' ability in finding the meaning of new words. According to Djuharie (2005:73) it cannot be argued that the main problem in mastering English determined by vocabulary, phrase and sentence.

d. Reading Proficiency

Language is a tool of communication, one of the international languages used by people in the world is that English. People can communicate by using foreign language if they have ability in using the language. According to Richard et al (1992: 204) language proficiency is a person's skill in using the language for specific purpose. In this case English proficiency refers to

the degree of skill with which a person can use English, such as how well a person comprehend English reading text. Reading is one of the four language skills that should be mastered by students who are learning English as a foreign language. Talok (1993), also says one of the activities which are aimed to activate the prior knowledge of students in reading is vocabulary preview, meaning that students try to elicit the meaning of some difficult words. According to Competence Based Curriculum book of Junior High School by The Department of National Education (2003:36), the objectives of teaching reading at Junior High School are as follows:

1) Students are able to find the main idea in a paragraph
2) Students are able to find factual information
3) Students are able to identify the meaning of words, phrases and sentences.
4) Students are able to take conclusion from English text discussed.

After reading the text, the students are hoped to be able to take conclusion from what they have read. Wassman (2000:348) says that one important aspect in understanding a text is that the readers are able to make conclusion. It means that to make conclusion, automatically they should have enough vocabularies.

e. The Relationship between Vocabulary and Reading

Vocabulary and reading are closely related, both of them cannot be separated each other. To comprehend what the text talking about, the reader should have enough vocabularies. Without having well developed vocabulary, they cannot understand the content of a reading text. It is clear that

reading proficiency is influenced by how many vocabularies that we have. Whereas, through reading the reader can increase their vocabulary, as Krashen statement (1986) in Celce-Murcia (1991:305), she said that non-native speaker will also most efficient increase their vocabulary through reading program, rather than through direct vocabulary teaching. On the other words in understanding English text, we should have knowledge about structure, vocabulary and technique to go with the flow of ideas, quoted from (Djuharie, 2005:257).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

There are two variables in this research. These variables can be drawn as follows:

Students' English vocabulary Mastery(X)   English proficiency(Y)
English vocabulary Mastery is taken as an independent variable and symbolized as (X), and the data of this variable is obtained through a vocabulary test.

1. English proficiency especially in reading skill is taken as a dependent variable and symbolized as (Y). The data of this variable is obtained through a reading test.

The population of this research includes all of the second year students of SMPN 05 Tambusai Utara, 38 persons. Because of the second year students are only 38 persons in a class, the writer takes the total population as a sample (population sample). In collecting the data, the writer uses test and documentation. In analyzing the data gained from data collection techniques, the writer operates product moment, which taken from the result of vocabulary test and reading proficiency test.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Steps Calculating the Product Moment Correlation Coefficient

1. Preparing the table of both result test

TABLE 1: THE RESULT OF BOTH VOCABULARY AND READING TEST

NO	STUDENT'S NAME	VOCABULARY	READING
1	St-1	72	68
2	St-2	88	84
3	St-3	64	68
4	St-4	60	56
5	St-5	68	68
6	St-6	72	72
7	St-7	44	36
8	St-8	48	44
9	St-9	52	56
10	St-10	52	60
11	St-11	48	44
12	St-12	64	60
13	St-13	68	76
14	St-14	68	76
15	St-15	40	44
16	St-16	60	68
17	St-17	64	60
18	St-18	36	32
19	St-19	72	64
20	St-20	68	72
21	St-21	56	64
22	St-22	80	84
23	St-23	80	80
24	St-24	84	84
25	St-25	68	68
26	St-26	84	76
27	St-27	64	68
28	St-28	60	60
29	St-29	60	64
30	St-30	52	48
31	St-31	72	72
32	St-32	52	52
33	St-33	48	44
34	St-34	64	68
35	St-35	68	68

36	St-36	72	76
37	St-37	68	64
38	St-38	60	56

36 – 40	1	3
TOTAL	38=N	38=N

TABLE 2:
PERCENTAGE OF VOCABULARY
MASTERY

NO	CATEGORY	F	%
1	Very Good	5	13, 16%
2	Good	12	31, 58%
3	Enough	11	28, 95%
4	Less	8	21, 05%
5	Fail	2	5, 26%
	Total	38	100%

TABLE 3:
PERCENTAGE OF READING
PROFICIENCY

NO	CATEGORY	F	%
1	Very Good	4	10,53%
2	Good	9	23,68%
3	Enough	16	42,10%
4	Less	2	5,26%
5	Fail	7	18,43%
	Total	38	100%

2. Make the table frequency distribution of variable X and variable Y

TABLE 4: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF VARIABLE X AND VARIABLE Y

SCORE (X) & (Y)	F (X)	F(Y)
86 - 90	1	1
81 - 85	2	1
76 - 80	3	4
71 - 75	4	1
66 - 70	6	1
61 - 66	5	7
56 - 60	7	4
51 - 55	5	8
46 - 50	2	4
41 - 45	2	4

3. Substitute to the product moment
From the previous tables , it can be known that:

N = 38

$\sum fx' = 37$

$\sum fx'^2 = 253$

$\sum fy' = 77$

$\sum fy'^2 = 409$

$\sum x'y' = 291$

$$r_{xy} = \frac{\sum x'y' \frac{(\Sigma fx')(\Sigma fy')}{N}}{\sqrt{\left\{\Sigma fx'^2 - \left(\frac{\Sigma fx'}{N}\right)^2\right\}\left\{\Sigma fy'^2 - \left(\frac{\Sigma fy'}{N}\right)^2\right\}}}$$

$$= \frac{291 - \frac{(37)(77)}{38}}{\sqrt{\left\{253 - \left(\frac{37}{38}\right)^2\right\}\left\{409 - \left(\frac{77}{38}\right)^2\right\}}}$$

$$= \frac{291 - \frac{2.849}{38}}{\sqrt{\left\{253 - (0,97)^2\right\}\left\{409 - (2,03)^2\right\}}}$$

$$= \frac{291 - 74,97}{\sqrt{\left\{253 - 0,94\right\}\left\{409 - 4,1\right\}}}$$

$$= \frac{216}{\sqrt{\left\{252,1\right\}\left\{404,9\right\}}}$$

$$= \frac{216}{\sqrt{102,1}}$$

$$= \frac{216}{319,5}$$

$$= 0,676$$

4. Give the interpretation

Ha : There is a significant correlation between students' English vocabulary mastery and their reading proficiency.

Ho : There is no a significant correlation between students' English vocabulary mastery and their reading proficiency.

To interpret the result, it should be consulted to "r" product moment. The steps are as follows:

- Finding out df (degree of freedom)

    Df = N –nf

    = 38 – 2

    = 36, because df = 36 is not include in the table, so the writer uses the closest that is   35.

- Consulting to "r" product moment

    In significant 1% = 0,418, and In significant 5% = 0,325

- Comparing between "r_o" (r observation) and "r_t" (r table) If the value of r_{xy} is 0,676 compare to r table, r_{xy} is more than r table, whether at level 5% or 1%. We can say 0,325 < 0,676 > 0,418.

It means that hypothesis null "there is no correlation between English vocabulary mastery and reading proficiency" is rejected and hypothesis alternative "there is a significant correlation between English vocabulary mastery and reading proficiency" is accepted.

Based on the scatter diagram consulted, the dots are gather and near from the line, means the correlation between the two variables is high, then to know how far the students' English vocabulary mastery contribute toward their reading proficiency, the writer multiplies the result of this research as quoted from Slameto (1999:112) as follows:

R_{xy}^2 = 0, 676^2 x 100%

= 0, 457 x 100%

= 45, 7%

Based on the result of multiple above, it can be known that students' English vocabulary mastery contribute 45, 7% toward their reading proficiency. While the rest of it, 54, 3% (100 – 45,7) is contributed by other factors which are not count in this research such as structure, grammar, etc.

CONCLUSION AND SUGESTION

From the presentation of the data in chapter V, it describes that the score range of students' English vocabulary mastery is categorized as "Enough" because the highest score on alternative option is C (44, 74%). After analyzing and calculating the data by using product moment formula, from the computation, r obtained is 0,676 which is higher than r table, whether at level 1% and at level 5% (0,325 < 0,676 > 0,418).

In conclusion that the null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected and hypothesis alternative (H_a) is accepted. "There is a significant correlation between English vocabulary mastery and Reading proficiency of the second year student of SMP 05 Tambusai Utara." According to Slameto (1998:218) to find out correlation between variable X and Y, the formula $(r_{xy})^2$ is used. Based on the scatter diagram, the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading proficiency is enough, that is 45,7% ($0,676^2$ x 100%) and the rest of it, 54,3% (100% – 45,7%) is contributed by other factors which are not count in

this research such as structure, grammar, etc.

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