

A CORRELATIONAL STUDY BETWEEN VOCABULARY MASTERY AND THE ABILITY IN COMPREHENDING READING TEXT OF THE FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AT SMAN 3 BATANG HARI JAMBI

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Abstract

This research was aimed to find out the correlation between vocabulary mastery and the ability in comprehending reading text. The design of this research was correlational one. The population is Students of SMAN 3 Batang Hari Jambi. The number of sample was 30 students selected by using random sampling technique. To get the data the researcher gave vocabulary and reading test then analyzed the data by using Pearson Product Moment Formula. After analyzing the data, the researcher got the value of r-counted. It was 0.78. The value of r-counted compared with the value of r-table. It was 0.362. It means $r\text{-counted} > r\text{-table}$. Therefore, the relationship between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension was significant. It also can be concluded that the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension was high correlation.

Key words: correlation, vocabulary mastery, reading comprehension

Introduction

In learning English, the students should master four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Those skills are benefit to get communication in English. In addition, students also should master three basic language components. They are phonology, grammar, and vocabulary.

Vocabulary is one of language components that more important than others. Thornbury (2004:13) says that without grammar very little idea on a statement can be conveyed but without vocabulary no idea on a statement can be conveyed. It means if we just spend time to study grammar, we cannot improve our language much but if we focus on

vocabulary we can see that vocabulary will improve our language.

According to Langan (2002:341), if you have a poor vocabulary, it will make you have slow reading speed and limit your comprehension. Furthermore, Athans and Devine (2010:60) say that vocabulary is important because it gives significant impact on reading comprehension.

In addition, Yossuke (2011:1) states that reading comprehension is a complex process in which the reader uses his ability to find the information. It means that, the reader must be able to comprehend the meaning of a reading text because the ability to read not only can read aloud what is written but the ability to understand what the reader reads. So, to comprehend the meaning of reading text, the reader needs to understand the number of vocabulary. Without it certainly can be difficult to understand a reading text.

In English learning, there are many kinds of text. One of them is recount text. Recount text tells about event that happened in the past. According to Derewianka (1991), in a recount we retell past experience and recount text is a series of activities that happened in the past. It is used to keep and help us to express our experience.

This research was intended to know the correlation between vocabulary

mastery and reading comprehension recount text.

Research Method

This research was a correlational research. According to Gay (1987: 229) correlational research involves collecting data in order to determine whether, and to what degree a relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables.

Population is the group of interest to the research, the group to which she or he would like the results of the study to be generalized (Gay, 1987: 102). The population of this research was the first year students of SMAN 3 Batang Hari, Jambi. The number of population was 88 students.

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of populations for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the large group from which they are selected (Gay, 1987:101). The sample is only a part of the population, and 30 subjects are generally considered to be a minimally acceptable sample size in correlational study (Gay: 1978).

In this research, the researcher used random sampling technique. According to Gay (1987:104), random sampling technique is the process of selecting a sample in such a way that all individuals in the defined population have an equal and

independent chance of being selected for the sample.

To collect the data of this research, the researcher used vocabulary mastery test to find out the measure students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension test to find out the measure of students' reading comprehension.

The kind of vocabulary test that researcher used was multiple choice. The aspect of vocabulary that would be the test such as: synonym, antonym, and meaning in context. The test consisted of 60 items and time allocation was 60 minutes and the kind of reading test that the researcher used was multiple choice, 25 items and the time allocation was 60 minutes.

Before doing the real tests, the researcher tried them out to students out of the sample. This try out was aimed at finding out whether or not the students understood what they should do with the test and the time allocation was enough. Besides, the result of this try out would be used to analyze test items and to find out the reliability of test.

To see the reliability of the two tests, the researcher used split half method. It was a kind of method, which divides the items of the test into odd group and even group. To calculate the coefficient correlation between the scores of odd and even items, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment formula as the following

(Arikunto, 2002:243). Then, the result of correlation was analyzed by using Spearman-Brown formula (Arikunto, 2002:156) to know the reliability coefficient of the whole test. The result of calculation of coefficient correlation of vocabulary mastery test was 0.83. The result of coefficient correlation of reading comprehension test was 0.79.

To have good item test, the researcher did item analysis.

Based on the result of item difficulty and item discrimination analysis of vocabulary mastery test and reading comprehension test it was found that 27 items were accepted, 36 items were revised, and 22 items were discarded.

The researcher collected the data through the following procedures:

1. The researcher gave score 1 for the correct answer and 0 for the wrong answer of the two tests.
2. The researcher counted the total score of each student for the two tests

To analyze the data, the researcher followed the following steps:

1. Finding the total scores for the two tests.
2. Correlating the total score of the two tests by using Pearson Product Moment Formula.
3. Then, the researcher compared the value of r -counted with r -table on the

level of significance 95% ($\alpha .0.5$) and the degree of freedom (df) $n-2$ (28).

To test the hypothesis, a statistical analysis was used. The statistical or null hypothesis (H_0): “there is no significant positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and ability in comprehending reading text of the first year students’ at SMAN 3 Batang Hari,” was accepted if the value of r -calculated was the same or less than r -table. Otherwise, alternative hypothesis (H_a): “there is a significant positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and ability in comprehending reading text of the first year students’ at SMAN 3 Batang Hari,” was accepted if the value of r -calculated was higher than r -table.

Finding and Discussion

To test the hypothesis, the researcher compared the r -counted with r -table. The hypothesis was accepted if the r -counted was higher than r -table. As a matter of fact r -counted was higher than r -table ($0.78 > 0.362$). Therefore, the hypothesis that stated “there is a significance correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension at SMA N 3 Batang Hari, Jambi was accepted.

In relation to classification of correlation elaborated by Arikunto (2002), the correlation of the two variables

(vocabulary and reading) could be classified as high correlation. Relating to this, it could be interpreted that an increasing ability in reading comprehension, probably has relationship with an increasing mastery in vocabulary.

Conclusions

Based on finding as already discussed before, the researcher points out the following conclusions:

1. There was a positive and significant correlation between students’ vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension of the first year students at SMAN 3 Batang Hari Jambi. It means that, vocabulary mastery gives much contribution in reading comprehension.
2. The correlation between students’ vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension of the first year students at SMAN 3 Batang Hari Jambi was categorized as high correlation. In other word, if the students’ ability vocabulary is good, their reading comprehension is good too.

Based on the conclusion above, some suggestions were presented as follows:

1. For the students, in order to improve their reading ability they should make effort to increase their mastery in

vocabulary since complexity of a reading text caused by vocabulary mastery.

2. Linguistic aspects in reading are not only vocabulary but many others. Therefore, the researcher suggests for further researchers to find another aspects in reading.

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