



THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY AND WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT ABILITY AT SMPN 1 TEBING TINGGI

Fita Maghvira¹, Eliwarti², Muhammad Syarfi³

^{1,2,3} Universitas Riau, Pekanbaru, Indonesia

¹fita.maghvira0698@student.unri.ac.id, ²eliwarti@lecturer.unri.ac.id ³m.syarfi@lecturer.unri.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the correlation between two variables, namely vocabulary mastery and writing descriptive text ability of the first-year students, at SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi. The researcher used a quantitative research method as the data approach. The population was the first-year students with a total of 124 students. The researcher used a simple random sampling technique and selected 32 students from all classes. The instruments used with two types of tests were multiple choice and written tests. To analyze the data, the researcher used SPSS Statistics 25. The research result indicates that the first-year students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi achieved a good level of vocabulary mastery and a mediocre level of writing descriptive text ability. The result indicates that there is a correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing descriptive text ability. The R_{xy} distribution of the coefficient correlation was 0.408. It means there was a correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing descriptive text ability of the first-year students at SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi that was at the fair level. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted.

Keywords: *vocabulary mastery, writing ability, descriptive text*

KORELASI ANTARA PENGUASAAN KOSAKATA DAN KEMAMPUAN MENULIS TEKS DESKRIPTIF SISWA TAHUN PERTAMA SMPN 1 TEBING TINGGI

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini membahas korelasi antara dua variabel, yaitu penguasaan kosakata dan kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif siswa kelas satu SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi. Peneliti menggunakan metode kuantitatif sebagai pendekatan data. Populasi yang digunakan adalah siswa kelas satu dengan total 124 siswa. Peneliti menggunakan teknik *simple random sampling* dan memilih 32 siswa dari semua kelas. Instrumen yang digunakan dengan dua jenis tes yaitu pilihan ganda dan tes tertulis. Untuk menganalisis data, peneliti menggunakan SPSS Statistik 25. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa kelas satu SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi mencapai tingkat yang baik dalam penguasaan kosakata dan tingkat yang sedang dalam kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif. Hasil penelitian membuktikan bahwa terdapat hubungan antara penguasaan kosakata dan kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif. Distribusi R_{xy} dari koefisien korelasi adalah 0,408. Ini berarti terdapat korelasi antara penguasaan kosakata dan kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif siswa kelas VIII SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi pada tingkat yang cukup. Jadi, hipotesis nol (H_0) ditolak dan hipotesis alternatif (H_a) diterima.

Kata Kunci: *penguasaan kosakata, kemampuan menulis, teks deskriptif*

Submitted	Accepted	Published
09 June 2023	20 July 2023	30 July 2023

Citation	:	Maghvira, F., Eliwarti., & Syarfi, M. (2023). The Correlation Between The First-Year Students' Vocabulary Mastery And Writing Descriptive Text Ability At SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi. <i>Jurnal PAJAR (Pendidikan dan Pengajaran)</i> , 7(4), 848-853. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.33578/pjr.v7i4.9486 .
-----------------	---	---

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is the most basic element in learning English. By having a good vocabulary, it will be easier for people to develop their language skills such as: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. River (1983) states, the development of a mastering vocabulary is necessary for successful second language use, because students would be unable to apply the

structure and functions they may have acquired for communication comprehension if they do not have a good vocabulary.

Writing is an activity that required certain instructions to ensure that the language used for written text is understood by readers. According to Raimes (1983), writing is a skill in which the writer expresses ideas, feelings, and thoughts that

are put into words, sentences, and paragraphs by using eyes, brain, and hand. Students can use the writing to express their ideas or anything else. As they already know, writing skills are important for students. The students are therefore encouraged to complete written assignments. They need to understand how to arrange the sentences in order to be skillful at writing skills.

According to the Merdeka curriculum, first-year junior high school students are supposed to be able to construct several texts, among which is descriptive text. Students express their thoughts and experiences in basic. By the end of phase D, demonstrating an improving use of particular vocabulary and simple sentence structure. They provide fundamental facts and specifics in their writing and vary their sentence style. To connect ideas, they utilize time markers, frequency adverbs, and common conjunctions. Their abilities to write new words are based on existing English letter-sound correlations, and they employ consistent punctuation and capitalization.

On the other hand, writing might not be an easy job for first-year of junior high school students. The process requires creative thinking and such language aspects as vocabulary, grammar, diction, punctuation, spelling, and structures to make a good sentence that are appropriate for the context. These aspects seem like difficulties faced by students in writing activity. According to the previous research from Jenny et.al (2022) with the title “The Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Writing Descriptive Text Ability of the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Negeri 40 Palembang, the researcher found some problem that makes the students difficulty in writing descriptive text such as lack of vocabulary, students do not pay attention to the grammar that makes the result of the research is poor to average categories in vocabulary mastery and writing descriptive text ability.

In fact, these problems of writing are also experienced by students of SMP Negeri 1 Tebing Tinggi. Moreover, the researcher informally interviewed the English teacher of the school. The students face certain problems that make it hard for them to do writing assignments. Some

problems were due to difficulties in correctly constructing sentences in writing a certain type of text in English, it must be caused by a lack of vocabulary, including choice of word and a low motivation to practice English. As a result, they frequently started to put their ideas into writing skills. From the explanation above, it is clear that most students of SMP Negeri 1 Tebing Tinggi still have difficulties in the writing process in which one of them was caused by their lack of vocabulary. As a result, it was assumed that vocabulary mastery will become one of the most fundamental factors to consider during the writing process. According to Khan (2005) it is difficult for learning language without mastering vocabulary. It can be assumed that by having adequate vocabulary, students can develop their ideas and write easily. Referring to the explanation above, the researcher was interested to conduct a research entitled “The Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Writing Descriptive Text Ability of the First Year Students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi”.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vocabulary mastery is essential for learners. It is more than simply grammar for communication reasons, especially when students are motivated to learn crucial vocabulary early on. Students will struggle to use English if they do not have a proportionate vocabulary. The requirements for generalization (the ability to define words) and application can be used to evaluate vocabulary mastery (Lewis, 1997). According to the definition, vocabulary mastery is one component of learning English as a foreign language for beginners, intermediates, and advanced intermediates. Listening, speaking, reading, writing, and vocabulary are the fundamental aspects of learning. Vocabulary mastery implies the student's ability to comprehend and apply the vocabulary.

One of the language abilities that English learners must master is writing. Writing is a kind of practical communication that allows students to conceive worlds of their own creativity (Klausenburger et al., 1973). It means they must be able to communicate themselves in writing in order to develop their ideas and attract the reader

when they read what they have written. However, Dadi (2015) states writing is a process that generates meaning. Based on the explanation above, writing is a system of human communication that represents a symbol. According to Jeremy (2004), there are four steps of writing namely: planning, drafting, editing, an final draft.

Based on Merdeka curriculum, the first year students are be able to write various text one of them is descriptive text. According to Dirgeyasa (2015:67), define that descriptive text is a kind of text to draw, to illustrate an object, place, person in order to have visual appearance of the object described. A good explanation is like a "picture of words". Readers can imagine things, places, and people in their heads. In general, descriptive methods describe approximately specific person, region or component details. Descriptive textual content needs to deal with action (verbs), in preference to sensation (adverbs and adjectives). The writer needs to count on the function of readers whose concept of the defined events, in entirety, built via means of textual content. Gerot and Wignel (1994) state a descriptive has the purpose to describe a particular person, place, and thing. Based on Zetira (2015), there are three types of descriptive text namely; description people, description things, and description place.

METHOD

This research used quantitative method with correlation analysis. According to Fraenkel et al., (2011) correlational research is a research which purpose is to find out the relationship between two or more variables and their cause and effect. This study will determine the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing descriptive text ability. This research has been conducted on November 2022. The setting

of the research was at SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi. The location is at Selatpanjang, Kepulauan Meranti Regency, Riau Province. In this research, the researcher used vocabulary mastery test and written test. The researcher combined the two results from these two data collection techniques to draws conclusions on the problems studied. In this research, the researcher used vocabulary mastery test and written test. The researcher combined the two results from these two data collection techniques to draws conclusions on the problems studied.

In this research, the researcher decided to choose first year students of the SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi as the study population consisted of four classes with 124 students. Therefore, the researcher used simple random sampling technique to determine the samples. The sample of the research is 30 students from four classes of the first-year students. This research was conducted in two sessions. The first sessions is vocabulary mastery test, it consist of 40 questions. The second session is writing a short descriptive text with the topic based on the lesson plan and curriculum. Then, the result of vocabulary mastery test and writing descriptive text test will analyzed into four steps, namely difficulty test, reliability test, normality, and Pearson product moment correlation test

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Vocabulary Mastery (X)

The vocabulary exam was created using multiple choice questions and consists of 40 questions. The data obtained reveals that the maximum score of the students' vocabulary mastery is 85 and the minimum score is 48. Each student's vocabulary mastery score was classified into excellent, good, mediocre, and poor. The score can be seen in table below:

Table 1. Classification score of Students' Vocabulary Mastery Test

No	Level	Frequency
1.	Excellent	4
2.	Good	18
3.	Mediocre	10
4.	Poor	0
	Total	32

Table 1 showed that there is no students in *poor* level, 10 students in *mediocre* level, 18 students are in *good* level, and in the *excellent* level there are 4 students. However, the average score of the students' vocabulary test is 68. It can be concluded that the vocabulary mastery students of the first year students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi at *good* level.

Writing Descriptive Text Ability (Y)

The students had 60 minutes to write a short descriptive text from the topic given by the researcher. For scoring students' writing ability the researcher invited 3 raters. The following table show the score of students:

Table 2. Classification score of Students' Writing Ability

No	Level	Frequency
1.	Excellent	0
2.	Good	6
3.	Mediocre	22
4.	Poor	4
	Total	32

Table 2 showed that there is no student in reached *excellent* level, while 6 students in *good* level, 22 students in *mediocre* level, and 4 students in *poor* level. In addition, the average score of students' writing descriptive text ability test is 52. It can be concluded the writing ability was classified in *mediocre* level.

Correlation Analysis

As previously stated, the purpose of this research is to find out the correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing descriptive text ability. In order to this, IBM SPSS Statistics was used to calculate the data from two variables using the Pearson Product Moment technique.

From the analysis by using Pearson Product Moment, it can be seen the correlation coefficient between vocabulary mastery and writing descriptive text ability is 0.408. Using the correlation classification by Arikunto (2014) the number is included in range of moderate correlation category. Based on the analysis, it can be inferred there is a moderate correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing descriptive text ability of the first year students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi.

DISCUSSION

The purposed of this study was to find out the correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing descriptive text ability of the first year students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi. The

researcher used two instruments in this research; vocabulary mastery test and writing descriptive text test. The sample in this study consist of 32 students.

The first variable of the research was students' vocabulary mastery test. The data on this variable was obtained from multiple choice. The result showed the average of vocabulary mastery score of students was 68 which it can be categorized in *good* level.

The second variable of the research was writing descriptive text ability. The data variable was gained from written test. The result showed the average of writing descriptive text ability test was 52 which it can be categorized in *good* level by (Permendikbud, 2014).

The research used IBM SPSS Statistics 25 for correlation analysis and hypothesis testing. According to the previous data, the correlation coefficient of vocabulary mastery and writing descriptive text ability of the first year students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi is 0.408. The result conforming to the correlation level by Arikunto (2014) is considered a moderate level of correlation. According to findings above, there are some factors that makes the moderate correlation for instance lack of vocabulary, low motivation of learning English, and lack of grammar.

The data of this research can be supported by another research, for instance a conducted by Azizah (2017), she found there was a correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and writing

ability. Students who have mastered vocabulary might do their hardest to write descriptive text applying vocabulary. It means that studies can support the research findings of this study. Besides, Schmitt (2000) states, vocabulary is one of the most important aspect in language. To have an ability in English very well, the first step is to know the vocabulary because it will be used in writing, reading, listening, and speaking. However, the students who can master vocabulary it will be easier to construct their ideas into writing, especially in writing descriptive text. So, it can be concluded there is a correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing descriptive text ability.

To sum up, this research managed to prove that the vocabulary mastery and writing descriptive text ability of the first year students of SMPN 1 Tebing Tinggi correlates each other. This conclusion can be seen from the coefficient of correlation found being 0.408, which it can be categorized as a moderate correlation. It means that the mastered students in vocabulary, the better their writing ability will be.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

According to findings of this research, the researcher draws conclusions as follows: First, the analysis of the data from vocabulary mastery test was classified in good level. Second, the analysis of writing descriptive text ability test was classified in mediocre level. Third, the correlation is moderate level, the null hypotheses (H_0) was rejected and the alternative (H_a) was accepted.

The researcher proposed some recommendations based on the result and the conclusion of the research. For English students to strengthen their writing abilities, students should write a sentence, paragraph, or text as often as possible. Furthermore, knowing a great variety of words and learn about grammar to understand writing difficulty. For teachers should provide students additional writing abilities based on general structure and they should explain how to apply the vocabulary and grammar in writing descriptive text. Last, for other researchers to conduct further research can improve the

research as it can be broadened to other subjects and in new settings.

REFERENCES

- Arikunto, S. (2014). *Prosedur penelitian pendidikan*. Jakarta: PT Rineka
- Azizah, Y. (2017). *The Correlation Between Students' Vocabulary Mastery and Their Writing Ability in Descriptive Text (a Study for the Seventh Grade Students of Smp Islam Sudirman 1 Bancak Semarang District in the Academic Year 2016 / 2017)*. 1.
- Buana, S. D. S. W., Maharani, A. A. P., & Budiarta, I. K. (2021). The Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Descriptive Paragraph Writing Ability of the Eighth- Grade Students of SMPN 5 Sukawati. *Proceeding 5th International Conference on Sustainable Development (ICSD) 2021*, 1(1), 104–110.
- Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. H. (2011). *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education* (p. 94). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Jeremy, H. (2004). *How to Teach Writing by Jeremy Harmer* (p. 5). Pearson Longman.
- Khan, B. (2005). Managing E-Learning Strategies. In *Managing E-Learning Strategies*. Information Science Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-59140-634-1>
- Klausenburger, J., Hartmann, R. R. K., & Stork, F. C. (1973). Dictionary of Language and Linguistics. In *The Modern Language Journal*. Applied Science Publisher. <https://doi.org/10.2307/325049>
- Lewis, J. H. (1997). *Practical Techniques for Language Teaching* (p. 12).
- M. Elvinna Jenny, Atmanegara Yunani, P. N. (2022). The Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Writing Descriptive Text Ability of the Eighth Grade Students in SMP Negeri 40 Palembang. *English Teaching and Learning Journal*, 1(8.5.2017). <https://doi.org/10.19109/literal.v1i1.12828>



- Permendikbud. (2014). Lampiran Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia Nomor 104 Tahun 2014 Tentang Penilaian Hasil Belajar oleh Pendidik pada Pendidikan Dasar dan Pendidikan Menengah. *Pedoman Evaluasi Kurikulum*, 13, 13,23. <http://pgsd.uad.ac.id/wp-content/uploads/lampiran-permendikbud-no-104-tahun-2014.pdf>
- Raimes, A. (1983). Techniques in teaching writing skills. In *Oxford University Press*.
- Schmitt, N., & Schmitt, D. (2000). Vocabulary in Language Teaching. In *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Zetira, R. G. G. (2015). *Using clustering technique to explore (The case of the tenth grades of State Senior High School 1 Pegandon in the academic year of 2014/2015)*. 168.