

VOCABULARY AND SPEAKING ACHIEVEMENT: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY AT ONE ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL IN JAMBI

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to find out whether or not there is any significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their speaking achievement. The study was correlational study. All of female students of the eight grade students at AL-Hidayah Modern Islamic Boarding School Kota Jambi were the population with the total number 163 students. The writer used purposive sampling to select the sample of the study. There were 30 students selected by means of several considerations; (1) The students were those who lived in dormitory, (2) The students' speaking score taken from the school document were 80, (3) The students were those who were selected in the language program, (4) The students were those who did not take English course elsewhere. The data were collected by using two instruments; vocabulary and speaking tests. The data showed that most of students were categorized Excellent in their vocabulary achievement and good at their speaking achievement. The results of statistical data indicate that there was a positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and students' speaking achievement. However the two variables were not significantly correlated [$r=0.079$, $n=30$, $p>0.05$].

Keywords: *Correlation, Vocabulary Mastery, Speaking Achievement*

INTRODUCTION

Speaking plays essential role in human life. It is used to deliver the idea to communicate with other as it is an integral part of human life (Hurlock, 1998; Flutcher, 2003; Luoma, 2004). Moreover, speaking skill becomes the important aspect of learning language. Sadiku (2015) stated that speaking is all special. It is the way the language learner needs to express what they have read, heard or written., speaking became an essential skill in learning language. Brown (2001, p.267) stated that "The successful of language acquisition is almost always the demonstration of an ability to accomplish pragmatic goals through interactive discourse with other speakers of the language". Therefore, speaking is an important tool for communication for every our activities wherever and whenever. We communicate with others, to express our ideas, and to know others' ideas as well and we use language in a variety of situations, without speech we cannot communicate with one another.

However, having speaking skill is challenging. Murcia and Olshtain in Gruyter (2006) stated since speaking involved a complex process of constructing meaning, it is considered as the most challenging skill among the four skills in learning language. It is not simply express something orally. The data regarding speaking skills also indicated the same idea. Most of the country used English as way to communication, despite not all of the country can speak English fluency. A survey by Special Eurobarometer 386 (and the data for Croatia from

“Eurobarometer 243”) since 2006 mentioned that in the 2011 census, 1.7% of the UK population reported that they speak poor English or no English at all. This is probably an underestimation, as the questionnaire itself was in English, so those with a poor command of English were less likely to fill it in correctly, and it included only people with permanent residence in the UK.

Moreover, speaking is one of the most difficult skill in English to learn in Indonesia, because English is a foreign language in Indonesia. They should learn speaking from the basic things. According to Indonesian citizenship census (2010) there are 60.40% of Indonesians who speak local language daily activities while there only 25.10% who speak Indonesia and 10.05% speak foreign language. The percentage of Indonesians who speak Indonesia as the daily language at home were increased from 10.73% in 1990 to 25.10% in 2010 let alone the foreign language.

In order to be able to speak certain language, one must consider several linguistic aspects, one of the aspects is vocabulary. Some experts believe that one cannot speak, understand, read or write a foreign language without knowing a lot of words as vocabulary is at the central of mastering a foreign language (Rubin & Thompson, 1994; Coady & Huckin, 1997). Moreover Thurnbury (2002, p.13) stated “Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed”. It means that grammar gives a role in conveying something, but vocabulary gives a role in conveying everything.

Some empirical studies also give the evidences regarding the importance of vocabulary in producing oral language. Koizumi & In’nami (2013) implied “Vocabulary holds a central position in formulating an utterance with the appropriate meanings”. Alharti (2020) also agreed that vocabulary is an essential element for successful communication. Based on the result of Fauzi’s observation (2010), Senior high school students’ speaking ability was low due to the fact that the students’ lack of vocabulary. It could be seen that during the speaking activities some students mostly ask for the meaning of the words in English. The even got stuck during their speech because they could not think of anything to say.

The importance of vocabulary had also been noticed at Al-Hidayah Modern Islamic Boarding school Kota Jambi. The school had a special program of enriching the students’ vocabulary by assigning the students to memorize 3 vocabulary every day with assumption that it could improve the students’ skill in speaking. In spite of the treatment, based on an interview with one of the English teachers who taught speaking there, the students speaking were still not good enough. It was also explained that the students’ average was 65 which means that they had not reached yet the minimum criteria of the score at school which was 80.

From the phenomenon, the writer was interested to conduct the study to see the correlation between vocabulary mastery and speaking achievement. The writer would like to find out whether or not there was significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and speaking achievement of the Eight grade female students at Al-Hidayah Modern Islamic Boarding School Kota Jambi.

METHOD

Research Design

This research used Quantitative approach with non-experimental design. The researchers applied the correlational design. Correlational research is done to determine relationship among two or more variable and to explore their implications for cause and effect (Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun, 2012). There were two variables in this study. The independent variable (X) was vocabulary mastery. Vocabulary mastery referred to the students' achievement as the result of answering vocabulary questions. The students' mastery was measured in terms of their ability to understand the words, and catch the meaning of the words by answering the questions correctly. The dependent variable (y) was speaking achievement. Speaking achievement referred to the students score in speaking test.

Research Sites and Participants

This research was conducted at Al-Hidayah Modern Islamic Boarding School Kota Jambi. The population was the eighth-grade female students. The total population was 163 students. The samples were taken on the basis of purposive sampling technique. The researchers considered some characteristics in selecting the sample. The samples were those who live in the dormitory whose speaking score was 80. The students were also those selected to join the language program provided by school and had never taken private English course elsewhere. As the results there were 30 students were participated in the research study.

Data Collection and Analysis

In order to collect the data, the researchers used two kinds of instruments. The researchers used vocabulary test to find out the students' vocabulary achievement. The students' asked to choose the correct answer based on the multiple-choice test. The questions were adopted from textbooks junior high school based on the curriculum applied in that school. There were 20 questions in the test. The students will get 1 for each of the correct answer. The second instrument used were speaking test. The researchers' designed the speaking test on the basis of talk as interaction based on the curriculum applied in the school. The students were asked to have a conversation. The researchers then recorded the students' interaction. In order to obtained objective results, there were two raters assigned to help the researchers scored the students' speaking interaction. The raters used rubric of speaking adopted from Brown (2001). Inter-rater reliability was employed to see the consistency of the results of the speaking tests scored by the two raters. The result of the interrater reliability showed that there was very high reliability [0.956] of the results of the test. The data obtained from the two instruments then analysed by using Pearson Product moment to see the correlation between the two variables.

The researchers used several categories to describe the students' vocabulary mastery and speaking achievement. Table 1 shows the categories.

Table 1. Categories of the Students' Score

| <i>Range of Scores</i> | <i>Categories</i> |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 16-20 | Excellent |
| 11-15 | Good |
| 6-10 | Weak |
| 5 | Poor |

FINDINGS

Students' Achievement

The researchers ran both the descriptive and inferential statistic to analyze the data obtained from the study. The descriptive analyses was conducted to obtain the data of the students score in vocabulary and in speaking.

Based on the results of the vocabulary test, the researchers found that there were 25 students (83%) were categorized as excellent. There were 5 students (17%) were categorized as good, and there were no students were categorized as weak and poor. Based on the result of descriptive statistic of vocabulary test showed that the minimum score was 11 and the maximum score was 20, so the mean of vocabulary test was 17,2. It means that most of students' vocabulary test can be categorized as excellent.

From the result of speaking test, the writer found that there were 3 students (10%) were categorized as excellent, 27 students (90%) were categorized as good, and no student were categorized or poor. It is found that the highest score is 16 and the lowest score is 11 and the mean is 13. The results of the analyses showed that the students had achieved higher score in vocabulary. There were more students obtained excellent score in vocabulary than in speaking.

The Results of Correlational Analyses

After getting the results of the normality test on the data obtained, the researchers run the parametric test analysis. A non-significant result ($0.200 > 0.05$) showed that the data was normally distributed. The results showed the $r=0.079$. It implies that there was very low positive correlation between the two variables. However, the significant value obtained was $p.0.05 > 0.678$ which indicated that there was no significant correlation between the variables.

DISCUSSION

Based on the finding of the study, the researchers drew some interpretations. First, there is a correlation between vocabulary mastery and speaking achievement. This could be seen from the result of correlation [$r=0.079$]. This result was due to the fact that At Al-Hidayah Modern Islamic Boarding School Kota Jambi had applied the treatment for vocabulary mastery by assigning some vocabulary to the students every day for about three vocabularies, which was outside the teaching and learning activities in the classroom. The treatment was done in the dormitory. After students got vocabularies, they were asked to practice vocabularies by making a short dialog with their friends. At Al-Hidayah Modern Islamic Boarding School Kota Jambi, the students were familiarized to speak English every day to communicate with each other about two weeks.

In fact, the result was in line with what experts have proved. Students will not be able to speak if they do not have stock of vocabularies, because vocabulary is one of the most important things in speaking. Vocabulary is coessential aspect to help students to be able to speak. Richards and Renandya (2002) stated that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency. It provides the basis of how well learners speak, listen, read and write. In other words, the first thing learners need to learn when they learn a language is vocabulary. Learners will find it difficult in learning a language if they have lack of vocabulary. Besides, Eppendi (2020) also reported that vocabulary influenced the students' performance in speaking. The low achievement of the students' speaking performance was due to the fact that they had difficulty in memorizing the vocabulary which made the students hard to develop the conversation. Thus it was suggested especially to those with high level of speaking anxiety to practice and enrich their vocabulary.

The results of the study, however, indicated that there was no significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and speaking achievement. It means that vocabulary achievement was not the only aspect that relates to the results of speaking achievement. There were other dominant aspects determined the speaking achievement. Burns (2019) argued "Speaking lessons are not just occasion for simply practicing or 'doing' speaking". The lessons must develop various components of speaking therefore they need to be designed as structured learning opportunities. Burns also mention that learners are needed to be guided through integrated activities to raise their awareness of the knowledge skills and strategies. This is important in order to let them perform better appropriately in certain context of interactions. Amalia & Apriani (2016) implied through their study that the students had better performance in speaking since they were trained to develop the idea on their own and give opportunities to speak in the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

Even though vocabulary was determined as an essential aspect in speaking, learners cannot deny the other aspects in speaking English. The learners may have trained well to memorize a lot of vocabulary or practice speaking by applying the vocabulary they just gained, but they must consider how to pronounce the words correctly, use correct sentence structure and develop fluency in order to score best in speaking.

This study in fact is still far away of being perfect. It is suggested for the future researcher who is interested to work in the same field to consider larger sample as it is intended to generalize the results of the study in larger population. It is also recommended to have different form of instruments since this study focused on what it was expected form the curriculum used in the setting of the study. It would also be essential to consider other types of talk, such as talk as performance and talk as transaction.

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