

**THE CORRELATION BETWEEN MASTERING VOCABULARY AND SPEAKING ABILITY
(CASE STUDY AT SMA 10 FAJAR HARAPAN BANDA ACEH)**

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ABSTRACT

This research is about the correlation between mastering vocabulary and speaking ability, which is conducted in SMA Negeri 10 Fajar Harapan Banda Aceh. This study has 2 (two) objectives; to find out the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their speaking ability as well as to find out the students achievement in mastering vocabulary and speaking ability. 48 students have been taken as sample of this study. The data is collected through observation and tests; vocabulary test and speaking test, then they are calculated by using the coefficient correlation Pearson product moment formula. With significant level $\alpha = 0,05$, the result of the test shows that there is positive correlation between mastering vocabulary and speaking ability with correlation value 0,93. Since the score is high, it can be concluded, therefore, that the students' vocabulary mastery has high correlation with their speaking ability.

Key words: Correlation, Vocabulary and Speaking

I. Introduction

A. Background of study

A language is a means of communication covering 4 (four) language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening and speaking are included as oral communication, while reading and writing are as written communication. In learning language, especially foreign language, it is more effective if the learners are actively involved in the process (Kippel, 1984, p. 120). Many activities are concerned with the learners themselves where their feelings and ideas are the focal point of the exercise. Therefore, learning a foreign language is not only a matter of memorizing a different set of names for things, but also having an educational experience.

This research is focused on students' speaking skill which is influenced by mastering vocabulary. It is an attempt to identify the students' achievement in improving their speaking ability. This is pertinent to what Norrish (1983, p. 19) points out that the students need to create new utterance, but with limited experience of vocabulary mastery, they may make a lot of mistakes. Fries (1984, p. 24) similarly adds that the students cannot realize that even if they could memorize all the words in the largest dictionary of a language and knew only that part of the language, they could not understand a single utterance.

B. Research objectives and research questions

Having reviewed the literature related to the speaking skill and its correlation to the vocabulary mastery, the aims of this study are as follows:

1. To examine the correlation between mastering vocabulary and speaking ability of the students at SMA Negeri 10 Fajar Harapan
2. To find out the students' achievement in mastering vocabulary and speaking ability

To pursue these aims, 2 (two) specific research questions have been drawn:

1. How is the correlation between mastering vocabulary and speaking ability of the students at SMA Negeri 10 Fajar Harapan
2. How is the students' achievement in mastering vocabulary and speaking ability

C. Methodology

1. The theoretical framework

The framework used in this study is an adaptation of the formula conducted by Soehardi Sigit (1999). It is a calculation of using r Pearson Product moment correlation in which the result of mastering vocabulary test is symbolized as X variable and the result of speaking ability test is as Y variable. The intended formula is as the following:

$$r_{XY} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Where r_{XY} = The correlation

$\sum X$ = The result of mastering
vocabulary

$\sum Y$ = The result of speaking ability

N = The total number of students

2. The procedure of collecting data

A. Observation

The classroom observation is conducted in order to observe the teaching learning process as well as the used of the appropriate materials in teaching. It is important to start analyzing about the class chosen as the sample of this study.

B. Tests

2 (two) sets of tests; speaking and vocabulary tests, are provided to the students. Vocabulary exercise will be given as the first test to the students which consist of translating words, fill in the blank and matching items. Furthermore, the students are requested to stand in front of the class to speak about the certain topic for 3 to 4 minutes as the speaking test.

II. Literature review

A. Student's vocabulary mastery

Mastering vocabulary is one of the methods to be better in speaking in order to avoid misunderstanding issue. This is essential to be concerned as vocabulary plays an important role in constructing the idea conveyed through a language used. At school, as it is one of places for learning, teachers must be good models as speakers of the target language that

they must technically adopt the ways of attracting students' attention to learn and practice (Harmer, 1986, p. 8).

Pronunciation is one of problems which might be faced in vocabulary mastery that should be concerned seriously. Various techniques could be modified to present pronunciation instruction:

a) model and imitation

The teacher sets a model that the students attempt to reproduce a word. The experience has shown that the habits of the first language will much interfere that of the second language. The teacher, thus, should be more creative to create a high-quality circumstance for students in learning vocabulary.

b) Explanation

The teacher tries to guide students by showing the way to produce some sounds and how to manipulate the speech organs as well as telling them what are characteristics of sounds that should be produced.

c) Practice

The application of this technique is really needed in order to strengthen the ability of mastering vocabulary. Practicing a new word with correct pronunciation help students enrich their vocabulary mastery.

d) comparison and contrast

These aspects are related to phonological area. The students have to identify the different sound of the words produced as well as to highlight the features that differentiate them.

Furthermore, Pahuja (1994, p.15) suggests some techniques to improve vocabulary mastery as in the following:

- a) firm determination
- b) curiosity
- c) read and listen carefully
- d) be selective with words
- e) prepare personal dictionary
- f) consult a dictionary and thesaurus
- g) play with words
- h) practice to familiarize with new words

B. Speaking ability

Speaking is a communication process which is a primary medium to express ideas. Many experts believe that speaking is a media to interact with the surrounding people in terms of sharing ideas and releasing problems. Colvin (1976, p.6) claims that anyone who cannot speak or understand the language is really cut off from the life of community.

In terms of its function, speaking can be distinguished into two categories; formal and informal. Speaking in informal context could be performed simply and straightforwardly as it does not require certain utterances. The speakers absolutely are able to share ideas and much information to the others without hesitation. However, the speakers should pay more attention while speaking in formal circumstances since a group of people are the listeners with various background of understanding. Some preparations then should be organized to reduce either anxiety or fear while speaking take place

as proper preparation rehearsal can help to reduce fear by about 75%, proper breathing techniques can further reduce fear by another 15% and mental state account for the remaining 10%.

According to Hybels and Weaver II (2001, p. 101), who highlight that:

“If an idea or impression is vague in the speaker’s mind, the resulting message will be confused and ambiguous because understanding is the core of meaning which is the two-way process. That is, the speaker is responsible for presenting the idea clearly and the listener is responsible for trying to understand it accurately. Meanings are ultimately determined by people, not by words”.

Regarding to its types, formal speaking consists of speech, MC (Master of Ceremony), seminar, workshop, discussion and meeting. The speakers, therefore, have to arrange themselves well before involving into these kinds of speaking; otherwise the communication purpose will not be reached properly.

C. The purpose of speaking

As has been mentioned earlier that speaking is a tool to convey information with other people for certain reasons. According to Harmer (1985, p. 41), who claims that there are some generalizations can be generated as the reasons why someone speaks, as in the following:

1. He wants to speak that speaking may be forced on him in some ways.

2. He has some communicative purposes, for instances charming the listeners, sharing information or expressing pleasure. It sometimes could be decided to be rude or to flatter, to agree or to complain.
3. He selects from his language store which means that he might have an infinite capacity to create new utterances if he is a native speaker.

D. The correlation between mastering vocabulary and speaking ability

Vocabulary mastery and speaking ability has close correlation each other since vocabulary is a branch of speaking skill. It is also a foundation to construct better speaking ability which has relationship to other language aspects, such as spelling, pronunciation, structure and many others. It is therefore essential for students to master vocabulary in order to acquire any language skills proficiently.

What is more, the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary is essential to be success at second language used since without an extensive vocabulary, it is impossible to apply the structure of the language and its functions. The more vocabulary develops, the easier to add new words even though the first ten words are probably the most difficult to learn (Nunan, local government. This is one of favorite boarding schools in Banda Aceh which has many supporting facilities, such as, student's

1991, p. 117). In relation to this issue, Nunan (p. 122) also emphasizes that it is important to provide students with strategies for inferring the meaning of unknown vocabulary from the context in which it occurs. It is then clear that mastering vocabulary plays an important role to increase the speaking ability in order to comprehend how to select, to put and to use the proper word in speaking.

Al – Kufaisi (1988, p. 42), furthermore, states that:

“In communication, the most important items that have to be mastered by English language learners are vocabularies, because they will not be able to state their ideas with limited vocabularies. It actually has become the major problem in speaking or interacting with others, for example, how to understand the news or cast on the radio, TV and other media if they have limited vocabulary”.

Based on the description above, it can be assumed that there is a close correlation between mastering vocabulary and speaking ability.

III. The Research at SMA Negeri 10 Fajar Harapan

A. The location of the research

SMA Negeri 10 Fajar Harapan is located in Ateuk Jawo Banda Aceh, which is about 4 km away from the city center and it is developed by dormitory (for male and female students), prayer room, library, laboratory and canteen.

B. Data collection technique

As has been mentioned previously, the data of this research is collected through observation and tests. After conducting those techniques, it is obvious that teaching learning process in SMA Negeri 10 Fajar Harapan Banda Aceh, especially in the sample classes, runs fluently. Both students and teachers build a good interaction to succeed teaching and learning process. The teachers used various materials and media in teaching English as well as changeable teaching methods in order to engage students' attention.

Turning to the test, there are 2 types of test provided to measure the students' ability in mastering vocabulary and speaking. Vocabulary test included translating words (both into Indonesian and into English), matching items and finding vocabularies meaning from reading text. For speaking test, the students are requested to speak about their experiences or their family in front of the class for about 3 to 4 minutes.

IV. Data Analysis and Results

The analysis of the data is calculated by using r Pearson Product moment correlation in

which the result of mastering vocabulary test is symbolized as X variable and the result of speaking ability test is as Y variable. The intended formula is as the following:

$$r_{XY} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Where r_{XY} = The correlation

$\sum X$ = The result of mastering vocabulary

$\sum Y$ = The result of speaking ability

N = The total number of students

The first step in analyzing the possible correlation between these two variables is to calculate the scores of vocabulary mastery test and speaking ability test. The result of both tests is shown in the following table:

Table 4.1 Mastering vocabulary score and speaking ability score

No	N	X	Y	X ²	Y ²	XY
1	AB	95	92	9025	8464	8740
2	FA	90	90	8100	8100	8100
3	RK	88	85	7744	7225	7480
4	SW	90	90	8100	8100	8100
5	SN	90	87	8100	7569	7830
6	SM	95	95	9025	9025	9025
7	AY	88	90	7744	8100	7920
8	AS	81	85	6561	7225	6885
9	SF	95	90	9025	8100	8550
10	FH	88	85	7744	7225	7480
11	IF	89	85	7921	7225	7565
12	FM	85	90	7225	8100	7650
13	UA	92	90	8464	8100	8280
14	NF	86	90	7396	8100	7740
15	NQ	86	90	7396	8100	7740
16	YN	93	90	8649	8100	8370
17	MT	81	87	6561	7569	7047
18	RL	86	90	7396	8100	7740
19	AK	92	90	8464	8100	8280
20	ZH	93	90	8649	8100	8370
21	CR	85	90	7225	8100	7650
22	ZF	83	85	6889	7225	7055
23	LI	93	95	8649	9025	8835
24	OK	87	90	7569	8100	7830
25	RS	88	90	7744	8100	7920
26	GR	64	70	4096	4900	4480
27	AE	63	70	3969	4900	4410
28	LS	79	85	6241	7225	6715

29	NY	75	80	5625	6400	6000
30	DI	60	70	3600	4900	4200
31	IA	72	80	5184	6400	5760
32	MA	70	76	4900	5776	5320
33	AD	86	90	7396	8100	7740
34	MI	94	90	8836	8100	8460
35	RM	94	90	8836	8100	8460
36	DP	73	75	5329	5625	5475
37	TD	74	87	5476	7569	6438
38	JP	84	90	7056	8100	7560
39	KZ	60	70	3600	4900	4200
40	MR	63	70	3969	4900	4410
41	FI	62	70	3844	4900	4340
42	TI	90	95	8100	9025	8550
43	WR	86	85	7396	7225	7310
44	DM	70	75	4900	5625	5250
45	FD	84	90	7056	8100	7560
46	RF	64	70	4096	4900	4480
47	TM	98	95	9604	9025	9310
48	AJ	44	70	1936	4900	3080
N = 48		$\sum X = 3928$	$\sum Y = 4072$	$\sum X^2 = 328410$	$\sum Y^2 = 348528$	$\sum XY = 337542$

The data above, furthermore, is calculated by using the following formula:

$$= \frac{207200}{222618.3446} = 0,93$$

$$r_{XY} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

$$= \frac{48 \times 337542 - (3928)(4072)}{\sqrt{[48 \times 328410 - (3928)^2][48 \times 348528 - (4072)^2]}}$$

$$= \frac{16202016 - 15994816}{\sqrt{[15763680 - 15429184][16729344 - 16581184]}}$$

$$= \frac{207200}{\sqrt{(334496)(148160)}}$$

$$= \frac{207200}{\sqrt{4.955892736}}$$

The result shows that the correlation between mastering vocabulary and speaking ability is positive since the score of r is high, which is 0, 93. This is appropriate with Nurkanca's statement:

“To know the coefficient correlation that is found whether it is significant or not, the obtained score should be compared with the

table of r product moment score. If the obtained coefficient correlation is higher than the control score in the table, it means that the correlation is significant, but if the coefficient correlation is lower, this means that the correlation is not significant". (Nurkanca, 1982, p. 153).

Moreover, the score obtained (r_h) is compared to r_t score with significant level $\alpha = 0,05$, if $N = 48$ so $r_t = 0,28$. This means that $r_h > r_t$ ($0,93 > 0,28$). Since $r_h > r_t$, the students' vocabulary mastery has high correlation with their speaking ability.

The result also presents that the students' speaking ability is much influenced by their vocabulary mastery. More than half students obtained high score both in mastering vocabulary test and speaking ability test. This is obvious that the vocabulary mastery plays an important role in speaking ability. Since the score obtained is high, it indicates that the students at SMA Negeri 10 Fajar Harapan Banda Aceh, especially who have been the sample of this study, have gained better achievement in speaking ability.

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V. Conclusion

Speaking is essential in all areas of life. Focusing on speaking context, it cannot be separated from the vocabulary mastery as it links each other to produce better comprehension while communication occurs. Based on the data analysis it can be concluded that the students at SMA Negeri 10 Fajar Harapan Banda Aceh has qualified ability in speaking since they master various vocabularies. The result also indicates that the students attained better achievement due to they are able to convey the ideas, thoughts and feelings well. However, it needs some more practices to maintain the ability they have to avoid misunderstanding and unconfident. This is pertinent to what Hybels and Weaver II (2001, p. 98) state that when you say a word, you are vocally represent something. Therefore, it can be underlined that vocabulary mastery has a significant correlation with speaking ability.

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