

Correlation between students' motivation and students' vocabulary mastery

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to find out whether or not there was a positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and students' motivation. It was quantitative research. The researcher employed 30 students of SMPN 22 Bandar Lampung as the sample. The instruments of this research were motivation questionnaire and vocabulary test. The collected data were analysed by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation in SPSS 24.0. The result showed that there is correlation between students' motivation and students' vocabulary mastery, with the score of the r table .640 this referring to medium correlation.

Keywords: *correlation, motivation, vocabulary mastery*

I. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Vocabulary is one of the language components and it is the most important component of language as a communication tool and also important because it is a basic part to understand the meaning of what people said and write. It is a primary component that should be mastered by the learners before they acquire language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Learning a language can start by learning its vocabulary first.

Gu and Johnson (1996) state that the importance of vocabulary learning strategies on foreign language learning. It has been suggested, that one way to accelerate the learning of a second or a foreign language is to teach learners how to learn more efficiently and effectively. This means that motivation is very important to stimulate learners to learn vocabulary learning strategies eagerly and plays an important role in supporting learners' learning.

According to Dornyei (1994), motivation is one of the main determinants of students of second or foreign language (L2) learning achievement. Motivation is an important factor in the learning process. In learning English, the students should have a high motivation to make the learning process easier. The success of learning depends on the level of students' motivation. It can drive learners in reaching learning goals. Therefore, motivation is the key to success in the learning-teaching process. Without motivation, the goal of learning is difficult to be reached.

By having motivation, students will be enthusiastic in the teaching-learning process so they will be pushed to study English well. Motivation is the extent to make choices about the goals to pursue and the effort will devote to that pursuit (Brown, 2001). In junior high school, students study vocabulary and grammar. In fact, they still find difficulties in enriching their vocabulary. They have very limited vocabulary so that they have difficulties communicating and practising using English.

Thus, it is important to find out the ways that will be useful to help the students improve their vocabulary mastery. Students with high motivation to learn English will be better prepared themselves to engage in the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. Teachers, parents, or observers will be easy to recognize students with high motivation and students with low motivation. Students with high motivation will prefer to read more books, ask many questions to teachers, do the exercises, expose themselves to the English language using, try to use their English skills to communicate with others, or happily engage in the process of teaching and learning English.

Meanwhile, students with low motivation usually have no strong will to engage in the process of teaching and learning English. They rarely ask questions even though they do not understand the subject. Students will have to be forced by teachers or parents to read the book, do the exercises, and or do the tasks from the teacher. Students with low motivation usually assume English subject as a difficult or even the most difficult subject to be learned.

Based on explanation above, it can be concluded that when the students have high motivation, they can increase their vocabulary and when the students have the low motivation, they can't increase their vocabulary. Besides, this research aimed to find the correlation between students' motivation and students' vocabulary mastery.

II. METHODS

This research applied quantitative method to analyze the result of the research. This method was used to find out the correlation between the students' motivation and students' vocabulary. The research took two classes as the experimental class through purposive sampling. The population of the research were the students of SMPN 22 Bandar Lampung in academic year 2020/2021. The total number of students for the third grade are 300 students. The instruments of this research were questionnaire of motivation and vocabulary test. In the questionnaire, there are four alternatives' answers (a, b, c, d). The researcher gave score 4 for choosing (A), 3 for choosing (B), 2 for choosing (C), and 1 for choosing (D).

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

To find out students' motivation, the data was collected by administering the questionnaire. The questionnaire (see Appendix 17) was about motivation and the questionnaire used Indonesian language. There are 30 items of questionnaire with four alternatives answers (a, b, c, d). The researcher gave score 4 for choosing (A), 3 for choosing (B), 2 for choosing (C), and 1 for choosing (D). The questionnaire given to the students had been translated into Indonesian in order to facilitate the students in understanding the questionnaire.

Table 1. Result of Students' Motivation Questionnaire

Level of category	Range of score	Total of the students
High	61-100	18 Students
Low	10 – 60	12 Students

From table 1, it can be seen that the student's response in answering questionnaire about the motivation that 18 students had high motivation and 12 students had low motivation for the maximal score is 92.5, the minimal score is 42.5, and the mean is 68.69. It can be said that more than 60% of the students had high of motivation. The findings showed that the students mostly had motivation in learning English.

In addition, the vocabulary test which was tested in the sample classes comprised of 30 items. This test required 40 minutes to be answered. There are 30 items of vocabulary test. The questions were about classification word classes or part of speech. In this research, the researcher used word class of vocabularies such as noun, verb, adjective and adverb. The vocabulary test was according to their grade and what they have in learning English.

Table 2. Result of Vocabulary Test

Level of category	Range of score	Total of the students
High	70-100	15 Students
Low	10 – 69	15 Students

Table 2 showed that the high score means the students were good at the test. The next is low its means students were weak on the test. In accordance with the analysis, it was revealed that half of the students had reached the required mastered of vocabulary. The result showed that the highest score was 90, the lowest score was 53.3, and the average was 69.3. It can be said that more than 50% of the students had high of vocabulary test.

Furthermore, in order to investigate whether there is any correlation between students' motivation and their vocabulary, both variables were analyzed by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation on SPSS version 24.

Table 3. The Value between Students' Motivation and their Vocabulary

Correlations			
		Motivation	Vocabulary
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.640**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	30	30
Vocabulary	Pearson Correlation	.640**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	30	30

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the result of calculation above, it was found that the coefficient correlation between students' motivation and their vocabulary was 0.640 at the significant level of 0.01. The coefficient correlation was higher than the critical value of r table ($0.640 > 0.449$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the research hypothesis was accepted.

The result of the data analysis above showed a positive correlation between students' motivation and their vocabulary. The positive correlation between motivation and their vocabulary mean that motivation can give the influence to vocabulary in order to be improved and strengthened.

Moreover, the correlation between students' motivation and vocabulary classifications showed that two of four factors of vocabulary did not have any positive correlation with the result of motivation. The result shows r value of Adverb is lower than r table $0.444 < 0.449$. Thus, there is no correlation between adverb with the result of motivation. Then, three other factors are positively correlated to students' motivation. The result shows r value more than higher than r table $0.515 > 0.449$ for Noun, $0.516 > 0.449$ for verb and for the adjective is $0.640 > 0.449$. The table results as follows:

Table 4. The Value between Noun and Students' Motivation

		Correlations	
		Motivation	Noun
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.515**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.019
	N	30	30
Noun	Pearson Correlation	.515**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.019	
	N	30	30

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5. The Value between Verb and Students' Motivation

		Correlations	
		Motivation	Verb
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.516**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	30	30
Verb	Pearson Correlation	.516**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	30	30

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.6. The Value between Adjective and Students' Motivation

		Correlations	
		Motivation	Adjective
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.640**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	30	30

Adjective	Pearson Correlation	.640**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	30	30

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The last three factors were positively correlated to students' motivation. It had 0.515, 0.516 and 0.640 r values for noun, verb and adjective factors respectively.

Table 7. The Value between Adverb and Students' Motivation

Correlations			
		Motivation	Adverb
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.444*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.014
	N	30	30
Adverb	Pearson Correlation	.444*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.014	
	N	30	30

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Discussions

Noun, verb and adjective were positively correlated to students' motivation, but not adverb. In line with result of the research conducted by (Goldfield, 2000 and De Bleser & Kauschke, 2003), nouns, verb and adjective tend to be acquired earlier than Adverb and accessed more easily. Thus, it can be said that most of the students had high grades because of their background knowledge.

Based on the whole of the result it was found that there was a positive correlation between students' motivation and their vocabulary. 18 students have a high score and 12 students who have a low score on motivation questionnaire. Besides, in the vocabulary test, 15 students get high score and 15 students get low score. In relation to the result above, it was clear that motivation correlated significantly with students' vocabulary. By looking at the result, the researcher concluded that motivation influenced the students' vocabulary, students who high motivation tended to have good vocabulary test. This is in line with the research conducted by Sadhegi (2013) who states that "The higher the students' level of motivation, the higher level of vocabulary knowledge". He also says most of the Iranian students who participated in the study had very high motivation towards learning English vocabulary.

Therefore, motivation is an important factor in the teaching-learning process. In learning English, the students should have high motivation to make the learning process easier. The success of learning depends on the level of students' motivation. According to Maulea & Ana & Jose (2011), motivation should be seen as a very important factor in the learning process. The motivated student has the inner strength to learn, to discover and capitalize on capabilities, to improve academic performance and to

adapt demands of the school context. With high motivation, the students were enthusiast in the teaching-learning process so they will be pushed to study English well.

However, some students have very low motivation. Students with low motivation usually have no strong to engage in the process of teaching and learning English. They rarely ask questions even though they do not understand the subject. Gokce (2013) states that students with low motivation hesitated to get involved in the class. When the teacher asks a question, they were not much eager to answer. Hence, students with low motivation have complicated in learning process.

Since the correlation between the students' motivation and their vocabulary was proved positively correlated, English teachers should be able to motivate learners so that they are eager to learn English. Teaching a class full of motivated students is enjoyable for teachers and students as well because students with high motivation can have self-esteem and effort to develop their ability in teaching-learning process. Some students are self-motivated, with a natural love of learning but students do not have this natural drive, a great teacher should make learning fun and inspire them to reach their full attention. Also, teachers should help their learners create motivation in the areas where they do not expect it and find their own motivational process so that they can take advantage of it.

The results of the current study can also assist language teachers to improve their teaching methods. From the explanation above, the researcher concluded that motivation is a key factor for explaining the success in teaching and learning vocabulary.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Based on the result of data analysis and discussions which have been elaborated to answer the research question, the researcher draws conclusion that there is a medium Correlation between the students' motivation and their vocabulary. It can be seen from the coefficient correlation which was higher than the critical value of t-table ($0.640 > 0.449$). It can be concluded that motivation is one of the factors that can influence students' vocabulary, so that the students who have motivation will have good vocabulary.

Suggestions

Based on her experience, the researcher proposes some suggestions. First, the researcher suggests to the English teachers to explore more information and knowledge about the importance of motivation, to make more an effective learning experience and enjoyment among the students. Because learning English nowadays turns to be easier. So, teacher should have new creative ways to make students more interested in English, especially in learning new vocabulary, for example: scrabble or word pairs to make the students more active in teaching learning activities. Second, this research focused on the students' vocabulary mastery in learning English. Therefore, it is suggested for further research to focus on the students' motivation in vocabulary. So, the researcher will know the students' motivation in learning vocabulary deeply.

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