The Relation between Reading Habit and Vocabulary Size of Seventh Semester English Department Students of Mulawarman University

Rizal Nor Wahit[1], Maria Theodora Ping[2], Bibit Suhatmady[3]
Universitas Mulawarman
[1]rizalnorwahit@gmail.com, [2]maria.t.ping@gmail.com, [3]bibitsuhatmady@fkip.unmul.ac.id

Abstract

The purposes of the study were: (1) To find out seventh semester English Department students' reading habit. (2) To find out seventh semester English Department students' vocabulary size. (3) To find out the relationship between students' reading habit and vocabulary size. The design of this study was correlational research design using quantitative approach. The population of this study was the seventh semester English Department students of Mulawarman University in the Academic Year 2018/2019 with the total sample of 50 students. The instruments used for the study were Reading Habit Questionnaire and Vocabulary Size Test. The time for collecting the data was different for each instrument in order to avoid errors or undesired results. Then, the researcher correlated the data using Pearson Product Moment Correlation formula in SPSS. This study showed three findings. First, it was found that the mean score of the reading habit questionnaire was 49.7, meaning that the students' reading habit was classified as moderate. Second, it was found that the mean score of the vocabulary size test was 7968, meaning that the students' vocabulary size fell in the category of Mid-Frequency level. Third, after analyzing the data using Pearson Product Moment formula, the researcher found that reading habit and vocabulary size had a positive, yet "very low" correlation (with rcomputed = 0.188). Having positive "very low" correlation means that both the variables had the tendency of getting similar results, but then the tendency was weak. In other words, this means that students who got high score in their reading habit did not automatically get high score in the vocabulary size test, and vice versa. However, there might be some factors affecting the findings of the study. Therefore, further investigation on which other factors might affect reading habit and its relation with vocabulary size should be done in the future.

Keywords: Relationship, Reading Habit, Vocabulary Size

1. Introduction

Building reading habit has always been an issue in many countries around the world, including Indonesia. In order to build a person's interest towards reading, a person needs to realize how important reading is in terms of gaining general and specific knowledge. Unexpectedly, Indonesia's reading interest was ranked as second-last, sitting in the 60th position out 61 countries around the world for its literate behavior characteristics (The Jakarta Post, 2016).

Frijuniarsi & Marlianingsih (2016) explained that through reading, language learners will acquire more knowledge to comprehend various kinds of themes and also gain benefits of vocabulary mastery towards listening skills. In Indonesia, both building reading habit and learning foreign language words seem to be an issue. This claim is supported by Kirkpatrick in Sudarman and Chinokul (2018) when he stated even though English has been taught for more than six years, Indonesian students' English proficiency remains very low.

One of the major factors influencing a person's language proficiency is the number of vocabularies he has in his brains. Vocabulary size thus is considered as one of the most crucial factors in term of mastering a foreign language. To be able to communicate well, a person should have sufficient number of vocabularies. Nation (2006) explained that in order to be able to read novels written for teenagers, to watch movies, and to take part in casual conversation, language learners need to know approximately 6000 words families. As for reading newspapers, novels, and academic texts, around 8000 to 9000 words are needed.

2. Literature Review

Based on the statements above, there seems to be a connection between reading habit and vocabulary size. Indeed, the probability of getting a positive correlation is high because of these two potential variables. However, it is just a theory since there are negative correlations found in many research, such as the research conducted by Silvianti (2016) entitled "The Correlation between Reading Attitude and Reading Comprehension of Fifth Semester Students of English Department Mulawarman University in Academic Year 2015/2016" and the research conducted by Ping, Syamdianita, & Asanti (2017) entitled "Extensive Reading Activities, Students' Reading Attitudes and Vocabulary Size: A Case Study at Mulawarman University English Department". Therefore, this current study was aimed to get more understanding about the relationship between reading habit and vocabulary size.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
1. How was the reading habit of the seventh semester English Department students?
2. How was the seventh semester English Department students' vocabulary size?
3. Was there any relationship between students' reading habits and students' vocabulary size?

This research was conducted to figure out the relationship between reading habit and vocabulary size of the seventh semester English Department students in Mulawarman University. Therefore in this research, correlational design was used in order to find out the correlation between the two variables. Walliman (2011) explained that in order to examine a relationship between two concepts or variables, correlational design is used.

3. Methods

The population of this research was the seventh semester English Department students of Mulawarman University with the total population of 137 students. The reason of choosing them was because they have taken reading classes from the first until the forth semester, and extensive reading in the fifth semester. Thus, it was assumed that their reading habit has been built.

In this study, the researcher used random sampling. According to Balnaves and Caputi (2001) each individual in the sampling frame will have the same opportunity of being selected as the sample, this sampling is called simple random sampling.

The researcher used two different instruments to collect the data in this study. The first instrument was a reading habits questionnaire and the second instrument was an online vocabulary size test. The reading habit questionnaire was used to collect data of the students' reading habit level, which consists of 20 items in 4 Likert scale. Then, the online version of Vocabulary Size Test by Nation & Beglar (2007) was used to collect data of the students'

vocabulary size. This test consists of 140 multiple-choice items, with 10 items from each 1000 word family. The total score of this test is 14.000 at the highest

After the two data sets had been collected, to see the relationship between students' reading habit and their vocabulary size, Pearson Product Moment Formula was used. However, since the questionnaire and the test had different scoring system, the researcher needed to convert both scores into Z score first before calculating it.

4. Result and Discussion

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between the seventh semester English department students' reading habit and their vocabulary size. Based on the students' performance in the reading habit questionnaire and the Vocabulary Size Test, the results of the analysis aiming to answer the research questions can be summarized into three points.

First, the findings of the students' reading habit showed from all the students' reading habit results, the researcher found that the minimum score was 31 and the maximum score was 69. The mean score was 49.7, which fell in the category of "Moderate" reading habit. The Standard Deviation was 7.957. There are 3 categories to determine the students' reading habit with interval score of 20.

There were 6 students (12%) who scored in interval 20-40 (Poor); 39 students (78%) who scored in interval 41-60 (Moderate); and 5 students (10%) who scored in interval 61-80 (Good). With that being said, it can be concluded that the percentage of students whose reading habit was categorized as "Moderate" was also the most dominant of all, with 39 out of 50 students.

Second, the findings of students' vocabulary size showed from all the students' VST scores, the researcher found that the minimum score was 2900 and the maximum score was 11300. The mean score was 7968, which fell in the "Mid-Frequency level". The Standard Deviation was 1674.105. According to Nation & Beglar (2007), there are three main frequency levels in the vocabulary size score, they are:

Three Main Frequency Levels in the Vocabulary Size Score

Level	1000 word family lists
High – Frequency	1000-2000
Mid – Frequency	3000-9000
Low – Frequency	10.000 on

The frequency levels above have slightly different interpretation from their literal meaning. When a person scores in "High- Frequency" level, this does not mean that the person scores high in the Vocabulary Size Test. In fact, it means the person only knows High-Frequency words – in other words, those words that are commonly used in everyday conversation. On the other hand, when a person scores in "Low-Frequency" level, it means the person scores high in the Vocabulary Size Test and knows those Low-Frequency words – in other words, those academic words, in which not all people know.

Based on the calculation above, the mean score fell in the Mid-Frequency level. To interpret the score in terms of language use, the Mid-Frequency level has several coverages, such as: to be able to watch children's movies, around 6000 word families are needed; to be able to deal with unsimplified spoken English, around 7000 word families are needed; to read unsimplified written texts like newspaper, around 8000 word families are needed, and as for novels, around 9000 word families are needed.

There were 1 student (2%) who scored in High–frequency level; 45 students (90%) who scored in Mid-frequency level; and 4 students (8%) who scored in Low-frequency level. With that being said, it can be concluded that the percentage of students whose vocabulary size score was categorized as "Mid-Frequency level" was also the most dominant of all, with 45 out of 50 students.

Third, the result of the correlational analysis between the two variables showed:

The Relationship between Seventh Semester English Department Students' Reading Habit and Vocabulary Size

Correlations

		ZReadingHabit	ZVocabularySize
ZReadingHabit	Pearson Correlation	1	.188
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.191
	N	50	50
ZVocabularySize	Pearson Correlation	.188	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.191	
	N	50	50

From the table above, we can see that correlational analysis was used to examine the relationship between the students' reading habit and their vocabulary size. Result indicated a positive, yet very low correlation between the students' reading habit and their vocabulary size, $r(50) = +.18$, $p = 0.2$, two-tailed. In general, this suggests that both the variables had the tendency of getting similar results, but then the tendency was weak. In other words, this means that students who got high score in their reading habit did not automatically get high score in the vocabulary size test, and vice versa.

5. Conclusion

Based on the purposes of the study, the conclusions of this study are as follows: From the results of the reading habit questionnaire, the mean score was 49.7, which categorized as "Moderate". There were that 6 students (12%) who scored in "low" category, 39 students (78%) who scored in "moderate" category, and 5 students (10%) who scored in "high" category. The minimum score of students' reading habit was 31 and the maximum score was 69. Most students scored in the interval of 41-60, which falls in "moderate" category. From the results of the online Vocabulary Size Test, the mean score was 7968, which categorized as "Mid-Frequency Level". There were 1 student (2%) who scored in "high-frequency" level, 45 students (90%) who scored in "mid-frequency" level, and 4 students (8%) who scored in "low-frequency" level. The minimum score of students' vocabulary size was 2900 and the maximum score was 11300. Most students scored in the interval of 3000-9000 word families, which falls in the "mid-frequency" level.

There was a positive, yet very low correlation between students' reading habit and vocabulary size with N=50, the score r-computed was 0.188. Therefore, it could be concluded that H_a was accepted while H_o was rejected.

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