A STUDY ON THE MASTERY OF SYNONYMOUS WORDS
AMONG THE FIFTH SEMESTER STUDENTS
OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM
IN SANATA DHARMA UNIVERSITY

A THESIS

Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
to Obtain the Sarjana Pendidikan Degree
in English Language Education

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FACULTY OF TEACHERS TRAINING AND EDUCATION
SANATA DHARMA UNIVERSITY
YOGYAKARTA
2008
A Thesis On

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I honestly declare that the thesis which I wrote, does not contain the works or parts of the works of other people, except those cited in the quotations and references, as a scientific paper should.

Yogyakarta, 10 April 2008

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031214005
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

How thankful and grateful I am that I can finally finish my thesis. I will never be able to finish it without love, encouragement, help, inspiration, motivation, etc. by the people in my life. Therefore, in this opportunity, I would like to express my sincere thanks to those people.

I am deeply indebted to the people who directly give contribution to my thesis. I would like to thank my one and only sponsor, Drs. Pius Nurwidasa, M.Ed. for his help, guidance, and ideas during the fulfillment of this thesis. Without him, I will never be able to solve my thesis problems. I would like to thank Made Frida Yulia, S.Pd., M.Pd. who gave me lots of inspiration and help during Thesis Writing. Finally, I would like to acknowledge my debt to Henny Herawati, S.Pd., M.Hum., and the fifth semester students for their huge help during my research.

My deepest gratitude goes to my family for their supports. I would like to acknowledge my debt to my father, Pdt. Em. Paulus Sardjono, S.Th., a very patient and wise father who introduced me to English language for the first time and supports me a lot during my study by giving me a lot of dictionaries and many English books, and for always motivates me. I am deeply indebted to my mother, Dra. Lydia Christianie Sardjono, who always “kicked” me and encouraged me when I was lazy in doing my thesis. I would also like to thank my older sister, Anastasia Widiasih Sarjono, S.T., for her prayer, suggestions, and help when I had problems.
I would also say thank you to all my friends in English Language Education Study Program for the great moments that we have spent for many years. My sincere thanks go to Yuanita D.I, Natalia Niken, Arum Jatiningsih, Agatha Nila Sukma, Martuti Dewi, and all my friends that I cannot mention one by one.

Above all, my greatest thanks go to my dearest Lord, Jesus Christ who always gives me strength when I was weak. The greatest thing He does for me is filling my life with so many good people who love me and to whom I love.

Mathilda Fitria Ayuningtyas Sarjono
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ABSTRACT

Mathilda Fitria Ayuningtyas Sarjono (2003). A Study on the mastery of synonymous words among the fifth semester students of English Language Education Study Program in Sanata Dharma University. Yogyakarta: Department of Language and Arts Education, Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Sanata Dharma University.

The research studies about synonymous words. It measures the students’ ability to differentiate some words with similar meaning to be used in certain context. The research also studies the learning strategies employed by the students in mastering synonymous words. The subject of the research is the fifth semester students of English Language Education Study Program in Sanata Dharma University.

The aim of the research is to give information about the mastery of synonymous words among the fifth semester students of English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University. This information can be used as a consideration for teachers in setting a plan to teach synonymous words and to encourage the students to learn more about synonymous words. The research is also aimed to describe the learning strategies employed by the students to master synonymous words in order to find out a better learning strategy for the students.

There are two problems formulated in the study. The first problem formulation is what the mastery level of synonymous words among the students of English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University is. The second problem formulation is what strategies employed by the students in using dictionary to deal with synonymous words. The writer used survey as the method to answer the problems. In order to answer the first problem, the writer used test to measure the students’ mastery level of synonymous words. To answer the second problem, the writer made a questionnaire to be filled by the students after they had done their test. The test and the questionnaire were distributed three times in three different classes. The first one was in July 18, 2007. The second one was in September 3, 2007. The last one was in September 6, 2007.

From the result of the test, the average score of the students is 66.03125. Based on the academic regulation used in English Language Study Program of Sanata Dharma University, the students’ mastery of synonymous words is considered as Sufficient. From the result of the questionnaire, most of the students did not learn how to use synonymous words in context. However, they used the dictionary when they had to choose a word among synonymous words to be used in certain context. Unfortunately, they did not use an appropriate dictionary to be used for mastering synonymous words. They also did not use it appropriately.

Based on the results, the writer concluded that mastering synonymous words is very needed in vocabulary development. It can be supported by using appropriate dictionary in appropriate way.
ABSTRAK


Penelitian ini mempelajari mengenai kata bersinonim dan dimaksudkan untuk mengukur kemampuan mahasiswa membedakan beberapa kata yang memiliki arti yang sama namun digunakan dalam konteks yang berbeda. Penelitian ini juga mempelajari strategi pembelajaran yang diterapkan oleh mahasiswa untuk menguasai sinonim. Subyek penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa semester lima yang mengikuti perkuliahan di Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Sanata Dharma.

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk memberi informasi mengenai kemampuan mahasiswa semester lima Program Studi Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Sanata Dharma dalam menguasai kata-kata bersinonim. Informasi ini dapat digunakan oleh guru-guru sebagai acuan dalam membuat perencanaan untuk memberikan pengajaran sinonim dan juga dapat digunakan untuk mendorong para siswa agar mempelajari sinonim secara lebih mendalam. Penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan strategi pembelajaran yang diterapkan oleh mahasiswa dalam mempelajari kata-kata bersinonim untuk menemukan strategi pembelajaran yang lebih baik.


Berdasarkan hasil-hasil tersebut, penulis berkesimpulan bahwa menguasai kata-kata bersinonim sangatlah penting dalam pengembangan kosa kata. Hal tersebut dapat didukung dengan penggunaan dan pemilihan kamus yang tepat.
LEMBAR PERNYATAAN PERSETUJUAN
PUBLIKASI KARYA ILMIAH UNTUK KEPENTINGAN AKADEMIS

Yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini, saya mahasiswa Universitas Sanata Dharma:

Nama : Mathilda Fitria Ayuningtyas Sarjono
Nomor Mahasiswa : 031214005

Demi pengembangan ilmu pengetahuan, saya memberikan kepada Perpustakaan Universitas Sanata Dharma karya ilmiah saya yang berjudul:

“A STUDY ON THE MASTERY OF SYNONYMOUS WORDS AMONG THE FIFTH SEMESTER STUDENTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM IN SANATA DHARMA UNIVERSITY”

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Dibuat di Yogyakarta

Pada tanggal : 12 Mei 2008

Yang Menyatakan

Mathilda Fitria Ayuningtyas Sarjono
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, problem formulation, problem limitation, objectives of the study, benefits of the study, and definition of terms.

A. Background of the Study

Learning English cannot be separated from vocabulary learning. It is to be done by the learners in order to have good mastery of vocabulary. By having good vocabulary, learners are able to develop their language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). For example, in speaking, if the learners do not have the knowledge of vocabulary, they will not be able to express what they want to say. Another example is they will find difficulty to comprehend an English passage or text when they read it.

Considering the importance of vocabulary development in English language learning, English language learners and teachers need to know about the knowledge of word in order to know what is needed to have a good mastery of vocabulary. There are some components of word knowledge (Nation, 1990: 31). One of the components is about meaning. To have receptive and productive knowledge of words, learners need to know not only the meaning of the word, but also how it relates to the meaning of other words. In other word, learners need to know about meaning relationship. One of the study about meaning relationship is synonym. Synonym is the study about some words that have similar meanings.
Even though synonymous words have similar meaning, sometimes they are not interchangeable. Therefore, it is important to learn synonymous words. Moreover, to have an active vocabulary, learners need to know how the word relates to other words with similar meaning, and which other words it can be used with and in which context (Jordan, 1997: 154). When learners have a good mastery of synonyms, they know how to distinguish synonymous word and use the words appropriately in a certain context. By having good mastery of synonyms, learners are able to make critical and correct vocabulary choices whenever they speak or write. They are able to express their idea accurately.

After knowing the importance of learning synonymous words, we need to know the strategy in learning synonymous words. One of the good strategies in vocabulary learning is dictionary use. Dictionaries can give information about word meaning (Dale and O’Rourke, 1971: 277). Moreover, some dictionaries provide the explanation about some synonymous words and in which context the words are used. By consulting the dictionaries, the students will be able to choose an appropriate word for a certain context. Therefore, dictionary use is considered as a good strategy in learning synonymous words. It will help the students in doing their individual learning.

In conclusion, it is important for English teachers and learners to know the mastery of synonymous words. For English teachers, they need to know their students’ mastery of synonymous words in order to know their students’ knowledge of word meaning. It is also important for them especially when they are planning a vocabulary lesson for the students. It can be used as a consideration in developing the students’ vocabulary mastery. For English learners, it is
important to know their mastery of synonymous words because it can make them aware of the importance of learning synonymous words to develop their vocabulary and encourage them to learn more about synonymous words. It is also important for English teachers to know the learning strategies employed by the students in order to make a better learning strategy for their students to learn synonymous words.

B. Problem Formulation

Considering the importance of learning synonymous words, there are two problems that need to be answered:
1. What is the mastery level of synonymous words among the fifth semester students of English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University?
2. What strategies employed by the students in using dictionary to deal with synonymous words?

C. Problem Limitation

In the research, the writer tries to find out the mastery of synonymous words among the students of English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University, and their learning strategies. The writer focuses on some synonymous words, the words that have similar meanings but used in different context. The writer also focuses on the dictionary use as one of the strategies to master synonymous words. The research is held in Sanata Dharma University, with the fifth semester students of English Language Education Study Program as the subject of the research.
D. Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem formulation that has been mentioned above, the objectives of the study are as follow:

1. To give information about the mastery level of synonymous words among the fifth semester students of English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University that can be used as a consideration for teachers in setting a plan to teach synonymous words and to make the students more aware of selecting a word among synonymous words.

2. To describe the strategies employed by the students in using dictionary to deal with synonymous words in order to find out a better learning strategy for the students.

E. Benefits of the Study

From the study, it is hoped that the students will be more aware of selecting a word among synonymous words to be used in a certain context in order to express their idea accurately. It is also hoped that the study will encourage them to have the habit of consulting the dictionary.

For English teachers, the study will give more insight to them about the importance of teaching synonymous words to develop the students’ vocabulary. To know how much the students need to learn synonymous words, first, teachers must know the students’ mastery of synonymous words. After the teachers know the students’ mastery, they can set the plan to teach synonymous words based on the students’ mastery level. The study also gives the consideration about the strategy to teach synonymous words.
F. Definition of Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, it is important to define some terms that are used in the research. Below are the definitions of the terms:

1. Vocabulary

“Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write” (Richard and Renandya, 2002: 255). According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2005), vocabulary is all the words that a person knows or uses. In the study, vocabulary means all the words that learners know or use and provide much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write.

2. Learning Strategy

According to Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, learning is “knowledge gained through reading and study” (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2006: 916). Strategy is “a planned series of actions for achieving something” (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2006: 1640). In the study, learning strategy is a series of actions to gain knowledge.

3. English Language Education Study Program

English Language Education Study Program is one of the study programs in Sanata Dharma University Yogyakarta.

4. Mastery

According to The Merriam-Webster Dictionary mastery is “possession or display of great skill or knowledge” (The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 1970:}
In the study, mastery refers to the students’ knowledge of synonymous words. The mastery reaches the level of knowing some words which have similar meaning but are used in different context. In other words, the students have good mastery if they can select between two synonymous words to be used in a certain context appropriately.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the writer discusses about some theories which are relevant to the study. There are two parts in this chapter, theoretical description and theoretical framework.

A. Theoretical Description

Learning synonymous words is very important in vocabulary development. Before we discuss about the importance of learning synonymous words for vocabulary development, we need to know the nature of vocabulary learning. First, we need to know the definition of word and the kinds of word that is discussed in vocabulary learning. Then, we need to know what is involved to have the knowledge of word.

1. The Nature of Vocabulary Learning

a. What is a word?

When we are talking about vocabulary, we are talking about words. If we want to discuss more about words, we need to know the definition of word. There is a clear definition about word that is clearly stated by Akmajian, Demers, and Harnish. The definition is as follows:

A word is an arbitrary pairing of sound and meaning. The pairing of sound and meaning is arbitrary because there is no necessary reason why the particular combination of sounds represented by a word should mean what it does and nothing in the sound dictates what the meaning should be (1984: 57).
A distinction is sometimes made between *content words* (*open classes*) and *function words* (*closed classes*) when discussing about word (Akmajian, et al., 1984: 65). Examples of content words are brother, run, tall, quickly, and many more nouns, ‘full’ verbs, adjectives, and adverbs that can be said to have meaning as independent words. Function words, in contrast, cannot be easily defined as isolated words, but rather to indicate some grammatical function in a phrase or sentence. Examples of function words include conjunctions (*and, or*), articles and demonstratives (*the, a, this, that, etc.*), and prepositions (*to, from, at, with, etc.*). Function words, as the grammatical unit of words, are more likely to be discussed in grammar. While content words are more likely to be discussed in vocabulary (Read, 2000: 18). Therefore, in vocabulary learning, we discuss about content words only.

b. What is involved in knowing a word?

Learning vocabulary means having the knowledge of word. Therefore, we need to know what is involved in knowing a word. There are two types of word knowledge. They are receptive knowledge and productive knowledge. Receptive knowledge is the knowledge of words that is used in listening and reading, whereas productive knowledge is the knowledge of words that is used in writing and speaking. If the word is to be learned for receptive and productive use (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), there are some criteria to be consider to “know” a word. Nation (1990:31) classifies the distinction of receptive knowledge and productive knowledge in the form of table. Let us look at table 2.1. Each section is divided into two parts, one dealing with receptive knowledge (R), and the other is dealing with productive knowledge (P).
Table 2.1 Components of Word Knowledge (Nation, 1990: 31)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Associations</td>
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Table 2.1 specifies the learner’s task in knowing a word. As it is seen in the table above, one of the components of the word knowledge is about the frequency of word. Nation (1990: 38) states that overusing low-frequency words has a comical effect. If time is given to words according to their usefulness in English, then this effect can be avoided. It doesn’t mean that it is not important to learn low-frequency words, but except for special needs, low-frequency words must be learned after knowing high-frequency words. We can know which words are high-
frequently used from the list of high-frequency words. But we must be very careful in selecting the list because not all high-frequency words list is useful. Some of them do not give enough information. According to Nation (1990: 22), the most famous and most useful list of high-frequency words is West’s General Service List of English Words (1953). The list is old because the headwords in the list have not changed since 1936, but it has still not been replaced as a source of useful information about particular words and as a collection of the most important vocabulary for a learner of English (Nation, 1990: 22). The list contains 2000 headwords. In the entry, the parts of speech are distinguished. For example, the word “own” as an adjective and “own” as a verb. The various meanings are also distinguished, and each meaning is accompanied by examples.

Another component of word knowledge is about meanings. Having the knowledge of word meanings is important for both receptive and productive knowledge. Nation states that knowing a word for receptive use involves:

…being able to recall its meaning of the word when we meet it. It also includes being able to see which shade of meaning is most suitable for the context that is occurs in. In addition, knowing the meaning of a word may include being able to make various associations with other related words (1990: 32).

Moreover, Nation also states that for productive use, knowing a word involves using the word to stand for the meaning it represents and being able to think of suitable substitutes for the word if there are any (Nation, 1990: 32). Those two facts proof that knowing word meanings is important. It includes the knowledge of meaning relationship. Therefore, we need to learn about meaning relationship. One of the study about meaning relationship is the study of synonym. It studies
the meaning relationship of words that have similar meaning. In the next part, we will discuss more about synonym and the contribution of learning synonymous words in vocabulary development.

2. Synonym

When we are talking about synonymous words in vocabulary development, it is good for us to know more about synonyms. We will never really understand the importance of learning synonymous words in vocabulary development if we do not know about synonyms. First, we need to know what synonym is. Second, we need to know the degrees of synonymy in order to understand more the reason why learning synonymous words is important. Third, we also need to know how to distinguish synonymous words. In this part, we will understand that learning to distinguish synonymous words is also important.

a. What is synonym?

Words do not exist in isolation. Their meanings are defined through the sense relations they have with other words (Carter, 1998: 19). And not only do words and sentences have meaning, but the meanings are related to those of other words and sentences (Kempson, 1977: 3). For example: John murdered Mary, John killed Mary, Mary died. Those sentences are related in meaning. In this connection, the problem of synonymy arises. One of the relations between words and sentences is synonymy. Although synonymous words have the same meaning, not all of them are interchangeable. The definition of a synonym is clearly stated by Dees:
A synonym is a word that shares the same or very nearly the same essential meaning (denotation) with another word. Even when synonymous, all words vary in their individual implications, suggested meanings (connotations), and usage. For this reason, no two synonyms really ever have exactly the same meaning. Effective speakers and writers distinguish between synonyms and make accurate choices among them (Dees, 2003: 2).

Moreover, Dees (2003: 3) also states that words may be synonymous in certain ways, but each word will also have other meanings, nuances, or uses that it does not share with its synonymous partner. We can see the examples of synonymous words in table 2.2. The definitions are taken from Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (1995).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Word 1</th>
<th>Word 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>arrange</td>
<td>organize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. You arrange things into a particular sequence or a pleasing order.</td>
<td>a. You organize things into a system so that you can use them easily.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. When you arrange an event such as a meeting or a party, you invite people and agree a time and place.</td>
<td>b. You organize an event by preparing and providing everything that people will need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>salary</td>
<td>wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional people and people who work in offices receive a salary every year. It is paid monthly, usually directly into a bank account.</td>
<td>Wages are paid weekly (sometimes daily) and usually in cash. They are based on an hourly, daily, or weekly rate or on a certain amount of work done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>instrument</td>
<td>tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An instrument is a tool designed for a technical task, especially one that requires a lot of skill. It may be small and quite delicate, eg a surgeon’s knife, or have some moving parts and have a scientific</td>
<td>A tool is an object with a simple design that you hold and use to do a particular job, eg a hammer or drill.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. **mistake**  
   *Mistake* is the most general and used in most situations.

5. **track**  
   *A track* is a rough path in the country that has been formed by people, animals, or vehicles constantly using it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>fault</strong></th>
<th><strong>path</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Fault</em> emphasizes a person’s responsibility for a mistake and can also be an imperfection in a person or thing.</td>
<td><em>A path</em> is a narrow way marked out for people to walk along, between houses in a town, or across fields, besides rivers, etc in the country.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**b. Degrees of synonyms**

Within the class of synonyms, sometimes some pairs of items are “more synonymous” than others. Therefore, we need to distinguish the three degrees of synonyms. Cruse (2000: 157) states three degrees of synonyms:

1) **Absolute synonyms**

   Absolute synonyms can be defined as items which are equinormal in all contexts (Cruse, 2000: 157). Words can be absolute synonyms (have identical meanings) if and only if all their contextual relations were identical. It means that if two words X and Y are recognized as absolute synonyms, in any context in which X is fully normal, Y is, too. If X is slightly odd, Y is also slightly odd, and in any context in which X is totally anomalous, the same is true of Y. Cruse (2000: 157) illustrates the difficulty of finding uncontroversial pairs of absolute synonyms (‘+’ indicates “relatively more normal” and ‘−’ indicates “relatively less normal”):
(i) **brave: courageous**

Little Billy was so brave at the dentist’s this morning. (+)

Little Billy was so courageous at the dentist’s this morning. (-)

(ii) **calm: placid**

She was quite calm just a few minutes ago. (+)

She was quite placid just a few minutes ago. (-)

(iii) **big: large**

He’s a big baby, isn’t he? (+)

He’s a large baby, isn’t he? (-)

Since partial absolute synonyms are perfectly possible, only contexts in which both items are syntactically normal should be used (as far as this can be determined). For example, the difference between (i) and (ii) should not be taken as evidence for the non-synonyms of *hide* and *conceal*:

(i) Where is he hiding? (normal)

(ii) Where is he concealing? (odd)

The fact that *hide* and *conceal* are not absolute synonyms can be demonstrated using only contexts where each is equal:

(i) Johnny, where have you hidden Daddy’s slippers? (+)

(ii) Johnny, where have you concealed Daddy’s slippers? (-)

From the explanations and examples above, now it is clear once we know about absolute synonyms. If they exist at all, they are extremely uncommon. It means that we will rarely find absolute synonyms.
2) Propositional synonyms

Propositional synonyms can be defined in terms of entailments. If two words are propositional synonyms, they can be substituted in any expression with truth-conditional properties, without effect on those properties (Cruse, 2000: 158). Moreover, Cruse (2000: 158) states that differences in the meanings of propositional synonyms, by definition, necessarily involve one or more aspects of non-propositional meaning, the most important being:

(i) differences in expressive meaning,
(ii) differences of stylistic level (on the colloquial-formal dimension),

and

(iii) differences of presupposed field of discourse.

For example, the words shin and fibula. The difference of those words is in the field of discourse. Shin is the everyday term, with no special expressive or stylistic loading, whereas fibula is used by medical specialists acting in that role.

Another example is violin: fiddle. In this case, the difference depends on certain characteristics of the speaker. If the speaker is an ‘outsider’ to violinistic culture, fiddle is more colloquial, and possibly also jocular compared with violin.

However, if the speaker is a professional violinist talking to another professional violinist, fiddle is the neutral term, with no jocularity, disrespect, or colloquiality, whereas violin is used mainly to outsider.

3) Near-synonyms

Synonyms do not function primarily to contrast with one another. In certain context, of course, they may contrast, and this is especially true of near-synonyms:
He was killed, but I can assure you he was NOT murdered, madam (Cruse, 2000: 159). Cruse also states that to characterize the sorts of differences which do not destroy synonyms is not easy. It may be said that permissible differences between near synonyms must be either minor, or backgrounded, or both. Among ‘minor’ differences may be counted the following:

(i) adjacent position on scale of ‘degree’: fog:mist, laugh:chuckle, big:huge, weep:sob, etc.;
(ii) certain adverbial specializations of verbs: amble:stroll, chuckle:giggle, drink:quaff;
(iii) aspectual distinction: calm:placid (state vs. disposition);
(iv) difference of prototype centre: brave (prototypically physical): courageous (prototypically involves intellectual and moral factors).

c. How can we distinguish synonymous words?

After we know the three degrees of synonyms, we know the fact that synonymous words cannot be used interchangeably in all contexts. Since synonyms are not instantly interchangeable words, whenever we want to substitute one word for another, we have to decide whether the word that we are considering as a substitute carries the meaning that we require. According to Burton (1982: 110), there are some considerations involving the choice of substituting words:

- Words arouse and convey feelings as well as ideas. For example, although slay ‘means’ kill (and kill ‘means’ slay) no competent writer would substitute ‘slain’ for ‘killed’ in this newspaper headline: ‘Fifteen Killed on County’s Roads in Bank Holiday Black Week.’
• Very rarely do two words mean exactly the same thing, though they may mean something very similar. For example, although start and begin can ‘mean the same’ you would choose ‘started’ rather than ‘began’ to fill the gap in this sentence: ‘The mayor – the 3.30 race at Sandwood, run over two and a half miles for the newly presented Borough Trophy.’

• Words must be appropriate to the context in which they are used. For example, although buy ‘means’ purchase and live ‘means’ reside, you cannot just shuffle them around and slot one in instead of the other. There are contexts in which ‘purchase’ and ‘reside’ would be the wrong choices. They are not simple alternatives for ‘buy’ and ‘live’.

• Words have sounds – even written or printed words are ‘heard’ by a reader. The sound of the words you are using is an important consideration. For example, the sentence: ‘The general generally expects his subordinates to report their major decisions to him in writing.’ (It is not appropriate to substitute ‘generally’ for ‘usually’, and in that context, ‘chief’ is better than ‘major’.)

Another consideration to distinguish synonymous words is the denotative and connotative differences among them. Denotation is the explicit, direct meaning of a word (Dees, 2003: 4). When words denote, they point out or refer to very nearly the same objects of qualities. For example, the synonymous words cat and kitten can both denote a four legged, carnivorous mammal belonging to the family Felidae (Dees, 2003: 4). Differ to the denotation, the connotation of a word is the circle of ideas and feeling surrounding that word and the emotions that the word evokes. The denotative meaning of a word is often stretched to the
connotative meaning. For example, *dense*, meaning thick, may be extended connotatively to mean *dense*, thick-headed (Dale and O’Rourke, 1971: 53). An example of the difference between denotation and connotation can be seen in synonymous words of *cheap* and *inexpensive*. Both words have the denotative meaning of relatively low in price or cost. But they have different connotative meaning. The word *cheap* can be used to suggest that we consider it shoddy or inferior. Whereas the word *inexpensive* can be used to suggest that we consider it a good bargain, valuable in spite of its low price.

3. **Synonyms in Vocabulary Development**

   From all the discussions above, we know about word, the knowledge of word, the fact that learning synonymous words is one of the ways to have the knowledge of words, and the explanation about synonymous word. In this part, we will discuss about how learning synonymous words gives contribution to vocabulary development.

   As it is stated above that one of the components of word knowledge is about meanings. The students should know the meanings of words and how it relates to the meanings of other words. The students need to learn about meaning relationships. Moreover, according to Jordan (1997: 154), in order to have an active vocabulary, learners need to know about each new word:

   1. How does it relate to other words with similar meaning?
   2. Which other words can it be used with, and in which contexts?

   Therefore, learning synonyms can be considered as a good way for the students to develop their vocabulary. Knowledge of synonyms, especially,
suggests approaches to language that add to your understanding of how words work (Burton, 1982: 110). Synonyms not only help us convey general ideas, they also help us make fine distinctions between the meanings of words. For example, although the words under, below, and beneath are synonymous, we do not say we are living “beneath a democratic form of government”; we say “under a democratic form of government.” A suspect is not “below the protection of the police”; he is “under the protection of the police.” Learning synonyms means learning to use some words that have similar meaning in appropriate context. In learning synonyms, the students learn to compare some words with similar meaning but used in different context. Learning synonyms cannot be separated from learning how to use them in context.

Moreover, learning synonyms is an excellent time-saving approach to vocabulary study. Comparing synonyms helps the students see the relationship between words of similar meaning. It also helps the students generalize and classify words and concepts. Although the study of lists of synonyms helps the student to classify general concepts (large and small, high and low, etc.), of greater value is the development of the student’s ability to make fine distinctions between one synonym and another (Dale and O’Rourke, 1971: 52).

In addition, Dale and O’Rourke (1971: 52) also state that studying synonyms offers the teacher an excellent opportunity to teach concepts relating to the denotative and connotative aspects of vocabulary development. Studying synonymous words require the students to distinguish them. One of the considerations is differentiating their denotative and connotative meaning. It may help the students to develop their vocabulary.
4. Dictionary Use

Since we have known that learning synonymous word is important, now we have to consider about how to learn synonymous words. Dictionary use is considered as one of good strategies to learn synonymous words. Before using dictionaries to help us learn synonymous words, we need to know the importance of dictionary in vocabulary development, the kinds of dictionary, the examples of dictionary, and the consideration to choose the appropriate dictionary to learn synonymous words.

a. The use of dictionary

Dictionary is one of the tools in learning language. Using dictionary is one of the most important vocabulary learning (Nunan et al., 2003: 158). It is considered as one of good vocabulary learning strategies. Dale and O'Rourke (1971: 277) state that from the dictionary, the learners can get information on word derivation, meaning, spelling, and pronunciation. The use of dictionary increases the students’ understanding of general, technical, and literary terms. It also gives information about the formal and informal use of words, idioms, foreign words, proper nouns, and abbreviations. In his book, Nation states that dictionary can be used to correct errors and eventually prevent such errors (Nation, 1990: 155). In addition, dictionaries are generally used when students have already come across a word and then look it up to check that they know how to use it (Harmer, 2001: 170). Because of the importance of dictionary use, the students must get into the habit of using dictionary (Burton, 1982: 101).
Surprisingly, a large number of students cannot use the dictionary effectively (Dale and O’Rourke, 1971: 277). Dictionary provides much information that the students’ need in learning language. Unfortunately, the students cannot dig as much information as possible from the dictionary. The students only find the definition of an unfamiliar word (or as much of it as the student cares to read), comprehend it at the time of reading but quickly forget it. To use the dictionary effectively, the students can find sufficient keys to understand it fully through careful analysis of the entire definition, remember it, and most important, use it intelligently (Dale and O’Rourke, 1971: 277). Teacher plays an important role in the students’ ability to use the dictionary effectively. The teacher should train the students to be able to use the dictionary effectively (Bright and McGregor, 1970: 35). Furthermore, it is also important for teachers to be very careful in choosing the appropriate dictionary for the students. Because of that reason, teachers must know the kinds of dictionary.

b. Kinds of dictionary

There are many kinds of dictionary, especially English dictionary, which can be used to help the students in learning English language. Dictionaries can be bilingual or monolingual. Many students, in their early stages of studies, use bilingual dictionary or translating dictionary. The reason why the students use bilingual dictionaries is clearly stated below:

There is every good reason for them to want this since, at least in earlier stages, people tend to translate in their heads when they are learning in a foreign language, and the idea of a one-to-one correspondence between words in two languages is immensely attractive (Harmer, 2001:168).
If bilingual dictionary provides just the information that the students need, there is nothing wrong to use bilingual dictionary. Unfortunately, all too often bilingual dictionaries fail to show how words are used in the foreign language, providing simple answers. They also fail to give sufficient information about grammatical context, appropriacy, and connotation (Harmer, 2001: 168). However, students need to use monolingual dictionaries if they want to be an advanced user of the language (Jordan, 1997: 208). There are many advantages of using monolingual dictionary. In monolingual dictionary, the students can find information such as the different meanings that words have, how they are pronounced, what other words they collocate with, and when they can be used (Harmer, 2001:169). According to Jordan (1997: 208), there are several kinds of monolingual dictionary:

1) **Learner’s dictionaries**

Learner’s dictionaries are designed according to the needs of the learners. This kind of dictionary is the most appropriate for the learners. But the learner’s dictionaries themselves contain of many kinds of dictionary. The teacher and the students must be very careful in selecting the appropriate dictionary according to their needs.

2) **Native speaker’s dictionaries**

These kinds of dictionaries are primarily designed to provide decoding information (to understand the meaning of something in a foreign language). The kinds of encoding information (to express the meaning of something in a foreign language) that a foreign learner would need are not included. They are used by an advanced student in need of a wider range of entries than in a learner’s dictionary.
3) **Pronouncing dictionaries**

The pronouncing dictionaries give the standard pronunciation of all word forms in phonetic symbols. This kind of dictionary can be very useful, especially for an English teacher who might be uncertain of some pronunciations.

4) **Specialist subject dictionaries**

The dictionaries include the vocabulary of specialized subjects. For example: dictionaries of science, history, psychology, economics, geography, sports and pastimes, slang, clichés, proverbs, quotations, etc.

5) **Thesaurus (a virtual dictionary of synonyms)**

They contain lists of synonyms that are grouped according to their meanings, but give no indication of usage, collocation or style. They can only be recommended for advanced students.

c. **Examples of dictionary and their contents**


This monolingual dictionary was written by A S Hornby. This dictionary contains some features:

- 183,500 British and American words, phrases and meanings
- 85,000 example sentences
- 2,000 new words (bird flu, life coach, offshoring)
- 7,000 synonyms and opposites
- 5,000 study words from the sciences, literature, computing and business
- 700 World English words (stickybeak, godown, indaba)
- 2,600 cultural words (Walter Mitty, Forth Bridge, Capitol Hill)
As it can be seen in the list of feature above, this dictionary contains of synonyms. The dictionary also explains how to differentiate the synonymous words and how to use them in context.

2) **Longman Contemporary English (2006)**

This dictionary is also monolingual. We can see the features of this dictionary below:

- 155,000 natural examples bring English to life
- British and American pronunciations of headwords, including people and place names
- 1 million additional sentences from books and newspaper
- 3,000 most frequent words in spoken and written English highlighted
- 207,000 words, phrases, and meanings
- Collocation and Word focus boxes

This dictionary contains of words focus boxes. One of the explanations in the boxes is the explanation about synonyms. Like Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, this dictionary gives explanation how to differentiate the synonymous words and how to use them in context.

3) **The Merriam-Webster Dictionary (1975)**

This monolingual dictionary contains approximately 57,000 entries which constitute to the core of English language. It contains the definition of words,
pronunciation, functional labels, inflected forms, etymology, usage, sense division, cross-reference, synonyms, combining forms (prefixes and suffixes), lists of undefined words, abbreviation and symbols. It also contains some lists, they are:

- a list of foreign words and phrases that frequently occur in English texts but that have not become part of the English vocabulary
- a list of the nation of the world
- a list of 12,000 or more inhabitants that the United States have, with a summary by states; a similar list of places in Canada, with a summary by provinces and territories; and a section devoted to widely used signs and symbols.

As we can see in the list of features above, this dictionary contains the list of synonyms. Unfortunately, this dictionary does not explain how we differentiate the synonymous words and how we use them in context.


The fourth sample of dictionary is Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary (1995). This monolingual dictionary contains:

- over 30,000 references
- pronunciation at each entry
- up-to-date vocabulary
- American English
- help with grammar
- help with irregular spellings
- many examples of usage

Unlike the monolingual dictionaries above, this dictionary does not contain synonyms at all.


The last one is a bilingual dictionary. This dictionary, An English-Indonesian Dictionary, was written by John M. Echols and Hassan Shadily (1975). It contains some features below:

- thousands of entries
- phonetics transcription
- explanation of word class
- additional explanation of word meaning according to a certain field
- examples of to use the words in sentences

This dictionary does not contain synonyms too.

d. Choosing dictionary

Once we know many kinds of dictionary, we must be able to choose the appropriate dictionary according to our need. If a dictionary is going to help in the learning of vocabulary, it needs to show the form and meaning relationships between words and their uses so that the learning burden of words is reduced (Nation, 1990: 136). Some dictionaries discriminate between the exact meanings of closely related terms. They indicate a meaning by a synonym, a word that has nearly the same meaning as the word we are looking for (Guth, 1969: 412).
To choose the dictionary that is appropriate in learning synonymous words, we must consider the content of the dictionary. Some dictionaries contain the explanation about synonymous words, but some others are not. From the examples of dictionaries that are stated above, the dictionaries like Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary and Longman Contemporary English are good to be used because those dictionaries contain the explanation about synonymous words. Using dictionaries that provide the explanation about synonymous words and how they are used is important. Those dictionaries can be used by teachers as a starting point to show students that synonyms provided in the dictionary often unlock the meaning of a word and synonyms reflect shades of meaning which, when used in context, heighten the accuracy of verbal or written communication. Therefore, teachers should promote the use of the dictionary to point up the role of synonyms in increasing the student’s vocabulary and word skills (Dale and O’Rourke, 1971: 280).

B. Theoretical Framework

Learning vocabulary cannot be separated from having knowledge of words. In teaching vocabulary, teachers should consider what kind of words that the students need to learn. Function words, such as articles, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions, auxiliaries, etc. are more appropriate to be learned in grammar. While content words, such as nouns, ‘full’ verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, belong to vocabulary learning. Then, when we discuss about vocabulary learning, we should focus on content words.
Knowledge of words itself contains of many components. The two of them are about frequency and meaning of words. High frequency words should be taught in the very beginning stage of vocabulary learning. This is done in order to avoid misusing of low frequency words by the students. It is good for the teacher to use a list of high frequency words to decide what words should be taught. West’s General Service List of English Words (1953) is highly recommended since it is the most famous and most useful list of high-frequency words. It has not been replaced by other list of words. Another component of word knowledge is about word meaning. In order to have the knowledge of word meanings, the students should know the meaning relationship of words. The students should be able to choose the appropriate word to be used in a certain context. One of the study of meaning relationship is the study of synonym. A synonym is a word that has the same or nearly the same meaning of other words. Although synonymous words have similar meanings one another, sometimes they are not interchangeable. In order to have the knowledge of synonymous words, we also have to know the degree of synonyms, and the knowledge of how to distinguish them.

There are many advantages of learning synonymous words, especially for vocabulary development. Learning synonymous words is considered as a good learning strategy in vocabulary development. In order to have an active vocabulary, learners should know how a word relate to other words with similar meaning and in which context the words can be used. In this case, by learning synonymous words, the students are able to have an active vocabulary. They will
not only know the meaning of a single word, but they know the words with similar meanings and able to use it to express their idea appropriately according to the context in which the words are used. Dale and O’Rourke (1971: 52) states that learning synonymous words can help the students generalize and classify words and concepts. It is also an excellent opportunity to learn concepts related to the denotative and connotative aspects of vocabulary development.

Another good learning strategy is dictionary use. Using dictionary gives much information that the students need in learning vocabulary, one of the information is about synonyms. Therefore, dictionary use is a good strategy to learn synonymous words. There are many kinds of dictionary. The most appropriate one is learner’s dictionary, since it is designed for the learners according to their need. The dictionary should be monolingual, because it gives important information about the target language. Since there are many kinds of dictionary, students should be very careful in choosing the dictionary that they need. In relation to the learning of synonymous words, they should be more careful in choosing the dictionary. Not all English dictionaries contain the list of synonyms, and not all of them distinguish the synonyms. Good dictionaries for learning synonymous words contain the list of synonyms of a word and distinguish them. Two examples of the dictionaries are Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary and Longman Contemporary English. In those dictionaries, there are some boxes containing synonymous words, which explain how to use them in context.

In conclusion, mastering vocabulary also means having the knowledge of words. It includes the knowledge of meaning relationship. When the students
master vocabulary, they should have the knowledge of word meaning relationship. It means that they need to have the knowledge of synonymous words. To have a good mastery of synonymous words means having the ability to differentiate some words that have similar meaning to be used in certain context. Moreover, in mastering synonymous words, students should have good learning strategies. Dictionary use is one of it. However, they have to be very careful in choosing the dictionary. A good dictionary explains about synonymous words and explains how to use those words in context.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the writer discusses the method of the research, research participants, research instruments, data gathering technique, data analysis technique, and research procedure.

A. Research Method

This study is a descriptive research. Descriptive research is designed to obtain information concerning the current status of phenomena. The aim of descriptive research is to describe “what exists” with respect to variables or conditions in a situation (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, 1990: 381). The study aims to find information about students’ mastery of synonymous words and the learning strategies employed by the students.

The writer used survey as the research method to answer the problems. In order to obtain the information about the students’ mastery of synonymous words, the writer used test as the research instruments. To find the information about the strategies employed by the students in using dictionary to deal with synonymous words, the writer distributed a questionnaire. The result of the test was used to measure the students’ mastery of synonymous words, and the questionnaire is used to know the students’ learning strategies. The research was done in English Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University.
B. Research Samples

The subjects of the study were the fifth semester students of English Language Education Study Program and the sampling method was random. All the members of the population had the same chance to be included in the sampling. The writer planned to have the samples that really represent the total population. It means that the writer should take more than 50% of the total population to be included as the samples. From about 150 of the total population, the writer got 80 students as the samples. The samples were more than 50% from the total population. The fifth semester students were chosen because they had taken Vocabulary 1, and some of them had taken Vocabulary 2. It was expected that fifth semester students had better vocabulary mastery than first, second, third, and fourth semester students.

C. Research Instruments

The writer used two instruments in the study. The first instrument was test, and the second one was questionnaire.

1. Test

The test was conducted to measure the students’ mastery of synonymous words. The test was a multiple-choice item and the number of the question is 40 (the test can be seen on Appendix 1). Multiple-choice items are so convenient to administer and there are well-established procedures for analyzing them (Read, 2000: 78). Based on it, the writer chose multiple-choice item. In the study, the writer focused on high-frequency words. Based on this need, the writer used West’s General Service List of English Words (1953). The list contains 2000
headwords. The writer only used content words for the test. According to Read (2000: 18), when we set out to test vocabulary, it is knowledge of content words that we focus on. In making the test, the writer also considered the validity and reliability of the test.

a. Validity of the test

Validity of a test is the extent to which it measures what it is supposed to measure and nothing else (Heaton, 1975: 153). The writer measured the validity of the test based on the three kinds of validity:

1) Content Validity

A test is said to have content validity if its content constitutes a representative sample of the language skills, structures, etc. with which it is meant to be concerned (Hughes, 1989: 22). Before making the test, the writer had counted the number of content words in West’s General Service List of English Words (1953), and then made the test based on the calculation (it can be seen in appendix 6). It can be concluded that the test had content validity because its content constitutes a representative sample of the content words in General Service List of English Words.

2) Construct Validity

A test, part of a test, or a testing technique is said to have construct validity if it can be demonstrated that it measures just the ability which it is supposed to measure (Hughes, 1989: 26). In the study, the test was supposed to measure the students’ ability to distinguish two synonymous words. In the test, the students were required to choose one of two synonymous words to be used in a certain context. Based on it, it can be concluded that the test had construct validity.
3) **Face Validity**

A test is said to have face validity if it *looks* as if it measures what it is supposed to measure (Hughes, 1989: 27). When doing piloting, the writer asked some students about the face validity of the test. They directly said that the test contained of face validity.

b. **Reliability of the Test**

Reliability is a general quality of stability of scores regardless of what the test measure (Lado, 1961: 330). The writer asked eight students from semester 9 to do the test, and the score of the test were used to measure the reliability of the test (the result can be seen on Appendix 7). In measuring the reliability of the test, the writer used split-half method. In the method, the test was divided in two parts. The division was based on the odd and even numbers. The score of the odd number was for one half of the test, the second score was for the other half. The two sets of scores were then used to obtain the reliability coefficient as if the whole test had been taken twice (Hughes, 1989: 33). Then, an empirical formula known as the Spearman-Brown formula was then used to estimate the reliability of the whole test (Lado, 1961: 332). The formula of the whole processes in split-half method is:

\[ r_{xy}^2 = \frac{[N \cdot \Sigma XY - (\Sigma X)(\Sigma Y)]^2}{[N \cdot \Sigma X^2 - (\Sigma X)^2][N \cdot \Sigma Y^2 - (\Sigma Y)^2]} \]

\[ N \] = the number of students in the sample
ΣX = the sum of X scores  
ΣY = the sum of Y scores  
ΣX² = the sum of the squares of X scores  
ΣY² = the sum of the squares of Y scores  
ΣXY = the sum of the products of X and Y scores for each.

To estimate the reliability of the entire test, the formula is:

\[
 r_{11} = \frac{2r_{1/2}}{1 + r_{1/2}}
\]

\( r_{11} \) = the obtained reliability coefficient of the entire test.  
\( r_{1/2} \) = the obtained reliability of half the test.

To evaluate the reliability of the entire test, the writer used the criterion proposed by Best and Kahn (1986: 240). The criterion is as follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COEFFICIENT (r)</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.00 to .20</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.20 to .40</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.40 to .60</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.60 to .80</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.80 to 1.00</td>
<td>High to very high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the result of the reliability of the piloted test, it was known that the reliability of the test is 0.86100174809. It means that the reliability of the test is considered as high to very high (see Appendix 7).

2. Questionnaire

The questionnaire was used to know the learning strategies employed by the students to master synonymous words. Using questionnaire can save time (Wallace, 1998: 130). Therefore, the writer chosen questionnaire as one of the research instruments. The questionnaire was close-ended consisting of five items (the questionnaire can be seen on Appendix 3). Close-ended questionnaires are
questionnaires that call for short, check-mark responses (Best and Kahn, 1986: 167). In the questionnaire, there were some questions and choices of answer. The students were required to choose one answer that really represents their attitudes.

Before using the questionnaire, the writer did piloting. Questionnaire should be piloted to see whether it works as planned (Wallace, 1998: 132). It was also done because the writer would like to know, how many times they needed to fill in the questionnaire. Therefore, the writer asked eight students from semester 9 to analyze the questionnaire. It was done after they had done the test. When piloting the research instruments, the writer asked the students to do the test and fill in the questionnaire. After that, the writer asked them to give their comments. The writer asked them to give comments based on the questions below:

1. Is the instruction clear and easy to follow?
2. Are the questions and all the statements clear?
3. Do you find any irrelevant question?
4. Do you find any difficulty in filling the questionnaire?

D. Data Gathering Technique

In the study, the data was gathered through the test and the questionnaire. The test and the questionnaire were distributed to some semester 5 students. The test and the questionnaire were bounded as one set, but divided into two parts. The students were given 25 minutes to do the test and fill in the questionnaire. The first 20 minutes were used to do the test and the rest 5 minutes to fill in the questionnaire. In doing the test, the students were required to do the test individually, to avoid cheating during the test. The results of the test became the
data to answer the first question in the problem formulation. It was to find out the
students’ mastery of synonymous word. The results of the questionnaire became
the data to answer the second question in the problem formulation. It was to find
out the learning strategies employed by the students.

The research was conducted three times in three different classes. The first
one was on July 18, 2007 in Introduction to Literature class. The second one was
held on September 3, 2007 in AMT class. The third one was held on September 6,
2007 in AMT class. Before the students did the test and filled in the questionnaire,
the writer asked them to write their name and student number. This was done to
put aside some shopper students’ works, since they were not included as sample.
After selecting all the students, the writer got 80 students as the sample of the
research.

E. Data Analysis Technique

1. Test Analysis Technique

The students’ answers were evaluated based on the dictionary as the source
of information about synonymous words. Three dictionaries were used as the
source. They were Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (1995), Longman
Dictionary of Contemporary English (2006), and Thorndike Barnhart High School
Dictionary (1965). Those dictionaries were chosen because all of them contain the
information about synonymous words that were needed in the study.

Each correct answer was scored 1 (one) and each wrong answer was scored
0 (zero). The sum of all correct number was timed by 10 and divided by 4. The
result became student’s score. The score of the test from each student was then put into a table (see Appendix 4).

As the scores were obtained from the test, the average score of the students were measured by using the formula below:

\[
X = \frac{\sum X}{N}
\]

\(X\) = mean  
\(\sum X\) = sum of the score  
\(N\) = number of the students

The average score of the students were evaluated to judge the overall students’ mastery of synonymous words. The evaluation was based on the criterion that is used in Sanata Dharma University. As it is stated in Panduan Akademik Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris (2004) of Sanata Dharma University, the values that are used as the criteria to measure the students’ competency are A, B, C, D, and E. Each value means:

- A : Amat Baik (Very Good)
- B : Baik (Good)
- C : Cukup (Sufficient)
- D : Kurang (Insufficient)
- E : Buruk (Poor)

According to Peraturan Akademik Institut Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (1986), the passing score should be determined as the minimum limit of the students’ competency. With the range of 0-100 (known as 101 standard), 56 is decided as the passing score which considered as Sufficient (C), and 50 as the limit score in the category of Insufficient (D). The scores that are considered as B
(Good) and A (Very Good) are decided by spreading the rest of the scores. With the consideration above, it can be concluded that the criterion of the students’ competency is as follows:

- **Very Good (A)**: 85-100
- **Good (B)**: 70-84
- **Sufficient (C)**: 56-69
- **Insufficient (D)**: 50-55
- **Poor (E)**: \( \leq 49 \)

2. **Questionnaire Analysis Technique**

In the questionnaire, there were five questions. Each question consisted of some options. The writer analyzed the students’ attitudes based on the option they chose. Then the writer put the result in a table (see Appendix 5). After that, the writer analyzed the questions one by one. For question number one, there were three options and the students were free to choose more than one option. In the case that the students chose option two and three, it means that the students learn how to use synonymous words in context. Question number two consisted of three options also, but the students were not allowed to choose more than one option. In the case that the students chose option one, it means they had the consideration to use the dictionary. Question number three consisted of three options, and the students were not allowed to choose more than one option. In the case that the students chose option one or two, it means they had the habit of using the dictionary. In the question number four, there were five options. The students were not allowed to choose more than one option. In the case that they chose...
option one and three, it means they use the dictionary that contains of information needed in learning synonymous words. The last question, question number five, consisted of three options. The students were allowed to choose more than one option. In the case that the students chose option two and three, it means the students had used the dictionaries effectively. From those numbers, the options that were chosen by most of the students used to describe the overall students’ attitudes.

F. Research Procedure

After deciding the topic of the research, there were some procedures that the writer did:

1. Preparing the research instruments

As soon as the writer had chosen the topic of the study, the writer decided what kind of instruments that would be used in the study to answer the problems that were formulated. After deciding that test and questionnaire were used as the research instruments, the writer made the instruments.

2. Conducting the research

The next step was conducting the research in some classes. Before conducting the research, the writer asked some lecturers’ permission to do the research in their class. After getting their permission, the writer did the research in the day that had been chosen before. The test was given to the fifth semester students at the beginning of their class. When they had done the test, they were required to fill in the questionnaire.
3. Recording the results of the test and the questionnaire

First, the writer evaluated the test, and then recorded the result of the test in a table. Second, the writer recorded the findings from the questionnaire in a table.

4. Analyzing the results of the test and the questionnaire

Based on the recordings, the writer analyzed the result of the test and the questionnaire. The result of the test was used to know the students’ mastery of synonymous words, and the result the questionnaire was used to know the students’ learning strategies.

5. Reporting the results

After all the data had been gathered and analyzed, the writer reported the research findings.
CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the writer presents and describes the data, performs the analysis of the data, and the result discussion.

A. Data Presentation

1. Presentation of the Result of the Test

Learning synonymous words is very important, since it can develop the students’ vocabulary mastery. To learn synonymous words, first, we must know the students’ mastery of synonymous words. As their mastery of synonymous words is known, we can decide what synonymous words to be learned and how to learn it. Therefore, the first research problem has been formulated. It is to find out the students’ mastery of synonymous words.

In order to answer the first problem, the writer distributed tests to some fifth semester students. The test was a multiple-choice test which consists of 40 numbers. The test was held three times in three different classes. The first one was on July 18, 2007 in Introduction to Literature class. The second one was held on September 3, 2007 in AMT class. The third one was held on September 6, 2007 in AMT class. The total number of the samples was 80. They did the test in 20 minutes.

The result of the test was used as the data to find out the students’ mastery level. It is as the first finding on the study. The data was analyzed in order to find out the students’ average score. The students’ average score was then compared to
the criterion that was used in order to decide the students’ mastery level. In order to give a clear presentation, and to make it easier to present the data, the writer put the findings in table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Presentation of the Result of the Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>The Number of the students</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-85</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-84</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-69</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>48.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-55</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤49</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 4.1, we can see that 2 students got more than 85. It means 2.5% of the samples got the highest score. Nine students got 50 to 55. It means 11.5% of the samples got the lowest score. There are 30 students, or 37.5% of the samples got 70 to 84. While the rest of the students, or 48.75% of the total samples, got 56 to 69. From the total samples, no one got less than 49.

2. Presentation of the Result of the Questionnaire

To decide how synonymous words can be learned for vocabulary development, we should also know the learning strategies employed by the students. As we know their learning strategies, we can make some improvements in their learning strategy in order to develop their mastery of synonymous words.
Therefore, the second research problem has been formulated. It is to find out the learning strategies employed by the students.

To answer the second problem, the writer distributed questionnaires to some fifth semester students, together with the tests. The questionnaire is close-ended. The students were required to choose one answer that really represents their attitudes. There are five questions in the questionnaire. The first question is to find out the students’ attitudes in learning new words. What they did in learning words, whether they learn about how to use some synonymous words in context or not. The second question is to find out what the students did in choosing a word for a certain context. The third question is to find out how often the students consult their dictionary. The fourth question is to find out what dictionary they mostly use. The fifth question is to find out how the students use the dictionary. The result of the questionnaire can be seen in table 4.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Possibilities of Answer</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Percentages of the Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What did you do when you learn some new English words? (You may choose more than one option)</td>
<td><strong>Option 1:</strong> Learn the meaning of each word</td>
<td><strong>Option 1:</strong> The students only learn the meaning of the words.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 2:</strong> Learn their synonyms</td>
<td><strong>Option 2:</strong> The students only learn synonymous words without knowing how to use it in context.</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1: Use the dictionary to check it</td>
<td>Option 2: Choose the word</td>
<td>Option 3: The students consult the dictionary when they have to choose a word among synonymous words to be used in a certain context.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1 and 2: The students only learn synonymous words without knowing how to use them in context.</td>
<td>Option 2 and 3: The students learn some synonymous words to use it in appropriate context.</td>
<td>Option 3: The students learn new words from the context the words are used.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1 and 3: The students learn the meaning of the word to use it in appropriate context.</td>
<td>Option 2 and 3: The students learn some synonymous words to use it in appropriate context.</td>
<td>Option 1, 2, and 3: The students learn the meaning of the words and compare them to other words which have similar meaning to be used in appropriate context.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. What did you do when you had to choose a word among synonymous words to be used in a certain context and

<p>| Option 1: Use the dictionary to check it | Option 2: Choose the word | Option 1: The students consult the dictionary when they have to choose a word among synonymous words to be used in a certain context. |
| Option 1 and 2: The students only learn synonymous words without knowing how to use them in context. | Option 2 and 3: The students learn some synonymous words to use it in appropriate context. | Option 3: The students learn new words from the context the words are used. |
| Option 1 and 3: The students learn the meaning of the word to use it in appropriate context. | Option 2 and 3: The students learn some synonymous words to use it in appropriate context. | Option 1, 2, and 3: The students learn the meaning of the words and compare them to other words which have similar meaning to be used in appropriate context. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Option 1</th>
<th>Option 2</th>
<th>Option 3</th>
<th>Option 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>you have your dictionary?</td>
<td>Option 3: Use your feeling</td>
<td>the words only because they are familiar with the word.</td>
<td><strong>Option 3:</strong> The students choose the word based on their feeling.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often do you consult your dictionary to choose the right word for certain context?</td>
<td>Option 1: all of the time</td>
<td>Option 2: most of the time</td>
<td><strong>Option 2:</strong> The students did it as many times as possible to get into the habit of using their dictionary.</td>
<td><strong>Option 4:</strong> The students never did it. They do not even have the consideration to consult the dictionary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 3: seldom</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 3:</strong> The students seldom do it. They cannot get into the habit of using their dictionary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 4: never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Which dictionary do you mostly use? (Please choose only one)</td>
<td><strong>Option 1:</strong> Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary</td>
<td><strong>Option 1:</strong> The students use a dictionary which contains of information needed in learning synonymous words.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 2:</td>
<td>Option 3:</td>
<td>Option 4:</td>
<td>Option 5:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. What did you do when you look up in the dictionary? (You may choose more than one option)</th>
<th>Option 1:</th>
<th>Option 2:</th>
<th>52.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Look up the meaning of the words</td>
<td>The students use a dictionary which does not contain information needed in learning synonymous words.</td>
<td>The students use a dictionary which contains information needed in learning synonymous words.</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look up how the words relate to other words which have similar meaning</td>
<td>The students use a dictionary which does not contain information needed in learning synonymous words.</td>
<td>The students use a dictionary which does not contain information needed in learning synonymous words.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 1:</th>
<th>Option 2:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The students only find out the meaning of words when they consulting the dictionary.</td>
<td>The students compare the words with other words which have similar meaning when consulting the dictionary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. What did you do when you look up in the dictionary? (You may choose more than one option)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 3:</th>
<th>Look up in which context the words are used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Option 1 and 2:</td>
<td>Look up the meaning of the words and how the words relate to other words which have similar meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1 and 3:</td>
<td>Look up the meaning of the words and in which context the words are used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 2 and 3:</td>
<td>Look up how the words relate to other words which have similar meaning and in which context the words are used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1, 2, and 3:</td>
<td>Look up the meaning of the words, how the words relate to other words which have similar meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 3:</th>
<th>The students find out in which context the words are used when consulting the dictionary.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Option 1 and 2:</td>
<td>The students find out the meaning of the words and compare the words with other words which have similar meaning when consulting the dictionary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1 and 3:</td>
<td>The students find out the meaning of the words to use them in appropriate context when consulting the dictionary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 2 and 3:</td>
<td>The students compare the words with other words which have similar meaning to be used in appropriate context when consulting the dictionary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1, 2, and 3:</td>
<td>The students find out the meaning of the words and compare the words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 6.25 |
| 7.5 |
| 37.5 |
| 2.5 |
| 23.75 |

PLAGIAT MERUPAKAN TINDAKAN TIDAK TERPUJI
similar meaning, and in which context the words are used | with other words which have similar meaning to be used in certain context when consulting the dictionary.
---|---

As we can see in table 4.2, for question number one, there were seven possibilities of the students’ answer. From the result of the questionnaire, 15% of the sample chose option one. 1.25% of the sample chose option two. 11.25% of the sample chose option three. 2.5% of the sample chose option one and two. 38.75% of the sample chose option one and three. 7.5% of the sample chose option two and three. Finally, 23.75% of the samples chose option one, two, and three.

Question number two contains of three options, but the students were not allowed to choose more than one. They must choose one option that really represents their attitude. From the result of the questionnaire, as we can see in the table above, 72.5% of the sample chose the first option. They used the dictionary to choose a word among synonymous words. 15% of the sample chose the second option. They chose the words which is familiar to them. The rest 12.5% of the sample chose the third option. They chose the word based on their feeling.

For question number three, the students were not allowed to choose more than one question. From the result of the questionnaire, it was found out that 10% of the sample consult the dictionary all of the time, 45% consult it most of the time, 43.75% seldom consulting the dictionary, and the rest 1.25% never consult the dictionary.
Question number four contains of five options. Like question number two and three, the students were required to choose only one. From the result of the questionnaire, it was known that 26.25% of the sample mostly used Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary. 52.5% of the sample used Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary. Only one student or 1.25% of the sample used Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. The rest 20% of the sample used English-Indonesian Dictionary by Hassan Shadily. No one used The Merriam-Webster Dictionary.

Like question number one, the students were allowed to choose more than one option in question number five. There were three options in this question. From seven possibilities of option, 20% of the sample chose option one. 2.5% of the sample chose option two. 6.25% of the sample chose option three. 7.5% of the sample chose option one and two. 37.5% of the sample chose option one and three. 2.5% of the sample chose option two and three. Finally, 23.75% of the sample chose option one, two, and three.

B. Data Analysis

1. Analysis of the Result of the Test

In order to analyze the data in a convenient way, the writer used descriptive statistic. A convenient way of summarizing data is to find a single index that can represent a whole set of measure (Ary, et al, 1979: 99). Measure of central tendency can be used to find it. It includes the measure of mean, median, and mode. In analyzing the result of the test, the writer used the measure of mean.
According to Ary, et al (1979: 99), mean is generally a more precise measure than the median or the mode. It is also the most stable of the three measures of central tendency in that if a number of samples are randomly drawn from the population.

Mean is the sum of all the values in a distribution divided by the number of values (Brown and Rodgers, 2002: 128). The formula is as follows:

\[
M = \frac{\sum X}{N}
\]

$M = \text{mean}$

$\sum = \text{sum of (or add up)}$

$X = \text{values}$

$N = \text{number of values}$

Based on the formula above, the writer measured the mean of the result of the test. To make it easier to measure the mean of the test result, the writer made a table contains the students’ score in detail:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>X</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>$\sum X$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>387.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>472.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>157.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 80 | 5282.5 |
From the data above, the mean can be counted as:

\[ M = \frac{5282.5}{80} \]

\[ = 66.03125 \]

From the calculation above, it can be seen that the average score of the students’ achievement to the test is 66.03125.

2. Analysis of the Result of the Questionnaire

In analyzing the questionnaire, the writer used the responses that were responded by more than 50% of the samples to describe the overall students’ attitude. To make it easier and clearer, the writer analyzed the question one by one.

According to Jordan (1997: 154), to have an active vocabulary, the students should learn how the words relate to other words with similar meaning and in which context the words are used. Therefore, the students need to learn synonymous words, words which have similar meaning. In learning synonymous words, the students learn to compare some words based on the context in which the words are used in order to be able to use each word in appropriate context. Learning synonymous words means learning to use the words in appropriate context, not merely listing some synonymous words. Since learning synonymous words is very important in vocabulary development, it is also important to find out the students’ attitude in learning synonymous words. For that reason, the first question of the questionnaire is made. It is to find out whether the students learned synonymous words through the context in which the words are used or
not. There were three options for number one, and the students were allowed to choose more than one option. Since the students were allowed to choose more than one option, there are seven possibilities of answer. If the students include option two and three as their answer, it means they learned synonymous words in context. We can see it in table 4.4.

Table 4.4 The Result of the First Question from the Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Possibilities of Answer</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Percentages of the Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What did you do when you learn some new English words? (You may choose more than one option)</td>
<td>Option 1: Learn the meaning of each word</td>
<td>Option 1: The students only learn the meaning of the words.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 2: Learn their synonyms</td>
<td>Option 2: The students only learn synonymous words without knowing how to use it in context.</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 3: Learn how the words are used in context</td>
<td>Option 3: The students learn new words from the context the words are used.</td>
<td>11.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 1 and 2: Learn the meaning of each words and their synonyms</td>
<td>Option 1 and 2: The students only learn synonymous words without knowing how to use them in context.</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 1 and 3: Learn the meaning of each word and how the word is used in context</td>
<td>Option 1 and 3: The students learn the meaning of the word to use it in appropriate context.</td>
<td>38.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Option 2 and 3:  
Learn their synonyms and how the words are used in context

Option 2 and 3:  
The students learn some synonymous words to use it in appropriate context.

Option 1, 2, and 3:  
Learn the meaning of each word, their synonyms, and how the words are used in context

Option 1, 2, and 3:  
The students learn the meaning of the words and compare them to other words which have similar meaning to be used in appropriate context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 1, 2, and 3:</th>
<th>7.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Option 2 and 3:</td>
<td>23.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the result of the questionnaire in table 4.4, we can see that 7.5% of the sample chose option two and three, while 23.75% of the sample chose option one, two, and three. The total percentages of the samples that include option two and three as their answer is 31.25. It means that only 31.25% of the students learned synonymous words in context. The total percentage of the sample that did not include option two and three is 68.75. It means that 68.75% of the sample did not learn synonymous words in context. It can be concluded that most of the students, or 68.75% of the sample did not learn synonymous words in context.

To develop vocabulary, especially through learning synonymous words, dictionaries also play an important role. Dale and O’Rourke (1971: 277) state that from the dictionary, the learners can get information on word derivation, meaning, spelling, and pronunciation. Moreover, some dictionaries discriminate between the exact meanings of closely related terms. They indicate meaning by a synonym, a word that has nearly the same meaning as the word we are looking for.
(Guth, 1969: 412). Therefore, when students have to choose a word among synonymous words, it is important for them to consult the dictionary, in order to be able to use the words in appropriate context. It is done because some dictionaries provide information about synonymous words and how to distinguish them based on the context in which the words are used. In order to know the students’ strategy when they have to choose a word among synonymous words, the second question was made. Let us see again the result of the questionnaire in table 4.5.

Table 4.5 The Result of the Second Question from the Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Possibilities of Answer</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Percentages of the Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. What did you do when you had to choose a word among synonymous words to be used in a certain context and you have your dictionary?</td>
<td>Option 1: Use the dictionary to check it</td>
<td>Option 1: The students consult the dictionary when they have to choose a word among synonymous words to be used in a certain context.</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 2: Choose the word which is familiar to you</td>
<td>Option 2: The students choose the words only because they are familiar with the word.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 3: Use your feeling</td>
<td>Option 3: The students choose the word based on their feeling.</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 4.5, we can see that 72.5% of the students use the dictionary when they have to choose a word among synonymous words. It means most of the students had the consideration to use the dictionary.
Students must get into the habit of using the dictionary (Burton, 1982: 101). It means that the students must do it as many times as possible until it becomes their habit. To know the students’ habit in using the dictionary, the third question was made. It was aimed to find out how many times the students consulted the dictionary. If the students did it all of the time or most of the time, it means that the students did it as many times as possible to get into the habit of using their dictionary. Let us see it from the result of the questionnaire below:

Table 4.6 The Result of the Third Question from the Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Possibilities of Answer</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Percentages of the Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. How often do you consult your dictionary to choose the right word for certain context</td>
<td><strong>Option 1:</strong> all of the time</td>
<td><strong>Option 1:</strong> The students did it as many times as possible to get into the habit of using their dictionary.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 2:</strong> most of the time</td>
<td><strong>Option 2:</strong> The students did it as many times as possible to get into the habit of using their dictionary.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 3:</strong> seldom</td>
<td><strong>Option 3:</strong> The students seldom do it. They cannot get into the habit of using their dictionary.</td>
<td>43.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 4:</strong> never</td>
<td><strong>Option 4:</strong> The students never did it. They do not even have the consideration to consult the</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As we can see in table 4.6, there are 10% of the samples consult the dictionary all of the time. 45% of the samples consult it most of the time. It means 55% of the students got the habit of consulting the dictionary. 43.75% of the samples seldom did it, while 1.25% of the samples never did it. It means that 45% of the students did not get the habit of consulting the dictionary. From question number three, it can be concluded that most of the students, or 55% of the students got the habit of consulting the dictionary.

In consulting the dictionary, many English dictionaries can be used by the students. Unfortunately, not all of them provide information about synonymous words needed by the students. Some monolingual dictionaries such as Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary and Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English provide information about synonymous words needed by the students. Other dictionaries, such as Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary and The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, only provide the list of synonymous words without distinguishing them based on the context the words are used. To find out what kind of dictionary that the students used, question number four was made. Let us see the result below:

**Table 4.7 The Result of the Fourth Question from the Questionnaire**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Possibilities of Answer</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Percentages of the Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Which dictionary do you</td>
<td>Option 1: Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary</td>
<td>Option 1: The students use a dictionary which</td>
<td>26.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mostly use? (Please choose only one)</td>
<td>contains of information needed in learning synonymous words.</td>
<td>contains of information needed in learning synonymous words.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 2:</strong> Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 2:</strong> The students use a dictionary which does not contains of information needed in learning synonymous words.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 3:</strong> Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 3:</strong> The students use a dictionary which contains of information needed in learning synonymous words.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 4:</strong> The Merriam-Webster Dictionary</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 4:</strong> The students use a dictionary which does not contains of information needed in learning synonymous words.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 5:</strong> English-Indonesian Dictionary by Hassan Shadily</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 5:</strong> The students use a dictionary which does not contains of information needed in learning synonymous words.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we can see from table 4.7, most of the students used Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary. It can be seen from the percentage which reaches 52.5% of the samples.

Although dictionaries provide much information needed by the students, surprisingly, a large number of students cannot use the dictionary effectively.
(Dale and O’Rourke, 1971: 277). Using dictionary is very important since it provides much information. In order to get as much knowledge as possible from the dictionary, the students should use the dictionary effectively. To use the dictionaries effectively, the students need to look up not only the meaning of the words but also look up the meaning of other words which have similar meaning in the context the words are used. By doing this, the students are able to compare some words which have similar meaning to use in appropriate context. In order to know how effective the students use the dictionary, the last question was made. It is to find out what they did when they look up in the dictionary. Like question number one, the students are allowed to choose more than one options. If the students include option two and three, it means the students had used the dictionaries effectively. We can see the result below:

Table 4.8 The Result of the Fifth Question from the Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Possibilities of Answer</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Percentages of the Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. What did you do when you look up in the dictionary? (You may choose more than one option)</td>
<td>Option 1: Look up the meaning of the words</td>
<td>Option 1: The students only find out the meaning of words when they consulting the dictionary.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 2: Look up how the words relate to other words which have similar meaning</td>
<td>Option 2: The students compare the words with other words which have similar meaning when consulting the dictionary.</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 3: Look up in which context the words are used</td>
<td>Option 3: The students find out in which context the words are used when consulting the dictionary.</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1 and 2: Look up the meaning of the words and how the words relate to other words which have similar meaning</td>
<td>Option 1 and 2: The students find out the meaning of the words and compare the words with other words which have similar meaning when consulting the dictionary.</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1 and 3: Look up the meaning of the words and in which context the words are used</td>
<td>Option 1 and 3: The students find out the meaning of the words to use them in appropriate context when consulting the dictionary.</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 2 and 3: Look up how the words relate to other words which have similar meaning and in which context the words are used</td>
<td>Option 2 and 3: The students compare the words with other words which have similar meaning to be used in appropriate context when consulting the dictionary.</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 1, 2, and 3: Look up the meaning of the words, how the words relate to other words which have similar meaning, and in which context the words are used</td>
<td>Option 1, 2, and 3: The students find out the meaning of the words and compare the words with other words which have similar meaning to be used in certain context when consulting the dictionary.</td>
<td>23.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the result of the questionnaire in table 4.8, we can see that 2.5% of the sample chose option two and three, while 23.75% of the sample chose option one, two, and three. The total percentages of the samples that include option two and three as their answer is 26.25. It means that only 26.25% of the students looked up not only the meaning of the words but also the meaning of other words which have similar meaning in the context the words are used when they consult the dictionary. The total percentage of the sample that did not include option two and three is 73.75. It means that 73.75% of the sample did not look up the meaning of other words which have similar meaning in the context the words are used when they consult the dictionary. It can be concluded that most of the students, or 73.75% of the sample did not use the dictionary effectively.

C. Discussion

1. Students’ Mastery of Synonymous Words

Mastering vocabulary means having knowledge of words. Nation (1990: 31) stated that one of the components of word knowledge is the knowledge of word meaning. It includes the meaning relationship of words. One of the studies of meaning relationship is synonymy. It is a study of the relationship of words that have similar meaning. Synonyms sometimes cannot be simply interchanged one another. They are used in different context. It is important for the students to have the ability to distinguish synonymous words. The advantage of studying synonyms is that the students will be able to express the idea accurately. It is
important to measure the students’ mastery of synonymous words, since it can be used to develop the students’ mastery of synonymous words, and then develop their vocabulary mastery.

In order to measure the overall students’ achievement of the test, the writer compared it to the academic regulation that is used in Sanata Dharma University. It was done to find out in which category the students’ mastery of synonymous words belongs. As it was stated in Chapter 3, the criterion of the students’ competency that is used in Sanata Dharma University, especially in English Language Study Program is as follows:

- **Very Good (A)**: 85-100
- **Good (B)**: 70-84
- **Sufficient (C)**: 56-69
- **Insufficient (D)**: 50-55
- **Poor (E)**: \( \leq 49 \)

From the result of the test, it is known that the students’ average score is 66.03125. Based on the academic regulation above, the students’ mastery of synonymous words is considered as sufficient.

### 2. Students’ Learning Strategies

Learning synonymous words is very important in vocabulary development. In order to have an active vocabulary, as it is stated by Jordan (1997: 154), the students should learn the words: how it relates to other words with similar meaning and which other words can it be used with, and in which contexts. From
the result of the questionnaire, it is known that most of the students did not learn synonymous words and in which context the words are used.

The learning of synonymous words is supported by the use of dictionary. Dictionaries provide a lot of information that the students need (Dale and O’Rourke, 1971: 277). A good dictionary for learning synonymous words is a dictionary that provides information, especially about synonymous words. It discriminates between the exact meanings of closely related terms. They indicate meaning by a synonym, a word that has nearly the same meaning as the word we are looking for (Guth, 1969: 412). Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary and Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English are considered as good dictionaries since those dictionaries provide the information that is needed by the students in learning synonymous words. Therefore, when the students are required to choose a word among synonymous words, it is good for them to consult the dictionary. They should do it as many times as possible. The use of dictionary should also be supported by the students’ ability to use it effectively. Unfortunately, a large number of students cannot use the dictionary effectively (Dale and O’Rourke, 1971: 277). They only look up the meaning of the words in the dictionary. An effective use of the dictionary means looking up the meaning of the words, how it relates to other words that have similar meaning, and how it is used in context. By using the dictionary effectively, the students will be able to use the words accurately. From the result of the questionnaire, it is known that most of the students prefer to use the dictionary when they have to choose a word among synonymous words. It means that they had the consideration to consult the dictionary. It is also known that they did it as many times as possible. Most of the
students prefer to use Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary. The small and thin shape of the dictionary can be the reason for the students to use the dictionary. Unfortunately, the dictionary does not provide the information about synonymous words and how to distinguish them. When consulting the dictionary, most of the students did not look up how the words relate to other words which have similar meaning, and in which context the words are used.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In this chapter, the writer states the conclusion of the research and some suggestions for language teachers, learners, and for further research.

A. Conclusions

The first problem of the study is to find out the students’ mastery of synonymous words. To answer the first problem, the writer had distributed a test to some fifth semester students of English Language Study Program in Sanata Dharma University. From the result of the test, it was found that the students’ average score is 66.03125. Based on the academic regulation that is used in English Language Study Program of Sanata Dharma University, the students’ mastery of synonymous words is considered as sufficient. As the first problem of the study has been answered, it can be concluded that increasing the students’ mastery of synonymous words is needed, since mastering synonymous words is very important.

The second problem of the study is to find out the students’ strategies in using dictionary to deal with synonymous words. Therefore, the writer had distributed a questionnaire, together with the test. From the result of the questionnaire, it was found out that 68.75% of the students did not learn how to use synonymous words in context. However, 72.5% of the students used the dictionary when they had to choose a word among synonymous words to be used in certain context. It means most of the students have the consideration to consult
the dictionary. It is proofed by the next finding that most of the students, or 55% of the students got the habit of consulting the dictionary. Unfortunately, from the next finding, it was known that 52.5% of the students did not use an appropriate dictionary to be used for mastering synonymous words. Most of them used Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary, a dictionary that does not provide information that the students’ need in learning synonymous words. Besides not using the appropriate dictionary, most of the students also cannot use the dictionary effectively. It can be seen from the result of the questionnaire that when consulting the dictionary, 73.75% of the students did not look up the meaning of other words that have similar meaning in the context the words are used.

B. Suggestions

After analyzing the result of the test and the questionnaire, and also giving the conclusion, the writer will give some suggestion for language teachers, students, and further researchers. The suggestions that the writer give are for the development of language teaching-learning, especially for vocabulary development.

1. Suggestions for language teachers

Learning synonymous words is very important for the students to develop their vocabulary. By learning synonymous words, the students will be able to express their idea using the appropriate word for certain context. Learning synonymous words means comparing some words that have similar meaning based on the context the words are used. Comparing synonymous words helps the
students see the relationship between words of similar meaning. It also helps the students generalize and classify words and concepts. Moreover, teaching synonyms offers teachers an excellent opportunity to teach concepts relating to the denotative and connotative aspects of vocabulary. Studying synonymous words require the students to distinguish them. One of the considerations is differentiating their denotative and connotative meaning. It may help the students to develop their vocabulary (Dale and O’Rourke, 1971: 52). To teach synonymous words, there are two considerations. The first one is what synonymous words should be taught and the second one is how to teach those words.

a. **What synonymous words to be taught.**

To teach synonymous words, first, we have to know what synonymous words should be taught. To decide it, teachers should know the students’ need. Nation (1990: 4) divides vocabulary into three groups; high-frequency words, low-frequency words, and specialized vocabulary. Teachers should teach high-frequency words first.

In the study, the writer used high-frequency words to measure the students’ mastery of synonymous words. Those high-frequency words are taken from West’s General Service List of English Words (1953). From the result of the test, as it is stated above, it was known that the students’ mastery of synonymous words is considered as sufficient. It means that the students’ mastery should be increased. It also means that for the synonymous words that considered as high-frequency used, the students still need to increase their ability to differentiate
them. Therefore, they have to increase their ability to differentiate synonymous words that are high-frequently used first.

b. How to teach synonymous words

After deciding what synonymous words to be learned, teachers should decide how to teach the synonymous words. The writer suggests the use of dictionary as a good strategy to develop the students’ mastery of synonymous words. Teachers can guide the learners to consult the dictionary whenever they are dealing with synonymous words. Guiding the students to use the dictionaries can help the students to learn independently. They will not depend on their teachers all the time. However, teachers should also be very careful in choosing the dictionary according to the students’ need. Not all dictionaries provide information about the differences of some synonymous words. Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary and Longman Contemporary English Dictionary can be used to learn synonymous words, since those words provide information that the students need in learning synonymous words.

2. Suggestions for language learners

Dealing with synonyms is sometimes more confusing than other study of meaning relationship such as antonyms and homophones. When we are learning about antonyms, it is clear that the words are different to each other, since we are dealing with words that have opposite meaning. Learning homophones is clearer too, since we are dealing with some words with different meaning but sound alike. Those two studies are the study about meaning relationship of words that
have different meaning. When we are dealing with synonymous words, we are dealing with some words with similar meaning but are used in different context. The similarity makes learning synonymous words seems difficult. We do not even realize that synonymous words are sometimes used in different context. We use them interchangeably, without considering the context.

Even though it seems difficult to learn synonymous words, it does not mean that we cannot or should not learn it. We can still do it. The very first thing that we should do is to realize that some words, even though they have similar meaning, are sometimes used in different context. If we do it, the next time we are dealing with some words with have similar meaning, we will use them carefully. Differentiate synonymous words is not easy too. We have to consider about the context in which the words are used. Since it is not easy to differentiate synonymous words, we need help. Consulting the dictionaries is a good help for us. We cannot depend on the teachers or lecturers to explain us the differences among synonymous words. It is good to find it ourselves. Another reason is that the dictionaries provide information about synonymous words. There are some explanations provided in the dictionaries that help us differentiate the synonymous words based on the context the words are used. Once we get into the habit of consulting the dictionary, we will have the understanding of how to differentiate some synonymous words. It helps us to use the words appropriately and effectively.

One thing that should be considered is that not all dictionaries provide information about synonymous words. Some of them only provide the list of synonymous words without giving the explanation of how to differentiate them.
Some other dictionaries do not even discuss about synonyms. There are two examples of dictionaries that can be used in learning synonymous words. They are Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary and Longman Contemporary English Dictionary. In the study, many students use Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary. The size of the dictionary may become the reason to use the dictionary. It is small and thick. They are able to bring it wherever they go. Unfortunately, the dictionary does not provide much information needed by English language learners, especially to learn synonymous words. Therefore, selecting the dictionaries carefully is important.

3. Suggestions for further study

For further study, this study can be developed into other studies that are related to the topic of this study. This research can be developed into a study to design a set of material to learn synonymous words. The design may focus on one of the skills. The subject may be changed into the higher or lower level of students than the fifth semester students, or can be changed with the other students of different institution. High school students may become the subject of the study.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDICES
Appendix 1 Synonym Test

Name : 
St. Number : 

Choose the best answer for each of the following questions!

1. Could you … a meeting with Mr. Wilson for Monday, please?
   a. organize  b. arrange

2. Has your … been paid into your bank account yet?
   a. salary  b. wages

3. …. he failed in college work after getting high grades in high school.
   a. surprisingly  b. astonishingly

4. The most useful … to have are a screwdriver, a hammer, and a saw.
   a. tools  b. instruments

5. Tom broke the window, but it was my … for letting him play football in the house.
   a. mistake  b. fault

6. It was a … day and the water seemed peaceful and inviting.
   a. calm  b. silent

7. A wedding is an … for celebration.
   a. opportunity  b. occasion

8. He wears his clothes …
   a. neatly  b. tidily

9. … of saving his business, he shot himself.
   a. hopeless  b. despairing

10. Freedom of speech does not mean … to gossip or tell lies.
    a. liberty  b. freedom

11. How long have you been in your … job?
    a. current  b. present

12. There is a small … for parking.
    a. charge  b. price
13. Laszlo Biro … the ball-point pen.
   a. discovered b. invented

14. We walked along a … through the forest.
   a. track b. path

15. The garden wall is two meters ….
   a. tall b. high

16. The argument soon became a … when somebody pulled out a knife.
   a. fight b. quarrel

17. Please … the table.
   a. raise b. lift

18. Geologists … the newly discovered mineral deposit.
   a. explored b. searched

19. You look tired. You need a good …
   a. break b. rest

20. She … the flower from her boyfriend, then throws it away.
   a. accepts b. receives

21. Measles is the most devastating of all the major childhood ….
   a. diseases b. illnesses

22. Raising frogs is a … way to make a living.
   a. strange b. peculiar

23. They went on a long train … across India.
   a. journey b. trip

24. The … of the wind can be harnessed to produce electricity.
   a. power b. strength

25. The company made a healthy … last year.
   a. advantage b. profit

26. Learning to play the piano well takes much …
   a. practice b. exercise

27. Women are forced to make a … between family and career.
   a. preference b. choice
28. Eating hot dogs is an American …
   a. custom  b. habit

29. The match was … to the following Saturday because of bad weather.
   a. delayed  b. postponed

30. We walked to the … of the water.
   a. edge  b. border

31. My vacation … when school started.
   a. finished  b. ended

32. All of my Arithmetic problems are hard, but … this one.
   a. particularly  b. especially

33. She looked carefully at all the … of materials before buying any.
   a. sample  b. example

34. He made a … decision when he went into advertising.
   a. lucky  b. fortunate

35. Getting rich seems to be her only … in life.
   a. intention  b. purpose

36. This alliance is … for the stability of Europe.
   a. necessary  b. essential

37. Her friend’s unkind comments … her pleasure in her new dress.
   a. spoiled  b. ruin

38. … indicate the new drug will cure infection.
   a. trials  b. experiments

39. The original Declaration of Independence is a … document kept in Washington.
   a. precious  b. valuable

40. He has … anything to eat.
   a. scarcely  b. barely
ANSWER KEY

1. b   11. b   21. a   31. b
2. a   12. a   22. b   32. a
3. b   13. b   23. a   33. a
4. a   14. a   24. a   34. b
5. b   15. b   25. b   35. b
6. a   16. a   26. a   36. b
7. b   17. b   27. b   37. a
8. a   18. a   28. a   38. b
9. b   19. b   29. b   39. a
10. a  20. b   30. a   40. a
Questionnaire

Please choose the best answer that really represents you from the question below.

1. What did you do when you learn some new English words? (You may choose more than one option)
   □ learn the meaning of each words
   □ learn their synonyms
   □ learn how the words are used in context

2. What did you do when you had to choose a word among synonymous words to be used in a certain context and you have your dictionary?
   □ use the dictionary to check it
   □ choose the word which is familiar to you
   □ use your feeling

3. How often do you consult your dictionary to choose the right word for certain context?
   □ all of the time
   □ most of the time
   □ seldom
   □ never

4. Which dictionary do you mostly use? (Please choose only one)
   □ Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary
   □ Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary
   □ Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English
   □ The Merriam-Webster Dictionary
   □ English-Indonesian Dictionary by Hassan Shadily
5. What did you do when you look up in the dictionary? (You may choose more than one option)
   □ look up the meaning of the words
   □ look up how the words relate to other words which have similar meaning
   □ look up in which context the words are used
## The Result of the Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Wrong Answers</th>
<th>Correct Answers</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6.5</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>21</td>
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**Average Score** 66.03125
# The Result of the Questionnaire

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**Appendix 5** The Result of the Questionnaire

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PLAGIAT MERUPAKAN TINDAKAN TIDAK TERPUJI
The Result from the West’s General Service List of English Words

In making the test, the writer used the West’s General Service List of English Words. The writer counted the adverb, adjective, verb, and noun in the list. It is to be done in order to decide how many adverb, adjective, verb, and noun to be used in the test. Below is the result:

- **Adverb**: 373 words => \[
\frac{373}{3,743} \times 100\% = 9.96\%
\]

- **Adjective**: 745 words => \[
\frac{745}{3,743} \times 100\% = 19.90\%
\]

- **Verb**: 851 words => \[
\frac{851}{3,743} \times 100\% = 22.7\%
\]

- **Noun**: 1774 words => \[
\frac{1774}{3,743} \times 100\% = 47.4\%
\]

The test consisted of 40 items, so the division is as follows:

- **Adverb**: \[
\frac{9.96}{100} \times 40 = 4 \text{ items}
\]

- **Adjectives**: \[
\frac{19.90}{100} \times 40 = 8 \text{ items}
\]

- **Verb**: \[
\frac{22.7}{100} \times 40 = 9 \text{ items}
\]

- **Noun**: \[
\frac{47.4}{100} \times 40 = 19 \text{ item}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{40 items} & \quad + \\
\end{align*}
\]
Appendix 7 Reliability of the Piloted Test

Reliability of the Piloted Test

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<td>4500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>5625</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3600</td>
<td>4500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>5625</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>4900</td>
<td>5250</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>7225</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>4250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>6400</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>4225</td>
<td>5200</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>5625</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3025</td>
<td>4125</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>75</td>
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<td>65</td>
<td>4225</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>5625</td>
<td>4500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>600</td>
<td>45350</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>31700</td>
<td>37200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 8
ΣX = 600
ΣY = 500
ΣX² = 45350
ΣY² = 31700
ΣXY = 37200

\[ r_{xy}^{2} = \frac{[N \cdot \Sigma XY - (\Sigma X)(\Sigma Y)]^2}{[N \cdot \Sigma X^2 - (\Sigma X)^2] \cdot [N \cdot \Sigma Y^2 - (\Sigma Y)^2]} \]

\[ = \frac{[8. \cdot 37200 - (600)(500)]^2}{[8. \cdot 45350 - 360000] \cdot [8. \cdot 31700 - 250000]} \]

\[ = \frac{[297600 - 300000]^2}{[362800 - 360000] \cdot [253600 - 250000]} \]

\[ = \frac{[-2400]^2}{[2800] \cdot [3600]} \]

\[ = \frac{5760000}{10080000} \]

\[ = 0.57142857142 \]
\[ r_{xy} = \sqrt{0.57142857142} \]
\[ = 0.75592894601 \]

\[ r_{11} = \frac{2r^{1/2}}{1 + r^{1/2}} \]
\[ = \frac{2 \times 0.75592894601}{1 + 0.75592894601} \]
\[ = \frac{1.51185789204}{1.75592894601} \]
\[ = 0.86100174809 \]

According to Best and Kahn (1986: 240), the reliability of the test is considered as High to Very High.