

Correlation Between Students' Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension at Junior Islamic School

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Abstract

This study investigated the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension, conducted among eighth-grade students at an Islamic boarding school in Indonesia. The research aims to answer whether there is a correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension at the junior high school level. The population of this study was the eighth-grade students of junior Islamic school. The researcher selected students from classes A and B, with a total sample of 25 students chosen through a random sampling technique. The collected data was analyzed by using Pearson Product Moment correlation. The instruments used were vocabulary and reading tests. The results of this study showed that the calculated r-count was significantly higher than the tabulated r-table. Therefore, r-count (0.895) > r-table (0.396) indicated a positive correlation between vocabulary and reading. These findings suggested that students' vocabulary mastery had a significant influence on their reading comprehension abilities in eighth grade. It is emphasized that by building a strong vocabulary foundation, students are better equipped to comprehend the meaning and the core essence from the texts they read.

Keywords: correlation, reading comprehension, vocabulary mastery

1. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is one of the fundamental aspects of language learning. A strong vocabulary mastery is essential for effective communication, comprehension, and expression in any language, especially English as a foreign language in non-native countries. Building vocabulary is akin to constructing the foundation of a language, as one cannot truly learn a language without a rich vocabulary. In the school environment,

especially in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), vocabulary is crucial for understanding English and developing daily communication skills (Resmisari & Sitepu, 2022). Moreover, in modern boarding school settings, English language teaching policy are implemented through activities such as morning vocabulary exercises, language drills, morning conversations, vocabulary memorization, bilingual competitions, awards, and public speaking, aimed in enhancing students' communication skills competently and creatively (Febi, et al. 2023).

Furthermore, Reading requires the skills of comprehending, employing, evaluating, and reflecting upon texts for specific purposes. It also encompasses a complex interaction between the reader and the text, utilizing prior experiences and knowledge to make predictions and decisions that enhance understanding (Habók et al. 2019). Reading comprehension involves more than just scanning text; it entails understanding the meanings of words, sentences, and how ideas relate across paragraphs (Sinaga, 2022). According to Rayner et al. (2012), reading comprehension is the ability to extract essential information from a page and grasp the meaning of the text. Kimsesiz & Ataç (2023) stated that different strategies of reading comprehension activities are used to enhance students' English proficiency. These strategies include pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading approaches, which assist readers in effective text interaction. They involve setting reading goals, activating prior knowledge, identifying main ideas, taking notes, and summarizing texts to achieve deep understanding, which is crucial in foreign language contexts for clear and precise meaning delivery.

Reading comprehension is closely correlated with vocabulary mastery. In the context of reading comprehension, having a strong vocabulary mastery is essential for understanding written text effectively. Several findings found that vocabulary knowledge plays a significant role in reading comprehension for middle school students. In China, researchers acknowledged the strong correlation between vocabulary and reading, prompting curriculum planners to focus on developing students' vocabulary and their ability to infer during reading comprehension tasks (Dong et al. 2020). On the other hand, a study in Malaysia by Wong et al. (2019) asserts that vocabulary plays a crucial role in second language acquisition and is essential for comprehending various texts. Without reaching a certain level of vocabulary proficiency English Language Learners (ELL) will struggle to understand texts, thus vocabulary is considered an important indicator for measuring proficiency in a second language. The study conducted in Indonesia by Lisana et al. (2022), also concluded that there is a correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. If a student has an extensive vocabulary, they will comprehend the texts they read easier.

Vocabulary refers to the collection of words and phrases that a language employs to communicate meaning. According to Taslim, (2014), vocabulary is defined as a set of words, terms, and phrases compiled and defined within a language to facilitate communication. Individuals use this vocabulary to express ideas, communicate verbally, and describe objects or people. Therefore, vocabulary mastery is essential in supporting junior high school students in developing their reading and writing skills. A vocabulary mastery helps them not only understand texts better but also convey their ideas more accurately and meaningfully to readers. According to Daulay (2021, p.18), types of vocabulary in English can be categorized according to their groups. These types are divided

into six categories such as: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverb, adjectives and prepositions. According to the 2013 curriculum, English language learning competencies at the junior high school level pertaining to vocabulary include the following aspects: (1) Understanding and employing various types of words and phrases such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in diverse contexts and situations, (2) Comprehending and utilizing idiomatic expressions, collocations, and phrasal verbs in both oral and written communication, (3) Grasping and employing academic and technical vocabulary relevant to various subjects such as science, mathematics, and social studies, (4) Understanding and employing figurative language such as similes, metaphors, and personification in literary texts, (5) Understanding and applying prefixes, suffixes, and roots to deduce the meanings of unfamiliar words. Educators are encouraged to align their lesson plans and assessments with these competencies, offering a diverse range of learning opportunities and strategies to facilitate students' vocabulary mastery.

Reading comprehension is an active cognitive process that involves reasoning to construct meaning from a written text and understanding it effectively and thoroughly (Kasmiri et al. 2023). According to Habók et al. (2019), reading comprehension can enhance learners' English language skills and expand their knowledge by allowing them to assimilate information from the texts they read. This multifaceted process encompasses a variety of skills and strategies, including the ability to decode words, grasp vocabulary, identify main ideas, make inferences, and synthesize information. According to Sinaga (2022), the strategies of reading are (1) skimming, (2) scanning, (3) Extensive Reading, (4) Intensive Reading, (5) affection. Furthermore, there are number of competencies that should be achieved in English writing in grade 8 of junior high school according to the 2013 curriculum, as follows: (1) Ability to comprehend short functional texts, such as announcements, invitations, and simple reports, (2) Ability to identify explicit information in reading texts, (3) Ability to infer implicit information in reading texts. (4) Ability to analyze text structure, including purpose, main ideas, and development of ideas, (5) Ability to evaluate and interpret the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences in context and (6) Ability to employ reading strategies such as predicting, interpreting, and evaluating information within texts. Additionally, students are expected to employ reading strategies such as predicting, interpreting, and evaluating information within texts. Based on explanations above which has a related vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension in junior high school, the title of this research was correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension at the junior Islamic school.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 General Concept of Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to the collection of words and phrases that a language employs to communicate meaning. According to Taslim (2014), vocabulary is defined as a set of words, terms, and phrases compiled and defined within a language to facilitate communication. Individuals use this vocabulary to express ideas, communicate verbally, and describe objects or people. According to Daulay (2021), vocabulary is one of the key aspects that students must be familiar with is the variety of methods and strategies available to enhance the enjoyment and engagement in the process of learning and teaching English. In conclusion, vocabulary is a fundamental component in communication. Deeply understanding the definition and function of vocabulary, as well

as studying effective learning strategies, helps individuals enhance their language skills and fully utilize the potential of language.

2.2 Kinds of English Vocabulary

Types of vocabulary are crucial elements in learning any language, as they assist students and learners in understanding and using the target language more efficiently. Each category plays a significant role in helping learners enhance their communication skills by understanding the structure and use of the language effectively. These categories include nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, and prepositions, all of which contribute to forming accurate and meaningful sentences in both spoken and written English. According to Daulay (2021, p.18), types of vocabulary in English can be categorized according to their groups. These types are divided into six categories including nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and prepositions, each with its own function. On the other hand, Fromkin et al. (2017) divided words into two categories, content words and function words. Content words, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, have clear lexical meanings and refer to concepts, objects, or actions. In contrast, function words, such as conjunctions, prepositions, articles, and pronouns, serve to indicate grammatical relationships without adding lexical meaning. These classifications aid in understanding sentence structure. Theoretical insights offer a comprehensive framework for both linguistic analysis and language teaching, ensuring clear and effective communication across various contexts.

2.3 Vocabulary Mastery in Junior High School Context

According to the 2013 curriculum, English language learning competencies at the junior high school level pertaining to vocabulary include the following aspects: (1) Understanding and employing various types of words and phrases such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in diverse contexts and situations. (2) Comprehending and utilizing idiomatic expressions, collocations, and phrasal verbs in both oral and written communication. (3) Grasping and employing academic and technical vocabulary relevant to various subjects such as science, mathematics, and social studies. (4) Understanding and employing figurative language such as similes, metaphors, and personification in literary texts. (5) Understanding and applying prefixes, suffixes, and roots to deduce the meanings of unfamiliar words. The overarching objective of these competencies is to cultivate students' vocabulary knowledge and communication skills, enabling them to engage effectively in English communication across academic and real-world contexts. Educators are encouraged to align their lesson plans and assessments with these competencies, offering a diverse range of learning opportunities and strategies to facilitate students' vocabulary mastery. Ultimately, the main objective of this competency is to prepare students not only to achieve academic success but also to develop effective communication skills.

2.4 General Concept of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the intricate cognitive process through which individuals understand, interpret, and derive meaning from written text. Comprehension is a text involving a dynamic interaction where students draw on their prior knowledge, grasp the intended purpose of the material, and engage with the vocabulary and language complexity employed by authors to derive meaning (Smith et al., 2021). Reading

comprehension is an active cognitive process that involves reasoning to construct meaning from a written text and understanding it effectively and thoroughly (Kasmiri et al., 2023). According to Habók et al. (2019), reading comprehension can enhance learners' English language skills and expand their knowledge by allowing them to assimilate information from the texts they read. This multifaceted process encompasses a variety of skills and strategies, including the ability to decode words, grasp vocabulary, identify main ideas, make inferences, and synthesize information.

2.5 Kinds of Reading Strategies

Reading strategies are categorized into several types based on their objectives, methods used, and desired outcomes, thereby aiding students in comprehensive reading skill development. According to Sinaga (2022), the strategies of reading are as follows:

a. Skimming

Skimming is a valuable reading technique that enables readers to efficiently extract the main ideas from a text. Fatmawan et al. (2023) found that through skimming, readers can also get a key idea and allows readers to quickly grasp the overall message of a text without getting bogged down in details, making it a particularly useful tool for when there is a large amount of reading material to cover in a limited timeframe.

b. Scanning

Scanning is the ability to read a text quickly in order to find specific information. Scanning means a technique of flashback in a careful way. It has a goal to find the special information from the text. According to Mambua et al. (2020) the scanning process involves a meticulous search for specific information, such as names, dates, places, or initials, according to the reader's needs.

c. Extensive Reading

Extensive reading is the practice of reading longer texts, such as novels, magazines, or lengthy articles, for enjoyment and learning, aiming to enhance knowledge and broaden perspectives. According to Barella (2021), extensive reading encourages readers to select materials of interest and focus on comprehending the content, making it more effective in improving language proficiency, including vocabulary acquisition, compared to intensive reading, which emphasizes language rules.

d. Intensive Reading

Intensive reading is an approach that emphasizes in-depth and detailed comprehension of shorter texts, such as articles, essays, or book chapters. Taembo (2023) states that the purpose of intensive reading is to extract specific information, analyze arguments, and thoroughly understand the meaning. This means reading carefully, word by word, sentence by sentence, to grasp the precise meaning of the text. Therefore, dictionaries become essential tools in intensive reading classes.

e. Affection

Interests, motivations, beliefs and feelings belong to affection. And they will influence students' comprehension greatly. When a person is reading a piece of writing, his background experience will engage with his language ability. Through his thinking

abilities, he will comprehend according to his purpose in reading. Meanwhile his interests, motivations, beliefs, and feelings will influence the result of the comprehension. Dewi et al. (2020) Posited that an affection of reading activities is a multimedia construct encompassing affective, cognitive, and behavioral aspects, all of which contribute to the development of students' reading interest.

2.6 Reading Comprehension in Junior High School Context

There are a number of competencies that should be achieved in English writing in grade 8 of junior high school according to the 2013 curriculum, as follows: (1) Ability to comprehend short functional texts, such as announcements, invitations, and simple reports. (2) Ability to identify explicit information in reading texts. (3) Ability to infer implicit information in reading texts. (4) Ability to analyze text structure, including purpose, main ideas, and development of ideas. (5) Ability to evaluate and interpret the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences in context. (6) Ability to employ reading strategies such as predicting, interpreting, and evaluating information within texts. English is taught as a foreign language in junior high schools in Indonesia, and developing English reading skills is a crucial component of language education. According to the 2013 curriculum for eighth grade, several reading competencies must be achieved, including: the ability to comprehend short functional texts such as announcements, invitations, and simple reports; the ability to identify explicit information and infer implicit information within reading texts; the ability to analyze text structure, including purpose, main ideas, and the development of ideas; and the ability to evaluate and interpret the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences in context. Additionally, students are expected to employ reading strategies such as predicting, interpreting, and evaluating information within texts.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research approach, specifically employing a correlation method with a predictive focus. This approach systematically gathered, analyzed, interpreted, and documented the study's findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p.33). According to Creswell & Creswell (2018, p.41), quantitative research is described as a technique for evaluating objective theories by exploring the relationships between variables. Additionally, Sugiyono (2022, p.153) states that prediction-type correlation research aims to test hypotheses regarding the relationship between one dependent variable and one independent variable. These variables are measured, often using instruments, and provide numerical data that are analyzed using statistical techniques.

The method employed in this study is a correlational research method to determine whether mastery of vocabulary among junior high school students influences their reading comprehension skills. In quantitative research, a correlational design is used to examine the relationships between two or more variables. According to Creswell & Creswell (2018, p.49), a correlational design involves using correlational statistics to identify and assess the level of relationship between two or more variables or sets of scores.

In this study, two variables are examined: the independent variable (vocabulary mastery) and the dependent variable (reading comprehension). Data on these variables are systematically collected and subjected to quantitative analysis. The findings derived from these analyses are then used to draw informed conclusions at the end of the study.

3.2. Population and sample

This study utilized a quantitative research approach, specifically employing a correlation method with a predictive focus. This approach systematically gathered, analyzed, interpreted, and documented the study's findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p.33). Quantitative research was described as a technique for evaluating objective theories by exploring the relationships between variables. In this study, the target population was the eighth-grade students at an Islamic junior high school in Indonesia, consisting of 50 students. However, from a population of 50 eighth-grade students aged between 13 and 14 years, this study randomly selected 25 students as the research sample. Each student in the population was assigned a unique number, and a random number generator was used to select 25 students from this list.

3.3. Instruments

In this research, tests were used as data collection instruments, specifically vocabulary tests and reading comprehension tests. According to Creswell & Creswell (2018, p.149), tests are commonly used as data collection instruments in research. Tests are structured tools designed to measure specific variables or attributes and are often employed to assess participants' knowledge, skills, abilities, or other characteristics relevant to the study.

The vocabulary test involved multiple-choice questions where students were given ten questions to select the correct word from the provided options to complete the blanks appropriately. This test was designed to assess students' vocabulary knowledge, particularly regarding verbs. Similarly, the reading comprehension test also consisted of multiple-choice questions designed to evaluate students' reading comprehension skills, focusing on the ability to identify explicit information, understand descriptive details, recognize text structure, and interpret sentences accurately.

Both tests aimed to provide a comprehensive assessment of students' vocabulary and reading comprehension skills. The vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension tests were a compilation of assessments conducted over two semesters. Scores obtained represent students' overall performance over one academic year in the eighth grade of junior high school. The scoring rubric for the multiple-choice test was adapted from Hassan & Alnoori (2024). Each correct response was awarded 1 point, while incorrect responses received 0 points. This binary scoring method ensured an objective assessment of the students' knowledge and understanding.

3.4. Data Analysis Techniques

The study employed three key statistical tests: the Normality Test, Linearity Test, and Hypothesis Test. The Normality Test, based on Nuryadi et al. (2017), was conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method in SPSS 26 to determine whether the data were normally distributed. A p-value greater than 0.05 indicated that the data followed a normal distribution. The interpretation of the reliability coefficient was guided by the criteria

established by Witte & Witte, (2017, p.113-114). The Linearity Test, as described by Sujarweni and Utami (2019), was performed through ANOVA analysis to evaluate whether there was a significant linear relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. A p-value greater than 0.05 confirmed linearity. Lastly, the Hypothesis Test utilized Pearson product-moment correlation, which, according to Chee and Queen (2015), measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables. If the correlation coefficient exceeded the critical value from the table, it indicated a significant relationship between the variables.

4. RESULTS

The descriptive statistics for the vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the 25 students involved in the study. The minimum score for vocabulary mastery was 5, while the maximum score reached 9, resulting in a total sum of 174 and an average (mean) score of 6.96, with a standard deviation of 1.172. In contrast, reading comprehension scores ranged from a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 10, yielding a sum of 186 and an average score of 7.44, with a higher standard deviation of 1.685. These statistics indicated generally positive performance among the students in both areas, with reading comprehension showing a higher range of scores.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics Test

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	SD
Vocabulary	25	5	9	174	6.96	1.172
Reading	25	5	10	186	7.44	1.685

Source: SPSS 26 output (Researcher data 2024)

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was employed to assess the normality of the data. The following criteria were applied to interpret the Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) values:

1. If the Sig. value is higher than 0.05, the data are considered to follow a normal distribution.
2. If the Sig. value is less than 0.05, the data are considered to deviate from normality.

Likewise, the results of the normality test were presented in the table below.

Table 2 The Result of Kolmogorof-Smirnov Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		25
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	,0000000
	Std. Deviation	,75037073
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,113
	Positive	,089
	Negative	-,113
Test Statistic		,113
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,200 ^{c,d}

a. Test distribution is Normal; b. Calculated from data; c. Lilliefors Significance Correction; d. This is a lower bound of the true significance

Source: SPSS 26 output (Researcher data 2024)

Referring to the output in Table 3 the significance value is 0.200, which indicated that the results are normal since the test score exceeds 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data follows a normal distribution. The linearity test aims to determine whether two or more variables have a significant linear relationship. In this study, the significance value is assessed based on the deviation from linearity. Correspondingly, data can be considered linear if the significance level of linearity is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$).

Table 3 The Result of Linearity ANOVA (deviation from linearity)

ANOVA Table			Sum of Square	df
			s	
VOCABULARY* READING	Between Groups	(Combined)	54,960	4
		Linearity	54,647	1
		Deviation from Linearity	,313	3
Within Groups			13,200	20
Total			68,160	24

Source: SPSS 26 output (Researcher data 2024)

The table 4 indicated that the results of the linearity test showed the value of the deviation from linearity is 0.313, which is greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that the relationship between the two variables is linear. Therefore, since the relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension is linear, the next step is to conduct a Pearson Product Moment Correlation test to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between these two variables. Besides, the scatterplot diagram (Figure 1) showed that vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension were not perfectly aligned. When vocabulary mastery increases, reading comprehension also tends to increase accordingly. Although the values for these two areas did not match exactly in the scatterplot below, both demonstrated an upward trend at the same time.

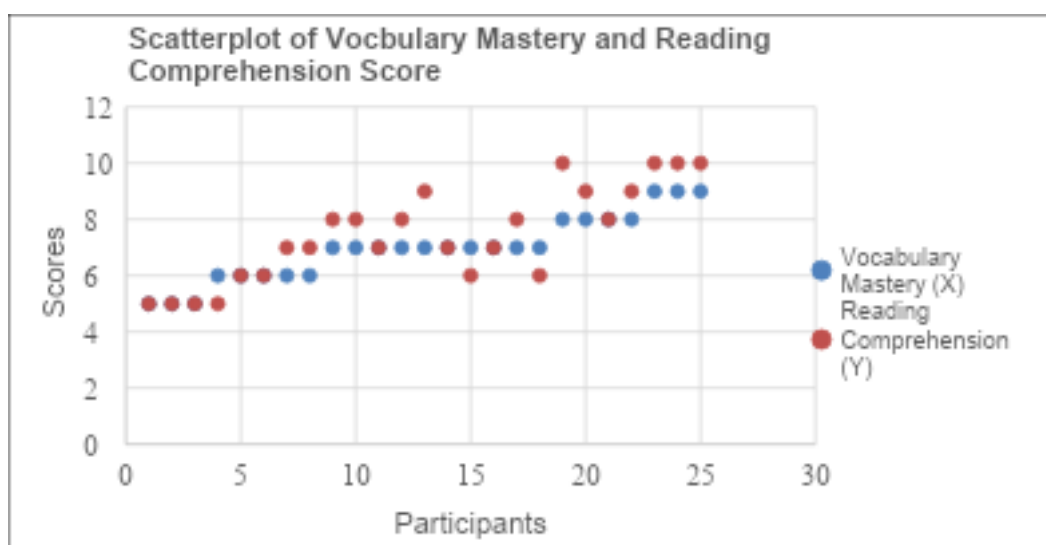


Figure 1 Scatter plot Between Vocabulary and Reading

To investigate the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension, the researcher calculated the data using SPSS 26, applying the Pearson Product-Moment correlation. This statistical method is commonly used to measure the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables. It provides a correlation coefficient (r) that ranges from -1 to 1, indicating either a negative, positive, or no relationship. A positive value suggests that as one variable increases, the other also tends to increase.

Table 4 The Result of Hypothesis Test

Correlations			
		VOCABULARY	READING
VOCABULARY	Pearson Correlation	1	,895**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N	25	25
READING	Pearson Correlation	,895**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	25	25

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

Source: SPSS 26 output (Researcher data 2024)

5. DISCUSSION

In this discussion, the researcher will explain the findings of this study regarding the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension among middle school students. This discussion aims to answer the research question about the extent to which vocabulary mastery contributes to students' ability to understand English texts. The results are presented based on the statistical analysis conducted on the collected data. Additionally, this section outlines key trends observed during the analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the variables. These findings are further interpreted in the context of relevant literature to emphasize the significance of the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.

To answer the question, "is there correlation between Students' vocabulary mastery and reading Comprehension?" the findings show a significant correlation between these two variables. Test results indicate that students with a higher level of vocabulary mastery tend to score higher on reading comprehension tests. This finding aligns with studies by Dong et al. (2020) in China that identified a positive correlation between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension among middle school students. In this context, Dong et al. recommend that curriculum development focus on expanding vocabulary to improve inferential skills during reading comprehension activities. Thus, improving vocabulary mastery can be seen as a strategic approach to enhancing students' overall reading abilities.

Furthermore, this current study highlights vocabulary as a key factor in reading comprehension, allowing students to identify main ideas and implied meanings more easily. In accordance, Sarena et al. (2023) concluded that there was a strong correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension, as vocabulary plays a significant role in helping students understand a text. Besides, Kamal et al. (2022); Lisana et al. (2022); Pravitasari & Rahmah (2024), found that students with strong vocabulary skills can

understand texts better and more effectively express their ideas in class activities. This skill is particularly important in learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia, where students often face challenges in understanding texts due to limited vocabulary. Therefore, strengthening students' vocabulary should become a priority in teaching strategies to improve their comprehension abilities.

In addition, the correlation analysis of the two variables showed that the calculated r -value (0.895) was higher than the r -table value (0.396), indicating a strong correlation between these two variables. This finding aligns with research by Putra et al. (2023), which confirmed a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension among eighth-grade students. The study showed a correlation coefficient of 0.675, with a t -value of 5.220, surpassing the critical t -value of 2.028. These results indicated that higher vocabulary mastery is associated with better reading comprehension skills. Moreover, vocabulary development and reading comprehension also play crucial roles in enhancing critical thinking skills among students. As Dagnaw (2023) stated, a strong vocabulary empowers students to articulate their ideas and opinions with precision and clarity. On the other hand, through the reading process, students are not only able to comprehend the information presented, but are also encouraged to analyze, evaluate, and connect the text with existing knowledge in their minds. Consequently, reading activities can enhance students' critical thinking abilities, which are essential for deep comprehension and analysis of texts (Ramadhani et al, 2023). However, both a strong vocabulary and reading activities are crucial in supporting students' critical thinking skills, as they play a crucial role in understanding, analyzing, and connecting information effectively.

Based on the results above, it can be concluded that vocabulary mastery has a significant impact on students' reading comprehension. In the context of middle school learning, vocabulary forms an essential foundation that enables students to better understand the meaning of texts and develop critical thinking skills for text analysis. Students with a rich vocabulary are more likely to decode unfamiliar words, identify key ideas, and make inferences, which are crucial for comprehensive understanding. Furthermore, vocabulary knowledge supports students in grasping nuances, cultural references, and context, enhancing their overall reading experience. Therefore, enhancing vocabulary mastery should be prioritized in the curriculum to ensure students' success in reading comprehension tasks.

6. CONCLUSION

This study highlighted a significant positive relationship between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension abilities in eighth-grade students at the junior high school level. Likewise, this finding confirmed that there is a significant relationship between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension, meaning that students with a better vocabulary tend to have improved reading comprehension skills. This study has also emphasized the critical role that vocabulary plays in students' ability to comprehend English texts effectively. Furthermore, this study explored the important aspects of vocabulary mastery, particularly how a stronger vocabulary foundation enhances students' understanding of texts and improves their ability to engage with reading materials. Vocabulary mastery, which refers to the breadth of words a student knows and understands, plays a pivotal role in helping students grasp

the meaning of texts. This study revealed that students with a stronger vocabulary can better understand and analyze texts, which in turn boosts their reading comprehension skills.

Moreover, it concluded that there was a strong positive correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension abilities. Furthermore, this study indicates that improving vocabulary mastery can enhance students' reading comprehension, so educators may consider implementing vocabulary-focused activities in their teaching strategies to support the development of students' English reading skills. Accordingly, this study enriches the existing literature by providing a new perspective on the relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension. This study also adds a new dimension by exploring the role of vocabulary in the teaching and learning context within Islamic boarding schools. However, this study has limitations, particularly in the sample size, as it was only conducted with eighth-grade students at an Islamic boarding school in Indonesia and did not account for other factors such as students' prior knowledge and motivation. Therefore, future research is recommended to use a larger sample size and to consider additional variables that may influence reading comprehension.

7. IMPLICATION

The findings of this study have several practical and theoretical implications. First, the positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension underscores the importance of integrating vocabulary-focused activities into instructional strategies. These activities can enhance students' ability to understand and analyze texts, ultimately improving their academic performance in English. Additionally, curriculum developers should prioritize vocabulary enrichment as a core component of English instruction, ensuring that vocabulary and reading comprehension are treated as interconnected skills.

From a policy perspective, especially within Islamic boarding schools, this study highlights the need for policies that emphasize vocabulary development. Providing access to diverse and culturally relevant reading materials can help support students in building stronger language and comprehension skills. Theoretically, this study contributes to a broader understanding of vocabulary's role in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. It provides a foundation for future research to explore the relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension across varied educational settings, age groups, and socio-cultural contexts.

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