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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VOCABULARY MASTERY, CONTENT SCHEMATA AND READING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT

Recently there has been a great debate among the educators which one dominates between vocabulary mastery and content schemata to improve students' reading comprehension. To counter this issue, this present study tries to investigate whether the combination of vocabulary mastery and content schemata are significantly related to reading comprehension, whether there is a significant relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension while content schemata is held constant, and whether there is a significant relationship between content schemata and reading comprehension while vocabulary is held constant. The writer used two stages sampling technique. Two-stage random sampling is combination of cluster random sampling with individual random sampling. Therefore, 54 students out of 216 students of the eighth grade in academic year 2013/2014 were chosen. The method of the research was a correlation study. Two types of research instruments were used to collect the data. They were multiple-choice tests and questionnaire. Then the data were analyzed by multiple correlations and multiple regressions. Based on the results of the data analysis, there were three conclusions drawn: first, the combination of vocabulary mastery (X1) and content schemata (X2) are jointly related to reading comprehension (Y). Second, there is a significant relationship between vocabulary mastery (X1) and reading comprehension (Y). Third, there is a significant relationship between the content schemata (X2) and reading comprehension (Y). Based on the finding of the three test hypotheses, it was found that the test estimated regression equation on content schemata is higher than vocabulary mastery. It means that students with minimum vocabulary mastery can still comprehend a text with an appropriate content schema.

Key words: Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary Mastery, and Content Schemata

INTRODUCTION

Based on the writer's pre-observation, a problem faced by the students is vocabulary mastery. The English teacher of the second grade of SMPN 125 Jakarta stated that her students' failure in achieving the reading comprehension due to the limitation of words possessed by the students. Most of students fail to achieve the minimum standard of determined score. The students often have difficulty to process, transfer and interpret the meaning. As known, the words are the basic unit of language. The lack of vocabulary will make the students get difficult to

comprehend a text. Another problem in SMPN 125 students lacks of background knowledge or content schemata of the reading content. There are some students who cannot activate their content schemata knowledge properly. For that reason, it is an essential for the students to possess this kind of background knowledge or content schemata to support their reading comprehension. If the considerations such as vocabulary and content schema process of teaching reading mentioned above are neglected by the teachers, they will automatically lead the students to fail to develop their reading comprehension.



Considering the above fact and the necessity to solve the problems, the writer is inspired to conduct a correlation study in order to investigate whether there are relationships between vocabulary mastery, content schemata and reading comprehension jointly together, there is a significant relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension, and there is a significant relationship between the content schemata and reading comprehension.

Differential success in reading comprehension may be caused by several factors such as linguistics schemata (vocabulary and grammar mastery), content schemata (background knowledge), formal schemata (form of texts), motivation, learning strategies and even gender. However, this present study mainly focuses on investigating the relationship between vocabulary mastery, content schemata and reading comprehension. There are several previous studies which are related studies on schemata reading research and vocabulary mastery. However, none of the studies discusses the relationship between vocabulary, content schemata and reading comprehension jointly together.

As stated by Anthony, Pearson, and Raphael (1993:284) that reading comprehension is widely considered as complex process included the reader who tries to bring their background knowledge to read the text which is consisted from knowledge. Moreover, Nunan says (1998:23) "reading is a process of coding written symbols from smaller unit (letter) to bigger unit (word, phrases, and sentence)." The correlation between the reader and text is also described by Grabe and L. Stoller (2002:9) that reading is ability to get meaning from written form and interpret this information given appropriately. From the definitions above, the writer concludes that reading comprehension is an activity in that involves interactions between the readers and the text in process of getting information or idea from the written text.

Meanwhile, vocabulary is one of the most important steps to comprehend a text. Students can comprehend the reading text by mastering sufficient vocabulary. Considering the importance of language vocabulary, it is, therefore, important to teach vocabulary effectively and optimally in EFL. Ur also states (1996:60) that vocabulary is one the most important aspects in a language learning. Furthermore, Richards and Renandya

say (2008:255) "vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write."

Cook, further, says (1991:31) "Vocabulary is as words which are related one to another so the meaning depends on the context." It can be concluded that vocabulary is dealing with word. Thus, to define vocabulary specifically, the writer has to discuss the definition of word. Word is also stated by Trask (2007:324), O'Grady (2005:115), and Bloomfield in Aitchison (2008:56) that word is the smallest unit of language occurred in both spoken and written. Based on the definitions above, it is concluded that vocabulary mastery is the knowledge of words and meanings possessed by human through acquiring from exposures, and the skills to use the words possessed approximately either oral or written.

Another important factor to comprehend a text is to possess content schemata. The closer relationships between a reader and a text, the more comprehension occurs. A reader tends to bring their content schemata to predict and guess what the text is all about. Based on the previous research on L2 reading suggests that the readers' background knowledge play a significant role in reading (Johnson (1992), Nuttal (1996), Aebersold and Field (1997). Those researchers indicate the following results: (a) lack of content schema or the failure to activate an appropriate schema can significantly impair or hinder the students' understanding, (b) appropriate content schema application can increase the understanding on the text, (c) background knowledge can be just as important as language ability to acquired by the students. There are three dimensions related to content schemata. They include topic familiarity, cultural knowledge, and previous experience with a field or knowledge about the world, (Issa (2006), Aebersold and Field (1997), and Hakiki and Razi (2009). As it is known, if someone got closer with a text they read, they will comprehend the text.

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted at SMPN 125 Jakarta. The school is located at Jl. Utan Jati Pegadungan Kalideres Jakarta Barat 11830. The research was started from November and ended in June 2014. This research belongs to quantitative



in which the method used in this research is correlational research. Fraenkel and Wallen (2007:335) state that in a simple form, correlational study investigates the possibility of relationships between only two variables, although investigations of more than two variables are common.

The technique of sampling used in this research is two-stage random sampling. Frankel and Wallen (2007:335) notice that two-stage random sampling is combination of cluster random sampling with individual random sampling. It is useful to take sample in a large population. That sampling means that there are three grades in SMPN 125 namely 7th, 8th and 9th as cluster random sampling. From those grades, the writer chooses 8th grade as cluster random sampling and from the 8th grade, the writer will take 25% from the population in each class as individual random sampling. This idea is taken by Arikunto (2006:134) that representative sample can be obtained 15% up to 25% of the population if the population is more than 100 persons.

The instruments used to collect data of the variables are in the following. (1) For the vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension, the writer used the written technique in the form of multiple choice items and (2) for the content schemata; the writer used the questionnaire. The reliability and validity were conducted. The reliability was measured by using KR 20 Formula for multiple-choice and the validity was measured by using test-item analysis. Meanwhile, the instrument of content schemata was tested and analyzed to know the validity and reliability of the instrument. The item validity was measured by correlating each item of the instrument with their total score by using Person correlation formula (product moment correlation) and the Alpha Cronbach formula was used.

In this research the techniques of analyzing data used were correlation and regression analysis technique. To use the regression analysis, it is important to meet certain requirements. Among others are the sample must be randomly taken, all the variables are linearly correlated, the variable distributions must be normal or near normal and the homogeneity of error variances. In addition, to test whether the samples taken come from populations with the same distribution or not, the homogeneity test was conducted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The writer presents three types of data: the scores of students' reading comprehension (Y), the scores of students' vocabulary mastery (X1) and the scores of students' content schemata (X2). From the research data collected, the writer computed them by using descriptive statistics inclusive of size convergence of the data by using SPSS 20.0 for Windows Versions, such as average (mean), median and mode. The size diversity was also measured such as range, standard deviation, minimum and maximum score.

Table 1 Frequency of Variable Y

		Reading			
		Fre qu en cy	Perc ent	Valid Perc ent	Cumul ative Perc ent
Valid	48.00	1	1.9	1.9	1.9
	52.00	1	1.9	1.9	3.7
	55.00	2	3.7	3.7	7.4
	60.00	3	5.6	5.6	13.0
	62.00	2	3.7	3.7	16.7
	64.00	7	13.0	13.0	29.6
	67.00	6	11.1	11.1	40.7
	69.00	6	11.1	11.1	51.9
	71.00	9	16.7	16.7	68.5
	74.00	7	13.0	13.0	81.5
	76.00	2	3.7	3.7	85.2
	79.00	3	5.6	5.6	90.7
	81.00	2	3.7	3.7	94.4
	83.00	2	3.7	3.7	98.1
	86.00	1	1.9	1.9	100.0
Total		54	100.0	100.0	

Before testing and analyzing the research data, the test of analysis assumptions such as test of normality, test of homogeneity and test of linearity have been done to the data by using SPSS 20.0 for Windows Versions. The results showed that all data are normal distributed, homogenous, and linier. After collecting the results of the test and calculating them with SPSS 20.0, the writer used Correlation Product Moment to see how the variables relate to one other and Multiple Regression Analysis to test the relationships between the two independent variables with the dependent variable and the relationships between each independent variable with the independent variable.

Table 4. The Relationships among the Variables

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.840 ^a	.706	.695	4.31953

a. Predictors: (Constant), schemata, vocabulary

Based on Table 4, it was found that multiple correlation coefficient R was 0.840. It means that the relationships among the variables are positive and strong. The R^2 was 0.706. It can be said that 70.6% of variability in students' reading comprehension can be explained by its linear relationship with the vocabulary mastery and content schemata.

Table 5 Testing of the Relationships

From Table 5, the writer found that p value of the multiple regressions is in the level of significance of 0.000. It is smaller than α 0.05. In conclusion, the writer decided to reject H_0 and accept H_1 . It can be concluded that there are significant relationships between the combinations of vocabulary mastery, content schemata and reading comprehension.

Table 6 Table of Correlation

Correlations			
	Vocabulary	schemata	reading
Pearson Correlation	1	.154	.766**
Sig. (2-tailed)		.266	.000
N	54	54	54

Pearson Correlation	.154	1	.459**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.266		.000
N	54	54	54

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2285.759	2	1142.880	61.253	.000 ^b
Residual	951.574	51	18.658		
Total	3237.333	53			

a. Dependent Variable: reading

b. Predictors: (Constant), schemata, vocabulary

Pearson Correlation	.766*	.459**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
N	54	54	54

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

Based on correlation table above, it was obtained that the correlation coefficient between vocabulary mastery (X1) and reading comprehension (Y) is r_{y1} was 0.766 with the p value 0.000. It means that the relationship between vocabulary mastery (X1) and reading comprehension (Y) is positive and significant. In addition, the correlation table shows that the correlation coefficient between content schemata (X2) and reading comprehension (Y) is r_{y2} was 0.459 with the level of significance 0,000. It can be said that the relationship between variable (X2) and (Y) is positive and significant.



Table 7 Testing of the Second and Third Hypotheses

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	58.923	18.362		-3.209	.002
1 Vocabulary	.633	.068	.713	9.273	.000
Schemata	.719	.158	.349	4.541	.000

a. Dependent Variable: reading

Based on the above table 7, it was found that the p value was 0.000. It was smaller than α 0.05. Therefore, the writer decided to reject H_0 2 and accepted H_1 2. It can be summarized that there is a significant relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension while content schema is held constant. Test of the second hypotheses was also done by using t test. From the table the writer got the t statistic 9.273.

With the degree of freedom (df) denominator 51 and α 0.05 the writer got the t critical 2.008. It can be found that t statistic was greater than t critical so the decision was reject H_0 2 and accept H_1 2. So, it can be inferred that there is a significant relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension while content schema is held constant. Furthermore, from estimated regression equation it was found that the b_1 is 0.633. It means that if the vocabulary mastery increases by 1 point, the students' reading comprehension will increase by 0.633 point controlling for the content schemata.

From the coefficient table 7 above, it was found that the p value is 0.000. It is smaller than α 0.05. Therefore, H_0 3 is rejected and accept H_1 3. It can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between content schemata and reading comprehension while vocabulary mastery is held constant. The writer also used t test to test the relationship between variable X_2 and Y. With

the degree of freedom (df) denominator 51, α 0.05 the t critical is 2.008. From the table, the researcher got the t statistic which is 4.541. It can be seen that t statistic is greater than t critical. Therefore, it can be concluded that there are significant relationship between content schemata and reading comprehension while vocabulary mastery is held constant. From the estimated regression equation, it was found that the b_2 is 0.719. It means that if the students' content schemata increase by 1 point, their reading comprehension will increase by 0.719 while vocabulary mastery is held constant.

Based on test of the three hypotheses that have been done, it was found that all variables are significantly related. Based on the finding of the first test hypotheses, it was found that R was 0.840. It indicates that the relationships among the variables are positive and very strong. Meanwhile, R^2 was 0.706. It means that 70.6% of variability in students' reading comprehension can be explained by the vocabulary mastery and the content schemata, whereas 29.4% of variability in student's reading comprehension can be explained by other factors. Next, the finding from ANOVA table revealed that $F= 61.253$ and was significant. It was indicated by p value of the regression was in the level of significance of 0.000 which was smaller than α 0.05. It was found that there are significant relationships between the combination of vocabulary mastery and content schemata and reading comprehension. In addition, the scatterplot of normality of residuals shows that the dots were spread which means that the regression of the residuals is normal. The result of students' reading comprehension test shows that the average score of the students was 69. It means that the students' reading comprehension is low since the score is under 70, as the minimum determined score. It means some students failed to comprehend a text.

From 42 reading items testes to the students, the writer found that item no 39 which was about asking for general information, was answered by many students. There were 48 out of 54 students who could answer it correctly. On the other hand, item No. 7 and 9 which were about asking for unstated information, was answered by a few students. There were 25 out of 54 students who could not answer correctly for these questions. For the rest of dimensions, the students' score were in the medium level. The result reveals that the students' reading



comprehension in asking unstated information questions were harder from other dimension. Meanwhile, their comprehension in general information score were better from other dimension.

As the test result, most students failed to comprehend text No. 1 to 3 about the writer's experience on Tsunami at Aceh in 2006, were answered by a few students. They had a few content schemata on that text because first they did not live near the beach and second they were born in 2009; whereas the Tsunami happened in 2006.

Related to the conceptual framework, vocabulary mastery and content schemata have positive relationships with reading comprehension. A student who masters vocabulary will be able to use the words that he is going to comprehend a text based on a particular reading context. Therefore, his comprehending will be more proper when he is going to read a text. Meanwhile, a student who has appropriate content schemata such as topic familiarity, background knowledge, and previous experience with a field or knowledge about the world enables him to comprehend a text easily and fast. On the other hand, if the students lack vocabulary and have low content schemata their reading comprehension will be a problem in comprehending a text well. In addition, they tend to comprehend a text slowly and hard because they need to translate the words in the text one by one. Furthermore, if the considerations such as vocabulary and content schema process of teaching reading are neglected by the teachers, they will automatically lead the students to fail to develop their reading comprehension. Therefore, the combination of vocabulary mastery and content schemata, as mentioned above, of course will enable students to achieve their comprehension as expected more successfully.

Based on the finding of the second test hypotheses, it is found that the p value was 0.000. It means that the p value 0.000 was smaller than α 0.05. It can be summarized that there is a significant relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension while content schemata is held constant. From the estimated regression equation, it was found that the b_1 is 0.633. It means that if the students' vocabulary increases by 1 point, their reading comprehension will increase by 0.633 while content schemata is

held constant. The test of vocabulary mastery used by the researcher covers the dimensions of vocabulary such as synonym, antonym, spelling, and word definition. Based on the result of the vocabulary test, it is seen that the highest score was 88, the lowest score was 53 and the average score was 69. This score is in the low level.

From 40 items tested to the students, the writer found that item No.40, which was about choosing the word definition, was answered by many students. There were 44 out of 54 students who could answer correctly for this item. On the one hand, item No. 7, which was about synonym, answered by a few students since only 23 out of 54 students could answer it correctly. For the rest of the dimensions the students' scores were in the medium level. The result reveals that students' vocabulary mastery in spelling and some word definitions were better from other dimensions; whereas, their mastery in synonym is still low. In order to develop their reading comprehension well, students need to learn more all dimensions of vocabulary.

Related to the conceptual framework, vocabulary mastery has positive relationships with reading comprehension. A student who possesses good vocabulary mastery will be able to comprehend texts given easily since she or he knows what the text is about. This means that vocabulary mastery is considered as one of decisive factors to get the success of reading comprehension. By mastering vocabulary, the students are able to use and select the types of words that he is going to use to comprehend a text based on a particular reading context. Therefore, his understanding on a text will be proper. As a result, it can be inferred that vocabulary mastery supports the success of reading comprehension. In other words, the higher one's vocabulary mastery, the better his reading comprehension will be. As mentioned previously a student who has a good mastery of vocabulary can quickly comprehend the text. The more words one knows, the better he/she understands a text. As also stated by Richards and Renandya (2008:225), Baumann & Kame'enui (1991: 604-632), Graves, Brunetti & Slater (1992: 99-104), and Thorbury (2002:11), vocabulary plays important role for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. In addition, it was found that the writer's data support the theory in which vocabulary helps the reader to understand the message of the source language.



The richness of vocabulary has very conspicuous effects on the students because vocabulary is one of the most important aspects in language learning. Therefore, the students who possess better knowledge of vocabulary or know many vocabulary items and its appropriate usage tend to comprehend the text better than those who possess limited vocabulary mastery.

The finding of the third test hypotheses revealed that the p value is 0.00. It is smaller than α 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between content schemata and reading comprehension controlling for vocabulary mastery. The result of the test of linearity of the regression equation of Y on X_2 revealed that the F statistic was 4.541, while the F critical is 2.008. It can be seen that F statistic is greater than F critical. It is concluded that the regression equation of Y on X_2 is linear. From the estimated regression equation, it was found that the b_2 is 0.719. It means that if the students' content schemata increase by 1 point, their reading comprehension will increase by 0.719 point while vocabulary mastery is held constant.

Content schemata can be viewed from certain dimensions such as background knowledge – previous experience with a field or knowledge about the world and topic familiarity. Students with these dimensions comprehend a text easily and fast. In addition, they motivated to learn reading comprehension. The result of the students' content schemata showed that the highest score of students' content schemata was 126, and the lowest score was 107. The average score was 116.57.

Related to the conceptual framework, content schemata have positive relationships with reading comprehension. A student who activates his/her schemata on the text read will be able to comprehend texts given easily. This means that activating to use schemata is an important factor to get the success of reading comprehension. As the result, using schemata is very important and supports students' success in developing their reading comprehension. In addition, the statistical data shows that people who have good schemata have a strong ability comprehend the text because the closer relationships between a reader and a text, the more comprehension occurs. Therefore, having and activating schemata will contribute to the achievement of reading comprehension. The development of students' content schemata, as mentioned by Johnson (1982), Nuttal (1996),

Aebersold and Field (1997), of course will enable students to achieve their reading comprehension more successfully. Based on the discussion above, it is clear that there is a positive relationship between content schemata and students' reading comprehension. In other words, the higher one's content schemata, the better his reading comprehension will be.

However, based on the finding of the three test hypotheses, it was found that the test estimated regression equation on content schemata 0.719 is higher than vocabulary mastery 0.633. It means that students with minimum vocabulary mastery can still comprehend a text with an appropriate content schema. As also mentioned by Ahmad Al-Issa (2006), "The ability to understand a text is based not only on the reader's linguistic knowledge, but also on general knowledge of the world and the extent to which that knowledge is activated during processing." In other words, possessing much content schemata can facilitate the students to comprehend a text because a language in text is not only the simple combination of vocabulary, sentence structure and grammar but also the levels of the language culture. Therefore, to some extent content schemata can be very helpful to make up for the lack of linguistics schemata because reader sometimes uses predicting or guessing the meaning, choosing information, and removing the ambiguities to understand the content of the text.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The result of this research is expected to be beneficial for the English teachers, the students, the school, English textbook author and the other researchers. Especially, for the English teachers who teach at second grade students in Junior High school, the result showed that vocabulary mastery and content schemata are important to develop students' reading comprehension. Therefore, the teaching and learning of reading should not neglect the improvement of students' vocabulary mastery and content schemata. The implications of the result of the research are in the following:

1. Vocabulary plays a decisive role in developing students' reading comprehension. To be able to comprehend a text, students must possess sufficient words and knowledge of vocabulary. Moreover, they must know how to use the words in appropriate context in a text. Based on the result of the research, the

writer found that the students who got high scores for their vocabulary test tend to comprehend much better than those who got low scores for their vocabulary test. It indicates that vocabulary mastery support the students' reading comprehension. Vocabulary becomes the core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well students comprehend a text. For this reason, the English teachers should be able to teach vocabulary effectively and optimally to their students. It can be started from carefully selecting a reading material for the students until how to assess the students' vocabulary. Furthermore, teacher should be able to determine what vocabulary could be learned from such texts, and how well it is learned. Students are also need to be taught to use the strategies in guessing, understanding, using and remembering words.

2. Content schemata have a good contribution to the development of students' reading comprehension. Content schemata enable the students to build bridge between the reader and a text. Based on the result of research, the writer found that the students who have good content schemata tend to have a good comprehension. In line with this fact, the English teachers should pay more attention to the students' content schemata. Teachers are supposed to facilitate the students by creating some activities that can help students activate or even develop their content schemata such as asking and giving questions, using pictures, songs or quizzes.
3. Based on the finding of the three test hypotheses, it was found that the test estimated regression equation on content schemata 0.719 is higher than vocabulary mastery 0.633. It means that students with minimum vocabulary mastery can still comprehend a text with an appropriate content schema. Therefore, to some extent content schemata can be very helpful to make up for the lack of vocabulary because reader sometimes uses predicting or guessing the meaning, choosing information, and removing the ambiguities to understand the content of the text.

Based on the above result and implication, some suggestions are proposed as follows:

1. To the English teachers, in order to develop the students' reading comprehension, it is suggested not to separate the process of teaching and learning reading comprehension from the development of students' vocabulary mastery and content schemata. Teachers need to use various techniques and provide interesting reading activities that give more opportunities for the students to use their vocabulary in reading comprehension. Furthermore, teacher should encourage the students to practice their reading by giving them intensive and extensive reading task. If the students are more exposed to English, they will be get used to use their English well. Meanwhile, to develop students' content schemata, teachers need to establish a positive environment. It can be done by asking and giving questions, using pictures, songs or quizzes.
2. To the school, it is suggested to facilitate the students with some activities and facilities that can improve the students' reading comprehension, vocabulary mastery and content schemata. First, to improve the students' reading comprehension, the school needs to hold some activities such as wall magazine and reading news contest. These activities should be done regularly to motivate the students to comprehend better and better. Second, to improve the students' vocabulary mastery, it is necessary for the school to enrich the sources of English text book in its library. Authentic texts such as English magazines and newspapers are also suggested to be available in the library. Third, to develop the students' content schemata, school has to facilitate teachers to meet the seminar or sources for learning and teaching. Therefore, teachers are able to teach reading effectively by activating students' content schemata.
3. For the English textbooks' author, this result of the research can give positive information about to extents the content schemata knowledge such as asking and giving questions, using pictures, songs or quizzes to construct the content schemata before students read a text. Thus, in the future, the books used by the students should activate the students' content schemata before asking students to read the texts.



4. Finally, for other researchers, the result of the research can provide some informative inputs to conduct another investigation in the same field with certain interest. The other researchers might investigate in the same field. However, they might see from the lower, middle, and smart students by using interview and observation how content schemata and vocabulary really contribute on the students' reading comprehension.

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