

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ENGLISH VOCABULARY MASTERY AND TRANSLATION ABILITY IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract

Learning language especially English as the foreign language is crucial. People who want to learn English have to at least possess English vocabulary mastery and translation ability. The purposes of this research are to find out students capability in English vocabulary mastery and translation ability and to find out the problems that students face in learning English. The research was conducted on XI grade students. In this research, the writer used interview, observation, vocabulary mastery test, translation ability test and literature study to obtain the data. Based on the findings of this research, it can be concluded that the average score of students' vocabulary mastery test is 65.15 and the average score of students' translation ability is 63.93. Both indicate that students capability in English language especially in vocabulary mastery and translation ability is low. Students also faced difficulties in answering questions containing low frequency vocabularies because they rarely see or read the words.

Keywords: vocabulary mastery, translation ability, test, interview, observation.

Abstrak

Belajar bahasa Inggris merupakan hal yang sangat penting. Orang yang ingin belajar bahasa paling tidak harus memiliki kemampuan kosakata dan menerjemah. Tujuan penelitian adalah untuk mengetahui kemampuan kosakata dan menerjemah siswa dan mengetahui masalah yang dihadapi oleh para siswa dalam belajar bahasa Inggris. Penelitian dilaksanakan di kelas XI MIPA SMA Santo Fransiskus Asisi Pontianak. Penulis menggunakan wawancara, observasi, tes kemampuan kosakata, tes kemampuan menerjemah dan studi literatur untuk mengumpulkan data. Berdasarkan temuan penelitian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa nilai rata-rata tes kemampuan kosakata siswa adalah 65,15 dan nilai rata-rata kemampuan menerjemah siswa adalah 63,93. Keduanya mengindikasikan bahwa kemampuan kosakata dan menerjemah siswa berada pada kategori rendah. Temuan penelitian juga menunjukkan bahwa para siswa kesulitan dalam menjawab pertanyaan yang berisikan kosakata dengan frekuensi rendah karena jarang melihat atau membaca kosakata tersebut.

Kata Kunci: kemampuan kosakata, kemampuan menerjemah, tes, wawancara, observasi.

INTRODUCTION

English is an international language and one of the most used language in the world. Learning English is essential since there are many jobs which demanded English skill. English also one of the subject which is tested in national

exam. People learn English by a number of ways, one of them is through translation. English language lesson in Indonesia begins to be taught at junior high school. In English Proficiency Index (2018), Indonesia is ranked 51st in reading and listening skills, which is categorized as low. Students often feel hard to learn vocabulary and translate a text or conversation. When the writer studied at Senior High School in Pontianak in 2013 to 2015, the writer noticed that many students in the class that had learnt English language since elementary school still had difficulties in doing English assignment and examination. One of the problems is when students are trying to translate a text but do not understand the vocabulary. This may result in a failure to translate a text.

A previous study states that translation is a process of finding equivalence from one language to another language, and in translating the text, the translating was also adapting the style and the culture without changing the meaning. Furthermore, a previous study also states about a good translation characteristic that is a good translation should transfer the idea from the source language to the target language as similar as in the original text, and therefore the translator should understand the source text before transferring the idea into another language (Savitri, 2018).

There are two problem formulation of this research, they are: how is the students' capability and what is the students' problem in English vocabulary mastery and translation ability. Then, based on the problem formulation, purposes of this research are to find out the students' vocabulary and translation ability and to find out the problems that the students face in learning English. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write.

Richards and Renandya (2002) also added that without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve less than their potential and may be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities around them such as listening to the radio, listening to native speakers, using the language in different contexts, reading, or watching

television. According to Linse (2005), language consists of words. Vocabulary is the collection of words that an individual know. Moreover, Hornby (1987) states that vocabulary is total number of words in which by combining them will make up language, or range of word known used by a person then the word arranged in alphabetical order and defined or otherwise identified as in a dictionary or glossary.

Hatch and Brown (1995) states that vocabulary is a list of words for a particular language or a set of word that individual speakers of language might use. It means that list of word which are known and collected by someone are called vocabulary. Hiebert and Kamil (2005) state that generically, vocabulary is the knowledge of meanings of words. They also added that words comes from two forms: oral and print, also words knowledge comes from two forms as well: receptive and productive. When someone wants to learn or master a second language, it is important for them to learn the vocabulary first. Wilkins (1972) notes that without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.

The writer concludes that vocabulary is the core of a language, and without sufficient knowledge about vocabulary, learners will get difficulties in learning the target language. In order to achieve effective communication in speaking, listening, writing, and reading learners have to learn the target language vocabulary. In this case, the writers chose writing as the main focus of this research.

Thornburry (2002) classified the types of vocabulary into two types, they are receptive and productive vocabulary. According to them, there are two types of vocabulary related to language skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing, they are receptive or passive vocabulary which refers to the words that native speakers and foreign learners recognize and understand but it hardly ever use, it is used passively in reading and listening, and productive vocabulary which is utilized actively either in speaking or writing. Productive vocabulary refers to the words which learners use when they speak or write and it called active vocabulary. Thornburry (2002) also states that in learning vocabulary, there are

classification of word, they are noun, verb, adjective, adverb, conjunction, determiner, pronoun and preposition.

Schmitt and Schmitt (2014) state there are three kinds of vocabulary, they are high, mid and low frequency vocabulary. According to Schmitt and Schmitt (2014), high-frequency vocabulary is the most frequent 2,000 word families form the traditional cut-off point for high frequency vocabulary, a tradition widely cited in teacher guidebooks and research publications. High-frequency vocabulary is words that commonly used in written texts, books and more. Moreover, according to Schmitt and Schmitt (2014), mid-frequency vocabulary is in between vocabulary, high-frequency vocabulary in English extends up to about 3,000 word families, and that low-frequency vocabulary begins at about the 9,000 frequency level. This leaves a great gap between the 3,000 and 9,000 levels which has not been systematically addressed before. Then, according to Schmitt and Schmitt (2014), low-frequency vocabulary is where vocabulary becomes so infrequent that it has very limited utility. The obvious way of setting the boundary of low-frequency vocabulary is by looking at frequency distributions. That statement mean that words from the first 9000 onwards are categorized as low-frequency vocabulary.

According to Crystal (Regmi, 2010), translation is a process where the meaning and expression from the source language is transferred to the meaning of the target language verbally or written. According to Halai (Regmi, 2010), translation is a process to transform text from source language to another language. Torop (Regmi, 2010), stated that translation is a procedure of converting ideas expressed from source language to another language. Torop (Regmi, 2010) added that translation process as basically a boundary-crossing between two different languages. Translation is a process where the meaning and the expression of source language turned or transferred into target language through speaking or writings.

Catford (1965) defines that translation is the replacement of textual material in one language (source language) by equivalent textual material in one language (target language). It means that translation is an activity of rewriting a text from

the source language into the target language without modifying or changing the meaning in order to make the reader understand the content of the text. Then, Larson (1984) states that translation is transferring the meaning of the source language into the receptor language. This is done by going from the form of the first language to the form of the second language by way of semantic structure. It is meaning which is being transferred and must be held constant. It means that translation is a process of replacing or transferring messages, thought, ideas, meaning or information from the source language to the target language and the important point in the translation process is the translator must not change the meaning of the message of the original text.

Newmark (2001) states that translation is a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in another language. It means that translation is applying someone's ability through transferring the meaning of source language into the receptor language or the target language both written and oral. In translating a text, a translator need to consider the accuracy, readability and acceptability such Savitri (2018) states that the accuracy, readability and acceptability is necessary to consider in translation process and when assessing the translation quality.

According to Nababan (Fajria, 2015), there are 10 types of translation, they are word-for-word translation, free translation, literal translation, dynamic translation, pragmatic translation, esthetic-poetic translation, ethnographic, linguistics translation, communicative translation, and semantic translation. Word-for-word translation is the type of translation which is only concerned with word level translation in a sentence. In this type, translator finds the equivalence of the word in the target language. This research used word-for-word translation to test the vocabulary mastery and translation ability of students because most of the questions in students' LKS is a word-for-word translation.

Curriculum is an educational program which is provided by the government and must be followed by the school. Winarso (2015) states that curriculum is an educational program provided by the government to the school to teach the students, within the program students do various learning activities, so students

changes in their manner, in accordance with the goals of education and learning. Winarso (2015) also added that curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding content and material of teaching as well as guidelines for learning activities to achieve educational goals. Santo Fransiskus Asisi Senior High School Pontianak uses *Kurikulum 2013 Revisi* for X and XI grade.

Considering the important of vocabulary mastery and translation ability, the writers are interested to conduct a research entitled "An Analysis of Students' English Vocabulary Mastery and Translation Ability in Senior High School."

METHOD

In this research, the writers used qualitative research method. The writers chose qualitative research because the writers wanted to investigate students' capabilities and students' problems in vocabulary mastery and translation ability, the writers wanted a depth understanding of students' capabilities and their problems in English language lesson by using interview, observation and test questions. In this research, the writers chose Santo Fransiskus Asisi Senior High School Pontianak students as the participant of the research. This research used interview, observation and test as the data collection techniques. This interview was conducted with one English teacher who teaches English class of grade XI of Santo Fransiskus Asisi Senior High School Pontianak.

This research used semi-standardized or semi-structured interview. Semi-standardized interview do not fully followed a structured questions and permits the exploration of spontaneous issues rised by the interviewee to be explored. The interview was conducted to ask about the current students vocabulary mastery and translation ability, the problem that students face and about the usage of students' worksheet. The interview was conducted on 23rd of April 2019 at Santo Fransiskus Asisi Senior High School Pontianak with a duration of 9 minutes and with 7 questions asked. Observation also used to be the primary data collecting method of this research. The writers went to the school on 2nd May 2019 to observe the behaviour, environment and class equipment of XI grade students of

Santo Fransiskus Asisi Senior High School Pontianak by observing the students in their learning process.

The statement above states that test is a measuring instrument or procedure used in the framework of score measurement. The research uses test as the instrument of data collection. The writers made a test for vocabulary mastery and translation ability of students for Santo Fransiskus Asisi Senior High School Pontianak based on students' worksheet book for second semester. The vocabulary test consists of 10 questions, students were given multiple choice questions and the students have to choose the correct answer from 4 choices given. The translation test consists of 10 questions of English to Bahasa Indonesia translation. The score is determined by students accuracy, appropriateness, cohesion, choices of words and also naturalness for spoken translation, in this case the writers used written translation test.

Table 1 Translation Test Assesment Rubric

Assessment Rubric		
Aspect	Score	Information
Accuracy	0.25	The sentences are accurate
	0.00	The sentences are inaccurate
Appropriateness	0.25	Use appropriate sentences
	0.00	Use inappropriate sentences
Cohesion	0.25	The sentences are cohesive
	0.00	The sentences are incohesive
Choice of words	0.25	Use correct choice of words
	0.00	Use incorrect choice of words

Accuracy is the translation should convey the information in the source text precisely; Appropriateness is the sentences should sound fluent and native, and should be correct in terms of structure; Cohesion is the sentence that holds the text together and gives it meaning; Choice of words is the ways that the writer uses words.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Interview results show that according to the English teacher, some students are very good in English vocabulary especially in reading and listening class, but there are some students that are not very good in English in general. The students

that are not very good in English are usually not eager to study English in general, but the teacher has a strategy to improve students English mastery that is by using peer teaching, not by their friends teach them but by discussing in the group so they can learn from their friends. However, the teacher also found a problem with students who usually only want to have a group with their close friends. The teacher usually randomizes the group members, hence each student has to learn from their classmates no matter who they are.

The same thing can be said for translation, some students are good but some are not. One of the problems is that students have less motivation to study English, which makes it more difficult for them to learn English, or the students may not like English at all. Observation results show that some students were not really motivated in English class. For example, some students were not really focus or not interested in the subject, and they just speak with their friends. The English teacher said there were some really good students that do well in English class, and from the observation, some students were generally more interested in English class than the other students. The equipments in classroom are complete and clean except the walls which is covered with students writings. Then, the result of the test of students' vocabulary mastery can be seen in the Table 2.

There are various score of the vocabulary test from 33 students. 17 students got <75.4 students got 75-85, and 12 students got >85. The score was classified by using Santo Fransiskus Asisi Senior High School's score classification system. The Table 3 shows the detail of vocabulary test score. From Table 3, the average score of vocabulary test is 65.15. The average score is obtained form total score divided by the numbers of students who took the test. The results of vocabulary test show that the vocabulary mastery of student is low, half of students are in low score range which means that half of the students are still having difficulties in the vocabulary test.

Table 2 Vocabulary Test Score

No.	Name	Total	Result	No.	Name	Total	Result
1	Test Taker 1	9	90	18	Test Taker 18	8	80
2	Test Taker 2	7	70	19	Test Taker 19	8	80
3	Test Taker 3	3	30	20	Test Taker 20	10	100
4	Test Taker 4	5	50	21	Test Taker 21	4	40
5	Test Taker 5	3	30	22	Test Taker 22	2	20
6	Test Taker 6	8	80	23	Test Taker 23	2	20
7	Test Taker 7	2	20	24	Test Taker 24	1	10
8	Test Taker 8	10	100	25	Test Taker 25	8	80
9	Test Taker 9	9	90	26	Test Taker 26	3	30
10	Test Taker 10	7	70	27	Test Taker 27	9	90
11	Test Taker 11	10	100	28	Test Taker 28	4	40
12	Test Taker 12	10	100	29	Test Taker 29	10	100
13	Test Taker 13	5	50	30	Test Taker 30	7	70
14	Test Taker 14	7	70	31	Test Taker 31	10	100
15	Test Taker 15	9	90	32	Test Taker 32	5	50
16	Test Taker 16	9	90	33	Test Taker 33	2	20
17	Test Taker 17	9	90				
Total Score							
Total				215			
Result				2150			

Table 3 The Detail of Vocabulary Test Score

Score Range	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
<75	17	51.5	51.5
75-85	4	12.1	63.6
>85	12	36.4	100.0
Total	33		

Therefore, students need to learn more vocabulary in order to increase their vocabulary ability since vocabulary ability is important in language study such Wilkins (1972) notes that without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. The result of the students' translation ability can be seen in the Table 4.

Table 4 Translation Test Score

No.	Name	Total	Result	No.	Name	Total	Result
1	Test Taker 1	7.75	77.5	18	Test Taker 18	9.75	97.5
2	Test Taker 2	6.25	62.5	19	Test Taker 19	6.75	67.5
3	Test Taker 3	1.00	10.0	20	Test Taker 20	7.50	75.0
4	Test Taker 4	3.25	32.5	21	Test Taker 21	5.25	52.5
5	Test Taker 5	1.25	12.5	22	Test Taker 22	5.50	55.0
6	Test Taker 6	9.50	95.0	23	Test Taker 23	2.00	20.0
7	Test Taker 7	1.50	15.0	24	Test Taker 24	2.25	22.5
8	Test Taker 8	9.00	90.0	25	Test Taker 25	7.25	72.5
9	Test Taker 9	7.50	75.0	26	Test Taker 26	1.25	12.5
10	Test Taker 10	7.25	72.5	27	Test Taker 27	9.75	97.5
11	Test Taker 11	10.0	100.0	28	Test Taker 28	7.00	70.0
12	Test Taker 12	9.75	97.5	29	Test Taker 29	9.50	95.0
13	Test Taker 13	5.25	52.5	30	Test Taker 30	7.25	72.5
14	Test Taker 14	8.50	85.0	31	Test Taker 31	9.50	95.0
15	Test Taker 15	9.50	95.0	32	Test Taker 32	3.25	32.5
16	Test Taker 16	7.75	77.5	33	Test Taker 33	4.50	45.0
17	Test Taker 17	7.75	77.5				
Total Score							
Total				211			
Result				2110			

There are various score for the vocabulary test from 33 students. There are 20 students who got <75.4 students who got 75-85, and 9 students who got >85. The score was classified by using Santo Fransiskus Asisi Senior High School's score classification system. Table 5 shows the detail of vocabulary test score.

Table 5 The Detail of Translation Test Score

Score Range	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
<75	20	60.61	60.61
75-85	4	12.12	72.73
85>	9	27.27	100.00
Total	33		

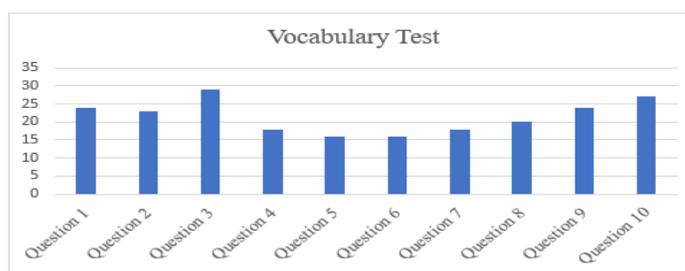
Based on the Table 5 the average score of translation test is 63.93. The average score is obtained from total score divided by the numbers of students that took the test. The results of vocabulary test show that the translation ability of

student is low, more than half of the students are in low score range which means that more than half of the students are still having difficulties in doing the translation. Therefore, based on the low score of translation that the students get, they need to learn and practice translation more in order to build their accuracy, readability and acceptability in translation such Savitri (2018) suggests to consider the necessary of accuracy, readability and acceptability in doing translation.

Table 6 Vocabulary Frequency Level

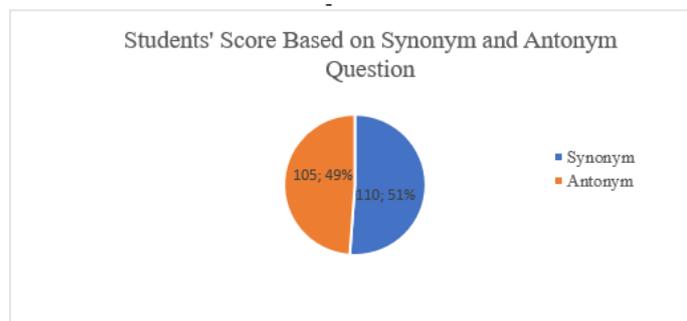
No.	Word	Frequency	Status
1	Sick	1202	High
2	Silly	3173	Mid
3	Wonderful	1055	High
4	Inedible	27036	Low
5	Critically	10898	Low
6	Afraid	674	High
7	Drought	10508	Low
8	Seperated	2484	High
9	Appreciate	4536	Mid
10	Evils	4224	Mid

Based on Table 6, the test consists of 4 high frequency vocabulary questions, 3 mid-frequency vocabulary questions and 3 low frequency vocabulary questions.



Picture 1 Students' Score on Each of Vocabulary Question

Based on Table 6 and Picture 1, most students are having difficulties in answering questions number 4, 5, 6, and 7. It means that students are having difficulties in low frequency vocabulary questions. Most students also answered correctly for questions number 1, 3, 9 and 10. It means that students find it easier to answer questions related to high and mid frequency vocabularies.

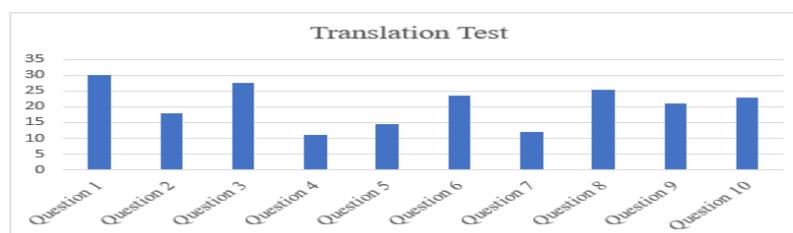


Picture 2 Students' Vocabulary Mastery in Synonym and Antonym Questions

Picture 2 shows that students do not experience any difference in the level of difficulties between synonym questions and antonym questions. Based on picture 2, synonym and antonym types of questions made no difference in determining students' vocabulary mastery, but low, mid, and high vocabulary frequency affect the score of vocabulary test.

Students Difficulty in Translation Test

The students' difficulty in translation test can be seen in the following picture.



Picture 3 Students' Score on Each of Translation Questions

Based on picture 3, students are having difficulties for questions number 4, 5, and 7. Based on Table 6, questions number 4, 5, and 7 are low frequency vocabulary. The students were having difficulties when they tried to answer and translate a word from low frequency vocabulary, which means that students rarely see the words on low frequency vocabulary. The translation test is also similar to vocabulary test because the students did not understand the keywords and also rarely see the words. They can not translate the questions very well because they do not know the meaning of the keywords.

CONCLUSION

After conducting interview with the English teacher, observation in the classroom and administering test for students vocabulary mastery and translation ability, here are some conclusions of this research: (1) From the interview with the English teacher of Santo Fransiskus Asisi High School Pontianak, some students are not eager to study English. Therefore, the teacher uses peer teaching to motivate students; (2) Based on the observation in the classroom, from the students' behaviour, there are some students who like to joke with their classmates. This minor disruptive behaviour also indicates that some students are not motivated or dislike English class; and (3) From vocabulary and translation test, the average for both tests is low. From the vocabulary test, we can see that students are having difficulties with low frequency vocabularies, meanwhile synonym and antonym type questions did not affect their score. Translation ability of students is low, 20 (60, 61%) students' translation test score is <75 which means that students are still having difficulties in word-for-word translation.

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