



# A Study on the Vocabulary Knowledge of the Second Grade Students of Senior High School

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## Abstract

This research second year students of SMAN 1 Kuantan Mudik. The sample of this research is class XI MIPA 3 of the second year students of SMAN 1 Kuantan Mudik which were chosen by using cluster random sampling technique. The number of the students is 32 students. The students were given The Updated Vocabulary Test (UVLT) that is adopted by Webb, et.al (2017). The result used descriptive-quantitative design which aims to find out the vocabulary knowledge level of the shows that the level of vocabulary knowledge of the second-grade students of SMAN 1 Kuantan Mudik is still below the threshold needed for reading or daily conversation. There were only 2 students who reached the mastery score at the 1000 level, and none of them at the 2000-5000 level. High frequency vocabulary will have a greater influence on students, according to Webb (2017). Teachers are recommended to increase students' vocabulary knowledge through reading activities and additional vocabulary tasks.

**Key words:** Vocabulary, Knowledge, Vocabulary Knowledge.

## Introduction

Vocabulary is one of the important elements of English language skills. Masyhur, et.al (2019) stated in Indonesian schools, authentic reading materials which are frequently used including articles, novels, and newspapers that include a variety of vocabulary. Knowing students' vocabulary size not only enables students to make better themselves, but also enables lecturers or teachers to inspire and teach students in a way that will raise their vocabulary sizes. Meaning will be conveyed well if it has the right and correct vocabulary. It helps students do communication which affects the basic language skills: Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing.

Vocabulary knowledge is considered important for foreign language learners, where a limited vocabulary will hinder the success of communication. The student's vocabulary

knowledge will help them to learn English. The importance of vocabulary is not only used in the classroom but also outside the classroom, where students who have good achievements usually have an adequate vocabulary (Alqahtani, 2015).

Several previous studies stated some of the results of the research on students' vocabulary skills and also the difficulties of students in mastering vocabulary. Aristya (2018) investigated that there are some difficulties that students face in vocabulary mastery such as; the students are not able to use vocabulary references correctly, remembering vocabulary, and writing or pronouncing the words. Nation (2006) specified if unassisted comprehension of a text requires 98% coverage, then spoken text comprehension requires a vocabulary of 6,000–7,000 words and written text comprehension requires 8,000–9,000 words from word families.

When students read, listen, write or speak they sometimes have difficulty with vocabulary. They cannot interpret what is heard or read, even what will be said, they do not know because of the limited vocabulary. There are still many students at school with unsatisfactory mastery. The researcher assumes that vocabulary affects the student's ability in learning English. As stated by Nation (2001) vocabulary level test measures how well test-takers could identify the relationships between word forms and meanings at the word-frequency level Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled: A Study on the Vocabulary Knowledge of the Second Grade Students of SMAN 1 Kuantan Mudik.

**Method**

Descriptive quantitative design was used by the researcher in this research. The aim of this research is to find out the vocabulary knowledge of the second grade students of SMAN 1 Kuantan Mudik. The population of this research is all of the second grade students of SMAN 1 Kuantan Mudik. The researcher used the cluster random sampling technique and XI MIPA 3 was chosen as the sample which consists of 32 students. To collect the data, the researcher used The Updated Vocabulary Level Test which is adopted from Webb, et.al (2017). The kind of test was a matching format vocabulary test, which aims to know knowledge of the word's meaning by matching the things with the right meaning. The researcher asked students to answer the test in 60 minutes. To know the level of students' vocabulary knowledge, the data were analyzed by using Microsoft Excel and SPSS.

**Results**

Data Presentation

*Table 1. Mastery Score for Each Level Based on VLT*

MASTERY SCORE	
VOCABULARY LEVEL	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
1000 LEVEL	2
2000 LEVEL	0
3000 LEVEL	0
4000 LEVEL	0
5000 LEVEL	0

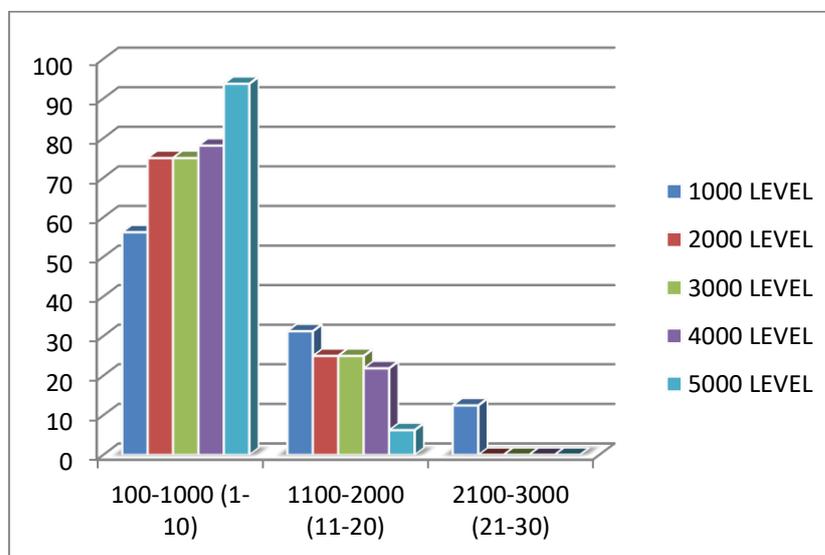
. Based on table 1, it was found that there were only 2 students who mastered

vocabulary at level 1000. Meanwhile, there were no students who mastered vocabulary at levels 2000-5000

Table 2. Vocabulary Level of XI MIPA 3 Students

VOCABULARY LEVEL OF STUDENTS					
SCORE	1000 LEVEL	2000 LEVEL	3000 LEVEL	4000 LEVEL	5000 LEVEL
100-1000 (1-10)	18 Students	24 Students	24 Students	25 Students	30 Students
1100-2000 (11-20)	10 Students	8 Students	8 Students	7 Students	2 Students
2100-3000 (21-30)	4 Students	0 Student	0 Student	0 Student	0 Student
TOTAL	32 Students				

Figure 1. Percentage of Students' Vocabulary Level



Based on table 2 and figure 1, it can be seen that at the 1000 Level, there are 18 students (56.25%) who achieved a score of 1-10 or 100-1000 word families, and there were 10 students (31.25%) who achieved a score of 11- 20 or 1100-2000 word families, and only 4 students (12.5%) achieved a score of 21-30 or 2100-3000 word families.

## Discussion

Based on the test on the Vocabulary level of the second-year students of SMAN 1 Kuantan Mudik, it shows different results for each level. According to Schmitt, et.al. (2001) a test taker is considered to master a particular level of Vocabulary Level Test (VLT) if he or she can answer correctly at least twenty-six (26) or higher out of thirty (30) items in that level. In this study, table 4.1 shows that there are only 2 students (6,25%) who achieve

mastery scores at the 1000 level, while at the 2000-5000 level, none of them achieve the mastery score. This indicates a low vocabulary knowledge level compared to previous research by Sinaga, et.al (2020) which found that high school students have reached the requirements for 1000 and 2000 levels. On the other hand, this result is in line with research conducted by Susanto (2017) where only 1% of participants master level 2000 which is a high-frequency word. The results of this study are no different from other studies in the same field conducted by Nurweni and Read (1999), Nurhemida (2007), and Sudarman and Chinokul (2018). Nurweni and Read (1999) revealed that on average, the students only knew 1226 English words, which is significantly less than the 3000-5000 word range. Nurhemida (2007) revealed that there were only about 1240-word families among senior high school students. Almost the same findings were shown by Sudarman and Chinokul (2018). The result of their study showed that the students had a very low mastery level, they weren't even proficient in the 2,000 or 3,000 high-frequency word level, nor the academic vocabulary level. Based on these findings, it can be said that Indonesian students, regardless of their educational levels and backgrounds, continue to struggle with a limited vocabulary.

Based on the mean score of the findings, the study shows that the students have not reached the requirement for the 1000-5000 vocabulary level of Depdiknas RI (2004). It involves the categories of middle-level readers (high school) must reach 1500-3000 family words. It indicates that the result of students' vocabulary knowledge level is still below the threshold needed for reading or daily conversation.

According to Webb, et.al (2017), high-frequency vocabulary will have a greater influence on students. Since a major portion of English is made up of high frequency words, it contributes to the students' foundation for further lexical and language development. The students who haven't mastered the 1000 vocabulary level need to receive further focus.

It is important to know that the Vocabulary Level Test is a tool for assessing students' receptive vocabulary knowledge, which reveals how well they can comprehend the meanings of words they come across in written material. The limitation of the research is that it doesn't assess productive vocabulary, which means the set of words that are utilized to create messages in speaking and writing (Dakhi & Fitria, 2019). The findings do not reveal how well children can use words with various frequency levels.

## Conclusions

From the results and discussion earlier, it can be concluded that the level of vocabulary knowledge of the second-grade students of SMAN 1 Kuantan Mudik is still below the threshold needed for reading or daily conversation. There were only 2 students who reached the mastery score at the 1000 level, and none of them at the 2000-5000 level. It also has been proven from the results of the mean score at each level. The mean score of vocabulary knowledge at the 1000 level is 11.84 or 1184-word families, at the 2000 level the mean score is 8.91 or 891-word families, the mean score at the 3000 level is 8.28 or 828-word families, the mean score at the 4000 level is 7.03 or 703-word families, and the mean score at the 5000 level is 6.34 or 634-word families. It indicates that they do not reach the standard requirements of vocabulary mastery for the high school level where the standard of vocabulary mastery according to Depdiknas (2004) is 1500-3000 vocabulary for the high school level. Finally, the researcher would like to give some recommendations. Firstly, students are recommended to improve their vocabulary knowledge through reading activities, for instance reading articles, novels, journals, or magazines that can be found online. Secondly, teachers are recommended to increase students' vocabulary knowledge by encouraging them to increase their vocabulary knowledge and providing additional

vocabulary tasks. Thirdly, further researchers are recommended to use a larger sample size, not only the Natural Science section (MIPA) but also the Social Science section (IPS), and the result of this research is expected to be a reference for other researchers in the same field.

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