

## EXPLORING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY LEVEL

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### ABSTRAK

*Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi tingkat kosakata siswa kelas VIII SMP Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif deskriptif yang hasilnya ditabulasikan dan dideskripsikan. Teknik pengumpulan data adalah tes dan wawancara. Langkah-langkah untuk menganalisis data adalah dengan menghitung rata-rata skor setiap level kemudian mempersentasekan skor rata-rata tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa persentase skor rata-rata pada tingkat 2000 kata adalah 83,6%, tingkat 3000 kata adalah 81%, tingkat 5000 kata adalah 63%, tingkat 10000 kata adalah 21,6% dan AWL (Academic Word List) adalah 77%. Kesimpulannya, siswa kelas VIII SMP Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu menguasai kosakata pada kata frekuensi tinggi di tingkat 2000 dan 3000 kata. Kosakata yang paling banyak dimiliki siswa adalah kata benda.*

**Kata kunci:** Kosakata, tingkat

### ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to identify the vocabulary level of grade VIII students at SMP Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu. This research is descriptive qualitative method which the results are tabulated and described. Data collection techniques are test and interview. The steps to analyze the data are to calculate the average score of each level and then the percentage of the average score. The results show that the percentage of average score on 2000 word level is 83.6%, 3000 word level is 81%, 5000 word level is 63%, 10000 word level is 21.6% and AWL (Academic Word List) is 77%. In conclusion, the grade VIII students at SMP Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu mastery vocabulary in high frequency word at 2000 and 3000 words level. The vocabulary most students have is nouns.

**Keywords:** Vocabulary, level

## INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is the basic language component that must be mastered by the students to support their language skills. Students can neither create the sentences, nor assignments and express their ideas in oral and written text without having sufficient vocabulary. Vocabulary is closely related to meaning and use. If students have a lot of vocabulary, they will not find difficulties in translation and also in use.

Vocabulary mastery supports the English learning process because vocabulary mastery is one of the important aspects in learning English. Vocabulary mastery refers

to the total number of words someone knows in form meaning and use. Students can be said mastering English vocabulary if they have a number of vocabulary more than 1000 words that contain word classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverb).

The importance of teaching vocabulary for the students can be seen from the curriculum for the junior high school. Based on the Curriculum of 2013 for junior high school level, the goal of learning vocabulary is that the students will be able to find out the meaning of words and respond to it through giving correct answers and be able to have vocabulary mastery. Regarding the preceding statement, the researcher may underline that vocabulary is very important for the students to have sufficient language skills in English.

Furthermore, the researcher has reasons why she is interested in conducting research at SMP Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu. First, the school is the most favorite school, it is proven by many achievements in the fields of English. Second, the students of SMP Al-Azhar can communicate using English. Therefore, the researcher wants to see or measure how the students' vocabulary mastery at school to support students activities in writing or speaking text.

## METHOD

This research used descriptive qualitative method. Gay *et al* (2012) explain that descriptive research determines and describes the ways things occur in the field. In this research, the researcher used this method without treatment or action in the classroom, because she only wanted to measure the level of vocabulary.

**Table 1** Distribution of the test  
**The Scoring Rubric of the Test**

SCORE	PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTION
1	Students can answer the question correctly
0	Students cannot answer the question correctly

*Depdikbud (2017)*

As for the reason to used this design is this design can produce more facts comprehensive in researching research problem, because researcher has the freedom to use all data collection tool according to the type of data needed. The subject of this

research which consists of two classes that are VIII A and VIII E. The total number of students is 50 students. All of the students in VIII A and VIII E fill out the Vocabulary Level test (VLT) and 1 teacher for interview.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### RESULTS

In this chapter, the researchers present the result of the research and the analysis of the data. The research was conducted from February 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> 2022. In collecting the data, the researchers used test as the main instrument and interview as supporting instrument. In this research, the researchers analyzed the data through the test namely VLT (Vocabulary Level Test). VLT used to assess the level of students vocabulary mastery. The data were taken from grade VIII students at SMP Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu as 50 students.

The first instrument used by the researchers in collecting the data was VLT (Vocabulary Level Test). The sample were 50 students of VIII grade at SMP Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu. The types of the test consists of 5 levels which each level has 30 items and the total of the test is 150 items. To know the vocabulary mastery level owned by the students, the students are expected to answer 24 out of 30 items at each level. After analyzing and calculating the score of each students, the researchers present the data as follow:

**Table 2.** the result of the testing

Total Score	1255	1219	1159	949	324
Average	25.1	24.38	23.18	18.98	6.5
% of Average Score	83.6%	81%	77%	63%	21.6%
Pass ( $\geq 80$ )	40	35	32	22	4
Fail ( $\leq 80$ )	10	15	18	28	46

In order to obtain the average score, the total score of the 2000 word level divided by the number of student (50). For example, the total score of the 2000 word level 1255. To obtain the average score, the researcher divided the total score with the number of student (50). Additionally, it is obtained that the average score of the level is 25.1. After obtained the average score, then the researcher presented the average scores of students who reached score 80 in the form of a percentage. For 2000 word level as

much as 83.6%, for 3000 word level is 81%, for 5000 word level is 63%, for 10000 word level is 21.6%, Lastly, for AWL is 64%. It can be indicated that the students` vocabulary level is high frequency word at 2000 and 3000 word level because of the high scores at that level.

The interview was done to one English teacher at SMP Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu. The interview consisted three questions and whatsapp Apk is used to collect the data of the interview.

**Table 3.** Result of the interview

No	Transcript
1	<p>Prestasi apa saja yang pernah dicapai oleh siswa kelas VIII khususnya dalam bidang bahasa Inggris?</p> <p>The teacher said:</p> <p>Siswa kelas 8 pernah mendapat juara 1, 2, dan 3 dalam National English Olympiad</p>
2	<p>Berdasarkan hasil tes ada 3 level yang mayoritas siswanya bisa menjawab dengan benar yaitu level 2000, 3000, dan AWL. Apakah kata yang ada dalam level tersebut merupakan kata yang sering digunakan dalam proses pembelajaran?</p> <p>The teacher said:</p> <p>Iya. Jadi, untuk kata-kata yang ada dilevel tersebut sering digunakan dalam proses pembelajaran, karena para siswa juga diwajibkan untuk menghafal kosakata bahasa Inggris disetiap pertemuannya. dan per dua bulan ssekali diadakan evaluasi.</p>
3	<p>Berdasarkan hasil tes ada 2 level yang mayoritas siswanya sulit menjawab dengan benar yaitu level 5000 dan 10000. Apakah kata yang ada dalam level tersebut merupakan kata yang jarang digunakan dalam proses pembelajaran?</p> <p>The teacher said:</p> <p>Iya. Untuk level 5000 dan 10000 masih asing bagi para siswa karena jarang digunakan dalam proses pembelajaran</p>

## DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this research is to identify the vocabulary level of the grade VIII students at SMP Al Azhar Mandiri Palu. Relying on the results of the vocabulary level test, it can be indicated that most of the students have mastered vocabulary. It is proved by the students answered. Based on the classification of the vocabulary level, to identify the level of vocabulary possessed by the students, it can be assessed from the percentage of the students average score and how often the vocabulary is used. It means that if the majority of correct answers in the test are used frequently, then these words are included in the high frequency level category and vice versa.

The classification of vocabulary includes three frequency levels that are high, mid, and low. Schmitt & Schmitt (2014) states the number of high frequency words from 2,000 to be 3,000 most frequent word families. They then defines mid frequency words are words ranging from the most frequent 3,000 to 9,000 word families, and low frequency words are words beyond 9,000. Based on the instrument of the research, there are five levels of word families includes 2000 to 3000 word levels are high frequency word, 5000 word level is mid frequency word, 10000 word level is low frequency word and AWL (Academic Word List).

First, at the 2000 word level which is a high frequency word there are 40 students who pass the level and 10 students who fail. the total score of this level is 1255, the mean score is 25.1, and the percentage of average score is 83.6%. The highest correct number obtained by students was dominated by nouns as many as 29 out of 30 items and the lowest 14 out of 30 items.

Second, 3000 word level which is a high frequency word there are 35 students who pass the level and 15 students who fail. The total score of this level is 1219, the average score is 24.38, and the percentage of average score is 81%. The highest correct number obtained by students was dominated by nouns as many as 29 out of 30 items and the lowest 5 out of 30 items.

Third, 5000 word level which is a mid frequency word there are 22 students who passed the level and 28 students who failed. the total score of this level is 949, the average score is 18.98, and the percentage of average score is 63%. The highest correct

number obtained by students was dominated by nouns as many as 28 of 30 items and the lowest was 0 out of 30 items.

Fourth, 10000 word level which is a low frequency word there are only 4 students who passed the level and 46 students who failed. the total score of this level is 325, the average score is 6.5, and the percentage of average score is 21.6%. The highest correct number obtained by students was also dominated by nouns as many as 29 of 30 items and the lowest was 0 out of 30 items.

Fifth, AWL or Academic Words are found in every kind of academic subject areas such as in Linguistics, Biology, Physics, etc. Instead of those words, there are words that are even more special to each subject area. But in this research, there are 32 students who passed the level and 18 students who failed. The total score is 1159, the average score is 23.18, and the percentage of average score is 77%. The highest correct as many as 30 of 30 items and the lowest was 0 out of 30 items.

Furthermore, the result of the interview show that most of the students of SMP Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu has achievements in the field of English. Both from the Olympic championships they won and from the test results. The interview result also show that 2000 and 3000 word levels are words often used in teaching and learning process, while 5000 and 10000 word levels are rarely used in teaching and learning process. The interview was conducted as a supporting instrument or proof of a test regarding the level of vocabulary possessed by the students in the categories of high frequency, mid frequency, and low frequency.

As the students' scores on the test obtained at each level, the researcher then correlates the findings to the previous ones conducted by (Sudarman, 2018) and (AbManan, 2016). The study by (Sudarman, 2018) found that there were no levels there were completely mastered by the students. Even for the high frequency level, 2000 word level, the students were estimated to have only about 54 % which is very low. The second study by (AbManan, 2016) found that the average scores of 2000 word level is 86%, 3000 word level is 53.7%, 5000 word level is 47.8% and 50% for AWL. It can be indicated that the VIII grade students at SMP Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu is mastery in high frequency on 2000 and 3000 word levels. It can be seen from the highest average score of each level and also the result of the interview.

## CONCLUSION

The vocabulary level of grade VIII students at SMP Al-Azhar Mandiri Palu is mastery in high frequency word at 2000 and 3000 words level. Furthermore, the vocabulary that most students have is nouns, where each level has a high score. The percentage of 2000 word levels is 83.6%, 3000 word levels is 81%, 5000 word levels is 63%, 10000 word levels is 21.6%, and the percentage of AWL (Academic Word List) is 77%.

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