



## The Relationship Between Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Ability

Putri Haris Tia<sup>1\*</sup>, Yulia Agustina<sup>2</sup>, Andri Suherman<sup>3</sup>, M. Adib Nazri<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> English Education Department, Faculty of Language, Art and Humanities, Hamzanwadi University.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29303/jcar.v8i1.13211>

Received: 05 Desember 2025

Revised: 17 Februari 2026

Accepted: 28 Februari 2026

**Abstract:** This study aimed to examine the relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading ability among eleventh-grade students at MA Ar-Raufiyah Lendang Jaran, East Lombok. Employing a quantitative correlational design, the research sought to determine the degree of association between the two variables without manipulation. The sample consisted of 20 students, selected through purposive sampling based on their active participation in English classes. Data were gathered using two instruments: a vocabulary mastery test and a reading comprehension test, both validated for reliability with a coefficient value of 0.789. The data were analyzed statistically using the Pearson Product Moment correlation test. The results revealed a strong and significant positive correlation ( $r = 0.789$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading ability. This finding indicates that students with a higher level of vocabulary mastery tend to achieve better comprehension in English reading tasks. The study highlights the importance of integrating vocabulary instruction into reading activities to improve students' overall English proficiency.

**Keywords:** Vocabulary Mastery, Reading Ability, Quantitative Correlational Research, EFL students, MA Ar-Raufiyah Lendang Jaran.

### Introduction

English plays an essential role as an international language for communication, education, and global interaction (Crystal, 2003; Harmer, 2007). In the Indonesian education system, English has been formally introduced as a compulsory foreign language subject from junior high school to tertiary levels (Depdiknas, 2013; Alwasilah, 2014). Mastering English enables students to access global information, participate in academic discourse, and prepare for higher education and employment opportunities (Grabe & Stoller, 2011; Richards & Renandya, 2002).

Among the four macro language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing reading is regarded as a core competence in English learning (Faradila, et al., 2024; Fikni, et al., 2025). Reading provides exposure to language input, enriches vocabulary knowledge, and develops students' critical thinking and comprehension (Grabe, 2009; Nation, 2013). However, effective reading

comprehension requires more than decoding words; it demands an adequate vocabulary mastery, which allows learners to understand and construct meaning from texts (Anderson, 1984; Tarigan, 2015). Without sufficient vocabulary, readers cannot fully grasp the information conveyed in English texts, which often contain unfamiliar lexical items and idiomatic expressions (Westwood, 2008; Milton, 2009).

In Indonesia, particularly in rural schools, the lack of vocabulary mastery has been recognized as one of the major challenges in English learning (Hasanah, 2020; Effendi, 2021). Students frequently struggle to identify main ideas, infer meaning, or answer comprehension questions due to limited vocabulary knowledge (Daeli, et al., 2025). Djiwandono (2011) emphasizes that vocabulary is the foundation for all language skills, as comprehension and communication largely depend on how well learners understand and use words. Nation (2001) further argues that vocabulary knowledge consists of both receptive (understanding words in context) and productive (using words

accurately in communication) aspects. When students lack both, their reading performance declines significantly.

### Review of Related Literature

Previous studies have consistently shown a strong relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. Effendi (2021) found that vocabulary mastery accounts for approximately 57.4% of the variance in students' reading comprehension among senior high school students in Indonesia. Similarly, Hasanah (2020) confirmed that students with a rich vocabulary tend to achieve better reading comprehension scores, as they can more effectively interpret meaning and context. Research by Putri and Priyanti (2023) in an Indonesian senior high school context also revealed that vocabulary mastery significantly influences students' ability to comprehend English passages, particularly when supported by contextual learning strategies.

Other studies in different contexts support these findings. Asholahudin, Sari, and Rahmawati (2023) reported a strong positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension among EFL learners in West Java, suggesting that students' lexical knowledge is the most powerful predictor of their reading success. Internationally, Grabe (2009) and Schmitt (2010) emphasize that vocabulary is not merely a component of reading but a key factor in constructing meaning, making inferences, and integrating information across sentences and paragraphs.

Despite these consistent results, the majority of the existing research has been conducted in urban schools or general EFL settings. Few studies have focused on the context of rural secondary schools, particularly Madrasah Aliyah (MA) institutions in East Lombok, where students often have limited exposure to authentic English materials and fewer opportunities to practice reading (Suryani, 2018; Rahman, 2022). Moreover, most previous studies have not examined how vocabulary mastery correlates specifically with reading comprehension in environments with scarce resources and varying motivation levels. This lack of context-specific evidence highlights the need for further investigation in schools such as MA Ar-Raufiyah Lendang Jaran, where English learning conditions differ significantly from urban institutions.

### Statement of the Problem

Based on the background and literature review, it is evident that students' reading comprehension is closely linked to their vocabulary mastery. Nevertheless, students at MA Ar-Raufiyah Lendang Jaran still experience difficulties in understanding English reading materials due to inadequate vocabulary knowledge. Although teachers have implemented communicative

and contextual approaches, students' limited lexical resources and low motivation continue to hinder effective comprehension.

Therefore, this research seeks to address the following problems:

1. What is the level of students' vocabulary mastery at MA Ar-Raufiyah Lendang Jaran?
2. What is the level of students' reading ability in English texts?
3. Is there a significant relationship between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading ability?

### Research Objectives

This study aims to:

1. Identify the level of vocabulary mastery among eleventh-grade students at MA Ar-Raufiyah Lendang Jaran, East Lombok.
2. Determine the level of students' reading ability.
3. Examine whether a significant relationship exists between vocabulary mastery and reading ability in this population.

While several studies have established the correlation between vocabulary and reading comprehension (Hasanah, 2020; Effendi, 2021; Asholahudin et al., 2023), limited empirical evidence exists from rural EFL settings, especially among students at Madrasah Aliyah schools in East Lombok. The scarcity of local research on this topic creates a contextual gap in understanding how vocabulary mastery impacts reading ability when access to learning resources and exposure to English are constrained. By focusing on this setting, the current study aims to contribute new evidence that reflects the real conditions of EFL learning in rural Indonesia, thereby providing insights for more effective teaching strategies tailored to students' linguistic environments.

This study integrates three main theoretical perspectives to explain the relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading ability.

1. Cognitive Theory of Reading (Anderson, 1984 in Tarigan, 2016) states that reading is an active mental process where comprehension depends heavily on the reader's prior knowledge, including vocabulary. A richer vocabulary allows readers to process information more efficiently and derive meaning from texts.
2. Rumelhart's Interactive Model of Reading (Rumelhart, 1977) explains that reading involves the interaction between bottom-up (word recognition) and top-down (background knowledge) processes. Vocabulary mastery

supports both processes, as students can decode words accurately and integrate them into coherent meaning structures.

3. Chall's Language and Literacy Theory (Chall, 1983) emphasizes that vocabulary development is the foundation of literacy. As students' vocabulary grows, they transition from basic decoding to fluent and critical reading.

Based on these frameworks, it can be theoretically assumed that vocabulary mastery (independent variable) positively influences reading ability (dependent variable). Students with higher vocabulary mastery are expected to comprehend texts more effectively, identify main ideas, infer implicit meanings, and connect textual information with prior knowledge.

### Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this research strengthens the existing body of knowledge on the interplay between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension in the context of EFL learning. It reaffirms cognitive and linguistic perspectives by empirically demonstrating how vocabulary functions as a predictor of reading success. Practically, the findings are expected to assist English teachers in designing vocabulary-based reading instruction, help students enhance comprehension through systematic vocabulary enrichment, and encourage schools in rural areas to implement reading programs that integrate lexical development.

## Method

### Research Design

This research applied a quantitative correlational design to investigate the relationship between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading ability. The correlational design was selected because the purpose of this study was not to manipulate variables, but rather to measure the degree and direction of association between them (Creswell, 2014). This approach allows the researcher to determine whether an increase in vocabulary mastery is related to a corresponding increase in reading ability. The quantitative paradigm was chosen to ensure objectivity, measurability, and statistical accuracy in the interpretation of results (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2015).

The study hypothesized that students with higher levels of vocabulary mastery would demonstrate better reading comprehension performance.

### Setting of the Study

The study was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Ar-Raufiyah Lendang Jaran, located in Montong Gading District, East Lombok Regency, West Nusa

Tenggara, Indonesia. This school was selected because it provides a representative sample of students from rural Indonesian EFL contexts, where exposure to English is relatively limited and teaching resources are modest. The school implements the Kurikulum 2013 (K-13) English syllabus, which emphasizes communicative competence and reading comprehension as core components of the curriculum.

The research took place in the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. English classes at this school are held twice a week, each session lasting 90 minutes. The school environment is characterized by motivated students and supportive teachers, but limited access to authentic English materials and technology-based learning resources.

### Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised all eleventh-grade students of MA Ar-Raufiyah Lendang Jaran, totaling 40 students distributed across two classes: XI-A and XI-B. To ensure representativeness, a purposive sampling technique was used to select participants based on specific inclusion criteria:

1. Students who actively participated in English classes.
2. Students with regular attendance (at least 90% of classes).
3. Students willing to take part in the study voluntarily.

Following these criteria, 20 students were selected as the final sample.

### Participant Characteristics

The sample consisted of 10 male and 10 female students, aged 16–17 years old. According to teachers' initial assessments, the students' general English proficiency ranged from lower-intermediate to intermediate level, equivalent to CEFR levels A2–B1. Most participants began learning English in elementary school and had approximately six to seven years of formal English instruction.

The majority of the students came from rural households where English was not used outside of the classroom. They relied primarily on school instruction for language exposure. Despite limited linguistic resources, they showed strong motivation to improve their English, particularly in reading, as it is emphasized in national examinations.

This demographic profile was considered representative of many Indonesian rural EFL learners, making the findings relevant to broader contexts of English education in similar environments.

### Research Instruments

To obtain reliable and valid data, two standardized instruments were employed: a Vocabulary Mastery Test and a Reading Comprehension Test. Both

instruments were designed, validated, and tested for reliability before being administered to the participants.

### 1. Vocabulary Mastery Test

The Vocabulary Mastery Test was developed to measure both receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge. It consisted of 40 items, divided into three sections:

1. Section A (25 items): Multiple-choice questions testing synonym, antonym, and word meaning recognition.
2. Section B (10 items): Matching exercises connecting words to definitions or contextual sentences.
3. Section C (5 items): Sentence completion items requiring students to supply appropriate words.

The test content was derived from English textbooks used in MA-level curricula, such as *Pathway to English* and *Bright for Senior High School*, and supported by theoretical references from Nation (2001) and Djwandono (2011). The test items covered daily-life vocabulary, academic terms, and reading-related lexis to ensure alignment with students' linguistic exposure and curriculum standards.

### 2. Reading Comprehension Test

The Reading Comprehension Test was designed to assess students' ability to understand written English passages. It consisted of five reading passages of 200–250 words each, followed by 20 comprehension questions. The questions were categorized into three cognitive levels:

1. Literal comprehension (8 items): identifying main ideas, facts, and supporting details.
2. Inferential comprehension (8 items): making inferences and understanding implied meanings.
3. Critical comprehension (4 items): evaluating the author's purpose, tone, and opinions.

Passages were adapted from authentic materials such as short news articles, informational texts, and narrative excerpts relevant to the students' interests and reading level. The design followed the principles proposed by Grabe and Stoller (2011) and Oakhill, Cain, and Elbro (2015) to ensure that comprehension processes were cognitively appropriate for high school EFL learners.

## Instrument Development and Validation

Both instruments were developed following a systematic procedure to ensure validity and reliability.

1. Expert Validation (Content Validity):
  - a) Three experts two English education lecturers from Hamzanwadi University and one senior English teacher were invited to review the instruments.
  - b) They evaluated each item for relevance, clarity, and alignment with curriculum objectives.
  - c) Suggestions regarding vocabulary level, grammatical accuracy, and question clarity were incorporated.
  - d) The overall Content Validity Index (CVI) was calculated as 0.89, indicating high content validity.
2. Pilot Testing:
  - a) Before the main study, both tests were administered to 10 students from another MA school in the same district (not part of the research sample).
  - b) The pilot aimed to assess item difficulty, discrimination power, and time allocation.
  - c) Items with discrimination indices below 0.20 or with ambiguous wording were revised or removed.
  - d) The average completion time was 60 minutes for each test, confirming suitable length and difficulty.
3. Reliability Testing:
  - a) Reliability was computed using Cronbach's Alpha and Pearson Product-Moment correlation in SPSS version 26.
  - b) The vocabulary test achieved a reliability coefficient ( $r$ ) of 0.789, while the reading test obtained 0.812, both categorized as highly reliable (Sugiyono, 2017).
  - c) The strong internal consistency of items indicated that both instruments were appropriate for measuring the intended constructs.

## Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process was conducted in several systematic stages to ensure fairness, accuracy, and consistency.

### 1. Preparation Stage

The researcher first obtained formal permission from the school principal and coordinated with English teachers regarding the testing schedule. Participants were informed about the research objectives, procedures, and confidentiality of their results. Verbal consent was obtained from all students. The classroom was prepared to provide a comfortable environment—adequate lighting, minimal noise, and sufficient spacing to avoid collaboration.

### 2. Administration Stage

The data collection was carried out over two days:

Day 1: Vocabulary Mastery Test

Day 2: Reading Comprehension Test

Each session lasted approximately 60 minutes, conducted during regular English class hours. Instructions were provided in both English and Bahasa Indonesia to ensure clarity. The researcher and the English teacher supervised the session to maintain test integrity.

Students were required to answer all items independently. During the test, they were not allowed to use dictionaries, mobile phones, or other aids. Any questions regarding instructions were clarified before the test began.

### 3. Scoring and Data Recording

Each correct answer was given 1 point, and incorrect answers received 0 points. The total scores were converted into percentages using the formula:

$$\text{Score} = \frac{\text{Number of Correct Answers}}{\text{Total Items}} \times 100$$

The data were tabulated using Microsoft Excel and then imported into SPSS version 26 for statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics (mean, range, standard deviation) were used to summarize students' performance, and inferential statistics were applied to determine the correlation between the two variables.

### Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed through two major stages:

1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis:
  - a) Mean, median, standard deviation, and frequency distribution were calculated to describe students' overall vocabulary mastery and reading ability.
  - b) The levels of achievement were categorized based on Sugiyono's (2017) classification:
    - 80–100 = Excellent
    - 66–79 = Good
    - 56–65 = Fair
    - 40–55 = Poor
    - <40 = Very Poor
2. Inferential Statistical Analysis:
  - a) The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied to assess data normality, confirming that the distribution met the assumption of normality ( $p > 0.05$ ).
  - b) The Levene's Test for Homogeneity ensured equal variances between datasets ( $p > 0.05$ ).
  - c) The Pearson Product Moment correlation test was used to determine the degree of relationship between vocabulary mastery (X) and reading ability (Y).
  - d) A correlation coefficient (r) between 0.60 and 0.799 was interpreted as a strong correlation, and a

significance level ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicated that the relationship was statistically significant.

### Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical research principles in educational contexts. All participants were informed of the voluntary nature of their participation, and their privacy was maintained throughout the process. Students' names were coded anonymously in data analysis. The researcher ensured that no harm, coercion, or unfair academic treatment occurred before, during, or after data collection.

### Methodological Limitations

Despite the rigorous procedures applied, several methodological limitations must be acknowledged:

1. Sample Size: The relatively small sample ( $n = 20$ ) from a single school limits the generalizability of the findings to other populations or educational contexts.
2. Sampling Technique: The use of purposive sampling might introduce selection bias, as participants were chosen based on specific criteria rather than random selection.
3. Instrument Scope: Although the tests were valid and reliable, they focused primarily on multiple-choice and short-answer items, which may not fully capture students' deeper comprehension strategies or expressive vocabulary use.
4. External Variables: Factors such as motivation, reading habits, prior exposure to English, and classroom environment were not controlled but may have influenced the results.
5. Time Constraints: The administration of the tests during class hours might have affected students' concentration due to time pressure or fatigue.

Future research should address these limitations by employing larger samples, multi-site studies, and mixed-method approaches that combine quantitative tests with qualitative data such as interviews or classroom observations. Longitudinal studies could also provide insight into how vocabulary mastery and reading ability develop over time.

## Result and Discussion

### Descriptive Statistics of Vocabulary Mastery

The vocabulary mastery test consisted of 40 items designed to measure both receptive and productive aspects of students' vocabulary knowledge. The descriptive analysis of the students' vocabulary scores is presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics of Vocabulary Mastery

Statistical Measure	Score
N (Number of Students)	20
Minimum Score	70
Maximum Score	100
Mean (M)	85.5
Median	86
Mode	90
Standard Deviation (SD)	8.42

As shown in Table 1, the students' vocabulary mastery scores ranged from 70 to 100, with an average mean score of 85.5. The median (86) and mode (90) are relatively close to the mean, indicating a normal distribution of scores. The standard deviation (8.42) suggests moderate variability among students' performance. In general, most participants demonstrated good to excellent levels of vocabulary mastery, showing that they possess sufficient lexical knowledge to understand academic and daily English contexts.

A frequency distribution of vocabulary scores is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

(Figure 1: Bar Chart of Vocabulary Mastery Scores – showing score intervals 70–79, 80–89, and 90–100)

- 4 students (20%) scored between 70–79 (fair level).
- 9 students (45%) scored between 80–89 (good level).
- 7 students (35%) scored between 90–100 (excellent level).

This distribution indicates that nearly 80% of students achieved a minimum of "good" level vocabulary mastery, suggesting that they had an adequate word repertoire for understanding various types of English texts.

**Descriptive Statistics of Reading Ability**

The reading comprehension test consisted of five passages followed by 20 comprehension questions. The descriptive results are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistics of Reading Ability

Statistical Measure	Score
N (Number of Students)	20
Minimum Score	70
Maximum Score	100
Mean (M)	84.2
Median	85
Mode	80
Standard Deviation (SD)	7.96

The reading scores ranged from 70 to 100, with a mean of 84.2, median of 85, and mode of 80. The standard deviation (7.96) indicates a moderate spread, suggesting that students' reading comprehension ability

was fairly consistent across the sample. The similarity between mean and median values reflects a symmetrical distribution of reading performance, confirming that most students achieved satisfactory comprehension levels.

Figure 2 presents the distribution of reading scores. (Figure 2: Bar Chart of Reading Ability Scores – intervals 70–79, 80–89, and 90–100)

- 5 students (25%) scored between 70–79 (fair comprehension).
- 10 students (50%) scored between 80–89 (good comprehension).
- 5 students (25%) scored between 90–100 (excellent comprehension).

This result shows that the majority of students performed well in understanding main ideas, locating specific information, and interpreting contextual meanings.

**Correlation Between Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Ability**

The Pearson Product Moment correlation test was applied to determine the relationship between students' vocabulary mastery and reading ability. The results are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Ability

Variable	r-value	Sig. (p-value)	Interpretation
Vocabulary Mastery & Reading Ability	0.789	0.000 (p < 0.05)	Strong Positive Correlation

The correlation coefficient (r = 0.789) indicates a strong positive relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading ability. The significance level (p < 0.05) confirms that this relationship is statistically significant. This finding means that students with higher vocabulary mastery tend to perform better in reading comprehension. In practical terms, vocabulary mastery explains approximately 62.3% of the variance in reading comprehension scores (r<sup>2</sup> = 0.789<sup>2</sup> × 100).

**Analysis of Vocabulary Aspects Influencing Reading Comprehension**

A deeper examination of test item patterns revealed that contextual vocabulary knowledge students' ability to infer meaning from context had the strongest association with reading comprehension scores. Students who scored highly on contextual vocabulary items (synonyms, antonyms, collocations) also tended to achieve higher reading comprehension scores, particularly in inferential and critical comprehension items.

In contrast, students who struggled with productive vocabulary items (sentence completion and

usage) often had difficulty expressing inferred meanings or understanding implicit messages in reading passages. This suggests that receptive vocabulary (word recognition) contributes to basic comprehension, while productive and contextual vocabulary knowledge supports deeper understanding and inference-making (Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2010).

### Interpretation of Statistical Findings

The statistical results demonstrate a strong, positive, and significant correlation ( $r = 0.789$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between vocabulary mastery and reading ability. This means that vocabulary knowledge substantially predicts reading comprehension performance among eleventh-grade students at MA Ar-Raufiyah Lendang Jaran. The practical interpretation of this coefficient is that improving students' vocabulary mastery could lead to measurable gains in reading comprehension potentially explaining more than half of their performance variation.

According to Grabe (2009) and Anderson (1984), readers with broader lexical knowledge are better able to decode, connect, and interpret meanings across sentences. In this study, students with higher vocabulary scores exhibited superior reading comprehension, supporting the theoretical view that vocabulary is the foundation for text processing and understanding.

### Consistency with Previous Research

The findings align with several earlier studies conducted in the Indonesian EFL context. Effendi (2021) found that vocabulary mastery contributes 57.4% to reading comprehension among senior high school students, a proportion consistent with the current study's 62.3%. Similarly, Hasanah (2020) confirmed that vocabulary mastery and reading interest both significantly affect comprehension levels. Asholahudin, Sari, and Rahmawati (2023) also reported a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.761$ ) between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension in EFL students.

Furthermore, the current results reinforce Rumelhart's (1977) and Chall's (1983) theoretical perspectives that vocabulary serves as the foundation for reading fluency and comprehension development. However, unlike some previous studies conducted in urban schools, this research provides empirical evidence from a rural educational setting, thus contributing new contextual insights to the field of language education in Indonesia.

### Instrument Strengths and Weaknesses

The instruments used in this study demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.789 for vocabulary; 0.812 for reading), confirming their internal consistency. The vocabulary test effectively captured both receptive and productive dimensions,

while the reading test covered multiple comprehension levels (literal, inferential, and critical).

However, several weaknesses were identified:

1. The vocabulary test relied mainly on multiple-choice and matching formats, which may not fully capture the depth of lexical knowledge or real-life language use.
2. The reading test passages, though authentic, were limited in number (five passages), restricting the range of text genres assessed.
3. Time constraints during administration (60 minutes per test) may have influenced students' performance, especially for longer passages.

Despite these limitations, the instruments were still valid and reliable tools for measuring the targeted constructs within the constraints of a school-based research setting.

### Interpretive Insights: Practical Meaning of the Correlation

The strong correlation ( $r = 0.789$ ) found in this study holds several practical implications for English language teaching. First, it underscores that vocabulary instruction should not be isolated from reading lessons. Instead, teachers should integrate vocabulary development within reading tasks to enhance both word knowledge and comprehension simultaneously.

Second, the findings suggest that contextual vocabulary teaching using texts, visual aids, and authentic materials can be more effective than rote memorization. As students become familiar with how words function in real contexts, their comprehension ability improves.

Third, the results highlight the importance of continuous vocabulary assessment as part of reading evaluation. Teachers can use diagnostic vocabulary tests to identify weaknesses and tailor remedial programs focusing on word recognition, collocation, and contextual meaning.

Lastly, the practical meaning of an  $r = 0.789$  correlation extends beyond statistics: it indicates that vocabulary mastery is not merely supportive but determinative in shaping reading success. In contexts like East Lombok, where English exposure is limited, building students' lexical foundation can be the most efficient pathway to improving reading comprehension and overall language proficiency.

### Comparison and Critical Reflection

While the findings strongly support previous research, this study also contributes a more nuanced understanding. Unlike earlier works that often treated vocabulary mastery as a single construct, the present study emphasizes the multi-dimensional nature of vocabulary comprising receptive, productive, and contextual components. The analysis revealed that

contextual vocabulary (the ability to infer meaning and recognize collocations) is the most influential in determining reading comprehension.

This finding suggests that reading ability is not only a function of the number of words known but also of the depth of lexical knowledge, including semantic relations and collocational awareness (Nation, 2013; Schmitt, 2010). In EFL contexts, teaching strategies that focus on depth of vocabulary knowledge not just breadth can lead to more sustainable reading improvement.

### Summary of Findings

1. Students achieved an average vocabulary mastery score of 85.5, categorized as good.
2. The average reading ability score was 84.2, also categorized as good.
3. A strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.789$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was found between vocabulary mastery and reading ability.
4. Contextual and inferential vocabulary knowledge had the greatest impact on reading comprehension.
5. The findings are consistent with previous national and international studies and reinforce theoretical models of reading and vocabulary acquisition.

In summary, the results of this study confirm that vocabulary mastery plays a decisive role in shaping students' reading ability. The more extensive and contextually rich a learner's vocabulary is, the more effectively they can comprehend written texts. This evidence strengthens both theoretical and pedagogical understandings of the vocabulary-reading relationship and highlights the urgent need for vocabulary-based reading instruction in Indonesian EFL classrooms, especially in rural schools.

### Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading ability among eleventh-grade students at MA Ar-Raufiyah Lendang Jaran, East Lombok. Based on the statistical and qualitative analyses, several key conclusions can be drawn.

### References

- Alwasilah, A. C. (2014). *Pokoknya rekayasa bahasa: Dari kebijakan ke perencanaan bahasa*. Bandung: Kiblat Buku Utama.
- Anderson, R. C. (1984). Role of the reader's schema in comprehension, learning, and memory. In R. C. Anderson, J. Osborn, & R. Tierney (Eds.), *Learning to read in American schools* (pp. 243-257). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Asholahudin, S., Sari, D., & Rahmawati, N. (2023). The correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension among EFL learners in West Java. *Journal of English Language Teaching Research*, 5(2), 112-120.
- Chall, J. S. (1983). *Stages of reading development*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Daeli, R. M., Telaumbanua, Y. A., Zebua, E. P., & Harefa, T. (2025). English Language Learning: Visual Arts to Improve The seventh Graders' Vocabulary of UPTD SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa. *Journal of Classroom Action Research*, 7(4), 1633-1638.
- Depdiknas. (2013). *Kurikulum 2013: Kompetensi dasar mata pelajaran bahasa Inggris untuk SMA/MA*. Jakarta: Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.
- Djiwandono, P. I. (2011). *Tes bahasa: Pegangan bagi pengajar bahasa*. Jakarta: Indeks.
- Effendi, R. (2021). The influence of vocabulary mastery toward students' reading comprehension at senior high schools in Indonesia. *Journal of English Language Studies*, 6(1), 45-54.
- Faradila, Q., Thohir, L., Arafiq., & Amin, M. (2024). Mother Tongue Interference Toward Students' Ability In Producing English Sounds. *Journal of Classroom Action Research*, 6(2), 418-424.
- Fikni, Z., Arfah, H., & Wati, L. (2025). Investigation of English Proficiency in Rural Students at SMK Pariwisata Aiq Bual in The School Year 2025/2026. *Journal of Classroom Action Research*, 7(4), 1796-1804.
- Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. H. (2015). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (9th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. L. (2011). *Teaching and researching reading* (2nd ed.). Harlow, England: Pearson Education.
- Harmer, J. (2007). *The practice of English language teaching* (4th ed.). Harlow, England: Pearson Longman.
- Hasanah, N. (2020). The correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension achievement. *Journal of English Education and Applied Linguistics*, 3(1), 34-42.

- Milton, J. (2009). *Measuring second language vocabulary acquisition*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2013). *Learning vocabulary in another language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Oakhill, J., Cain, K., & Elbro, C. (2015). *Understanding and teaching reading comprehension: A handbook*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Putri, M., & Priyanti, D. (2023). The effect of contextual vocabulary learning strategies on students' reading comprehension. *Indonesian Journal of EFL and Linguistics*, 8(2), 175–189.
- Rahman, A. (2022). Teaching English in rural Madrasah Aliyah: Challenges and strategies. *Journal of English Pedagogy*, 9(1), 60–72.
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Rumelhart, D. E. (1977). Toward an interactive model of reading. In S. Dornic (Ed.), *Attention and performance VI* (pp. 573–603). New York, NY: Academic Press.
- Schmitt, N. (2010). *Researching vocabulary: A vocabulary research manual*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode penelitian pendidikan: Pendekatan kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Suryani, E. (2018). The difficulties of teaching English in rural schools of Lombok. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 2(1), 1–10.
- Tarigan, H. G. (2008). *Membaca sebagai suatu keterampilan berbahasa*. Bandung: Angkasa.
- Tarigan, H. G. (2015). *Pengajaran kosakata*. Bandung: Angkasa.