

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON VOCABULARY MASTERY BETWEEN FEMALE AND MALE STUDENTS OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract

This study was conducted to examine the comparative achievement on English vocabulary mastery between female and male students. The population of this research was all of the second year students of Junior High School which consisted of 300 students and the total sample was 30 students which consisted of 15 female students and 15 male students. The data were collected by using multiple choice tests through analysis descriptive method. The result of the analysis showed that female students and male students have the same vocabulary achievement on vocabulary mastery.

Key Words: *Vocabulary Achievement, Female and Male*

Abstrak

Analisis Perbandingan Penguasaan Kosakata antara Siswa SMP Perempuan dan Laki-laki. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk menguji prestasi komparatif penguasaan kosa kata bahasa Inggris antara siswa perempuan dan laki-laki. Populasi penelitian ini adalah semua siswa tahun kedua SMP yang terdiri dari 300 siswa dan sampel total adalah 30 siswa yang terdiri dari 15 siswa perempuan dan 15 siswa laki-laki. Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan tes pilihan ganda melalui analisis metode deskriptif. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa siswa perempuan dan siswa laki-laki memiliki prestasi kosakata yang sama pada penguasaan kosakata.

Kata kunci: *Penguasaan kosakata, perempuan dan laki-laki*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a human communication which exists wherever and whenever human beings are. Language is an essential need in human life that differs human beings from animal. Language is a medium of communication that serves functions to support the development of the society and may broaden human relationship all over the world. Commonly, people believe that producing words means producing a language. Educational quality is certainly influenced by many factors. Among the factors are students' facility, students' interest, students' attitude, students' motivation and students' intelligence and the teacher. The teaching and learning process at school are influenced by the teacher's preparation in teaching-learning process, teacher's intelligence, the method used in teaching learning process, teacher's technique and the use of media.

Vocabulary is one of the important language components to be mastered by English students, with the purpose to practice their English. It is one way of students to understand and to know English in any circumstances. Vocabulary is a group of words stored in the mind of the language user. Having enough vocabulary we can speak, read, write and listen easier. Vocabulary is the most important language component because every language skill as listening, speaking, reading, and writing are developed or increased based on vocabulary.

The difference of students' performance between female and male is caused by the students' learning style, interest, and attitude beside that caused by the influence of the school environmental factors and facility factors. All of those can affect the students' performance in learning English. Males have a vastly superior ability to visualize the three dimensional objects than do females. This gives the male his often-observed superior abilities in math and geometrical reasoning. In addition, males are better skilled in gross motor movements than are girls.

The difference between the male and female brain is not evidence of superiority or inferiority, but of specialization. According to Michael Levin in *Feminism and Freedom*, notes that, in general, males have better spatial and math skills than females. While feminists often claim that these differences are due to social expectations--and if girls were encouraged to be mathematicians, they would have the same ability as boys--there is evidence that these differences are inherited and appear in childhood, actually increasing during puberty. On the other hand, girls tend to be more vocal than boys, are better at hearing higher frequencies, and do better than boys in reading and vocabulary tests.

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Moreover, Sutcliffe (1998) in his article wrote some differences of male and female speaking. Female generally speak differently, apologize, and smile hesitantly while male speak or argue, interrupt and loudly. Trudgill (2000) found that words referring to women generally have negative connotations whereas those referring to men are much more positive. For examples, men usually discuss, while women usually gossip and chat. Besides, men are forceful and masterful but women are bossy and dominating.

Wasty (cited by Langgadi, 2001) stated that female students have more capability of memorizing, creating, esthetics and social problems. Whiterington in Langgadi (2001) stated that male students have high score in exact, science, while female students have higher in linguistics.

Rahmah, in her comparative study between male and female students in sharing opinion in the classroom interaction (2003) found that: firstly, female and male students are almost the same in vocabulary, particularly in pronunciation and diction. Secondly, female students are more polite and excellent in structure than male students. Thirdly, the self confidence of male students is higher than female students. Moreover male students focus on ideas while female students focus on forms.

Shael et.al (cited by Langgadi, 2001) stated that female students are strong enough to memorize or remember information such as conversation, information between individual or social interaction. Female students find it easy to learn literature and the other social science, meanwhile male students find it easy to describe to complex problem such as mathematics, physics and the other natural sciences.

Concept of vocabulary

Talking about vocabulary is not only about the meaning of one word, but more than you can imagine. So what is vocabulary? Sometimes we can get the meaning of the word directly from the context but sometimes we need other words to help finding the meaning of the word, and sometimes a word does not have any meaning without other word. For example, pencil has a meaning without checking or having other words, whether by the way or two sandwiches short of a picnic does not have nor has different meaning if word by word is separated. Go off, go on, go down have different meaning. Vocabulary is essential for effective reading, writing, and oral communication. The words a child knows and can use in order to communicate or read are defined as his vocabulary. By increasing the size of a child's vocabulary, you can effectively increase the level at which the child is capable of reading, writing, and speaking.

Vocabulary is crucial for getting meaning from a written or oral text. Without knowledge of key vocabulary in a text, a learner may have serious trouble understanding the message. Teaching the meaning of individual words, however, will not ensure that learners can read a text with understanding. 'Words enter into meaningful relations with other words around them. (Sinclair 1996:76). As Steven Stahl (2005) puts it, "Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world." Vocabulary knowledge is not something that can ever be fully mastered; it is something that expands and deepens over the course of a lifetime. Instruction in vocabulary involves far more than looking up words in a dictionary and using the words in a sentence. Vocabulary is acquired incidentally through indirect exposure to words and intentionally through explicit instruction in specific words and word-learning strategies.

Many language experts set out about the concept of vocabulary. Ur (1991) defined vocabulary as the words we teach in a foreign language. However, a new item of vocabulary may be more than single word.

Basically, there are two kinds of vocabulary namely, active and passive vocabulary. The active vocabulary consists of the words used in conversation and writing, i.e., the speaking vocabulary. The passive vocabulary consists of those words, which are not usually part of one's speaking vocabulary, but words that we recognize when we hear them or read them. The passive vocabulary is usually many times larger than the active vocabulary.

Harmer (1991: 159) separated vocabulary into 2 types:

1. Active vocabulary. Active vocabulary refers to the vocabulary that the students has learned and can be used in speaking and writing. They are expected to be able use it.
2. Passive vocabulary. Passive vocabulary refers to words that the students will recognize when they are listening or reading. They will be probably unable to use the vocabulary in speaking and writing.

Based on the description above, it is clear that both active and passive vocabularies are very important. Active vocabulary used for speaking and writing, and passive vocabulary is all the words that understand when listening or reading.

Concepts of female and male

Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary defines female and male for the following:

1. Female is the sex that produces young or produces eggs (p.153)
2. Male is the sex that does not give birth. (p. 252)

Dictionary net defines female and male definitions as follows:

1. Female is a person bearing two X chromosomes in the cell nuclei and normally having a vagina, a uterus and ovaries, and developing at puberty a relatively

rounded body and enlarged breasts, and retaining a beardless face; a girl or woman, an organism of the sex or sexual phase that normally produces egg cells.

2. Male is a person bearing an X and Y chromosome pair in the cell nuclei and normally having a penis, scrotum, and testicles, and developing hair on the face at adolescence; a boy or man. An organism of the sex or sexual phase that normally produces a sperm cell or male gamete.

Umar (1999) concluded that sex can be differed based on biological aspects, such as, chemical composition, hormone, physical anatomy, reproduction, and many others. Mc Conell (2002) defines sex as a genetics and physiology. On the other words, sex is the property or quality by which organisms are classified according to their reproductive functions.

Brain differences

Are men and women different? They are different anatomically, of course, but are they differing in any other ways? Do their hormonal differences influence their behaviors and attitudes? Do they process information differently?

Men see and believe while women hear and believe. This is why men have learned in their dealings with women, especially those designs to encourage the females into participating in particular avenues of relating -- to have an effective "line" of banter and thereby say all the things a woman wants to hear (and which she will for the most part believe). At the same time, women have learned to look good and thereby make men believe that the shapes, contours, colors of hair and skin, and all the visible attributes are real and worth investigating in enormously greater detail.

This standard ingredient in any male-female relationship counseling is the result of an even more fundamental difference in the male/female approach to life. Men focus on matters. This is essential as a means of solving problems -- which is the male forte. Such focus is typically a visual commodity, but can incorporate other senses as well -- often to a lesser degree (except for kinesthetic when involved with a female!). Inasmuch as the primary sensory apparatus used in the focus process is seeing, this implies a conscious limitation of the unidirectional aspect of the sensory apparatus. It is thus clear that the idea of men seeing and believing is simply part of the focus thing.

Women, on the other hand, are highly receptive and none focused. (The less enlightened males might even use the word, "scatter brained". The author will for obvious reasons use the term, "multitask oriented". It's something of a "line", but what can you do?) For example, a woman can be cooking a gourmet meal, typing a novel on the kitchen table chatting on the telephone between buzzes from the oven, absorbing the latest Oprah edition on television, and still hear and distinguish the nature of a baby's cry in the next room. The key in part is that women are into the hearing aspect. They hear and believe.

Whiterington in Langgadi (2001) states that male students have high score in exact, science, while female students have higher in linguistics. Female students are easier to learn literature and the other social science, meanwhile male students are easier to describe the complex problem such as mathematics, physics and the others natural science.

George Mason University professor Robert Nadeau, the author of *S/he Brain: Science, Sexual Politics, and the Feminist Movement*, describes significant differences between male and female brains. In an essay on this subject in *The World & I*, (November 1, 1997), Nadeau observes:

The human brain, like the human body, is sexed, and differences in the sex-specific human brain condition a wide range of behaviors that we typically associate with maleness or femaleness.

Nadeau says that the sex-specific differences in the brain are located both in the primitive regions, and in the neocortex--the higher brain regions. The neocortex contains 70 percent of the neurons in the central nervous system, and it is divided into two hemispheres joined by a 200-million fiber network called the corpus callosum.

The left hemisphere controls language analysis and expression and body movements while the right hemisphere is responsible for spatial relationships, facial expressions, emotional stimuli, and vocal intonations.

Men and women process information differently because of differences in a portion of the brain called the splenium, which is much larger in women than in men, and has more brain-wave activity. Studies have shown that problem solving tasks in female brains are handled by both hemispheres, while the male brain only uses one hemisphere.

Differences in the ways that men and women communicate are also function of sex-specific areas of the brain. Women seem to have an enhanced awareness of "emotionally relevant details, visual cues, verbal nuances, and hidden meanings," writes Nadeau. Similarly, male infants are more interested in objects than in people, female infants respond more readily to the human voice than do male infants.

Female have a good graduate to arrange word, spell the sentences, good smelling and can learn fast another language. Female brain part left have grow so fast, so some of females are good to making a sentences, good to choose a word, and etc. For that reason, female will use left part brain to talking. Not like female, male's right part brain grows so fast too, this part will make that male have good logical, mathematic, set of puzzle, and problem solving. This is the reason why male have good solution of the problem, reading a map.

Another different is that male brain can do only one work in the one time, so if we talking with male on working, usually male do not listen what we have talked. Sometimes, some of male will quite if there's something problem happen and that makes a male really quietly.

Remember female is a feeling creature so male do not tell a lie, because female so hate if some males have told a lie to her but female self is a clever liar. Several female can do all of works in one time, for example some females can hear the noise around her although she is making love with her couple.

If some female want talk to male, please make one topic and choose a simple sentences to male understood about what have talk about and I suggestion for male to please trying understand female. Maybe that is why male and female will love to each other purpose to close a less and an excess from each individual.

Different brains: different abilities

Not only men and women are fundamentally different in the way their brains are wired, they are also vastly different in physical strength and endurance. The differences are rooted within both the genes and the hormones of male and female. Michael Levin notes that women only have 55- 58 percent of the upper body strength of men and on average, are only 80 percent as strong as a man of identical weight. Sex differences also appear by the age of three in the ability of males and females to throw a ball far and accurately.

Differences in male and female communication styles

While much has been said about women and men being from different planets and having their own cultures, the reality is that we have all grown up on the same planet, and interact with each other in different ways on a daily basis.

It is fun to look at communication differences between men and women but we also have to be careful not to stereotype and assume that all men will act a certain way and all women will act a certain way. We are all on a continuum and there are women that have some traits that might be attributed to the male style or there are times when it is necessary to use the male style and the same for men.

Women are more likely to talk to other women when they have a problem or need to make a decision. Men keep their problems to themselves and do not see the point in sharing personal issues.

Women are more relationship oriented, and look for commonalities and ways to connect with other women. Men tend to relate to other men on a one-up, one-down basis. Status and dominance are important.

If women have a disagreement with each other it affects all aspects of their relationship. Men can have a disagreement, move on to another subject and go to get a drink together. Women get things done at work by building relationships. Men build relationships while they are working on tasks with each other.

At meetings women nod their head to show that they are listening. Men think that the woman is agreeing with them. They then assume that the women will go along with their idea. They are surprised when they later disagree, since they nodded her head. They have no idea why women agree with them since they never asked them.

At meetings, men only nod their heads when they agree. If a woman is speaking, she doesn't see men's head nod as they listens, she assumes they either disagree or are not listening.

Strength and endurance

Not only are men and women fundamentally different in the way their brains are wired, they are also vastly different in physical strength and endurance. The differences are rooted within both the genes and the hormones of males and females. Michael Levin notes that women only have 55- 58 percent of the upper body strength of men and on average, are only 80 percent as strong as a man of identical weight. Sex differences also appear by the age of three in the ability of males and females to throw a ball far and accurately.

Facing reality

Contrary to the wishful thinking of feminists, bisexuals, and transsexuals, there are profound differences between males and females--and those differences are programmed within the DNA from the moment of conception. The brains of females and males are clearly "sexed," and testosterone and estrogen are the juices that augment maleness and femaleness.

To be sure, gender-distorting prenatal abnormalities do affect some individuals, and may increase the likelihood that such an afflicted person will later self-identify as transgendered or transsexual (and in some cases, homosexual).

But barring such unfortunate developmental errors--- which we should not normalize as if they were not disruptions in normal growth and development--the simple truth remains: maleness and femaleness are innate and integral parts of our human design.

METHOD

The design of this research was descriptive method. It means that the vocabulary mastery between female and male students was explained descriptively.

The participant of the current research was the students of the second year of SMP. There are 10 classes, namely, class A, class B, Class C, Class D, Class E, Class F, Class G, Class H, Class I and Class J. The number of students is 30 students each class. The technique of taking sample was purposive cluster random sampling. Abustam, Djaali, and Rahman (in Bariun, 2003) state that “in a research which has a big population, the amount of the sample must be at least 10% from the amount of population. So the participant of the research was 15 female students and 15 male students.

Data collection is vocabulary mastery test. The test consist test (vocabulary achievement test) consisting of listening test, writing test, reading test and speaking test using multiple choice questions.

In analyzing the data, the researcher was classifying both students' answers namely female students answer and male students answer after that checking the correct students answer next scoring the students answer after that computing the frequency and the rate percentage of the students score was used formula from Ali, 1982 and the last given the score classification of the students answer was adapted from Depdikbud, 2005

FINDINGS

The data of female and male students have been processed in terms of vocabulary achievement test. The result shows that the minimum score of female and male students is 8. While the maximum score of female students is 10 and that of the male students is 9.75. Both of them have the same total score is 137.

Based on the classification as stated in chapter III, the average of female and male students for their vocabulary achievement is classified very good. The distribution of frequency and percentages for classification of students' vocabulary achievement for female students can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 1. The Frequency and percentage in vocabulary achievement of female students and male students

Score	Classification	Female		Male	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
9.6 – 10	Excellent	1	6.6	1	6.6
8.6 – 9.5	Very Good	10	66.7	12	80
7.6 – 8.5	Good	4	26.7	2	13.4
6.6 – 7.5	Fairly Good	0	0	0	0
5.6 – 6.5	Fair	0	0	0	0
3.6 – 5.5	Poor	0	0	0	0
0.0 – 3.5	Very Poor	0	0	0	0
Total		15	100	15	100

Table 1 above gives us information that from 15 female students, there is 1 student (6.6%) in excellent score, there are 10 students (66.67%) in very good score and there are 4 students (26.7%) into good score. There are no students who got fairly good, fair, poor, and very poor score.

From 15 male students there is 1 student (6.6%) in excellent score, there are 12 students (80%) in very good score and there are 2 students (13.4%) in good score. There are no students who got fairly good, fair, poor, and very poor score.

a. The Histogram of frequency distribution in table 1 above can be seen in Figure 1.

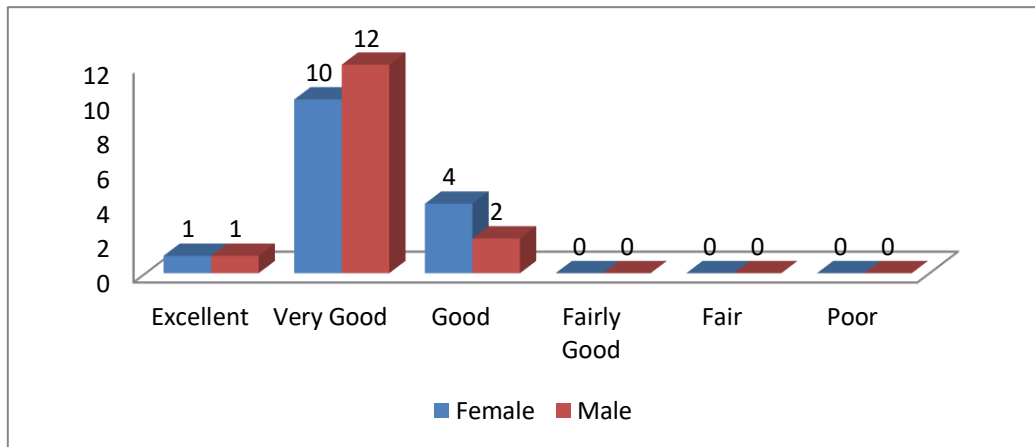


Figure 1. The Histogram of frequency distribution vocabulary of female and male students

Based on Figure 1 above, as can be seen the blue histogram symbolizes the female students, there is 1 student classified into excellent classification, there are 10 students classified into very good classification and there are 4 students classified into good classification but there are no student classified into fairly good, fair and poor classification.

The red histogram symbolizes the male students, there is 1 student classified into excellent classification, there are 12 students classified into very good classification and there are 2 students classified into good classification but there are no student classified into fairly good, fair and poor classification.

b. Female and male students' vocabulary achievement

Table 2. Female and male students' mean score, median, modus and Std. deviation on Vocabulary Achievement

Sex	Vocabulary Achievement			
	Median	Mean Score	Modus	Std. Deviation
Female	9.25	9.13	9.5	0.53
Male	9.25	9.13	9.5	0.47

Table 2 above shows that female and male students have the same median that is 9.25, the same mean score that is 9.13, and the same modus that is 9.5. The standard deviation of female students is 0.53 and that of the male students is 0.47.

In vocabulary achievement female and male have the same score. Therefore, the researcher interpreted; both sexes, namely female and male students are the same in vocabulary achievement.

DISCUSSIONS

Based on the data on the findings as have been stated above, it seems that both sexes, namely female and male students are same on vocabulary achievement which is showed in the findings of this research. The result shows that the vocabulary achievement of female students and male students are the same because both of them have the same mean score. They have highest score is very good classification with high frequency for female students is 66.7% and for male students is 80%. Both of them, they have same low frequency (6.6%) with excellent classification and good classification as the middle frequency for female and male students.

This condition is same with Rahmah's research (2003:33). She concluded that female and male students are same in vocabulary. This happens because when the test was conducted, both of them had high concentration and gave question when they did not understand something in test. Beside that, both of them had English book facility and high degree of frequency of learning English to support them during the test because the vocabulary test that they got contained vocabulary that they learnt in the class.

Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that the English language teachers also have control toward students and definitely, the students achieved good score.

The histogram of frequency and percentage between female and male students on vocabulary achievement is showed in Figure 1.

CONCLUSION

The participation from this research was doing the test and got the result, the researcher concluded that even female and male students have many different; it is not big problem because the result is showing that Female students and male students are the same better vocabulary achievement.

SUGGESTIONS

1. For the teachers who teach English, they should be more creative in teaching student in the class or out side interaction, so gender differences in language can be accurately equal between female and male students
2. For the students, both female students and male students in order focus on other aspect of study English. Especially for male students should increase their performance by more memorize the words.
3. For the next research, it is suggested to specialize the scope of the research particularly in mixed sex pairs or a same sex pairs in mastery the vocabulary.

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