

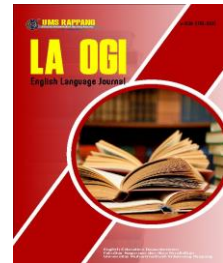


# La Ogi is English Language Journal

Vol. 9 – No. 02, tahun 2023, Hal.191-198

e-ISSN: 2745-9233

<https://jurnal.umsrappang.ac.id/laogi/issn>



## THE CORRELATION BETWEEN MEMORY AND USES OF WORDS MEANINGS AND USAGES OF SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS AT SMP N 2 Yogyakarta

Nur Rifai Akhsan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Ahmad Dahlan

[nurakhsan@pbi.uad.ac.id](mailto:nurakhsan@pbi.uad.ac.id)

### Abstract

The objective of this research was to know whether there is any correlation between memory and uses of the words meanings and usages. There are there research problems were examined. It is about the total words meanings and usages remembered by the students, the uses of the words meanings and usages in the four language skills, and the correlation between memory and uses of the words meanings and usages. This research conducted at SMP N 2 Yogyakarta and the sample used was students in the seven grade consisted of 62 students. The data were collected using test and questionnaire. The result of test shows that the highest total number of words meanings and usages remembered by the students is 115 words (90%) from the total number of words is 128 words while the lowest total number of words meanings and usages remembered by the students is 64 words (50%). The most word class remembered by students in terms of word meanings and usages is noun that is 75% and word class adverb is 42% remembered by the students. The result of questionnaire shows that students used words meanings and usages frequently in reading. In reading, 62 students (100%) used words meanings and usages in terms of word class noun, verb, adjective, and adverb. The result of data analysis shows that there is a significant correlation between memory and uses of words meanings and usages. It could be seen by looking at the result of Point-Biserial Correlation coefficient  $r$  that is 0.564.

**Key Words:** *memory, uses of words meanings and usages*

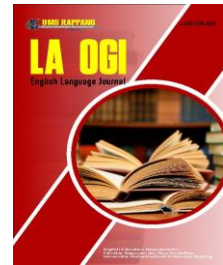


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## Introduction

English is taught as a foreign language in Indonesian school according to BNSP in Ratminingsih (2013). Indonesian school use curriculum of SBC (School Based Curriculum) or *KTSP (Kurikulum Tingkat satuan Pendidikan)*. Teaching English as foreign language focuses on the development of the four language skills. Those are listening, reading, speaking, and writing (Cabrera and Bazo: 2002). Competency is used as the model of the curriculum and the model of curriculum is known as CBC (Competency Based Curriculum) or *KBK (Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi)*. According to *Peraturan Pemerintah No.19 tahun 2005*, the implementation of CBC allows the schools to have its own management, principle, belief, goal, and value underlying the school itself based on the situation or condition in every school. This model has two competencies namely standard competency and basic competency. Standard competency is the purpose of the learning in a general point meanwhile basic competency is the specific point.

In order to know when the students can be competent in standard competency and basic competency, indicators can be used to measure the improvement of the students. In listening and reading skill, the indicators are main idea, specific information, textual references, and word/phrase/sentence meaning and usage. The indicators for speaking are pronunciation, diction, coherence, fluency, grammar, and content. In writing skill, the indicators are title, topic sentence, arrangement, development, diction, grammar and mechanics. From all of the indicators, it can be seen that the existence of words/dictions appears in those four language skills.

According to Case (2008) there are some reasons why students find listening is difficult; it is because students are trying to understand every word, students get left behind trying to work out what a previous word means, students just don't know the most important words, students don't recognize the words that they know, students have problems with different accents, get tired, have a mental block, distracted by background noise, cannot cope the words because having no images about the words, have hearing problems, and students cannot tell the difference between the different voices.

McHugh (2014) stated that there are four different difficulties in speaking, namely listening, vocabulary, pronunciation, and confidence. Listening problem means that when people don't understand what the other person is saying, it is difficult to replay. Vocabulary problem means that sometimes when people speak English, people have a sentence in mind but there are some important words are missing and then it becomes difficult to say something. Pronunciation problem means that English words can be difficult to pronounce and when speaking English, people have to consider not only the pronunciation of the

individual words, but also the connection between the words in the sentence. Confidence problem means that when people say something, they usually feel nervous and afraid of making mistake while speaking, and then this become obstacle in speaking.

According to Levine (2002) there are some difficulties with reading: decoding difficulties, comprehension difficulties, and retention difficulties. In decoding difficulties, the problems are trouble sounding out words and recognizing words out of context, confusion between letters and the sounds they represent, slow oral reading rate (reading word by word), reading without expression, and ignoring punctuation while reading. In comprehension difficulties, the problems are confusion about the meaning of words and sentences, inability to connect ideas in a passage, omission of or glossing overall detail, difficulty distinguishing significant information from minor details and lack of concentration during reading. In retention difficulties, the problems are trouble remembering or summarizing what is read, difficulty connecting what is read to prior knowledge, and difficulty applying content of a text to personal experiences.

Levine (2002) identifies the neurodevelopment problems and their potential impacts on writing such as attention problem, spatial ordering problem, sequential ordering problem, memory problem, language problem, higher order cognition problem and graphomotor problem. In attention problem, may manifests



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itself as difficulty getting started on writing assignments, easy distractibility during writing tasks, mental fatigue while writing, inconsistent legibility in writing, uneven writing tempo, many careless errors and poorly planned papers and reports. In spatial ordering problem, may manifests itself as poor use of lines on the paper, organizational problems, uneven spacing between letters, and many misspelled words. In sequential ordering problem, may manifests as poor letter formation, transposed letters and spelling omissions,

poor narrative sequencing and lack transitions. In memory problem, may manifests as poor vocabulary, many misspelled words and frequent capitalization, punctuation and grammar errors. In language problem may manifests as poor vocabulary, awkward phrasing and unconventional grammar, inappropriate use of colloquial language, difficulty with sentence structure and word order, trouble reading back what is written and difficulty with word sounds, spelling and meanings. In higher order cognition problem, may manifests as trouble generating ideas or elaborating them, difficulty developing and organizing ideas, lack of opinion or sense of audience, and difficulty with writing tasks that require creativity and / or critical thinking. In graphomotor problem, may manifests as write only very short passages, write exceptional slowly and with great effort, use an awkward pencil grip, lack fluidity in cursive writing and find it hard to form letters.

From the entire problems in the four language skills, word is one of the causes. According to Thornbury (2002:13) stated the importance of words. He stated that everyone can deliver idea in English though knows very little about grammar and everyone cannot deliver everything if he doesn't have words. The statement above also supported by Dellar. H and Hocking as cited in Thornbury (2002: 13). He stated that when people spend most of the time studying grammar, their English will not improve very much and there is improvement if people learn more words and expressions.

Waring (n.d) stated that language makes use of a large number of words and not all of the words are equally useful. One measure of usefulness is word frequency. Word frequency is how often the word occurs in normal use of the language. He also stated that if a learner knows a small number of the words of English occur very frequently, that learner will know a very large proportion of the running words in a written or spoken text. Most of these words are content words and knowing enough of

them allows a good degree of comprehension of a text. From the statements it can be seen that word is essential in learning a language.

Definition of learning stated by Wesson (2012) is the capability of modifying information which already stored in memory based on new input or experiences. He added that since memory is united with prior learning, the first step in memory is learning which occurs when sensory systems send information to the brain and then stored to long term in order to be able to recall the information later.

As stated in the paragraph four in this chapter which is said that words/dictions exists in all of the four skills in learning English as a foreign language, students are expected not only to learn a lot of words, but to remember them and able to use them in communication. There are several ways to remember words and one of them is using the words. According to Thornbury (2002: 24), putting words to use is the best way of ensuring the words are added to long term memory. It is the principle popularly known as '*use it or lose it*'. This principle also supported by one of the theory of forgetting, namely decay theory. According to Ellen (2012: p 227) decay theory is a theory of forgetting that proposes that memory traces that are not routinely activated in long term memory will degrade. To maintain that once a memory trace is stored in long term, it must be routinely activated to keep it there.

According to Cox (2012) one tip to get information into the brain and keep it there is by repeating yourself. Simple repetition that is practice to retrieving a memory over and over again is the best form of consolidation the memory. It means that when people want to keep information into the brain and want to keep it, people should use the information frequently.

Based on this literature review, both of words and frequency of use were very crucial in learning



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a language. Words are essential to deliver ideas and it has mutually connection with language use while frequency of use is crucial in making something stored in long term memory. Related to the above issues, the researcher has the interest in conducting the study in investigating whether or not there is a significant correlation between memory and uses of words meanings and usages.

## Research Method

This research was correlational research. The correlational research designed to determine whether and how a set of variables are related or to test hypotheses regarding expected relations, In this research the hypothesis was thereis a significant correlation between memory and uses of words meanings and usages of the seven grade students at SMP N 2 Yogyakarta in academic year 2013/2014.

The sample of this research was selected using cluster random sampling technique, a sampling technique which is intact groups and not individual. Accordingto Arikunto in Rahman (2012), there are two ways in selecting a sample. First, if the population is less 100, all population can be sampled. Second, if the population is over 100, the researcher can take 10%- 15% or 20%-25% from all population as a sample. In this research, the researcher taken 20% from all population (i.e. 312 students) and the sample were 62 students. The sample was randomly selected using lottery and the students in class VII A and VII F were the sample of this research.

The data in this research were collected using test and questionnaire . The data then described in descriptive and inferential analysis, and the data were analyzed using Point-Biserial Correlation. Point-Biserial Correlation is a special case of the Pearson  $r$  and it is used when one variable is a discrete dichotomy (i.e. the result of questionnaire) and the other variable is measured on at least an interval scale (i.e. the result of test).

## Finding and Discussion

The result of memory of wordsmeanings and usages can be seen in the table 1.

Table1. Memory of Words Meanings and Usages Result

Respondent	noun (n)	verb (v)	adjective (adj)	adverb (adv)	f	%
R1	52	30	22	7	111	87
R2	54	29	24	8	115	90
R3	30	18	12	4	64	50
R4	40	20	14	3	77	60
R5	30	20	14	4	68	53
R6	40	20	14	3	77	60
R7	45	28	15	5	93	73
R8	30	18	13	3	64	50
R9	50	25	17	6	98	77
R10	50	25	17	6	98	77
R11	40	20	18	3	81	63
R12	45	28	15	5	93	73
R13	39	28	18	1	86	67
R14	50	25	17	6	98	77
R15	45	28	15	5	93	73
R16	39	28	18	1	86	67
R17	50	25	17	6	98	77
R18	40	20	18	3	81	63
R19	45	28	15	5	93	73

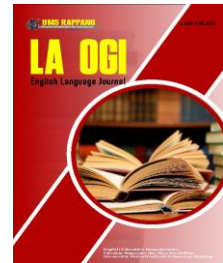


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R20	39	28	18	1	86	67
R21	50	25	17	6	98	77
R22	45	28	15	5	93	73
R23	51	29	20	2	102	80
R24	40	22	12	3	77	60
R25	29	28	13	3	73	57
R26	40	20	18	3	81	63
R27	39	28	18	1	86	67
R28	50	25	17	6	98	77
R29	53	30	24	8	115	90
R30	50	29	20	2	101	79
R31	40	18	16	3	77	60
R32	29	19	12	4	64	50
R33	40	20	14	3	77	60
R34	38	22	14	3	77	60
R35	40	20	18	3	81	63
R36	40	20	18	3	81	63
R37	40	20	18	3	81	63
R38	37	27	18	1	83	65
R39	37	27	18	1	83	65
R40	37	27	18	1	83	65
R41	38	27	18	1	84	66
R42	38	27	18	1	84	66
R43	38	27	18	1	84	66
R44	45	25	15	5	90	70
R45	45	28	15	5	93	73
R46	45	25	15	5	90	70
R47	45	25	15	5	90	70



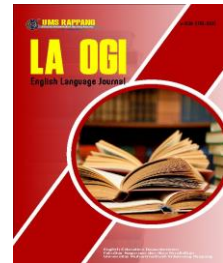


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R48	50	16	15	5	86	67
R49	50	16	15	5	86	67
R50	46	28	20	2	96	75
R51	42	35	15	5	97	76
R52	42	35	15	5	97	76
R53	50	25	21	4	100	78
R54	51	29	20	2	102	80
R55	51	29	20	2	102	80
R56	51	29	20	2	102	80
R57	50	25	17	6	98	77
R58	50	25	17	6	98	77
R59	54	29	19	4	106	83
R60	52	30	22	5	109	85
R61	52	30	22	5	109	85
R62	51	31	22	7	111	87
<b>Total</b>		<b>2714</b>	<b>1517</b>	<b>1063</b>	<b>237</b>	
<b>%</b>		<b>75%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>42%</b>	

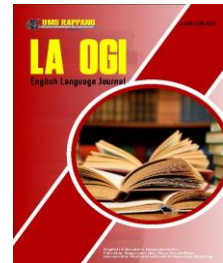
Based on the table 1, the highest total number of words meanings and usages remembered by the students is 115 words (90%) and the lowest total numbers of words meanings and usages remembered by the students is 64 words(50%).

In terms of word classes, it could be found that from the total number of words for noun that is 58 words; only 75% words of noun are remembered by 62 students. The total number of words for verb is 34 words and 62 students are remembered only 72% word of verb. The total number of words for adjective is 27 words and 62 students are remembered only 63% word of adjective. The total number of words for adverb is 9 words and 62 students are remembered only 42% word of adverb. So the word class noun is the most word class remembered by the students in terms of words meanings and usages. Table 2, 3, 4, and table 5 show the result of the uses of words meanings and usages by the students in the four language skills.

From the table 2 until table 5, the result of the uses of words meanings and usages in the four language skills are students used words meanings and usages frequently in reading and in reading, 62 students (100%) used words meanings and usages in terms of word class noun, verb, adjective, and adverb.

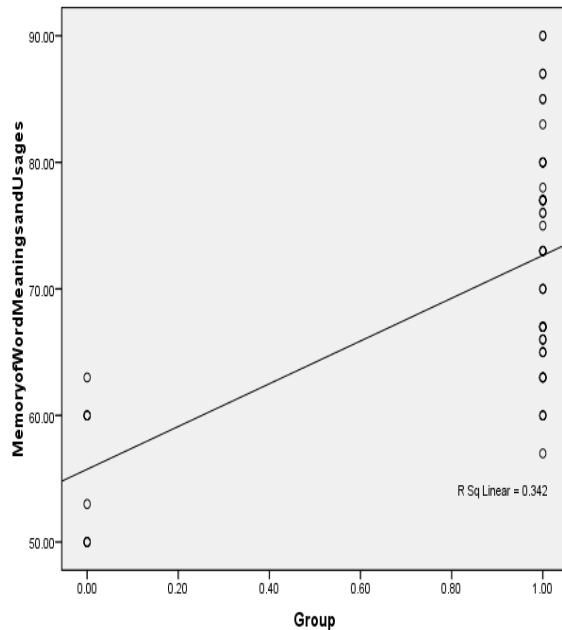
The data is analyzed by using Point- Biserial Correlation coefficient and it is done using SPSS v 16 for Windows.

By using SPSS v.16 for Windows, the value of correlation coefficient is +0.564. Looking at the correlation coefficient it can be said that the correlation is positive correlation and the relationship between the variables is moderate. It means that the students who frequently used the words meanings and usages in the four language skills are



likely to have a high total number of words meanings and usages remembered. So the result of the data analysis shows that there is a correlation between memory and uses of words meanings and usages of the seventh grade students at SMP N 2 Yogyakarta in academic year 2013/2014.

The scatterplot for the correlations shown in the graph 1.



Graph 1. The Scatterplot for the Correlation

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The findings of the research were answered the three research problems. First is the result of memory of words meanings and usages. The result showed that the highest total number of words meaning and usages remembered by the students was 115 words (89.8%) while the lowest total number of words meaning and usages remembered by students was 64 words (50%). In terms of word class, the most word class remembered by students in terms of word meanings and usages is noun that is 75% and word class adverb is 42% remembered by the students.

Second is the result of uses of words meanings and usages. The result showed that students used words meanings and usages frequently in reading and in reading, 62 students (100%) used words meanings and usages in terms of word class noun, verb, adjective, and adverb.

Third is the correlation between memory and uses of words meanings and usages. The result of data analysis showed that there is a positive correlation between memory and uses of words meanings and usages of the students in the seventh grade at SMP N 2 Yogyakarta in academic year 2013/2014. It is proven by looking the value of Point - Biserial Correlation coefficient that was 0.564. The result of this research was in line with one of the theories of forgetting, that is decay theory and the theory by Forster (1979). According to decay theory stated by Pastorino (2012: p 227), information in memory that are not routinely activated in long term memory will degrade by the time and the variables which affect storage are frequency of use and recency of use (Forster, 1979). In his theory, Forster illustrated the theory by using a pile of cards that each card representing word. The most frequently used cards are at the top of the pile than other and the most recently used cards is being at the top of the pile, so that it is easier to retrieve.

So based on findings and discussions in this research, there are some suggestion that can be advised. For English teachers, it is suggested that by knowing that there is a positive correlation between memory and uses of words meanings and usages, hope that teacher used it as a reference to develop



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effective strategy and technique in teaching English in schools. It also hoped that teachers will give more attention in the frequency of the students in using the knowledge to make sure that the knowledge stored correctly in the students' memory.

For the students it was suggested that the result of this research could assist the students in learning process. The result of this research found that students' memory has correlation with frequency of use. Hence, it could change the students' habit in learning a new knowledge that is by using frequently the new knowledge in daily life. It is important that students know the essential of stored the information in the long term memory in learning process, considering that it help students in remembering the lesson.

For the other researcher, it is suggested that the results of the research could be used as additional references in conducting other research, particularly that concerned with correlation.

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