



Identification of English Vocabulary Mastery Levels among Primary School Students

Farisatma¹, Krisnawati¹, Anisa Rizkayati¹

¹Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Muhammadiyah Buton, Indonesia

*e-mail correspondence: farisatma.umbuton@gmail.com

Abstrak

Penguasaan kosakata merupakan komponen fundamental dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di sekolah dasar karena menjadi dasar bagi pengembangan keterampilan berbahasa lainnya. Namun, dalam praktik pembelajaran, kemampuan kosakata siswa sering kali berkembang secara tidak merata. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi tingkat penguasaan kosakata Bahasa Inggris siswa kelas IV serta menggambarkan kesenjangan kemampuan kosakata antarsiswa di SD Negeri 1 Kaobula dan SD Negeri 2 Kaobula. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan jenis penelitian deskriptif. Subjek penelitian terdiri atas 42 siswa kelas IV yang dipilih secara purposive. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes penguasaan kosakata Bahasa Inggris dan dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis deskriptif kuantitatif dengan menghitung persentase, nilai rata-rata, serta pengelompokan kategori penguasaan kosakata. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tingkat penguasaan kosakata Bahasa Inggris siswa berada pada kategori yang bervariasi, yaitu tinggi, sedang, dan rendah. Secara umum, penguasaan kosakata siswa berada pada tingkat sedang, yang menunjukkan bahwa siswa telah memiliki pemahaman dasar kosakata Bahasa Inggris, namun belum optimal. Selain itu, hasil identifikasi juga mengungkap adanya kesenjangan penguasaan kosakata antarsiswa, yang menegaskan pentingnya pemetaan kemampuan awal sebagai dasar perencanaan pembelajaran yang lebih kontekstual dan adaptif. Temuan ini diharapkan dapat menjadi acuan bagi guru dalam meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di sekolah dasar.

Kata Kunci: Penguasaan Kosakata; Bahasa Inggris; Sekolah Dasar; Analisis Deskriptif

Abstract

Vocabulary mastery is a fundamental component of English learning in primary schools, as it serves as the foundation for the development of other language skills. However, in classroom practice, students' vocabulary acquisition often develops unevenly. This study aimed to identify the level of English vocabulary mastery of Grade IV students and to describe the vocabulary mastery gap among students at SD Negeri 1 Kaobula and SD Negeri 2 Kaobula. This research employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design. The research subjects consisted of 42 Grade IV students selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through an English vocabulary mastery test and analyzed using descriptive quantitative techniques, including percentage analysis, mean scores, and classification of vocabulary mastery levels. The results revealed that students' English vocabulary mastery varied across high, moderate, and low categories. Overall, students' vocabulary mastery was at a moderate level, indicating that they had acquired basic English vocabulary but had not yet reached an optimal level of proficiency. Furthermore, the findings indicated a noticeable gap in vocabulary mastery among students, highlighting the importance of initial ability mapping as a basis for planning more contextual and adaptive English learning strategies. These findings are expected to provide practical insights for teachers in improving the quality of English instruction in primary schools.

Keywords: Vocabulary Mastery; English Language Learning; Primary School; Descriptive Analysis



1. Introduction

Identifying the level of English vocabulary mastery among primary school students is an important initial step in understanding students' readiness and basic abilities in foreign language learning. Vocabulary serves as a fundamental foundation of language skills, as it is a prerequisite for the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills (Zasrianita & Putri, 2022). At the primary school level, vocabulary mastery is not only related to the number of words students know, but also to their understanding of meaning, their ability to use words in simple contexts, and their capacity to connect vocabulary with everyday experiences (Ramadhani & Ammar, 2023). This identification process aims to obtain an empirical overview of the variation in students' vocabulary abilities, which are influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors include students' learning interest, motivation, and cognitive readiness, while external factors encompass teachers' instructional strategies, the use of learning media, and learning environments at school and at home (Nordin, 2023) (Dari et al., 2021) (Tasaufi et al., 2024). Through systematic identification, educators can recognize gaps in vocabulary mastery among students and map learning needs more accurately, enabling the design of more contextual and developmentally appropriate instruction for primary school learners.

Previous studies on English vocabulary mastery among primary school students indicate that vocabulary is a key component in the success of early foreign language learning. Numerous studies have emphasized that limited vocabulary has a direct impact on students' low reading and speaking abilities (P. Y. Lestari et al., 2023) (Anh, 2023). Other research has found that primary school students tend to acquire vocabulary more easily when learning is connected to concrete contexts, visual support, and everyday experiences (Chopra, 2021) (Sari et al., 2022) (Naqsyabandiyah & Dehghanitafti, 2023). In addition, the use of interactive and image-based learning media has been proven to significantly enhance vocabulary retention and comprehension of word meanings (Syafrizal et al., 2021) (Esa et al., 2021).

Several studies conducted in the context of Indonesian primary education and other developing countries indicate that gaps in English vocabulary mastery persist due to learning approaches that are largely memorization-oriented and insufficiently contextual (Maulidiyah et al., 2023) (Satriani et al., 2022). Empirical studies have also emphasized the importance of early identification of vocabulary ability in order to map students' learning needs and design adaptive instructional strategies (Ningsih et al., 2021) (Munawir et al., 2022) (Siregar & Fithriani, 2023). More recent research highlights that identifying vocabulary mastery functions not only as a diagnosis of linguistic ability but also as a foundation for developing innovative learning models that support sustainable language literacy at the primary school level (Mujahidah et al., 2024) (Wahyuningsih & Fitriani, 2022) (Verawati et al., 2024). Despite the growing body of research addressing the importance of English vocabulary mastery among primary school students, significant research gaps remain, particularly in relation to comprehensive and contextual identification of vocabulary ability. Most previous studies have focused primarily on improving vocabulary through the application of specific methods or learning media, while the initial identification stage is often treated merely as a pretest. Consequently, students' vocabulary mastery has not been fully mapped in terms of meaning comprehension, use in simple contexts, and connections to students' everyday experiences and learning environments.

Research that specifically examines the identification of English vocabulary mastery among primary school students within local contexts is still relatively limited, especially

studies that consider cultural characteristics, learning environments, and students' literacy readiness (Zulfritri, 2022). Many identification instruments and approaches are adopted from educational contexts in developed countries without adequate adaptation to the conditions of Indonesian primary schools (Anthonius & Andanti, 2023). This gap indicates the need for research that focuses on identifying English vocabulary mastery in a more contextual, adaptive, and relevant manner, so that it can serve as a strong empirical basis for designing effective English learning strategies and models at the primary school level.

Problems in English learning at the primary school level are largely related to students' low vocabulary mastery, which is not accompanied by systematic and contextual identification of their abilities. Gaps emerge when instruction is more oriented toward curriculum targets and rote memorization of vocabulary, while initial mapping of students' levels of understanding, use of vocabulary in simple contexts, and differences in individual abilities receive limited attention. These challenges are further compounded by limitations in learning media and instructional strategies that align with primary school students' developmental characteristics, differences in learning environments, and the lack of adaptive vocabulary identification instruments suited to local contexts. As a result, the planning and effectiveness of English instruction at the primary education level remain suboptimal.

At the research sites, namely SD Negeri 1 Kaobula and SD Negeri 2 Kaobula, the main problem in English learning is reflected in students' low vocabulary mastery, which affects their limited ability to understand and use English in simple forms. Based on preliminary observations and information from teachers, vocabulary instruction tends to be textbook-centered and relies heavily on memorization methods, with minimal integration of students' everyday contexts and limited use of varied learning media. In addition, systematic identification of students' vocabulary mastery has not been conducted to map their initial abilities, making it difficult for teachers to adjust instructional strategies to students' needs and varying ability levels. This condition poses a particular challenge in improving the quality of English learning in both schools.

As a response to these issues, this study is directed toward systematically and contextually identifying the level of English vocabulary mastery among primary school students. The purpose of the study is to obtain an empirical description of students' vocabulary abilities as a basis for planning more appropriate, adaptive, and learner-centered English instruction. The research title is considered compelling because it does not merely position vocabulary as a linguistic aspect, but also emphasizes the importance of early identification as a foundation for developing effective instructional strategies that are relevant to the primary school context and capable of making practical contributions to improving the quality of English learning in primary schools.

2. Research Method

This study employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design. This approach was selected to objectively and systematically describe primary school students' levels of English vocabulary mastery based on empirical data obtained through research instruments (Herdi et al., 2022) (Harianto & Thomas, 2021) (Junaid et al., 2022). Descriptive quantitative research enables the researcher to map students' vocabulary abilities without administering any specific treatment, thereby ensuring that the findings reflect the actual condition of students' English vocabulary mastery in the primary school context (Ritonga & Hz, 2024). The research was conducted at SD Negeri 1 Kaobula and

SD Negeri 2 Kaobula, involving upper-grade primary school students who had already received English instruction.

The sample for this study was determined using purposive sampling, involving 42 Grade IV students from SD Negeri 1 Kaobula and SD Negeri 2 Kaobula. Grade IV students were selected because they had already acquired basic experience in learning English and demonstrated relatively stable reading and writing skills, making them the most representative group for identifying vocabulary mastery levels. In addition, selecting Grade IV students allowed for more objective measurement of vocabulary ability, as students at this level were able to respond to the research instruments independently. The sample size of 42 students was determined based on research feasibility, the availability of participants in both schools, and the need to obtain sufficient data to descriptively illustrate variations in students' vocabulary mastery. Involving students from two schools was also intended to broaden the scope of the findings, so that the results would not reflect a single school context but provide a more comprehensive picture of English vocabulary mastery among Grade IV students in the Kaobula area.

Data collection techniques in this study included tests and documentation. Tests served as the primary method for identifying the level of English vocabulary mastery among Grade IV students at SD Negeri 1 Kaobula and SD Negeri 2 Kaobula. The test instruments were designed in the form of multiple-choice and/or short-answer items to measure students' ability to recognize word meanings, match words with pictures, and use vocabulary in simple sentence contexts. The test instruments were developed in accordance with primary school students' cognitive development and the vocabulary content that had been taught in class. In addition to tests, documentation was used to complement the research data. Documentation included information on the number of students, class lists, and supporting documents related to English instruction at the schools, such as syllabi or lesson schedules. These documentation data were used to strengthen contextual information about the research setting and participant characteristics, enabling a more comprehensive and accurate analysis of students' English vocabulary mastery.

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive quantitative analysis techniques. The data obtained from the vocabulary mastery tests were analyzed by calculating each student's score and converting it into percentage values. This analysis aimed to objectively describe students' levels of vocabulary mastery based on the measurement results. Prior to analyzing the test results, clear assessment criteria were established as a reference for classifying students' abilities. This classification was intended to facilitate interpretation of the test data and to provide a systematic overview of primary school students' vocabulary mastery levels. With these criteria, the measurement results were not only presented numerically but also interpreted qualitatively through clearly defined mastery categories.

Table 1. Classification of English Vocabulary Mastery Levels of Students

Percentage Range (%)	Mastery Category
76–100	High
56–75	Moderate
≤ 55	Low

Based on Table 1, students' English vocabulary mastery is classified into three categories: high, moderate, and low. The high category indicates that students have mastered most of the tested vocabulary and are able to understand and use it effectively. The moderate category represents students who have adequate vocabulary mastery but

still require reinforcement in certain aspects. Meanwhile, the low category indicates that students still experience difficulties in recognizing and understanding basic English vocabulary and therefore require more intensive instructional support and learning strategies.

Descriptive analysis is employed to provide an overall picture of students' English vocabulary mastery based on the collected test data. Through this analysis, quantitative data are not only presented as individual scores but are also summarized into representative statistical measures, such as the highest score, lowest score, and mean score. Presenting data through descriptive analysis aims to facilitate understanding of overall patterns and trends in students' vocabulary mastery.

Table 2. Results of Descriptive Analysis of Students' English Vocabulary Mastery

No	Descriptive Statistics	Result
1	Highest Score	Yes
2	Lowest Score	Yes
3	Mean Score	Yes
4	Number of Students	42

Based on Table 2, the results of the descriptive analysis indicate variations in English vocabulary mastery among Grade IV students at SD Negeri 1 Kaobula and SD Negeri 2 Kaobula. The highest and lowest scores illustrate the range of students' abilities, while the mean score reflects the overall level of vocabulary mastery. With a total of 42 students, these data provide a sufficiently representative overview of the condition of English vocabulary mastery among primary school students and can serve as a basis for drawing conclusions and formulating appropriate instructional recommendations.

Table 3. Formulas for Data Analysis of English Vocabulary Mastery

Type of Analysis	Formula	Description
Vocabulary Mastery Percentage Score	Percentage = (Score obtained / Maximum score) × 100%	Used to determine each student's level of vocabulary mastery
Mean Score	$\bar{X} = \Sigma X / N$	\bar{X} = mean score; ΣX = total score of all students; N = number of students
Highest Score	Maximum score	The highest score achieved by a student in the vocabulary mastery test
Lowest Score	Minimum score	The lowest score achieved by a student in the vocabulary mastery test

The table presents the data analysis formulas used to systematically and accurately process the results of the English vocabulary mastery test. The percentage formula is used to determine each student's individual level of vocabulary mastery, while the mean formula is used to describe overall vocabulary ability. In addition, the highest and lowest scores are used to indicate the range of students' abilities. Thus, this table serves as a primary reference in the descriptive quantitative analysis process and in drawing conclusions regarding primary school students' English vocabulary mastery levels.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

The results of this study indicate that English vocabulary mastery among Grade IV students at SD Negeri 1 Kaobula and SD Negeri 2 Kaobula is uneven and shows considerable variation among students. This condition is reflected in the differences in vocabulary mastery levels, which fall into high, moderate, and low categories. The mean

test score suggests that, overall, students' vocabulary mastery is at a moderate level, indicating that instructional reinforcement is still required to improve students' understanding and use of English vocabulary more optimally. These findings also highlight the existence of a vocabulary mastery gap, emphasizing the importance of identifying and mapping students' initial abilities as a foundation for designing more contextual, adaptive, and needs-based English learning strategies for primary school students.

Level of English Vocabulary Mastery

Before presenting the research findings in tabular form, it is important to note that the analysis of students' English vocabulary mastery was conducted as an effort to comprehensively map students' abilities. This mapping aims to provide an accurate picture of the vocabulary mastery of Grade IV students at SD Negeri 1 Kaobula and SD Negeri 2 Kaobula based on the results of the administered test. Accordingly, the data obtained are not only numerical in nature but are also interpreted descriptively in line with the predetermined vocabulary mastery categories.

The classification of the research results into high, moderate, and low categories was conducted to support clearer data interpretation and to identify variations in students' vocabulary mastery levels. Each category represents distinct characteristics of students' abilities, ranging from those who demonstrate effective understanding and use of English vocabulary to those who still require substantial instructional support. This categorization allows researchers and educators to better understand the distribution of students' abilities and to recognize specific learning needs within each group. Presenting the research data in tabular form further enhances clarity and systematic analysis of the findings. Tables provide a concise and structured overview that enables readers to easily compare categories and identify key patterns in students' vocabulary mastery. Through this presentation, the results become more accessible and interpretable, serving as a useful basis for drawing conclusions and formulating appropriate instructional strategies based on the observed differences in students' abilities.

Table 4. Results of the Study on English Vocabulary Mastery Levels

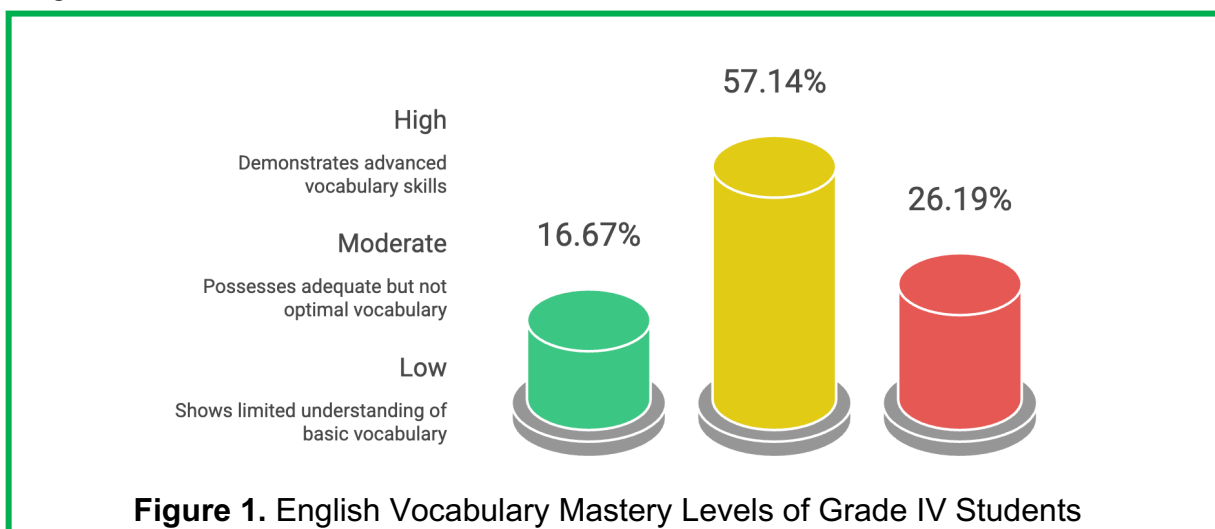
Mastery Category	Description of Findings
High	Students are able to recognize, understand, and use basic English vocabulary effectively. They can answer test items accurately and comprehend word meanings in simple contexts.
Moderate	Students have adequate but not yet optimal vocabulary mastery. They can recognize commonly used vocabulary but still experience difficulties in understanding and using vocabulary in different or more complex contexts.
Low	Students show limitations in recognizing and understanding basic English vocabulary. They have difficulty linking vocabulary to appropriate meanings or contexts and obtain relatively low test scores.
General Finding	Students' vocabulary mastery varies, indicating differences in ability among students and the need for more contextual instructional strategies as well as targeted interventions for students in the low category.

Based on Table 4, students in the high category demonstrate strong ability in recognizing, understanding, and using basic English vocabulary. They are able to respond accurately to test items and comprehend vocabulary meanings in simple contexts, indicating a solid vocabulary foundation in English learning. In contrast, students in the moderate and low categories continue to show various limitations in vocabulary mastery. Students in the moderate category require instructional reinforcement to use vocabulary more flexibly across contexts, while those in the low category need greater attention and

more intensive instructional intervention. Overall, these findings emphasize that English instruction at the primary school level should be designed in a more contextual and adaptive manner to bridge gaps in students' vocabulary mastery.

Mean Score of Vocabulary Test Results

Before being presented in visual form, the research findings on the level of English vocabulary mastery among Grade IV students were first analyzed descriptively to provide a general overview of the distribution of students' abilities. This analysis aimed to show the proportion of students in each vocabulary mastery category—high, moderate, and low—based on the test results obtained. Visual presentation of the data was selected to ensure that the research findings could be understood more clearly and communicated more effectively. Data visualization in the form of a diagram was used to emphasize the differences in proportions across the categories of students' English vocabulary mastery. Through this diagram, readers can easily observe the dominant trends in students' abilities and directly identify the categories that require greater attention in the learning process. Thus, the figure serves as a concise visual representation of the study's quantitative findings.



Based on the figure, it can be observed that the majority of students fall into the moderate category, accounting for 57.14% of the total. This finding indicates that most students have acquired a sufficient level of basic English vocabulary mastery, although they have not yet reached an optimal level. This condition suggests that the instruction implemented thus far has provided a foundational understanding of vocabulary; however, further reinforcement is still required to enable students to use vocabulary more extensively and contextually. Meanwhile, only 16.67% of students are classified in the high category, indicating that relatively few students have achieved a high level of vocabulary mastery. On the other hand, 26.19% of students are in the low category, reflecting limitations in their understanding of basic English vocabulary. These findings emphasize the need for more adaptive and differentiated instructional strategies to enhance the abilities of students in the moderate category while providing targeted interventions for those with low vocabulary mastery.

Before presenting the results of the analysis in tabular form, it is important to explain that the analysis of the mean score was used to describe the overall level of students' English vocabulary mastery. This descriptive analysis aims to summarize individual test results into representative statistical measures, thereby providing a general overview of

vocabulary proficiency trends among fourth-grade students at SD Negeri 1 Kaobula and SD Negeri 2 Kaobula. In addition to the mean score, the analysis also includes the highest and lowest scores to illustrate the range of students' abilities. Presenting these data is essential for identifying the extent of variation in vocabulary mastery among students and for determining the position of the average ability level within the established categories. Consequently, the results table serves as a basis for interpreting the condition of students' English vocabulary mastery and for formulating relevant instructional implications.

Table 5. Results of the Mean Score Analysis of Students' English Vocabulary Mastery

Descriptive Statistics	Score
Highest Score	90
Lowest Score	45
Mean Score	68.40
Number of Students	42
Mean Category	Moderate

Based on Table 5, the mean score of the English vocabulary mastery test for fourth-grade students at SD Negeri 1 Kaobula and SD Negeri 2 Kaobula is 68.40, which falls within the moderate category. This mean score indicates that, in general, students possess a sufficient level of basic English vocabulary to support learning, particularly in recognizing and understanding commonly used words. However, this achievement does not yet reflect optimal mastery, especially in terms of broader and more contextual vocabulary use. The relatively wide range between the highest score (90) and the lowest score (45) indicates significant variation in vocabulary ability among students. This disparity suggests that students do not receive equal learning experiences or achieve the same level of vocabulary understanding. While some students demonstrate strong vocabulary skills, others continue to experience difficulties in understanding and using basic English vocabulary, thereby requiring special attention in the learning process.

Such variation in ability also reflects the presence of a vocabulary mastery gap within the classroom. If not addressed with appropriate strategies, this gap has the potential to hinder the overall effectiveness of instruction. Therefore, teachers need to develop a comprehensive understanding of students' abilities in order to adjust instructional methods, materials, and levels of difficulty according to the needs of students in each vocabulary mastery category. The findings of this study underscore the necessity of more focused and continuous reinforcement in English language instruction. Such reinforcement may be achieved through the implementation of more contextualized learning activities, the use of diverse and engaging instructional media, and the provision of regular and gradual vocabulary practice. Through these strategies, it is expected that students' English vocabulary mastery can progress from the moderate category to the high category while simultaneously reducing the gap in abilities among students.

Vocabulary Mastery Gap

The identification of students' English vocabulary mastery levels reveals a noticeable gap in ability among students. This gap is evident from differences in test scores that classify students into high, moderate, and low categories. Such differences reflect variations in the level of understanding and mastery of English vocabulary among fourth-grade students, which do not develop uniformly. This condition indicates that some students are able to follow English learning effectively due to having adequate vocabulary mastery. Students in the high category generally find it easier to understand learning materials, respond to instructions, and use vocabulary in simple contexts. In contrast,

students in the moderate and low categories still experience difficulties in understanding vocabulary meanings, particularly when vocabulary is used in different or more complex contexts.

This vocabulary mastery gap presents a significant challenge in the English learning process at the elementary school level. If not identified early, differences in students' abilities may lead to less effective instruction, as the materials and strategies used by teachers may not be appropriate for all students. Students with lower ability levels tend to lag behind, while students with higher ability levels may not receive sufficient challenges to further develop their potential. Therefore, mapping students' initial abilities becomes a crucial step as a foundation for instructional planning. Through systematic identification, teachers can obtain a clear overview of students' vocabulary proficiency profiles, enabling the design of learning strategies that are more contextual and adaptive. This mapping allows teachers to determine appropriate approaches, learning media, and levels of material difficulty in accordance with students' characteristics and needs.

With proper initial ability mapping, English learning at the elementary school level is expected to become more effective and learner-centered. Instructional strategies developed based on identification results not only help students with low ability levels to overcome their learning gaps, but also encourage students with moderate and high abilities to further optimize their vocabulary mastery. Consequently, the vocabulary mastery gap among students can be minimized, and the overall quality of English instruction in elementary schools can be improved in a sustainable manner.

Table 6. Research Findings on the Gap in Students' English Vocabulary Mastery

No	Mastery Category	Characteristics of Mastery
1	High	Students are able to understand and use basic English vocabulary effectively, respond easily to instructions, and apply vocabulary in simple contexts
2	Moderate	Students have sufficient vocabulary mastery but still experience limitations in using vocabulary across different or more complex contexts
3	Low	Students experience difficulties in recognizing and understanding basic English vocabulary and are not yet able to relate vocabulary to appropriate contexts
Indicates the presence of a vocabulary mastery gap among students		

Based on Table 6, it is evident that the English vocabulary mastery of fourth-grade students demonstrates distinct characteristics across each category. Students in the high category are able to understand and use basic English vocabulary effectively, both in responding to instructions and in applying vocabulary within simple contexts. In contrast, students in the moderate category still show limitations in using vocabulary flexibly, particularly when encountering different or more complex contexts, despite having an adequate basic understanding. Meanwhile, students in the low category experience significant difficulties in recognizing and understanding basic English vocabulary. Their inability to associate vocabulary with appropriate contexts highlights the need for greater attention and more intensive instructional interventions. Overall, these findings confirm the existence of a vocabulary mastery gap among students, underscoring the importance of initial ability mapping and the implementation of more contextual and adaptive instructional strategies to improve the quality of English learning in elementary schools.

3.2 Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the level of English vocabulary mastery among Grade IV students at SD Negeri 1 Kaobula and SD Negeri 2 Kaobula varies across three categories: high, moderate, and low. This variation reflects clear differences in students' vocabulary abilities. Students in the high category have developed a solid vocabulary foundation, enabling them to understand and use basic English vocabulary in simple contexts. In contrast, students in the moderate and low categories still experience limitations, both in the flexibility of vocabulary use and in understanding word meanings when vocabulary is presented in different contexts. These findings suggest that students' vocabulary mastery has not developed evenly and requires more contextual and adaptive instructional strategies, as well as targeted interventions for students with lower abilities, to minimize gaps in vocabulary mastery.

These findings are consistent with previous studies emphasizing that vocabulary mastery is a fundamental foundation in foreign language learning for primary school students (Nursih et al., 2024) (Istigfariyanti et al., 2023). Research by (Matulesy & Kahar, 2024) (Hasibuan & Lubis, 2021) also demonstrates that primary school students tend to exhibit varying levels of vocabulary mastery due to differences in learning experiences, teaching strategies, and language exposure. Furthermore, (Muslih, 2021) highlights the importance of mapping students' vocabulary abilities as an initial step in designing instruction that aligns with learners' needs. Thus, this study reinforces earlier findings that identifying levels of vocabulary mastery not only serves as an indicator of students' linguistic ability but also provides a crucial basis for planning effective and sustainable English instruction in primary schools.

Based on the analysis of the mean score of the English vocabulary mastery test, the overall result falls within the moderate category. This finding indicates that, in general, Grade IV students at SD Negeri 1 Kaobula and SD Negeri 2 Kaobula have acquired sufficient basic English vocabulary, particularly in recognizing and understanding commonly used words in classroom learning. However, this level of achievement does not yet reflect optimal mastery, especially in the broader and more contextual use of vocabulary. The relatively wide range between the highest and lowest scores indicates significant variation in students' vocabulary abilities, suggesting the need for more focused instructional strategies to strengthen students' skills evenly and reduce vocabulary mastery gaps within the classroom.

This result aligns with (Deviga & Ardhani, 2024) assertion that students' vocabulary mastery at the early stages of foreign language learning typically remains at a basic to intermediate level and requires continuous reinforcement. (Khasanah & Burhan, 2022) similarly notes that primary school students often possess adequate vocabulary knowledge but are not yet able to use it flexibly across various contexts without contextualized instructional support. In addition, (Mirador & Ellsworth, 2022) emphasizes that differences in mean scores and ability ranges highlight the importance of mapping students' initial abilities as a foundation for adaptive instructional planning. Accordingly, this study strengthens previous findings that analyzing mean vocabulary mastery not only describes students' proficiency levels but also serves as an essential basis for designing effective, learner-centered English instruction in primary schools.

The results further reveal a clear gap in English vocabulary mastery among Grade IV students, as reflected in the classification of students into high, moderate, and low categories. These differences indicate that the development of students' vocabulary

abilities does not occur uniformly. Students in the high category demonstrate sufficient vocabulary mastery to understand learning materials, respond to instructions, and use vocabulary appropriately in simple contexts. Conversely, students in the moderate and low categories continue to face difficulties, particularly in understanding vocabulary meanings when words are used in different or more complex contexts. This condition suggests that without systematic mapping of students' initial abilities, English instruction may become less effective because instructional strategies and materials may not fully address the diverse needs of learners.

The findings regarding vocabulary mastery gaps are consistent with (Silfia & Dinata, 2023) view that differences in vocabulary acquisition are a common phenomenon in foreign language learning and are strongly influenced by learning experiences and the intensity of language exposure. (Tirtayasa et al., 2022) also notes that primary school students often display significant variation in vocabulary ability, requiring contextualized and gradual instructional approaches. This study also supports (D. W. Lestari et al., 2021) argument regarding the importance of identifying and mapping vocabulary abilities as a basis for adaptive instructional design. Moreover, (Cleverisa et al., 2022) emphasizes that without appropriate intervention, students with lower abilities are at risk of falling behind, while those with higher abilities may lack sufficient challenges to further develop their skills. Therefore, this study provides further empirical evidence that mapping initial abilities and implementing differentiated instructional strategies are essential to minimizing vocabulary mastery gaps and improving the quality of English instruction in primary schools.

4. Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the English vocabulary mastery of fourth-grade students shows a clear variation in ability, encompassing high, moderate, and low categories. This variation indicates that students' vocabulary development has not progressed evenly. While some students are able to understand and use basic English vocabulary effectively, others still experience difficulties in recognizing word meanings and applying vocabulary in appropriate contexts. This condition suggests that, overall, students' vocabulary mastery still requires further reinforcement in order to develop optimally. In addition, the findings confirm the existence of a vocabulary mastery gap among students, which has implications for the effectiveness of English instruction at the elementary school level. This gap highlights the importance of mapping students' initial abilities as a foundation for more contextual and adaptive instructional planning. Through systematic identification of students' abilities, teachers can design learning strategies that are aligned with learners' needs, provide additional support for students with lower proficiency, and offer appropriate challenges for those with higher proficiency. Consequently, English instruction in elementary schools is expected to become more effective and oriented toward equitable improvement in students' vocabulary mastery.

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