

The Contribution of Vocabulary Mastery to Writing Ability (A Study at SMP Negeri 12 Takengon)

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui kontribusi penguasaan kosakata terhadap kemampuan menulis siswa di SMP Negeri 12 Takengon. Latar belakang penelitian ini didasarkan pada kesulitan siswa dalam mengungkapkan ide, menyusun kalimat, dan menggunakan kosakata yang tepat dalam menulis teks bahasa Inggris. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah penguasaan kosakata memberikan kontribusi yang signifikan terhadap kemampuan menulis siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian kuantitatif korelasional. Populasi penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas VIII SMP Negeri 12 Takengon, sedangkan sampel penelitian terdiri dari 40 siswa yang dipilih menggunakan teknik total sampling. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah tes vocabulary dan tes writing. Data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, dan Simple Linear Regression Analysis melalui SPSS versi 27.0. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa koefisien korelasi Pearson antara penguasaan kosakata dan kemampuan menulis adalah sebesar 0.628 dengan nilai signifikansi 0.000. Karena nilai signifikansi lebih kecil dari 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$), hal ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat korelasi yang signifikan antara penguasaan kosakata siswa dan kemampuan menulis mereka. Selain itu, hasil analisis regresi linear sederhana menunjukkan bahwa penguasaan kosakata memberikan kontribusi sebesar 39.5% terhadap kemampuan menulis siswa, sedangkan sisanya sebesar 60.5% dipengaruhi oleh faktor lain di luar penelitian ini. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa penguasaan kosakata memberikan kontribusi positif dan signifikan terhadap kemampuan menulis siswa di SMP Negeri 12 Takengon. Oleh karena itu, peningkatan penguasaan kosakata siswa sangat penting untuk mendukung perkembangan kemampuan menulis siswa dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris.

Kata Kunci: Penguasaan Kosakata, Kemampuan Menulis, Kontribusi, Penelitian Korelasional.

Abstract

This research was conducted to investigate the contribution of vocabulary mastery to students' writing ability at SMP Negeri 12 Takengon. The background of this research was based on the students' difficulties in expressing ideas, organizing sentences, and using appropriate vocabulary in writing English texts. Therefore, this research aimed to determine whether vocabulary mastery gives a significant contribution to students' writing ability. This research applied a quantitative correlational research design. The population of this research was the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 12 Takengon, while the sample consisted of 40 students selected by using total sampling technique. The instruments used in this research were a vocabulary test and a writing test. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Simple Linear Regression Analysis through SPSS version 27.0. The result of the research showed that the Pearson correlation coefficient between vocabulary mastery and writing ability was 0.628 with the significance value of 0.000. Since the significance value was lower than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$), it indicates that there is a significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their writing ability. Furthermore, the result of simple linear regression analysis showed that vocabulary mastery contributed 39.5% to students' writing ability, while the remaining 60.5% was influenced by other factors outside this research. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that vocabulary mastery gives a positive and significant contribution to students' writing ability at SMP Negeri 12 Takengon. Therefore, improving students' vocabulary mastery is important in order to support the development of students' writing ability in English learning.

Key Words: Vocabulary Mastery, Writing Ability, Contribution, Correlational Research.

A. Pendahuluan

Language is an important medium for conveying ideas, feelings, opinions, and information in human communication. Through language, people are able to interact socially, exchange knowledge, and build relationships with others. According (Sariakin, 2023) English as an international language plays an important role in active interaction in the era of globalization. Along with the rapid development of science and technology, English functions as a global tool for communication in both spoken and written forms. Therefore, mastering English becomes highly important for students in order to compete academically and professionally in the modern era.

In Indonesia, English is taught as a compulsory subject starting from junior high school level. The teaching of English aims to help students develop communication skills, access global information, and broaden cultural understanding. (Kusuma, 2018) the importance of English lies not only in the number of people who speak it, but also in its function as a global language used in various international contexts. Similarly, (Sariakin, 2016) states that language plays an important role in broadening students' horizons and facilitating social interaction. Language skills are also essential in developing students' academic and professional competencies.

Among the four language skills namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, writing is considered one of the most difficult skills to master. Writing requires students not only to generate ideas but also to organize ideas systematically, apply grammar correctly, and use appropriate vocabulary in context. According (Utami, 2018) writing is an activity of expressing and developing ideas in written form. Writing is also known as a recursive process that involves several stages in producing a meaningful text. Furthermore, Pestaria in (Utami, 2018) explains that writing is an essential component of English language learning because students are expected to arrange words into meaningful sentences and understandable paragraphs.

Writing ability is very important for students because it helps them communicate ideas clearly and effectively. Through writing, students are able to express experiences, feelings, opinions, and information in written communication. However, many students still experience difficulties in writing English texts, especially narrative texts. Students often face problems in organizing ideas, constructing sentences, choosing appropriate vocabulary, and developing coherent paragraphs. As a result, students frequently produce short, repetitive, and less meaningful written texts.

Vocabulary mastery is one of the important factors influencing students' writing ability. Vocabulary refers to all words used in a language for speaking, listening, reading, and writing

activities. According to Kasihani in (Sariakin, 2023) vocabulary is a collection of words owned by a language that gives meaning when used in communication. Vocabulary mastery is essential because students need sufficient vocabulary knowledge in order to communicate ideas effectively. Tarigan In (Mellys) states that the quality of a person's language skills depends on the quantity and quality of vocabulary they possess. The richer students' vocabulary is, the better their language performance tends to be.

In writing activities, vocabulary mastery becomes highly important because students need adequate vocabulary knowledge to express ideas clearly and coherently. Students who possess better vocabulary mastery are generally more capable of selecting appropriate words, organizing ideas, and constructing meaningful sentences. On the other hand, students with limited vocabulary often experience difficulties in expressing ideas and tend to use repetitive vocabulary in their writing. According (Fitria, 2023) vocabulary mastery is essential for mastering language skills, especially writing, because vocabulary supports students in communicating ideas effectively in written texts.

At the junior high school level, students commonly experience difficulties in writing English texts due to limited vocabulary mastery and lack of writing practice. Students frequently hesitate when selecting appropriate words to describe characters, events, and emotions in narrative texts. Consequently, their writing often consists of short and simple sentences with repetitive vocabulary use. This condition indicates that limited vocabulary mastery contributes to low writing performance among students.

The phenomenon of students' low writing ability has become an important concern in English language learning. Many students still struggle to develop ideas, compose stories, and choose suitable vocabulary in writing activities. According (Nugraheni, 2024) students often experience difficulties in selecting appropriate vocabulary when translating English into Indonesian because they do not fully understand word meanings and contextual usage. Similarly, (Novita,) explains that students need more vocabulary enrichment because they tend to use the same vocabulary repeatedly in writing activities. Students require sufficient vocabulary knowledge in order to use synonyms and varied expressions effectively.

Another problem influencing students' writing ability is low motivation and limited exposure to English outside the classroom. According (Samsidar, 2022) students who have limited vocabulary knowledge often experience difficulties in organizing ideas in writing activities. As a result, students may feel less confident and less motivated to write English texts. Therefore, vocabulary mastery plays a significant role in helping students improve their writing performance.

This condition also occurs among the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 12 Takengon. Based on preliminary observation conducted on April 10 and 11, 2025, the researcher found that many students still experienced difficulties in writing English texts. Based on interviews with English teachers, students often used repetitive vocabulary, wrote incomplete sentences, and had difficulties in expressing ideas coherently. This indicates that students' vocabulary mastery may influence their writing ability.

Several previous studies have discussed the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing ability. (Dorifa 2022) in her research entitled "The Contribution of Vocabulary Mastery Toward Students' Writing Ability at Senior High School 1 Tapung," found that vocabulary mastery significantly contributed to students' writing ability. The study used Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Simple Linear Regression analysis, and the results showed that the significance value was lower than 0.05, indicating a significant contribution between the two variables.

Similarly, (Fadhiah, 2022) in the study entitled "The Correlation Between Vocabulary Mastery and Writing Ability of the Fifth Semester Students of English Department IAIN Padangsidempuan," found a strong positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and students' writing ability with a correlation coefficient of 0.96. The findings indicated that students with higher vocabulary mastery tended to achieve better writing performance.

Other previous studies also support the importance of vocabulary mastery in writing activities. (Rahmati) found that vocabulary mastery significantly contributed to students' paragraph writing ability. In addition, (Agus, 2023) reported that students with better vocabulary mastery were generally more capable of developing coherent written texts. These previous studies consistently show that vocabulary mastery has a positive relationship with students' writing performance.

Although previous studies have investigated the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing ability, studies focusing on junior high school students, especially at SMP Negeri 12 Takengon, are still limited. Most previous studies focused on senior high school or university

students and did not specifically investigate narrative writing ability at the junior high school level. Therefore, this research aims to fill the research gap by examining the contribution of vocabulary mastery to students' writing ability among the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 12 Takengon.

This research specifically aims to determine whether vocabulary mastery gives a significant contribution to students' writing ability. Through this study, the researcher expects to provide a clearer understanding of the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing performance and to provide useful information for English teachers in developing more effective vocabulary-based teaching strategies. Therefore, this study is entitled "The Contribution of Vocabulary Mastery to Writing Ability: A Study at SMP Negeri 12 Takengon."

B. Methodology

This research used a quantitative correlational research design to investigate the contribution of vocabulary mastery to students' writing ability. The study was conducted at SMP Negeri 12 Takengon, located in Blang Mancung, Ketol District, Central Aceh Regency. The population of this research consisted of all eighth-grade students in the 2024/2025 academic year, totaling 45 students. The sample consisted of 40 students selected using a total sampling technique.

The instruments used in this research were a vocabulary test and a writing test. The vocabulary test consisted of multiple-choice questions designed to measure students' vocabulary mastery, while the writing test was used to assess students' ability in writing narrative texts. The writing assessment covered aspects of content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

Before being administered, the instruments were tested for validity and reliability to ensure that they accurately measured the intended constructs and produced consistent results. The vocabulary test items were adapted from English textbooks for junior high school students and re-evaluated before use in the research.

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Simple Linear Regression Analysis through SPSS version 27.0. Descriptive statistics were used to describe students' vocabulary mastery and writing ability. The Pearson correlation test was applied to determine the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing ability, while simple linear regression analysis was used to identify the extent of the contribution of vocabulary mastery to students' writing ability.

C. Results and Discussion

This study was conducted at SMP Negeri 12 Takengon to investigate the contribution of vocabulary mastery to students' writing ability. The study involved 40 eighth-grade students as the research sample. Vocabulary mastery served as the independent variable (X), while writing ability was the dependent variable (Y). Data were collected through a vocabulary test and a writing test and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Simple Linear Regression Analysis with the assistance of SPSS version 27.0.

The descriptive statistics revealed that students' vocabulary mastery scores ranged from 50 to 64, with a mean score of 58.10 and a standard deviation of 3.48. Meanwhile, students' writing ability scores ranged from 60 to 90, with a mean score of 74.00 and a standard deviation of 7.09. These findings indicate that students' writing scores showed greater variation than their vocabulary scores.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Research Variables

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Vocabulary Mastery	40	50	64	58.10	3.48
Writing Ability	40	60	90	74.00	7.09

To facilitate data interpretation, students' vocabulary mastery was classified into three

categories.

Table 2. Students' Vocabulary Mastery Classification

Category	Frequency
High	15
Moderate	20
Low	5

Source: Research Data (2026)

Based on Table 2, the majority of students were classified in the moderate category of vocabulary mastery, consisting of 20 students (50%). Meanwhile, 15 students (37.5%) were categorized as having high vocabulary mastery, whereas only 5 students (12.5%) were included in the low category. This distribution indicates that most participants had acquired sufficient vocabulary knowledge to understand common English words and expressions encountered in classroom learning. However, the relatively large proportion of students in the moderate category also suggests that many students had not yet achieved optimal vocabulary proficiency. During the vocabulary test, several students still experienced difficulties in identifying synonyms and antonyms, determining word meanings based on context, and selecting appropriate vocabulary in different situations. These findings imply that vocabulary development should continue to receive attention through regular practice, extensive reading, and contextual vocabulary-learning activities to strengthen students' lexical knowledge.

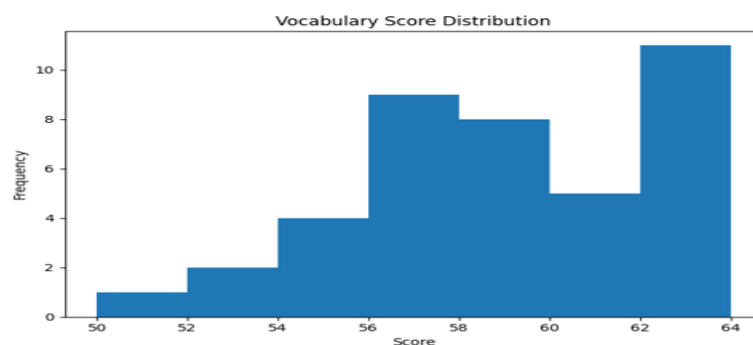


Figure 1. Distribution of Students' Vocabulary Mastery Scores

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of students' vocabulary mastery scores. The majority of students obtained scores between 56 and 62, indicating that vocabulary mastery among the participants was generally at a moderate level. Only a small number of students achieved the highest scores, while a few others remained in the lower score range. The distribution demonstrates that although students had developed an adequate foundation of English vocabulary, their lexical knowledge was not yet evenly distributed across the class. Students with higher vocabulary scores tended to recognize word meanings more accurately and identify vocabulary used in different contexts more effectively than those with lower scores. Therefore, continuous vocabulary enrichment through reading activities, classroom interaction, and communicative exercises is necessary to improve students' overall language proficiency.

Students' writing ability was also classified into three categories based on their writing scores.

Category	Frequency
High	12
Moderate	22
Low	6

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 4 reveals that the majority of students (22 students) were classified in the moderate

category, followed by 12 students in the high category and 6 students in the low category. These findings indicate that although most students were able to produce understandable narrative texts, many still experienced difficulties in developing ideas, maintaining coherence, applying grammatical rules accurately, and using appropriate vocabulary throughout their writing.

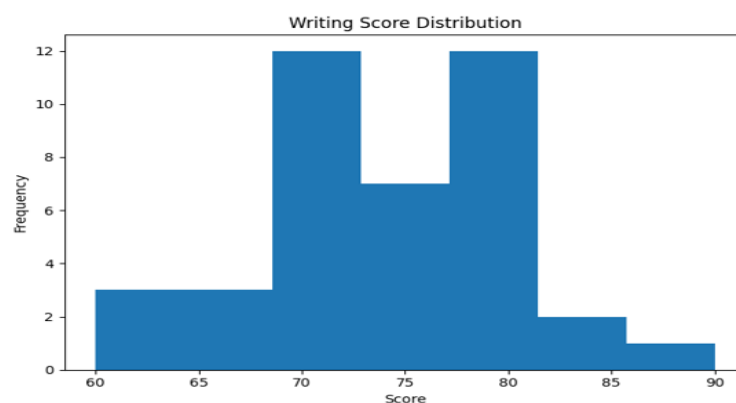


Figure 2. Distribution of Students' Writing Ability Scores

Figure 2 shows that most students obtained writing scores ranging from **70 to 85**, indicating moderate to good writing performance. Students with higher vocabulary mastery generally produced writing with better organization, richer vocabulary use, and clearer expression of ideas. Before hypothesis testing, the vocabulary instrument was examined for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha through SPSS version 27.0. The analysis produced a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of **0.993**, indicating excellent internal consistency.

Table 4. Reliability Statistics

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	Conclusion
Vocabulary Test	0.993	50	Highly Reliable

Source: Research Data (2026)

To examine whether there was a significant relationship between students' vocabulary mastery and their writing ability, the data were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation test. This statistical analysis was employed because both variables were measured on a continuous scale and had fulfilled the assumptions of normality, homogeneity, and linearity. The analysis aimed to determine the direction, strength, and significance of the relationship between vocabulary mastery and students' writing ability. The results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Pearson Product Moment Correlation

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance
Vocabulary Mastery – Writing Ability	0.628	0.000

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 5 presents the results of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis between vocabulary mastery and writing ability. The analysis produced a correlation coefficient ($r = 0.628$) with a significance value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant positive relationship between the two variables. According to Sugiyono's (2019) interpretation, the coefficient falls within the category of a strong positive correlation. This means that students who demonstrated better vocabulary mastery generally achieved higher writing scores. In practical terms, vocabulary knowledge appears to support students in selecting appropriate words, organizing ideas more effectively, and constructing meaningful sentences. Consequently, students with richer vocabulary resources tended to produce more coherent and understandable narrative texts than those with limited vocabulary knowledge.

To determine the contribution of vocabulary mastery to writing ability, Simple Linear Regression Analysis was conducted.

Table 6. Contribution of Vocabulary Mastery to Writing Ability

Variable	R Square	Contribution
Vocabulary Mastery	0.395	39.5%

Source: Research Data (2026)

Based on Table 6, the coefficient of determination (R Square) was 0.395, indicating that vocabulary mastery explained 39.5% of the variance in students' writing ability. This percentage demonstrates that vocabulary mastery is an important predictor of writing performance. Nevertheless, more than half of the variation in writing ability (60.5%) was influenced by other variables that were beyond the scope of the present study. These variables may include grammar mastery, writing experience, reading habits, learning motivation, classroom instruction, and students' creativity in expressing ideas. Therefore, although improving vocabulary is essential, English teachers should also integrate grammar instruction, reading activities, and regular writing practice to achieve better learning outcomes. These findings suggest that writing ability is a multidimensional skill that develops through the interaction of several linguistic and cognitive factors rather than vocabulary knowledge alone.

The regression equation obtained from the analysis was:

$$Y = -0.411 + 1.281X$$

The regression equation indicates that vocabulary mastery has a positive contribution to students' writing ability. The regression coefficient (1.281) implies that for every one-point increase in students' vocabulary mastery scores, their writing ability is predicted to increase by approximately 1.281 points, assuming that other variables remain constant. Although the constant value is negative (-0.411), it does not have substantial practical meaning because students' vocabulary scores cannot realistically be zero. Instead, the regression coefficient represents the direction and magnitude of the contribution of vocabulary mastery to writing ability. This finding suggests that improving students' vocabulary knowledge is likely to enhance their ability to express ideas, organize information, and construct meaningful written texts.

Furthermore, the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.395$) indicates that vocabulary mastery explains 39.5% of the variance in students' writing ability. This percentage demonstrates that vocabulary mastery is one of the important predictors of writing achievement. However, the remaining 60.5% of the variance is influenced by other variables that were not examined in this study. These variables may include grammar mastery, reading comprehension, writing experience, learning motivation, learning strategies, classroom instruction, and students' creativity in developing ideas. Therefore, although vocabulary mastery contributes significantly to writing ability, effective writing instruction should also consider these additional factors to achieve more comprehensive learning outcomes. These findings emphasize that writing ability is a multidimensional language skill which develops through the interaction of various linguistic, cognitive, and affective factors rather than vocabulary knowledge alone.

The findings of this study are consistent with several previous studies that reported a significant relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing ability. (Fadhliah, n.d.), found that students with better vocabulary mastery tended to demonstrate higher writing achievement. Similarly, (Rahmati, n.d.-b), reported that vocabulary knowledge had a significant positive correlation with students' writing performance, while (Agus, 2023), concluded that vocabulary mastery contributed substantially to students' descriptive writing ability. Compared with those studies, the present research obtained a correlation coefficient of 0.628, indicating a relatively stronger positive relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing ability among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 12 Takengon. The consistency of these findings across different educational contexts strengthens the evidence that vocabulary mastery is one of the fundamental factors supporting students' writing development.

The present findings also support the theoretical perspective that vocabulary constitutes one of the essential components of language proficiency. According to language learning theories, vocabulary knowledge is closely related to learners' productive language skills, particularly writing. Students cannot effectively communicate ideas in written form without possessing adequate vocabulary knowledge because vocabulary provides the linguistic resources needed to express meaning accurately. A richer vocabulary enables students to select more appropriate

words, construct grammatically acceptable sentences, organize ideas coherently, and communicate messages more clearly. Consequently, students with higher vocabulary mastery are generally more successful in producing well-developed narrative texts than students with limited vocabulary knowledge. This finding reinforces the view that vocabulary mastery is not merely an additional component of language learning but serves as a fundamental foundation for developing effective writing skills.

From a pedagogical perspective, these findings have important implications for English language teaching. Teachers should not only focus on grammar instruction but should also integrate systematic vocabulary development into writing activities. Vocabulary learning should be embedded in meaningful classroom practices, such as contextual vocabulary instruction, extensive reading, collaborative writing, guided writing exercises, vocabulary games, and peer feedback activities. These instructional strategies encourage students to apply newly acquired vocabulary in authentic writing situations, thereby strengthening both their lexical knowledge and writing competence. By combining vocabulary instruction with regular writing practice, students are expected to become more confident, creative, and effective in expressing their ideas through written English.

The findings of this study also have broader implications for English language education, particularly in Indonesian junior high schools. Since vocabulary mastery has been shown to contribute significantly to students' writing ability, schools are encouraged to provide learning environments that support vocabulary enrichment through various reading materials, digital learning resources, and interactive language-learning activities. Curriculum developers may also consider integrating vocabulary-focused writing tasks into English learning materials to promote balanced language development. Furthermore, the findings provide empirical evidence that may serve as a valuable reference for English teachers, researchers, and educational practitioners in designing instructional strategies that improve students' writing achievement through systematic vocabulary development.

Despite the significant findings, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research involved only 40 eighth-grade students from SMP Negeri 12 Takengon, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other schools or educational contexts. Second, the study examined only vocabulary mastery as the independent variable influencing students' writing ability. Other important factors, such as grammar mastery, reading comprehension, writing strategies, motivation, self-confidence, classroom environment, and learning experiences, were not included in the analysis. Finally, the study focused only on students' narrative writing, and therefore the findings may not fully represent students' writing performance in other genres, such as descriptive, recount, or argumentative texts. Future studies are recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples, investigate additional variables related to writing achievement, and examine different genres of writing in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting students' writing ability.

D. Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate the contribution of vocabulary mastery to students' writing ability among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 12 Takengon. The findings revealed that vocabulary mastery has a positive and statistically significant contribution to students' writing ability. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis produced a correlation coefficient of 0.628 with a significance value of 0.000, indicating a strong positive relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing ability. Furthermore, the Simple Linear Regression analysis showed that vocabulary mastery contributed 39.5% to students' writing ability, while the remaining 60.5% was influenced by other variables that were not examined in this study.

The findings indicate that students with better vocabulary mastery tend to demonstrate better writing performance because they are more capable of selecting appropriate words, organizing ideas coherently, and expressing their thoughts clearly in written texts. These results confirm that vocabulary mastery serves as one of the essential foundations for developing students' writing ability, although writing achievement is also influenced by other linguistic, cognitive, and affective factors.

From an educational perspective, the findings suggest that vocabulary instruction should become an integral part of English writing classes. Teachers are encouraged to provide students with meaningful opportunities to enrich their vocabulary through contextual learning, extensive reading, guided writing, collaborative learning, and communicative classroom activities. Such

instructional practices are expected to improve not only students' vocabulary knowledge but also their confidence and competence in producing well-organized written texts.

This study also contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence regarding the role of vocabulary mastery in improving writing ability among Indonesian junior high school students, particularly at SMP Negeri 12 Takengon. The findings may serve as a useful reference for English teachers, curriculum developers, and future researchers in designing more effective vocabulary-based writing instruction. Future studies are recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples, investigate additional variables such as grammar mastery, reading comprehension, motivation, and writing strategies, and examine various types of writing tasks to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing students' writing achievement.

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