

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

Vocabulary is a very important component in a language. Knowledge of vocabulary enables people to utilize it in all language skills. One of the most important purposes of learning language is to be able to use it for communicating with others. In communication, one should be able to express their ideas through words in order to have a successful communication. Wilkins (1972) declares that in order to communicate, a command of vocabulary is needed.

According to Uribe (2008), academic words or vocabularies are words used by the educated, and they occur in academic field at university level and beyond. In addition, Coxhead (2000) defines academic words as “lexical items that occur frequently and consistently across a wide range of academic material”. Additionally, learning academic words will help students to understand texts better, because several academic words are already recognized. Coxhead also asserts that Academic words are usually found in academic texts. Academic texts may include a summary of an article, a report of the results of an experiment, a text comparing two theories, a thesis journal, and English reading passages. Ideally, reading passages at university level should contain reasonable number of academic vocabularies.

Coxhead (2000) developed Academic Word List (AWL) in 2000. The AWL contains 570 word-families. Words inside the AWL occur reasonably frequently in academic texts regardless of the discipline. The AWL was intended as a guide for students to decide which words are worth to learn. Coxhead also suggested that academic texts, especially in university level should contain at least 10% academic words. In addition, words in the AWL are divided into 10 sub-lists. These sub-lists rank the academic words based on the frequency. Sub-list 1 contains the most frequent words, while sub-list 10 contains the less frequent words. Ebbers (2010) believes that academic words from sub-list 1–5 should be suitable for grade 6–8 students, while sub-list 6–10 should apply to high school and beyond.

This study investigated the academic words coverage and the sub-list of reading passages used in Reading A. The foreword, glossary, references, instruction, illustration, and texts which are not reading passages are excluded. In order to find the academic word coverage and the sub-list, the researcher used Web VocabProfilers Classic v.4 updated in 2018 by Tom Cobb, UQAM Canada, which is available online. This tool also helped the researcher to analyze the data.

There are a total of 12 reading passages in Reading A. These 12 reading passages accounted a total of 6609 tokens, while the AWL tokens are 304. As a result, the AWL percentage of the reading passages is 4, 60%. This AWL coverage is lower than suggested by Coxhead, which is 10% AWL coverage. In addition, the topics of the reading passages affect the occurrence of AWL tokens. Reading

passages about trends in living and issues in society has lower AWL coverage, which is around 3–4%, while reading passages about law, science, and history have higher AWL coverage, which is around 3–8%.

This study also revealed that the reading passages as a whole managed to include all ten sub-lists. The occurrence of sub-list 1–5 was around 27–88, while sub-list 6–10 was only around 2–24. In contrast to Ebber’s statement, sub-list 6–10 did not occur reasonably frequently in academic texts for university level. In addition, there was not a single reading passage that included all ten sub-lists. Reading passage from Chapter 9 managed to include words from sub-list 1–9, while also having the most AWL tokens. Other reading passages included only 6–8 sub-lists, except reading passage from Chapter 5, which only included a total of 5 sub-lists.

This study concluded that the reading passages used in Reading A do not prepare the students with enough exposure of academic vocabulary. In addition, the passages also lacked academic vocabularies from sub-list 6–10. The reading passages used in Reading A were intended for students in university level. However, the findings revealed that the reading passages were not suitable for readers in university level. Therefore, the reading passages used in Reading A need to be reviewed in terms of the AWL coverage and sub-lists.

5.2 Suggestion

The knowledge of AWL and reading activities are interrelated. Several studies proved that students learn academic vocabulary through reading. With enough exposure of academic vocabulary, students will become more familiar with academic vocabularies. Eventually, students can use academic vocabularies in their writing (Csomay & Prudes, 2018; McDonough, Neumann, & Smith, 2018; Wei, 2019). However, the study revealed that the academic vocabulary coverage in reading passages for Reading A is insufficient, which mean there are less exposure of academic vocabulary. Therefore, it is suggested that the reading passages used in Reading A need to be improved.

Ebbers (2010) believes that academic words from sub-list 1–5 should be suitable for grade 6–8 students, while sub-list 6–10 should apply to high school and beyond. This study revealed that the reading passages lacked AWL tokens in sub-list 6–10, especially sub-list 10 with only two AWL tokens. Including as many sub-lists as possible in a text is important. Not only does it increase the academic vocabulary coverage, but also ensures that the readers are exposed to more type of academic vocabularies. Therefore, it is suggested that material developers use the AWL as a guide in developing learning materials and tests.

According to Nation (2016), the AWL can be used as a guide to develop material for language teaching, design graded reading books, and develop vocabulary

tests. It is suggested for teachers and material developers to use the AWL as a guide in developing learning materials. In addition, book authors and designers are expected to use the AWL as a guide in designing and writing books. Finally, teachers can use the AWL to develop vocabulary tests. It can be beneficial for teachers, because they know their students' capabilities.

Future researches are suggested to explore deeper about academic vocabulary in receptive vocabulary, as this research is far from perfect. The data of this study was obtained from one reading book. The book itself was intended for intermediate level. In addition, the data of this study was only 12 reading passages, making the size of the analyzed corpus is rather small, as this study focused only on the reading passages. Future research which analyzes the academic vocabulary of reading passages including the questions, and exercises are suggested. Additionally, more studies about academic vocabulary on advanced level of reading are suggested. Finally, the findings of this study can be beneficial information to English teachers and material developers. Reading materials intended for university students should contain more academic vocabulary, even though the level is intermediate.

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