

## The Correlation Between Vocabulary Mastery and Students' Descriptive Writing Skills

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### A B S T R A C T

Vocabulary mastery and writing is an important part of learning. Regarding writing, there are various types of text in English subjects, one of which is descriptive text. That's why researchers want to know whether there is a correlation between vocabulary mastery (X) and students' descriptive writing skills (Y) class X.2 at SMAN 4 Palangka Raya. For this method used quantitative research, correlational design. Using random sampling so that the class chosen is X.2, number of students is 29. Data collection tools used multiple choice and essay tests. Data were analyzed using simple linear regression. Based on research results. The average student test score was 82.07 for vocabulary mastery and an average score of 67.69 for descriptive writing skills. The research results shown that there is no correlation between vocabulary mastery and students' descriptive writing skills, with a correlation significance of 0.744 which is greater than 0.05 (probability value) which means  $H_0$  is accepted while  $H_a$  is rejected. The correlation value (R) is 0.063 and the R square value is 0.004, which means the influence of variables X and Y is 0.4%. So, students must be improving skill for writing not only focused on vocabulary mastery.

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### Introduction

Writing skills are very important especially for academics because this activity is a basic thing that must be mastered. One of the four LSRW (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) abilities in language acquisition is writing (Maesaroh & Sari, 2021). According to Byrne & Langan in Saraswati et al. (2021) writing is turning our thoughts into language or written form, when writing, every idea you put forward must be supported with certain reasons or details. Writing is a thinking process that involves processes brain, to organize ideas to write, writers need to be imaginative and creative in pouring his thoughts into words (Selvaraj & Aziz, 2019). According to Deporter and Heracki explained that writing is an activity of the whole brain, which uses the right side of the brain (emotion) and the left side of the brain (logic) (Yoandita, 2019).

Troyka in Palanisamy & Abdul Aziz (2021) argues that the purpose of writing allows writers to express themselves, convey information, convince readers and create literary works. According Saraswati et al. (2021) Before beginning to write, writers must take into account a number of factors. First, phrases and paragraphs must be composed using proper terminology. Second, grammar must be utilized appropriately and relate to the notion being expressed through the use of the appropriate tenses. Thirdly, after reading the text or phrases that the students have written, the order of the sentences or paragraphs must be carefully reviewed and set up so that readers can grasp what they will read.

Difficulties for students when finding ideas or topics (Yoandita, 2019). So that the quality of students' writing is good, one way is to use (graphic organizers)Gos

(Sabarun et al., 2023). Edwin & Grundy in Farooq et al. (2012) There are six stages to the writing process: Determine the topic; take into account the reader; editing; proof reading; and revise. When writing students are expected to be able to generate ideas, plan, set goals, monitor, evaluate, and search for the language used to display the intended meaning(Rezai et al., 2022). This is because the reader obtains information that is clear and easy to understand. According to Badger & White in Sari (2019) there are four stages to writing, namely "pre-writing, composing/ drafting, revising, and editing". Pre-writing is the idea gathering phase. Drafting is the process of writing a rough outline of what will be covered. The multipledraft process thus consists of: generating ideas (pre-writing); write the first draft with an emphasis on content (to find the author's meaning/idea); second and third drafts (possibly more) to revise ideas and communicate those ideas.

According to Brown & Abeywickrama (2018) There are four categories of writing performance, namely imitating, intensive, responsive and extensive. According to Djuarie in Nasution (2021) there are several types of writing skill texts, namely descriptive, narrative, report and procedural texts. This study focuses on producing descriptive writing. Writing descriptive text is the act of gathering thoughts, ideas, or information into a text that describes certain persons, places, or objects by describing about a person, place, or thing in a way that can help the reader visualize what is clearly conveyed (Siregar & Dongoran, 2020). The purpose of a descriptive text is to fully and specifically describe a certain person, location, or item such that the reader can see it in their mind's eye (Potradinata, 2018).

According to the Akhadiah in Dalman (2014) There are several types of descriptive text, namely: 1. Description of the place. Place description is a description of events related to the environment and place. 2. Description of people. The description of a person is a description related to the physical depiction, the actions of a character, the circumstances surrounding the character, the feelings and thoughts of the character and a person's character. According to Mayekti et al. (2022) there are two generic descriptive text structures, namely: 1). Identification is the beginning of the text where students can identify, introduce phenomena. 2). Description is an explanatory part of the text where students can describe the parts, characteristics and characteristics in detail. The difficulties students to write descriptive teks are used language features, lack vocabularies and apply spelling and capitalization words (Indah, 2022).

Vocabulary is an essential component for learners since individuals who want to grasp a language must master vocabulary (Novitri et al., 2021). Richards in Ghonivita et al. (2021) asserts that vocabulary is the fundamental building block of language ability and forms a significant portion of the foundation for how effectively learners speak, listen, read, and write. To communicate our thoughts and to comprehend what other people are saying, we need to have a strong command of vocabulary (Susanto, 2017). Mastery of a broad vocabulary is the main element in communicating, especially in foreign languages. According to Thornbury in Surmanov & Azimova (2020) common difficulties in learning vocabulary are: a. pronunciation. This is because words that are difficult to pronounce are more difficult to learn. b. spelling. When spelling words there may be differences between what is written and what is spoken resulting in a spelling mismatch, this is one of the causes of difficulties in understanding and mastering new vocabulary heard or foreign words.

According Camino & García (2019) Vocabulary is divided into 2 stages, namely: receptive or passive vocabulary knowledge and productive or active knowledge. Pignot-Shahov in Camino & García (2019) Receptive vocabulary is

associated with listening and reading skills which refers to the knowledge students have when they are able to identify vocabulary items while productive is associated with writing or speaking skills which means that learners are able to produce and use the vocabulary items appropriately. According to Qizy (2022) the categories and classifications of words are divided: noun, adjective, pronoun, verb, adverb.

There are ten previous studies related to the researcher's research, of which there are four articles that show the same results that there is a significant relationship between variables, namely by Novitri et al. (2021) the results of the research show that there is a significant relationship between the two variables, with a significance degree of 5%, the  $r$  table value is 0.329 and the calculated  $r$  value is 0.603, where  $0.603 > 0.329$ , which means there is a correlation between the two variables. Then research by Taslim et al. (2019) the results show that there is a significant relationship between the two variables with calculated  $r = 0.532$  which is greater than table  $r = 0.349$ . after that, research by Maesaroh & Sari (2021) the results show that there is an influence between the two variables with a calculated  $f$  value of  $5.67 > f$  table 4.74.  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted. And fourth, research by Husna et al. (2021) the results of the research show that there is a correlation between the three variables of the 7th semester students in the 2017/2018 class with a correlation value of 0.604 which is included in the medium category.

In research by Andiyana (2020) the results of the analysis show that there is no correlation between the use of Instagram and the vocabulary size of students in the 5th semester of the 2019/2020 academic year, with a significance level of 5%, a correlation of  $-0.030 < r$  table 0.334. In research by Ghonivita et al. (2021) Improving Students' Listening Skills and Vocabulary Mastery using Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) shows that this increase in results is proven by the pre-test score of 57.85 and post-test 81.11. then the research Ambarwati & Mandasari (2020) The Influence of the Cambridge Online Dictionary on Students' Pronunciation and Vocabulary Mastery. The results of the research show that 60% of students agree that the Cambridge Online Dictionary influences their Pronunciation and Vocabulary Mastery. then, research Maru et al. (2020) Applying Video for Writing Descriptive Text in High Schools during the Transition Period of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The results of the research state that the use of videos is useful and effective in improving students' writing skills, including writing descriptive texts, even though during learning there was a shift from offline to online, this was due to the emergence of Covid-19 which disrupted the implementation of the last two meetings which did not require intervention adaptation costs .

Research by Siregar & Dongoran (2020) where the research results show that students' abilities in writing descriptive texts are in the good category. The results of the analysis of the average score of the descriptive completeness test for class VII students were 78.5. Research by Arifin & Anwar (2018) According to the data analysis's findings, pupils' writing abilities are influenced by the collaborative writing strategy. The average pretest scores of 69.38 for the experimental group and 68.71 for the control group serve as evidence for this finding. The experimental group's average score after four treatment sessions was 82.15, whereas the control group's was 76.32. Based on previous theory, to measure for correlation between one or more variables, used correlational analysis, but in this research used regression analysis. Beside that the class level taken was class X SMA, whereas in previous research the class level taken was class XI SMA, SMP and college. This research purpose is to answer the research question whether there is a correlation between vocabulary mastery and students' descriptive writing skills in SMAN 4 Palangka Raya grade X.

**Research Method**

This research uses a quantitative correlational design method. According to Schober et al. (2018) correlation is a measure of the monotonic relationship between 2 variables. So correlation is a measure of the relationship between variables. Variables are determined in the same or opposite direction which can be interpreted as a positive or negative relationship between 2 or more variables. There are two variables, namely vocabulary mastery (Y) and students' descriptive writing skill (Y). The research was conducted at SMAN 4 Palangka Raya class X. The sampling technique used random sampling so class X.2 was taken. the number of students was 43, after carrying out validity and reliability tests the number of students taken as test samples was 29 people. The test used for vocabulary mastery uses a multiple choice test consisting of 25 questions and students' descriptive writing skills use an essay test.

To obtain data, researchers used a test which was divided into two, namely multiple choice (vocabulary mastery), this test contained students' knowledge of vocabulary consisting of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and pronouns. The test was taken directly to students using sheets of paper prepared by the researcher. Test duration is 60 minutes. and essay test (students' descriptive writing skills). In the essay test, students are asked directly to create descriptive text based on instructions, namely to describe one of their friends. Minimum 100/150 words for 60 minutes. After getting the test results, the researcher calculated using SPSS 26 with simple linear regression analysis to get the research results. Previously, tests were carried out for normality, linearity and homogeneity of the data.

**Result and Discussion**

**Result**

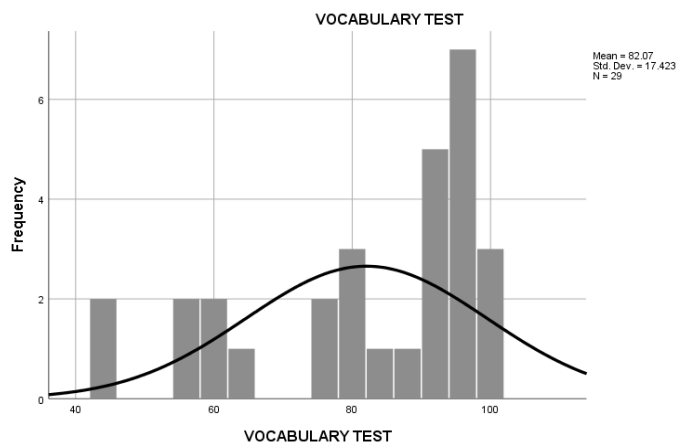
**1. The result of vocabulary mastery test**

To determine the study of students' vocabulary mastery and descriptive writing skills, this research was carried out at SMAN 4 Palangka Raya. There are 25-item vocabulary tests in multiple-choice, the choice is A, B, C, and D. The research was conducted in grade 10 class, only one class that is grade 10 room 2. Total of student in class is 43. Number of student followed the test 29. The result show in table 1 below.

**Table 1** The result of vocabulary test

No	Student (Code)	Score (X)
1	X 1	96
2	X 2	100
3	X 3	56
4	X 4	96
5	X 5	92
6	X 6	96
7	X 7	96
8	X 8	80
9	X 9	100
10	X 10	80
11	X 11	44
12	X 12	96
13	X 13	96
14	X 14	64
15	X 15	92
16	X 16	92
17	X 17	92

18	X 18	100
19	X 19	44
20	X 20	92
21	X 21	56
22	X 22	60
23	X 23	60
24	X 24	88
25	X 25	76
26	X 26	96
27	X 27	84
28	X 28	80
29	X 29	76
<b>Total</b>		<b>3208</b>
<b>Lowest score</b>		<b>44</b>
<b>Highest score</b>		<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>		<b>82.07</b>
<b>Median</b>		<b>92.00</b>
<b>Mode</b>		<b>96</b>
<b>Standard deviation</b>		<b>17.42</b>



**Figure 1** The graph result of vocabulary mastery test

The result of students vocabulary mastery test showed that the lowest score was 44, while the highest score was 100. The mean score was 82.07, the median score was 92.00 and mode score was 96. The standard deviation of the score was 17.42.

**Table 2.** The analysis of level measurement of student' vocabulary mastery test

No	Interval	Frequency	Criteria	Percentage
1	75-100	22	Very high	76%
2	58-74	4	High	13.8%
3	42-57	3	Average	10.2%
4	25-41	0	Low	0%
5	0-24	0	Very low	0%

Based on table 2 show that 22 students were included in very high criteria with the percentage 76%. 4 students fit into high criteria, the percentage 13.8%. 3 students include into average criteria, the percentage 10.2%. But no one

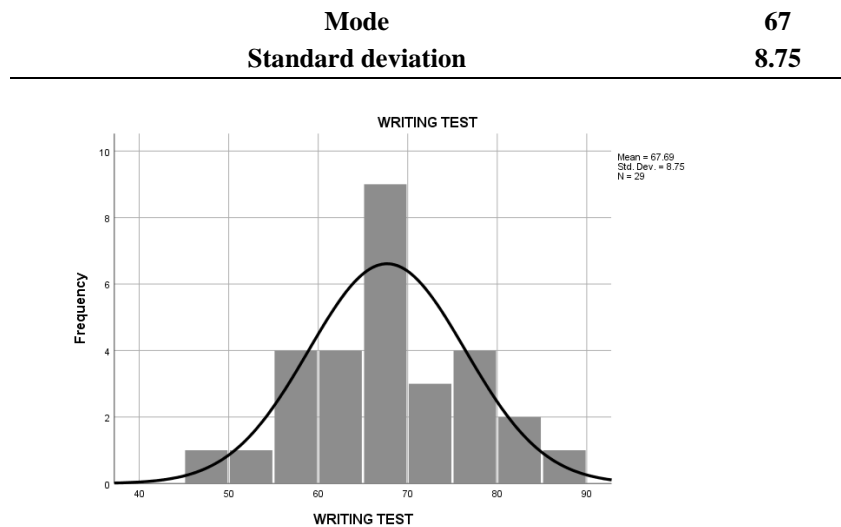
students include into low and very low. It's means 85% students mastery vocabulary.

**2. The result of student' descriptive writing skill test**

The descriptive writing skill test used essay test. Students wrote an essay about his friends, it's consist of 100-150 word or 2 pragraph, which the student must be careful to instruction. The researcher gave 60 minute for wrote the essay. The test conducted the same class with vocabulary test. The result is show in table below.

**Table 3** The result of student' descriptive writing test

No	Student (code)	Score		
		Grader 1	Grader 2	Final score
1	Y 1	88	85	87
2	Y 2	77	83	80
3	Y 3	70	55	63
4	Y 4	68	69	69
5	Y 5	57	40	49
6	Y 6	80	58	69
7	Y 7	74	68	71
8	Y 8	61	72	67
9	Y 9	77	68	73
10	Y 10	85	76	81
11	Y 11	67	50	59
12	Y 12	69	48	59
13	Y 13	62	45	54
14	Y 14	67	68	68
15	Y 15	78	55	67
16	Y 16	81	73	77
17	Y 17	71	53	62
18	Y 18	70	48	59
19	Y 19	76	54	65
20	Y 20	66	60	63
21	Y 21	78	55	67
22	Y 22	75	78	77
23	Y 23	60	76	68
24	Y 24	81	65	73
25	Y 25	82	77	80
26	Y 26	74	49	62
27	Y 27	84	55	70
28	Y 28	82	68	75
29	Y 29	65	50	58
<b>Total</b>				<b>1972</b>
<b>Lowest score</b>				<b>49</b>
<b>Highest score</b>				<b>87</b>
<b>Mean</b>				<b>67.69</b>
<b>Median</b>				<b>67.50</b>



**Figure 2** The graph result of descriptive writing skill

According to data in table 3 showed, there were two graders assessed the score essay test. Because writing test needed the subjective assessment. That are grader 1 was researcher itself and grader 2 was the expert lecture of writing that was mastery about writing. Based on the table 3, the data showed lowest score was 49 and highest score was 87. The mean was 67.69. The median was 67.50. The mode was 67 and standar deviation was 8.75.

**Table 4.** The Analysis of Level Measurement of Student’ Descriptive Writing Test

No	Interval	Frequency	Criteria	Percentage
1	100-80	3	Very good	10.4%
2	79-70	7	Good	24 %
3	69-60	13	Fair	44.9%
4	59-50	5	Poor	17.2%
5	49-0	1	Very poor	3.5%

Based on the table 4. show that there were 3 students getting “very good” with percentage 10.4%, 7 students was “good” criteria, percentage 24%. 13 students was “fair” criteria, percentage 44.9%. 5 student was “poor” criteria, percentage 17.2%. and 1 students was “very poor” criteria, 3.5%.

After assessing the students' essay test results, researcher and expert found errors in descriptive text writing skills as follows.

1. Content

Students tend to write the same content. where there are several students who use the same content, they only replace part of their friend's content. As well as repeating sentences that already exist at the beginning of the paragraph. Repetition of the same word.

2. Organization

In the text organization section, many students do not understand the structure in descriptive text which is divided into two, namely identification and description. In the description section, many students add identification

sentences where this section is the beginning or introduction of the object to be described. An example of an error in the student description section.

*Let me introduce my friend.....*

*I would like to introduce my friend.....*

*My classmates name.....*

In the description section, there is no need to introduce any more objects/people, but this section focuses on describing or explaining the objects that have been introduced in the identification section.

3. Vocabulary

In this aspect students tend to make mistakes in writing words or spelling, both words and numbers.

**Table 5.** Students’ common errors in descriptive writing skill

No	Error	Correction
1	Writing numbers 1. fifteenth yo, 16 yo  <b>sentence:</b> “ she/he is child (1).....from(2).....siblings” 1. the third, 3, second 2. 3	1. 15/16 years old  1. 1st,2nd,3th 2. Three,two
2	Writing/spelling words 1. Frieds 2. Friendly 3. Classmaters 4. Siviast 5. Choce 6. Stutents 7. Sivy 8. Everygone	1. Friends 2. Friendly 3. Classmates 4. Silliest 5. Choice 6. students 7. silly 8. everyone
3	Used of the words she/he for male and female 1. romeo(m) “her hair black “ 2. decha (f)“he’s nice person”	1. him/his hair black 2. she’s nice person
4	Used of the word her (possessive pronoun) as a subject “ her was slow respond”	she was slow respond
5	Inappropriate use of articles The diva, the angelita, an friend	A friend

4. Language use

“She is alay and itachi” not using an English language.

After scoring the test scores for assessing vocabulary mastery and descriptive writing skills, students then obtained the score results using simple linear regression analysis in SPSS 26. To found out the research question, whether there is a correlation between vocabulary mastery and students’ descriptive writing skills for class X.2 at SMAN 4 Palangkaraya. The results can be seen as follows.

**Table 6**



**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.063 <sup>a</sup>	.004	-.033	17.707

a. Predictors: (Constant), WRITING TEST

In table 6, the correlation value can be seen from column R, namely 0.063. and in the R Square column, a correlation coefficient of 0.004 is obtained, which means that the effect of variable X (vocabulary mastery) on variable Y (skills in writing descriptive text) was 0,4%.

**Table 7**

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	34.163	1	34.163	.109	.744 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	8465.699	27	313.544		
	Total	8499.862	28			

a. Dependent Variable: VOCABULARY TEST

b. Predictors: (Constant), WRITING TEST

Based on table 7, it is known that the calculated f value is 109 with a significance level (sig.) of 0.744 which is greater than > the probability value of 0.05, which means there is no correlation between mastery of vocabulary and the skills to write descriptive text. Which is where H0 is accepted and Ha is rejected. H0 (there is no correlation between vocabulary mastery and students' descriptive writing skills) and Ha (there is correlation between vocabulary mastery and students' descriptive writing skills)

**Table 8**

**Correlations**

		VOCABULARY TEST	WRITING TEST
VOCABULARY TEST	Pearson Correlation	1	.063
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.744
	N	29	29
WRITING TEST	Pearson Correlation	.063	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.744	
	N	29	29

From the table 8, it shown that 0.063 for value Person Product Moment Correlation Coefficients. It's mean for significance level among 0.00-0.2. and based on sign.(2-tailed) was 0.744 > 0.005 (probability value). Which mean was no correation between vocabulary mastery and descriptive writing skills. It can be conclude that the null hypothesis was accepted and alternative hypothesis was rejected.

**Discussion**

Based on data analysis using SPSS 26. Simple linear regression shows that there is no correlation between mastery of vocabulary and students' descriptive writing skills where the results show that the significance level (0.744) is greater than the probability value (0.05). The correlation coefficient value is 0.063. and the coefficient of

determination value is 0.004, which means that the relationship between vocabulary mastery and descriptive writing skills is 0.04%. And is in the interval 0.00-0.2 in the very weak category. So it can be concluded that there is no correlation between the two variables. And the direction of the correlation is negative because the results of the vocabulary mastery test are categorized as good with a score of 89% and the average student test score was 82.07, while the descriptive writing skills test is categorized as good with a score of 34% and the average score of 67.69.

The findings of this study differ from those of the earlier study by Novitri et al. (2021) where the results show that in previous research there was a correlation between vocabulary mastery and students' ability to write descriptive text with a high correlation category with an interval of 0.600-0.799. then the second by Taslim et al. (2019) with the title *Correlation Between Student's Vocabulary Mastery and Speaking Skill* based on research findings, shows that there is a significant positive relationship between vocabulary mastery. The third, Based on research Maesaroh & Sari (2021) discussing the study of grade eight students at SMP Negeri 46 in Jakarta on how vocabulary mastery affects students' writing skills The study analysis's findings indicated a beneficial relationship between students' vocabulary knowledge and their writing abilities in Grade VIII.

Fourth, Based on research Husna et al. (2021) regarding *Correlation among Grammar Mastery and Vocabulary Size Toward Translation Ability on Report Text*. The results of the study showed that a correlation value of 0.604 which was included in the moderate category. So it can be concluded that from the four previous theories it is stated that there is a correlation between vocabulary mastery and several skills in English such as writing, speaking. Meanwhile, According to the researcher's own analysis of the study's findings, there is no connection between students' writing skills and their command of language.

The fifth theory by Andiyana, n.d. (2020) entitled *The Correlation Between Using Instagram and Vocabulary Size at Iain Palangka Raya* stated that there is no correlation between the use of Instagram and vocabulary size, where the results of the correlation analysis are the same as in this study, there is no correlation. So in conclusion, the more often someone used Instagram, it doesn't mean that he understands a lot of vocabulary. Likewise, more and more vocabulary mastery does not guarantee if the students' writing results are also good.

Sixth theory by Ghonivita et al., n.d. (2021) states that if students continue to be trained to increase their vocabulary, their listening abilities will get better. This is the same as if students continue to improve their vocabulary mastery and writing skills, good results will be obtained. Seventh, by Ambarwati & Mandasari (2020) students can improve vocabulary mastery by studying online dictionaries. And it needs to be underlined that students also need to improve their writing skills by paying attention to spelling, numbering, etc. In English.

Eight, based on research by Maru et al. (2020) the results of the study state that to improve skills in writing descriptive text, you can use videos. Then Siregar & Dongoran (2020) stated that you should pay attention to existing indicators when writing descriptive text. For example, understanding text organization, writing words. Finally, by Arifin & Anwar (2018) each student has different abilities where the results of this research shown the diversity of student skills test results, both vocabulary mastery and students' writing skills. Even though some students have high vocabulary scores, they will get low scores on writing skills.

## Conclusion

Based on the research results, it was concluded that it was easier for students to understand the context of vocabulary in the form of multiple choices. This result was shown by the mean of the vocabulary test of 82.07. Meanwhile, in the essay test, it can be seen that students have difficulty writing numbers, writing/spelling words, differentiating male and female subjects, using possessive pronouns and using inappropriate articles in vocabulary. So this affects students' writing abilities. From the results of the Students' Descriptive Writing Test, it can be seen that the mean is 67.69. So, to answer the researcher's question about whether there is a correlation between vocabulary mastery and students' descriptive writing skills at SMAN 4 Palangka Raya. It can be seen from the results of the regression analysis  $R = 0.063$  It's mean for significance level between 0.00-0.2 with very weak correlation interpretation,  $R^2 = 0.004$  it's mean means that the effect of variable X (vocabulary mastery) on variable Y (skills in writing descriptive text) was 0.4%.  $f$  value is 109 with a significance level (sig.) of 0.744 which is greater than  $>$  the probability value of 0.05, which means there is no correlation between mastery of vocabulary and descriptive writing skills. Which is where  $H_0$  is accepted and  $H_a$  is rejected. For this reason, it can be concluded that the results of this research are not in the same direction, resulting in a negative correlation where students' vocabulary mastery abilities are high while the results of the Students' Descriptive Writing Test are low. For this reason, students need to improve their writing skills by paying attention to various aspects and purposes of writing, as well as increasing their mastery of written and oral vocabulary.

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