

# COVID-19 TERMINOLOGIES: THE EXTENT OF STUDENT'S VOCABULARY ACQUISITION DURING LEARNING FROM HOME

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**Submission date:** 31-Mar-2024 03:26PM (UTC+0700)

**Submission ID:** 2335744321

**File name:** F\_STUDENT\_S\_VOCABULARY\_ACQUISITION\_DURING\_LEARNING\_FROM\_HOME.pdf (430.75K)

**Word count:** 2851

**Character count:** 16398

**COVID-19 TERMINOLOGIES: THE EXTENT OF STUDENT'S  
VOCABULARY ACQUISITION DURING LEARNING FROM HOME**

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**ABSTRACT**

The coronavirus pandemic has affected the lives of people across the globe which forced students to work from home. In the education sector, students are strongly suggested to stay home and study from home. Consequently, online learning becomes a necessary learning process during the outbreak of COVID-19. Students are expected to be active in engaging themselves in learning. Suddenly they are confronted with many terminologies concerning classroom interaction. Many students found some of the terminologies confusing. This study was intended to find out the students' acquisition of COVID-19 terminologies which are commonly used in classroom interaction. The study found that students have inadequate comprehension of COVID-19 terminologies although they are widely exposed to terminologies in their daily life. Only common terminologies were comprehended appropriately. This study implies that a learning program should be provided to improve students' acquisition of COVID-19 terminologies.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, online learning, terminology, acquisition

**I. Introduction**

The outbreak of coronavirus has changed the life of many people both economically, socially, and psychologically. In the education sector, students and teachers are urged to stay home because schools are closed. Consequently, students have to study from home through online learning. Students have to deal with the use of education technology and communication technology at the same time. Students are required to completely comprehend the terminologies of Covid-19 because they have to deal with them in their daily life to survive and to be protected from the virus. To a certain degree, those terminologies are easier to understand for those who are familiar with the terminologies and have direct exposure. However, some students still encountered difficulty in understanding the terminologies especially the terminologies of COVID-19 because they are related to medical sciences. Therefore, this study is conducted to find out the students' acquisition of the terminologies of COVID-19 to establish a reference for further educational improvement.

Students' comprehension of certain terminology may affect their communication skills. Their communication skill is much influenced by how they mastered the language skill. Language skills consist of four aspects that complement each other. As we all know, the four aspects of language skills are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The four aspects of language skills are interrelated with one another. By mastering these four aspects of language skills, students may easily understand the learning material. Having a good mastery of all those language skills certainly help students to communicate effectively (Handayani & Widiastuti, 2019). Listening is related to the working power of the sense of hearing and needs to be supported with enough concentration to be able to understand and even examine the contents of listening. Reading, besides requiring concentration and a calm atmosphere, must also be based on reading skills. Reading is an activity of applying several skills in reading text processing to understand the contents of the reading text. Therefore, reading can be considered as an activity to obtain information or messages conveyed by the author in written language utterance. Meanwhile, speaking skills are activities to convey information to the recipient. Besides, it also requires theoretical knowledge to be applied in speaking. Various factors support students' language skill mastery such as insight, knowledge, creativity, and mastery of the vocabulary (Alsaaw, 2013).

There are so many new vocabularies related to COVID-19 terminologies that have to be acquired by the students to be able to communicate effectively. Vocabulary is one of the basic things to be mastered in learning a language. The more vocabulary is mastered, the easier for the students to learn and understand the language. In general, students who are just starting to learn a language, they need good and adequate vocabulary (Gardner, 2013). During this time the majority of language learning is delivered using lecture methods and the use of instructional media is very minimal. One of the supporting teaching materials in language learning is by utilizing learning media. The use of instructional media at the learning orientation stage greatly assists the effectiveness of the learning process and delivery of knowledge and content at the time. In addition to arousing the motivation and interest of students, learning media can also help students improve understanding. Therefore, teachers are suggested to be able to choose the most effective learning media and learning methods (Widiastuti, 2011).

Mastery of vocabulary affects the way of thinking and creativity of students in the language learning process so that mastery of vocabulary can determine the quality of a student in language. The quality of language skills depends on the quantity of vocabulary the students have. The more vocabulary a person has, the greater the language skills. Vocabulary is a variation of words owned by a language. In learning languages certainly will not be separated from learning vocabulary, because vocabulary has a very vital role in determining the smooth communication. The existence of vocabulary acquisition is one of the requirements to be able to master a language. Mastery of a language can be improved by mastering vocabulary well because the use of good vocabulary affects one's skills in the language (Carabott, 2014).

Given the increasingly advanced development of science and technology, the demand to be able to master a foreign language as a communication tool is a necessity. Having sufficient vocabulary is one of the requirements for mastering a language. It is made clear that the language component consists of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation. Recognizing the reality of the importance of language mastery in the future, learning language itself may have to be applied. This opinion, of course, can be understood that the quality and quantity of vocabulary owned by students certainly assist students in absorbing various information conveyed by teachers or information from various other learning sources. Good vocabulary mastery greatly affects students' ability to communicate, both oral and written (Biemiller & Boote, 2011).

Mastery of vocabulary is an important part of language teaching (Alqahtani, 2015). Vocabulary is an important part of all languages where students must continuously learn the words while the learner or student is also learning grammar and also pronunciation. This means that vocabulary is the initial stage to be taught before teaching other aspects of the language. Mastery of vocabulary can be measured by the presence of receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary is language component that students are expected to understand that are used in listening and reading. Productive vocabulary is language components that students are expected to understand and define the meaning of the word that students use in speaking and writing correctly. Therefore, vocabulary is an important for the students to learn (Annisa, 2013).

The importance of vocabulary learning towards the improvement and development of language skills makes language learning increasingly urgent to be done more seriously focused on vocabulary instruction. All aspects of language should be properly assessed to know the students' language achievement (Widiastuti, Mukminatien, Prayogo, & Irawati, 2020). This is because in the field there are still many students who have difficulty in learning, especially when learning four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) due to the low ability of students to master Indonesian vocabulary. Recently the outbreak of coronavirus forced students to acquire vocabularies related to COVID-19. For language learners, most of those vocabularies are very new. Therefore, it is not related to comprehending. Moreover, most of the COVID-19 terminologies are related to medical and science.

In that context, during the COVID-19 pandemic, several words in English appeared in the public. This was conveyed through the mass media or print media so that both consciously and unconsciously. Understanding the importance of a good vocabulary mastery and the phenomenon of coronavirus outbreak, therefore this study was intended to reveal the students' vocabulary acquisition of COVID-19 terminologies.

## **II. Methods**

This study was dealt with uncovering the students' vocabulary acquisition of Covid-19. This study used an ex post facto research design with descriptive analysis. The ex post facto

research design was used in this study because the students' vocabulary acquisition of Covid-19 as the research variable had already taken place before the undertaking of this study. Moreover, the students were exposed to the vocabulary of Covid-19 since the outbreak of Coronavirus in Indonesia. The data were collected by utilizing a valid and reliable instrument in the form of productive essay tests in which students were asked to define and describe terminologies concerning Covid-19 that they acquired in their daily life exposure. The data were analyzed descriptively and presented argumentatively to establish valid and reliable findings.

### III. Findings and Discussion

Acquiring sufficient vocabulary is important in the use of languages. Without a broad vocabulary, students will not be able to use the grammar and language functions that they have learned for extensive communication. This means that vocabulary mastery is an important part of language learning. Mastery of vocabulary is an element that supports grammar and language function as well as four language skills which include listening, reading, writing, and speaking (Liu, 2014). Vocabulary plays an important role in language teaching programs. It can be seen that the vocabulary appears in each language skill (listening, reading, writing, speaking) and also aspects of language forms. This study made use of ex-post facto research design with descriptive analysis to establish reliable findings. The data which were presented in this chapter showed the results of the students' acquisition of COVID-19 terminologies achieved by the students. Below is the list of COVID-19 terminologies that are mostly acquired by the students in this study.

- |                                      |                                   |                               |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Acute respiratory stress syndrome | 14. Epidemiology                  | 28. Physical distancing       |
| 2. Asymptomatic                      | 15. Essential business            | 29. Pre-symptomatic           |
| 3. Case fatality rate                | 16. Forehead thermometer          | 30. Presumptive positive case |
| 4. Clinical trial                    | 17. Herd immunity                 | 31. Respirator                |
| 5. Community spread                  | 18. Immune surveillance           | 32. Screening                 |
| 6. Confirmed positive case           | 19. Immuno suppressed             | 33. Self-quarantine           |
| 7. Contact tracing                   | 20. Incubation period             | 34. Shelter-in-place          |
| 8. Contactless                       | 21. Index case                    | 35. Social distancing         |
| 9. Containment area                  | 22. Index patient                 | 36. Super-spreader            |
| 10. Coronavirus                      | 23. Intensivist                   | 37. Symptomatic               |
| 11. COVID-19                         | 24. Lockdown                      | 38. Vaccine                   |
| 12. Epidemic                         | 25. National emergency            | 39. Ventilator                |
| 13. Epidemic curve                   | 26. Pandemic                      | 40. Work From Home (WFH)      |
|                                      | 27. Person-to-person transmission |                               |

In this study, students were asked to mention and describe 60 new vocabularies related to COVID-19 that they acquired in their daily life during the COVID-19 pandemic. In making the definition or the description, students have to use their own words. The tests were conducted by administering the product test by utilizing a google form which was sent through social media in the form of WhatsApp groups. The students' scores were then quantitatively calculated and presented descriptively with argumentative discussion.

Quantity the computation of data showed that the mean and standard deviation of the score of the students' acquisition of vocabulary mastery related to COVID-19. The mean and standard deviation can be used as the base to analyze the data using five values of norm references. All data were carefully calculated to show the range of achievement scores which are divided into five values; there were excellent achievement, good achievement, sufficient achievement, insufficient achievement, and poor achievement. Based on the converted score, it was found that there was 4 sample gained A or excellent achievement; 8 samples gained B or good achievement; 8 samples gained C or sufficient achievement; 18 samples gained D or insufficient achievement, and 2 samples gained E or poor achievement.

The percentages of the findings were obtained by computing the total of each converted score, then is divided by the total numbers of the samples. The result of the calculation were multiplied by 100% to get the percentage for each converted score. The result of the data analysis that conducted in form of table above clearly showed that: 4 samples or 10% of 40 samples achieved the excellent achievement, 9 samples or 22.5% of 40 samples achieved a good achievement, 16 samples or 40% of 40 samples achieved sufficient achievement, 8 samples or 20 % of 40 samples achieved the insufficient achievement, and 3 samples or 7.5% of 40 samples achieved the poor achievement. Therefore, by adding insufficient achievers and poor achievers, there were 27.5 % samples achieved insufficient achievement level. Serious improvement learning programs should be designed by school stakeholders.

Based on the data analysis, the samples with successful indicators have answered the test. They answered all questions, even though they made a few irrelevant definitions and wrong spelling. On the other hand, it was found that samples with unsuccessful indicators could not describe the words properly. Besides, they also made inappropriate definitions and descriptions and wrong, students were not very confident in describing and defining the terminologies of COVID-19.

The failure might be caused by some factors that were encountered by the students with poor achievement or unsuccessful achievement; besides, they could not construct clear sentences in describing the terminologies of COVID-19, students also could not confidently expressing the terminologies by using their own words. Most of the students preferred to finding the definition on google and they could not comprehend the meaning correctly. In the teaching and learning process, assessment is the way how the teacher knows the

achievement of the students during the process. An appropriate test should be conducted by the teacher to measure the students' achievement in vocabulary concerning COVID-19.

The findings suggest that teachers and students should be aware of the importance of vocabulary learning. Teaching vocabulary should be a top priority in language teaching. Students must be trained properly to increase vocabulary knowledge. At the initial level of language learning, it is better to teach vocabulary than grammar, and students can learn grammar when looking for the meaning of words in the vocabulary itself if the students have a sufficient vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, the main objective of the language teaching program is to help students acquire a broad vocabulary. In each lesson, the teacher must introduce new words and instruct the learner or student to practice those words, looking for clear meanings.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic occurred suddenly which required a lot of effort to conjure it. The outbreak of COVID-19 has affected all parts of life including in education. In the education sector, many students experienced difficulty in comprehending many terminologies. This is might due to their unfamiliarity with the new terminologies and most of the words are related to medical sciences. Additionally, students have to learn themselves as all schools were closed during the coronavirus outbreak. This study found that students' acquisition in COVID-19 terminology was at a sufficient level. Therefore, the findings suggest that students' acquisition in COVID-19 terminology should be improved by providing them with intensives courses and enrichment programs. The findings imply that teachers should urgently provide students with clear definitions and descriptions concerning the meaning of COVID-19 terminologies to ensure that students can communicate effectively.

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