RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING COMPREHENSION AND VOCABULARY SIZE AMONG ENGLISH MAJORS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES OF KAUNAS

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Research purpose. The purpose of this research study is to build on a previous study (Miseviciute, Vaida, & Speckauskiene, Vita. (2021). Relationship between reading comprehension and vocabulary size among english majors at the university of applied sciences of Kaunas. *Journal of International Scientific Publication : Language, Individual & Society*, 9–21) and compare the vocabulary size of the first year students enrolled in the BA philology studies of Business English at the University Of Applied Sciences Of Kaunas to non major first year students at Vytautas Magnus University. Specifically, the relationship between students' reading comprehension skills against their vocabulary size is measured at the entry level and further compared to the reading comprehension scores after reading instruction is provided at the midterm point. The research has attempted to provide stronger backing for the previously published results and understand how vocabulary size measurement may inform instruction.

Keywords: reading proficiency, receptive and productive vocabulary, vocabulary size

Research Methodology. The study was carried out with 12 first year students majoring in English and 110 non English major students enrolled in an intensive general English course. Student vocabulary size was tested at the beginning of the course (Figure 1) and measured against reading comprehension tests at the beginning of the course and midterm point (week 8). Statistical data analysis was performed by IBM SPSS Statistics 27. Chi-square test was used to analyze independence between two qualitative (nominal) variables. The relation was estimated by calculating Cramer's coefficient of association. Relation between variables considered to be statistically significant if $p < 0.05$.

Results/Findings. The findings reaffirm the observation that the target group has a surprisingly high (almost native speaker) vocabulary size in the first year of their studies. This number exceeds the typical vocabulary range set for ESL speakers in previous research studies. Both studies indicate that students with higher vocabulary receive better scores when productive readings skills are tested at the entry level (Figure 2). The study confirms previous research findings that even the students with the lowest vocabulary show full comprehension when receptive skills are tested. However, after reading skills instruction, students with lower vocabularies score as highly as the students with high vocabulary both productively and receptively at midterm point (Figure 3).

Originality/Practical implications. The findings reveal the importance of developing students' reading skills and vocabulary and should motivate students to seek to manipulate available language rather than cram new words.

Vocabulary size (word families)	Students majoring in English	Students not majoring in English
5,000-7,000	2	19
7,001-8,000	1	10
8,001-9,000	0	18
9,001-10,100	1	20
10,101-12,000	2	23
12,001-13,000	3	5
13,001-14,000	0	15
more than 14,000	3	0

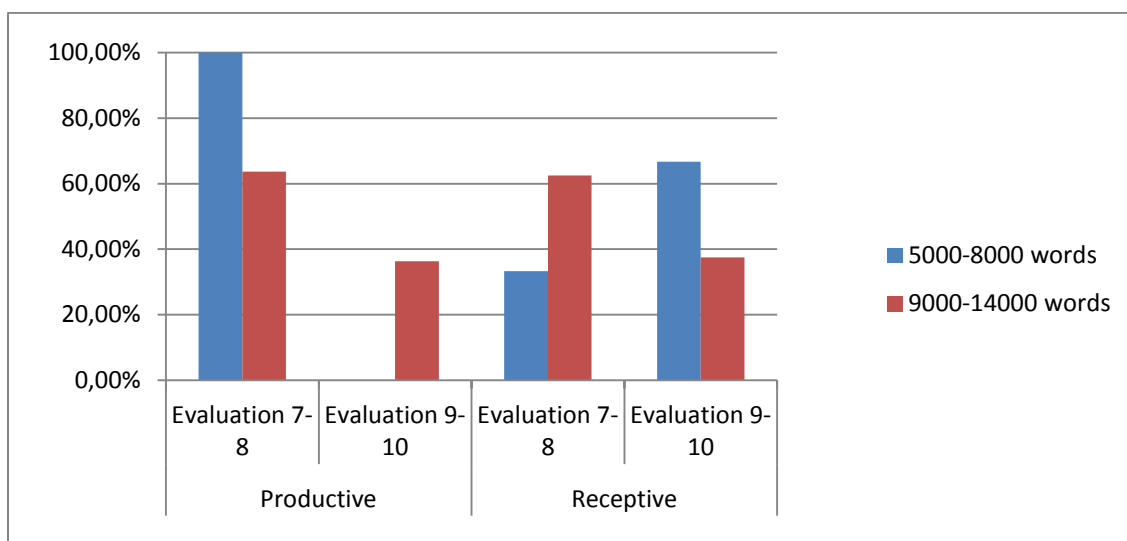*Figure 1. **Vocabulary size of target group***

*Figure 2. **Evaluation received on receptive and productive reading skills at the entry level***
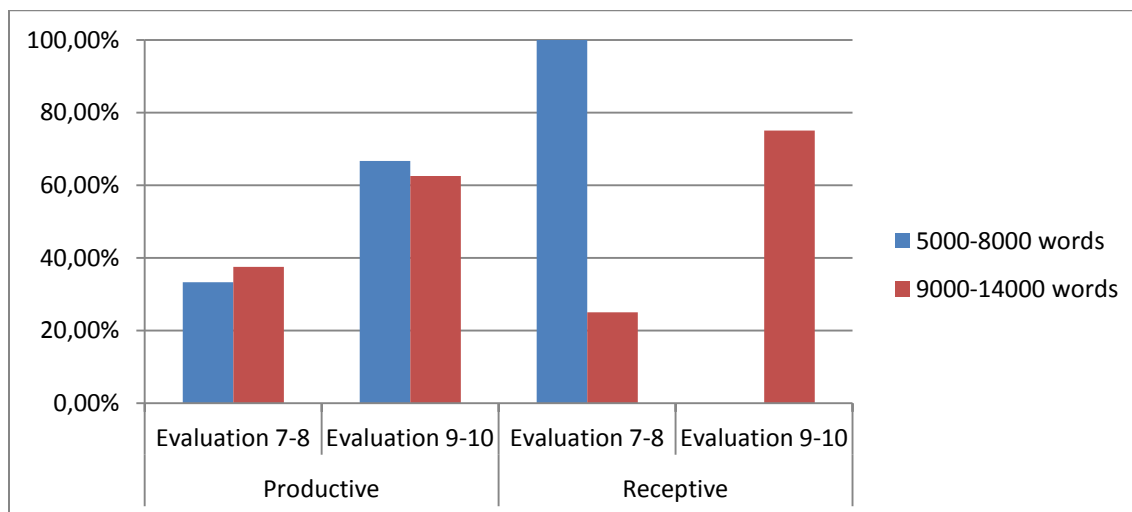

*Figure 3. **Evaluation received on receptive and productive reading skills at the midterm point***