



ENRICHING WORD POWER: A REMEDIAL INTERVENTION TO IMPROVE THE VOCABULARY OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary competence is vital for communication, comprehension, and academic success. This study identified the least mastered vocabulary competencies of Senior High School students and explored teachers' strategies for addressing vocabulary difficulties. Using a mixed-method approach, data were gathered through a diagnostic assessment and teacher narratives. Results showed that students struggled with interpreting meaning, interactive communication, expressing ideas clearly, and reflective communication, with the lowest performance observed in interactive and reflective competencies. Thematic analysis revealed five key strategies: vocabulary integration in daily instruction, engaging learning activities, learner-centered support, contextualized learning, and digital game-based instruction. Findings highlight the need for continuous, contextualized, and learner-centered vocabulary instruction to improve students' vocabulary development and communication skills.

KEYWORDS: vocabulary development, least mastered competencies, teacher narratives, learner-centered instruction, Senior High School students

1. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is fundamental to language learning, influencing learners' ability to comprehend texts, communicate ideas, and participate effectively in academic activities. However, many Senior High School students continue to experience difficulties with vocabulary-related competencies, affecting their performance in reading, writing, speaking, and classroom interaction.

Identifying the least mastered vocabulary competencies is essential for developing appropriate instructional interventions. Equally important is understanding teachers' experiences in addressing vocabulary difficulties, as these provide valuable insights into effective classroom practices. This study examined the least mastered vocabulary competencies of Senior High School students and explored teachers' narratives on strategies used to enhance vocabulary learning.

2. OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to determine the least mastered vocabulary competencies of Senior High School students as revealed by a diagnostic assessment and to explore teachers' narratives on strategies used to address students' vocabulary difficulties in classroom settings.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-method research design using a diagnostic assessment to identify the least mastered vocabulary competencies of Senior High School students and a qualitative narrative approach through teacher narratives to explore strategies for addressing vocabulary difficulties. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data provided a

comprehensive understanding of learners' vocabulary challenges and instructional practices.

4. SAMPLING DESIGN

Purposive sampling was utilized in selecting participants. Senior High School students identified as having vocabulary difficulties through a diagnostic assessment were included in the study. English teachers who regularly handled Senior High School classes participated in the focus group discussions and narrative sharing activities.

5. STATISTICAL DESIGN

Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, and mean scores, while qualitative data from teachers' narratives were examined through thematic analysis to identify recurring practices and experiences related to vocabulary development.

6. GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The study was conducted at Agusan del Sur National High School, Agusan del Sur, Philippines. The school serves a diverse population of Senior High School students enrolled in various academic and technical vocational strands.

7. RESULTS

The table presents the least-learned vocabulary competencies of Senior High School students based on a vocabulary assessment. Data were analyzed using frequency counting and percentage to identify areas with the lowest mastery levels. The findings highlight specific difficulties that affect students' comprehension and communication skills. These results provide a basis for designing targeted intervention



materials and strategies to address vocabulary learning gaps and improve proficiency.

Table 2.
Least Learned Vocabulary Competencies on Effective Communication

Learning Competency	Item	Performance Matrix	Academic Track	Technical Professional Track	Overall Average
1. Interpreting meaning in spoken, written, and multimodal academic and technical texts and how it is shaped by audience, purpose, and context	25	Average Score	13.6	11.17	12.39
		Minimum Score	4	4	
		Maximum Score	21	23	
2. Engaging effectively in interactive communication in academic and training contexts	10	Average Score	5.69	3.57	4.63
		Minimum Score	2	0	
		Maximum Score	10	8	
3. Expressing ideas clearly and coherently in spoken, written, and multimodal forms for academic and technical purposes, audiences, and contexts	10	Average Score	6.11	4.09	5.10
		Minimum Score	2	1	
		Maximum Score	10	7	
4. Reflecting on the processes of interpretation, engagement, and expression in academic and technical	5	Average Score	3.54	2.74	3.14
		Minimum Score	0	0	
		Maximum Score	5	5	

The data reveals that Senior High School students experience difficulties in higher-order vocabulary competencies, particularly in interpretive, reflective, and communicative tasks, indicating limited ability to apply vocabulary meaningfully in academic contexts despite having basic word knowledge. These challenges affect their confidence, participation, and performance in speaking, writing, and technical-vocational tasks, highlighting the need for contextualized, learner-centered remedial strategies to strengthen comprehension and communication skills.

The findings are supported by recent literature emphasizing the importance of vocabulary development in language learning and communication. Nation (2022) highlights its strong influence on reading comprehension, academic achievement, and communicative competence, while Coxhead (2021) notes that limited academic vocabulary restricts learners' ability to express complex ideas and

understand technical texts. Snow and Matthews (2020) further emphasize that vocabulary instruction is most effective when integrated into authentic communication and reflective activities.

On the other hand, Table 2 presents teachers' lived experiences and classroom practices in enhancing students' vocabulary skills. It highlights how educators address vocabulary needs through remedial instruction, interactive activities, and learner-centered strategies that support comprehension and meaningful language use. The narratives provide insight into the realities of vocabulary instruction and the practical ways teachers help students become more confident and independent language users. Overall, the study emphasizes that vocabulary development goes beyond memorization and requires continuous engagement, communication, and application in authentic learning contexts.

Table 2
Thematic Analysis for the Proposed Enhancement Learner-Centered Remediation Materials for Vocabulary Development

Theme	Sub-Theme
Vocabulary Integration in Daily Instruction	Continuous Exposure to Unfamiliar Words in Classroom Discussions
	Embedding Vocabulary Lessons Across Subject Activities
Varied and Engaging Learning Activities	Interactive and Game-Based Vocabulary Activities
	Collaborative and Creative Classroom Vocabulary Tasks
Learner-Centered Approach for Targeted Support	Identification of Individual Vocabulary Difficulties for Immediate Intervention
Contextualized and Meaningful Vocabulary Learning	Tailoring Instructional Strategies to Learners' Needs
	Connecting Vocabulary Learning to Real-Life Experiences
Digital Game-Based Vocabulary Learning	Context-Based Instruction for Proper Word Usage
	Technology-Assisted Vocabulary Activities for Independent Learning and Retention



To make the material more refining, the teachers' narratives were further analyzed and organized into emerging themes that capture their shared experiences, strategies, and challenges in addressing students' vocabulary difficulties. Teachers' narratives revealed five major themes related to vocabulary development:

Vocabulary Integration in Daily Instruction. Teachers emphasized integrating vocabulary instruction into regular classroom activities. Continuous exposure to new words through discussions, reading activities, and classroom interactions helped students develop familiarity with vocabulary in meaningful contexts.

"As a language teachers, we should make sure that in every lesson, we are able to unlock at least one word to help expand our students' vocabulary" (T2)

Varied and Engaging Learning Activities. Teachers highlighted the effectiveness of interactive and collaborative activities such as word games, group discussions, vocabulary challenges, and peer-learning tasks. These activities increased student participation and motivation.

"These new generation students we have today easily lose interest in class when they feel that things are repetitive, so we really need to vary the types of activities we use." (T2)

Learner-Centered Approach for Targeted Support. Participants stressed the importance of identifying learners' specific vocabulary difficulties and providing differentiated instruction. Individualized support allowed teachers to address varying levels of vocabulary proficiency.

"It is really important for us to know our students' performance level so we can address what they are lacking or identify the areas where they are having difficulty." (T1)

Contextualized and Meaningful Vocabulary Learning. Teachers observed that students learned vocabulary more effectively when words were introduced within authentic and familiar contexts. Real-life examples and contextualized exercises improved comprehension and retention.

"Students understand lessons more easily when the examples are related to their everyday experiences and situations." (T4)

Digital Game-Based Vocabulary Learning. Teachers reported that technology-assisted vocabulary activities increased learner engagement and confidence. Digital games and interactive platforms encouraged active participation and improved vocabulary recall.

"Students become more active when digital games are used because they do not feel like they are studying, yet they are already learning many new words." (T5)

Teachers' narratives provide meaningful insights into the realities of vocabulary instruction, including students' difficulties in understanding and applying new words as well as the strategies and interventions that effectively support their language development and participation in the classroom.

8. SUGGESTIONS

Recommendations include integrating vocabulary instruction across daily classroom lessons and activities through contextualized and authentic learning materials, incorporating collaborative and interactive vocabulary activities, employing digital game-based learning strategies, providing differentiated and learner-centered interventions for students with identified vocabulary difficulties, and

strengthening cross-curricular vocabulary reinforcement across subject areas.

9. CONCLUSION

The study revealed that Senior High School students experienced difficulties in interpreting meaning, communicating interactively, expressing ideas, and reflecting on communication, showing that vocabulary difficulties affect broader communication competencies, while teachers' narratives indicated that vocabulary development is enhanced through continuous exposure, contextualized instruction, learner-centered support, engaging activities, and technology-assisted learning in meaningful, authentic contexts.

10. AREA FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Future studies may explore the long-term effects of vocabulary intervention programs on learners' academic performance, the effectiveness of digital game-based vocabulary instruction across different grade levels and subject areas, and comparative studies in other schools and educational settings to gain broader insights into vocabulary development practices.

11. FIGURES, TABLES, AND REFERENCES

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