

Vocabulary Development Worksheets for Grade Five Second Language Learners at Mohon Elementary School

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Abstract: This study aimed to discover the pupils' vocabulary ability to further improve the techniques to be used. The respondents involved in the study were 30 pupils from Mohon Elementary School. Three tests were objectively made - namely 1) vocabulary level, 2) common difficulties encountered, 3) proposed supplementary materials. Data were tallied and interpreted using Mean. Table 1 disclosed that the mean of pupils' word vocabulary ability is 19.01 for grade five pupils interpreted as closely approximating mastery which apparently means that the pupils' ability for word vocabulary is low. Therefore, it was revealed that the vocabulary level of our grade five pupils are low and needs to be augmented. The researcher recommended that an intensive reading program should be strictly implemented along efficient program for vocabulary development utilizing the proposed supplementary vocabulary worksheets.

Keywords: Pupils, Reading, Vocabulary.

1. Introduction

Reading is the most important educational skill students will learn. Understanding the organization and meaning of text and instruction in both phonics and literature is essential to help young children read.

By understanding the prerequisite skills for reading, teachers can build a solid foundation for their students to learn and succeed in school. Yet, reading alone is of little value if the students cannot draw out the meaning of what they are reading. Reading, therefore, is considered to be a key element of vocabulary development in school-age children.

According to Kamil & Hiebert (2005), "Vocabulary is generically defined as the knowledge of words and word meanings. More specifically, we use vocabulary to refer to the kind of words that students must know to read increasingly demanding text with comprehension." It plays an important role both in learning to read and in comprehending text. Mc Carthy (cited in Gu, 2003) stresses that vocabulary is a single, biggest component of any language, that without having ample vocabulary, one would have trouble in understanding the meaning that is conveyed to him/ her.

Comprehension, as one of the literacy pillars in which children failed, improves when students know the meaning of words. Readers cannot understand text without knowing what

most of the words mean so, great vocabulary can improve all areas of communication, namely speaking, listening, reading and writing. Biemiller (2005) stated that "Teaching vocabulary will not guarantee success in reading, just as learning to read words will not guarantee success in reading. However, lacking either adequate word identification skills or adequate vocabulary will ensure failure". Some students feel that they are not taught enough words in class, words they need when talking to people. This is true among the students in Mohon Elementary School; whereas they think that teachers are so keen on teaching grammar or reading but that learning words come poor – the reason why their comprehension is not that sharp. In our classrooms, one way to assess a student's comprehension of stories read is through his ability to express his thoughts and ideas about what is being read, through appropriate words and meaningful sentences. Apparently, their grasp is measured on how they are able to express their beliefs and points of views - where the problem arises.

As teachers encourage the pupils to learn and use the second language during English, Science and Mathematics class, they themselves still can't express the language properly. This can, for sure be attributed to their lack of sufficient vocabularies and lack of them leads to feelings of insecurity and frustrations on their part, not to mention the teachers own exasperations.

In order to enhance the comprehension competence of our students in the reading classroom, vocabulary development must be given high regard and must be linked to meaningful communicative activities in the classroom. Through vocabulary building, the students will be able to read and comprehend and the schools will be able to serve its purpose – to hone competitively bright students.

Given these facts, the researcher opted to conduct a research that will help mitigate the pupils difficulties in vocabulary usage. If the schools will address the issue, it has to be done as soon as possible. The present study intends to shed some light on the vocabulary learning and interventions that would enhance vocabulary development of Grade Five Pupils of Mohon Elementary School.

2. Statement of the Problem

The researcher aimed at determining the pupils' vocabulary ability and designing vocabulary development worksheets for grade five second language learners at Mohon Elementary School.

Specifically, the researcher would like to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the vocabulary level of grade five pupils?
2. What are the common difficulties encountered by pupils using vocabularies?
3. What is the proposed supplementary material in enhancing pupils' vocabulary level?

3. Literature Review

Word learning is indeed a complex task. Students realize the important role vocabulary acquisition plays in all aspects of their language learning, but few have really thought about what it means to learn vocabulary item (Courtright & Wesolck; 2001). To improve their second language proficiency, English language learners (ELL) need a solid knowledge of vocabulary. While basic level of vocabulary will allow learners to communicate some ideas to certain degree, better communication whether in speaking/ listening or writing / reading can be accomplished when learners have acquired more vocabulary (Folse, 2008).

Learners forget words easily if they just master and memorize words which meanings were unfamiliar to them. (Zhilong 2000). Contexts can help explain the meanings of these unfamiliar words. Many professionals support the idea of inferring word meanings from contexts. Kruse (cited in Zhilong, 2000) has suggested introducing vocabulary items in such a way as to allow the students to infer or guess the meanings from the context or illustrations. Guessing word meanings from the context is possible; hence, contextual way of learning and expanding vocabulary are also possible.

Zhilong (2000) deduces that teaching vocabulary is a very important task in teaching English. By using successful techniques to learn new vocabulary, students will find words easier to remember and will become more motivated in class. As Johari (2008) claims they need to understand not just what individual words mean but also which combinations of these words in sentences or paragraphs convey a meaningful message to the reader.

In the same vein, in her several years of teaching, Shu Ying (2001) finds that enabling students to derive meaning with the help of context clues is an effective approach to increase vocabulary and reading comprehension. Too much dictionary work can wipe out all interest in reading and even interfere with comprehension because readers become more concerned with individual words and less aware of the context which gives them meaning.

Folse (2008) believes that English language learners need to increase and enrich their vocabulary knowledge. Teachers should incorporate explicit vocabulary teaching supported by

classroom activities that reinforce previously studied material. Such activities will help learners focus their attention on key vocabulary, require learners to retrieve the forms and meanings of the new words, and encourage learners to identify and develop a personalized inventory of strategies for vocabulary learning. The teachers must see to it that their goal to help students be active vocabulary learners is achieved before and after the students leave the classrooms.

Moreover, Tizon recommended that the teachers must have vocabulary teaching (or learning) strategies that need to cover a wide range of strategies, as both de-contextual and contextual methods draw on different dimensions of vocabulary knowledge. They should also examine and integrate frameworks of vocabulary teaching and learning to understand what types of activities are best suited for enhancing their student's vocabulary ability. the students should focus on discovering learning techniques or strategies which may help them to comprehend, learn, or retain new information. Carranza, et al. (2015) emphasized that there is a significant moderate positive relationship between the students' frequency of use of learning strategies and the vocabulary performance along context clues and word analysis. However, there is an insignificant positive relationship on dictionary skills. Research also shows the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and text comprehension, a process that is basic to learning. Therefore, regardless of the perspective taken in explaining the reading process, knowledge of vocabulary plays a significant role. Teachers play a fundamental role in the development of their students' vocabulary. The more students know, the better understanding they will have of themselves, society, the economy, history and so on. She added, that there is a relationship between vocabulary knowledge and text comprehension. Therefore, regardless of the perspective taken in explaining the reading process, knowledge of vocabulary plays a significant role.

4. Results and Discussion

This part of the study presents the responses to the research objectives heaved in the research. It deals with the percentage analysis and interpretation of the gathered data.

The data found in this chapter are arranged according to specific problems treated in this study.

A. Vocabulary level of grade five pupils

Table 1
Mean Percentage

		INTERPRETATIONS
MEAN	19.01	Pupils' ability for word vocabulary is low.
SD	6.32	
MPS	38.01	
PL	69.01	

Table 1 shows the mean percentage of the student's word vocabulary ability and their contextualized vocabulary ability and the interpretation for each.

Table 1 disclosed that the mean of pupils' word vocabulary ability is 19.01 for grade five pupils interpreted as closely approximating mastery which apparently means that the pupils' ability for word vocabulary is low. The pupils got mostly wrong answers to the synonyms and antonyms of words especially if those words are given plainly or not used in a sentence. Another set of words which the pupils weren't able to answer correctly are the words that ask for word equivalent or related words, where only one pupils was able to give one answer for the 5-item questions. The interview with select pupils revealed that they find it very hard to give the meanings of difficult words having only word choices. This is similar or related to the teachers' own observation that pupils are unable to deduce meanings of particular words when given plain words and without any clue. Therefore, giving the meaning of words not used in context or simply memorized according to what they are asked to is far more difficult. Simply learning the definitions of a word without examples of where and when the word occurs does not help learners to fully understand its meaning. This conveys that they can better infer / understand and give the meanings of words if used in contexts.

Table 2
Pupils' Scores

50 - 41	Excellent	0
40 - 31	Very Satisfactory	1
30 - 21	Satisfactory	12
20 - 11	Fair	15
10 - 0	Poor	2

The scores of the pupils as presented in the Table 2 divulged that only one pupil from Grade Five performed very satisfactorily having a score between 31-40, and 2 out of 30 Grade Five pupils obtained a score ranging from 0 – 10. Thus giving the researcher the confirmation on the vocabulary deficiency of the intermediate second language learners.

B. Common difficulties encountered by Pupils

Table 3
Pupils' rate regarding the difficulties

Difficulties Encountered in	Frequency	Percentage
Have poor predicting skills/ guessing	32	53%
Needs samples to be able to make a wild guess	57	95%
Encounter the word for the first time	35	58%
Unable to transfer words to real life vocabulary	18	30%
Don't have even a slightest idea of the word	40	67%
Cannot translate their interpretation to English due to vocabulary deficiency	45	75%
Pupils cannot identify the root words prefixes and suffixes	25	42%
Can't give word meaning if not used in context	55	92%

The table above revealed the difficulties encountered by pupils in learning vocabulary. The interview conducted among the select grade five pupils as to their own difficulty while answering the test revealed that they really had a hard time

guessing. Guessing was the strategy used by the pupils when given a kind of test where vocabularies are given plain, without clues. 53% of the respondents commented that they weren't able to give synonyms of words (average level of test) because they simply can't think of another English word for the Tagalog meaning they had in mind. Nathaniel, a pupil testifies that he still is confused with the terms synonyms and antonyms. 92% of the pupils find it hard to give meaning of word solely presented. They said that it would have helped if all the words are presented as part of sentences which the researchers regard as context clues. Thirty-five pupils or 58% encountered difficulty with the use of unfamiliar words. Whereas, Althea, one of the grade five pupils honestly claimed that it was the first time she encountered the word. (The researchers concluded that it is merely for the reason that they do not read beyond what is given in the class.) It was also noted that 95% of them, preferred having or needing samples of sentences to predict the meaning of the word. When asked whether they did try to look for root words as clue, they even claimed not to know either, what root words are. Twenty-five (25) pupils with a percentage of 42% proved that prefixes and suffixes might be confusing on their part though it was the easiest as inferred by the researchers.

C. Proposed supplementary materials in enhancing pupils' vocabulary level

The researcher came up with 10-item vocabulary worksheets to augment the vocabulary level of grade five second language learners. It is categorized as vocabulary building through synonym / antonyms, context clues, word analogy, puzzle and configuration clues. They were designed as booklets or two - fold pamphlets so as to make it look interesting and avoid being humdrum.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are presented:

1. The vocabulary level of our grade five pupils are low and needs to be augmented.
2. Our pupils encounter difficulties that when addressed immediately and accordingly will be remedied eventually.
3. Interventions like vocabulary worksheets are of importance for the development of pupils vocabularies and reading comprehension as a whole.
4. Intensive reading program should be continuously implemented along with efficient program for vocabulary development utilizing the proposed supplementary vocabulary worksheets.

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