Game-Based Vocabulary Building Activities Material in English

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Abstract

The study aimed to develop and enhance activity sheets material to improve vocabulary performance focusing on reading and writing skills of Grade 8 learners in English. It is geared towards the improvement of student's vocabulary performance in English by developing a game-based activity sheets. Data were gathered from one hundred ten (110) Grade 8 learners randomly selected, twenty (20) English Teacher and four (4) specialists who were purposively selected. The instrument used in the study were the researcher-made activity material and questionnaire and a DepEd's evaluation rating sheet for print resources. The data were collected and treated using frequency, percentage, ranking, mean and standard deviation. Findings revealed that audio-lingual was the approach most practiced in teaching vocabulary. However, direct approach was preferred by learners in learning vocabulary. The developed game-based vocabulary building activity sheets passed all the criteria as evaluated by the specialists.

Keywords: *Activity Sheets, Vocabulary Performance, Game-based Vocabulary Building Activity, Approach*

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Introduction

Vocabulary mastery has an important role in English as a subject. Vocabulary is the basic to acquiring other competencies such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Robertson (2015) explained that low levels of vocabulary can have an impact on reading and therefore writing. One can only write using words one knows. A broad vocabulary which includes a high volume of complex words provides greater scope to express ideas than a more limited vocabulary. Vocabulary, therefore, also impacts achievement on reading and therefore writing.

It was reported in the 2018 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) study that the Philippines were placed 79th in Reading. Over eighty percent of students in the Philippines did not reach a minimum level of proficiency in reading, with mean average of 340 against the 487 average which is one of the largest shares of low performers amongst all PISA-participating countries and economies. Reading literacy is defined as understanding, using, evaluating, reflecting on and engaging with texts in order to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential, and to participate in society which means that vocabulary place an important role in order for a child to improve his reading ability. Knowing vocabulary is a key to reading comprehension.

Since educational crisis happened because of the COVID – 19 pandemic, the learning delivery brought anxiety and boredom to the learners especially understanding subjects in the second language like English. The inclusion of games nowadays in the delivery of the lesson became an avenue for the teachers to help learners cope with the lessons. Be interactive, online or offline, teachers utilized this as springboard and assessment tool in order to engage the learners to the lesson.

As an English teacher for 10 years (2011-2021) at Callejon National High School, the researcher observed that the performance of the learners in English 8 is low in general. As reported in School Monitoring and Evaluation Planning Assessment (SMEPA) for School Year 2020-2021, English 8 reported 55.24 average MPS which is quite far from passing rate of 75. The researcher assumed that vocabulary plays an important role which affects the performance of learners in English subject. Therefore, the researcher finds that there is a need to use effective ways and appropriate strategies to help learners develop vocabulary knowledge in order to enhance the language comprehension and production abilities to be able to meet the need of a 21st century learner.

Methodology

The study employed descriptive methods focused on instructional development. Descriptive research (Pohl & Hungler 2016) describes what exists and may help to uncover new facts and meaning. The descriptive method was applied in describing the level of English vocabulary development performance, learning activities, preferred approaches in learning vocabulary as well as the peer evaluation on the developed Game-Based Vocabulary Building Activities Materials. The descriptive study provided a detailed description of the extent, environment and level of acceptability of the developed activity sheets material that the participants explored and utilized. The detail provided by the description look forward to generate sufficient insights and recommendations towards the enhancement of the game-based vocabulary building activities material.

There were two sets of respondents used in the study. The first set of respondents were teachers who were purposively chosen. They were 20 teachers who handled English 8 or had experienced handling English 8 subject and four (4) specialists who were masters of English subject as well as in learning resource material production. While, the second sets of participants were 110 students who were randomly selected from 4 sections in Grade 8 at Callejon National High School.

The study utilized two sets of questionnaire: checklist for teacher-repondents and student-respondents and adapted LRDMS evaluation tool.

The checklist questionnaire which was researcher-made was used to identify approaches used in teaching vocabulary and student's preferences in learning vocabulary. In addition, an evaluation tool adapted from DepEd Guidelines and Processes for LRMDS Assessment and Evaluation was utilized in the evaluation of the developed material.

In accomplishing this study, the following procedures were considered and followed:

The first phase of the data gathering procedures focused on seeking approval from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Quezon for the conduct of the study. The second phase was the collection of the needed data for needs analysis which was gathered from the school's data upon securing the needed approval. Establishing reliability of the researcher-made instrument, which was the third phase focused on the try-out group where the researcher distributed the questionnaire to 20 teachers outside San Antonio District and students in Grade 9 who were not part of the study. The aforementioned research-made questionnaire was validated by English master teachers, head teacher and the researcher's adviser.

Questionnaires for the Learning Approaches used by the teachers in teaching vocabulary in English 8 were done through Google Form. Meanwhile, the questionnaires for learners were printed and distributed upon the distribution of modules since the learning modality applied in the school where the study was conducted was modular learning. Likewise, copies of game-based vocabulary building activity material and DepEd Guidelines and Processes for LRMDS Assessment and Evaluation questionnaires were handed personally by the researcher to the different evaluator specialists.

Afterwards, the data collected from the respondents were classified, tabulated, and encoded for analysis.

In light of the ethical considerations, their participation was on voluntary basis. Full consent from the participants was secured as well as parental consent was issued to inform parents about the learners' participation in the study.

The following statistical techniques were used in this study to arrive at the correct interpretation and analysis of data: mean, standard deviation, ranking, frequency and percentage.

Findings

Based from the results of summative tests per quarter, the Mean Percentage Score (MPS) reached only the average level. Audio-Lingual Approach which focuses on drills on pronunciation, application, appreciation, manipulation and modeling of new learned words was the most practiced approach by the teacher in teaching vocabulary. However, Direct Approach which ranks 1st was preferred by the majority of the learners as an approach in learning vocabulary. Likewise, the evaluation rating of game-based vocabulary building activity sheets by specialists passed in all criteria. Specialists recommended to make instructions simpler and use standard font style for all the activities of game-based vocabulary building activity sheets.

Conclusion

The level of vocabulary competence of Grade 8 learners in English based on Summative Tests scores is only at the average level. Audio-Lingual Approach is the most practiced approach by majority of the teachers in teaching vocabulary. The learners preferred Direct Approach as an approach in learning vocabulary. Specialists recognized game-based vocabulary building activity sheets suitable in developing vocabulary skills and can be endorse for public usage.

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