

Authentic Materials as Alternative to Technology: The Effectiveness of Authentic Materials in Improving Learners' Vocabulary

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Abstract

The pandemic has shifted the learning environment from school to home. However, few learners saw the opportunity to explore the home to their advantage. While education continued, many learners experienced poor internet connection, greatly affecting their learning. Thus, this mixed-methods study aims to determine the effectiveness of an alternative method to using technology in learning: utilizing authentic materials found at home to improve the vocabulary level of Grade 5 learners. Forty Grade 5 learners underwent a three-week daily intervention to determine whether using authentic materials would improve their vocabulary. The intervention consisted of a daily gathering of a maximum of 10 vocabulary words from authentic materials found at home, such as shampoo sachets, product wrappers, and product labels. The learners listed the words in a journal, looked up the meaning of the words in the dictionary, identified their parts of speech, and used each word in a sentence. At the end of the three weeks, paired samples t-test showed that learners improved their vocabulary (mean pretest-31.10, mean posttest – 36.15) with a p-value of .000. The study concludes that the intervention using authentic materials significantly improved the vocabulary level of Grade 5 learners, making it a tool to learn in the absence of technology. The study recommends that the use of authentic materials may serve as an alternative method in teaching language to learners who have poor to no access to technology.

Keywords: authentic materials, vocabulary, mixed-methods study, alternative to technology

Introduction

Not all learners thrived during the pandemic. The transition from face-to-face to online learning modes highlighted the contrast between the rich and the poor. Students in the private schools had available gadgets to use, accessible and fast internet connections at home, sufficient instructional materials, and personal tutors, among others. On the contrary, those in the public schools lacked most or all the resources their fortunate counterparts had. Instead of online learning, public schools resorted to modular forms due to a need for more access to technology.

To level the playing field, educators searched for alternative ways to compensate for students' lack of technological access, especially those in public schools. Classroom teachers had to work together with parents to make the most out of this learning environment. While learners, teachers, and parents regard this type of learning environment as less than ideal, it nevertheless provides an opportunity to discover new learning methods sans technology. While many private schools need help to enhance their technological infrastructure, public schools seek ways to continue learning even without technology since many learners

do not have gadgets or access to technology. This study was the outcome of an endeavor to find other options to improve learning even when learners lack technological access.

The World Bank data (2022) showed that the incidence of learning poverty was very high before the pandemic. This was exacerbated by the pandemic, with the effects observed when face-to-face classes resumed, especially regarding reading. World Bank and UNESCO's Institute of Statistics (2021) revealed that 53% of children in low- and middle-income countries cannot read and comprehend a simple story. The percentage can go as high as 80% in developing nations. This high illiteracy demonstrates that sustainable development goals for education are far from being achieved.

Learners come across several authentic materials daily to use when learning the language. One challenging issue that learners faced was the need for more opportunities to grow their vocabulary due to the absence of socialization and face-to-face interaction. Thus, there is a need to compensate for this lack through deliberate vocabulary building using authentic materials found at home, which became the learning environment for learners.

According to Rao (2019), authentic materials are teaching resources that need to be specifically prepared for pedagogical purposes. These could be print, video, and audio materials that learners encounter daily. Authentic materials are not created specifically for use in the classroom, but they make excellent learning tools for learners precisely because they are authentic (Marpaung & Situmeang, 2020).

Authentic materials, therefore, make for an excellent learning tool for Grade 5 learners, who at this stage are more independent in their learning and require less guidance and support from teachers and other adults. At this grade level, they are supposed to understand and develop ideas about the texts they read, read independently, and can use the context of a text to determine the meaning of unknown words. Thus, this grade level is the best time to teach them to grow and develop their vocabulary.

Vocabulary is a fundamental aspect of learning English. Without adequate vocabulary, learners find it difficult to communicate, express ideas or opinions, comprehend simple texts, and listen to instruction (Li et al., 2021). One of the weaknesses of Filipino learners is reading comprehension. Based on the PISA 2019 result, the Philippines scored below the average of participating Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries in science, math, and English. At the heart of the low scores is not the lack of knowledge and skill among learners per se but the poor reading comprehension, which is foundational to learning science and math (Business Mirror, 2019).

To address this problem, children should improve their reading comprehension, one way of which is to grow their vocabulary. According to Dong et al. (2020), vocabulary level is strongly correlated with reading comprehension. Children with limited oral vocabularies comprehend at lower levels and vice versa. Thus, it is difficult to separate these two processes. It has long been established, according to Anjomshoa and Zamanian (2014) that vocabulary knowledge affects reading comprehension directly.

This further proves that the learners' vocabulary level and the effective use of a child's vocabulary is an important predictor of future literacy ability. As opposed to popular belief, vocabulary, not early reading skills, is the best predictor of later reading comprehension (Lee & Chen, 2019). Many children can read words in elementary grades but fail to understand what they read due to vocabulary limitations (Wanzeck et al., 2013). This problem could persist every year if not addressed. Thus, to address this problem, the

researcher used authentic materials found at home to serve as a vocabulary builder when learning shifted from face-to-face to online and modular forms of learning.

Literature Review

Average vocabulary increases from an estimated 3500 root word meanings at the beginning of kindergarten to 6000 root words at the end of the second grade, to approximately 20,000 root words by fifth grade. This means that from Grades 1 to 5, students need to learn approximately 3500 words per year. Given the learning limitations afforded by the pandemic, it seems unlikely that a Grade 5 student can learn 3500 words in a school year if vocabulary learning was not be deliberately targeted. If this 3500 were divided into 365 days, it would translate to 9.5 or 10 vocabulary words per day.

To ensure that the vocabulary growth of Grade 5 learners are nurtured daily even without the use of technology, the researchers thought of an independent vocabulary building strategy suited for Grade 5 using authentic materials at home that they encounter daily. The use of authentic materials is not a new concept in teaching vocabulary to students. In fact, Ruiz (2015) claimed that authentic materials should be put used in the language classroom since they provide learners with tools to make their lessons more realistic.

Akbari and Razavi (2016) added that the advantage of using authentic materials is that, first, they bring learners into direct contact with a real context. Second, authentic materials are always up-to-date and constantly being updated. Third, authentic materials work in particular areas of language, and fourth, they provide teachers with a source of up-to-date materials that are relevant to English learners' needs.

In terms of using authentic materials as a source of vocabulary learning, Ahmed (2017) proposed that authentic and culturally appropriate materials play a vital role in teaching a second language. They not only enrich the traditional lessons but are also very interesting to the learners. These materials could be within and outside classrooms that expose the learner to the language and that provide an opportunity to practice what has been learned.

Alqahtani (2015) claimed that vocabulary knowledge is often viewed as a critical tool for second language learners because a limited vocabulary in a second language impedes successful communication. He claimed that it is impossible to learn a language without words, and that the communication between human beings is based on words. This concept was supported by Viera (2017) who suggested that vocabulary knowledge is an essential tool for mastering any language skills; it also contributes to the understanding of written and spoken texts. Thus, the more frequent the exposure to vocabulary is, the more confident the learners are to understand and interpret the meaning of unknown words from context.

Alqahtani (2015) averred that words are one of the fundamental components in the mental processes of acquiring languages, which are learned in both incidental and intentional ways. Learners acquire language incidentally when they handle a package from Shopee or Lazada that their parents or siblings order. They read the texts in the package and indirectly authentically encounter texts. For example, product labels on shampoos, alcohol, powder, cooking oil, and other materials found at home contain a rich source of vocabulary that learners can learn from if they pay attention. These materials can, therefore, be used as authentic texts to grow their vocabulary (Mara & Mohamad, 2021).

The effectiveness of using authentic materials to enhance the vocabulary level of learners has been investigated by Nurriya (2018). The study focused on how authentic materials facilitated vocabulary

development. The result of the study revealed that using authentic materials is a very good way to acquire vocabulary and plays an important role in teaching a second language.

Another study is that of Hidayati and Pratiwi (2016) who also investigated the efficacy of using authentic materials in teaching vocabulary. The researchers found out that the use of authentic materials was indeed effective in teaching vocabulary to learners. The same conclusion was found by Ruiz et al. (2015) who likewise found effective the use of authentic materials to improve the vocabulary to learners.

With several studies establishing the effectiveness of using authentic materials for vocabulary development, the researchers embarked on a similar study as an opportunity to enhance the vocabulary development of Grade 5 learners. These Grade 5 learners study in public schools that use modules in learning due to a lack of technology or internet access. Grade 5 learners are described cognitively by the Northeast Foundation for Children (2011) as generally good at memorizing facts, enjoy collecting, classifying, and organizing, able to concentrate for longer periods and enjoy rules of logic, and their interest in reading independently strengthens. Thus, this is the best time to introduce the discipline of increasing their vocabulary through authentic materials. This was also the reason why Grade 5 learners were chosen as the participants in the study.

A reading comprehension test conducted for these Grade 5 learners revealed that 95 percent posted a basic user level, with only one classified as an independent reader and another as a proficient reader. During this grade level, learners transition from reading narratives to informational texts. Thus, they need to improve their vocabulary to master the deeper tasks involved in reading a non-fiction text. To prepare them for this more complex reading task, they should be able to have a large vocabulary bank to understand the texts they read and deepen their understanding of the connections within and between texts (K-12 Reader).

Among the standard expected of Grade 5 learners in terms of reading informational texts is to explain a text explicitly and accurately, use quotes, understand the theme of a piece of informational text and be able to summarize it, describe the overall structure of events or information in a text including elements like chronology, comparison, and cause and effect, analyze multiple accounts of the same events or topics in a text, get information from a number of different print or digital sources, explain the author's evidence within a text, read informational texts at grade band level, which must increase in complexity throughout the year.

To successfully accomplish this task, a Grade 5 pupil needs to have a vocabulary level of at least B or independent user level. Thus, a Barton Vocabulary Pre-test was run to test the vocabulary level of the participants. Out of the 40 learners, only 5 percent are at the upper intermediate and advanced level (one each), while the majority are at the basic user level. This shows the need to improve the vocabulary level of Grade 5 learners to cope with the reading demands that this grade level entails.

Aside from this, the Philippine –Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) test of identical learners showed that a combined 70 percent of learners were not at the ideal independent level of reading comprehension and that 25 percent were still at the frustration level. The possible reason for this low level of reading comprehension is poor vocabulary. This study, therefore, aims to find out whether improving learners' vocabulary skills through authentic texts affects learners' reading comprehension.

Because not all learners have access to the internet, this study focused on using authentic materials found at home that are commonly handled by learners, such as text in product labels, containers, snack food items, goods, and things found at home. When learners are asked by their parents to buy at the store, the items,

containers, sachets, or anything that has writings on them could be kept and used as a vocabulary aid for Grade 5 learners to enhance their vocabulary.

Theoretical Framework

Using authentic materials in classroom learning is emphasized in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), as the learner is exposed to the same language as a native speaker. Nuttal (1996) provides the following criteria for choosing authentic materials.

Suitability of Content

- Does the text interest the student?
- Is it relevant to the student’s needs?
- Does it represent the type of material that the student will use outside of the classroom?

Exploitability

- Can the text be exploited for teaching purposes?
- For what purpose should the text be exploited?
- What skills/strategies can be developed by exploiting the text?

Readability

- Is the text too easy/difficult for the student?
- Is it structurally too demanding/complex?
- How much new vocabulary does it contain?
- Is it relevant?

Presentation

- Does it “look” authentic?
- Is it “attractive”?
- Does it grab the student’s attention?
- Does it make him want to read more?

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1
Conceptual Paradigm of the Study

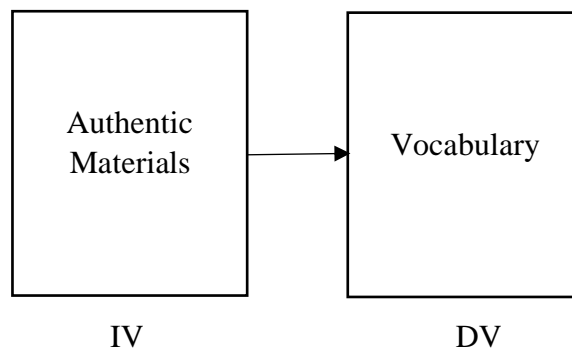


Figure 1 shows the paradigm of the study. On the left box is the independent variable, the use of authentic materials, which according to Nuttall (1996) can be motivating because they are proof that the language is used for real-life purposes by real people. In this study, authentic materials that learners come across daily at home such as shampoo sachets, product labels, product descriptions of consumer goods, and food packets, among others. Authentic materials also serve as the intervention to improve the vocabulary of learners. On the right box is the dependent variable, which is the vocabulary levels of learners. In this study, the vocabulary level of learners is measured using Barton's vocabulary test. The arrow connecting the two boxes implies causal relationship as the use of authentic materials was used as a strategy to increase the vocabulary levels of Grade 5 learners.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to find out whether the use of authentic materials, as an alternative to technology, is effective in improving the vocabulary levels of Grade 5 learners. Thus, this research sought answers the following questions:

1. What is the vocabulary level of Grade 5 pupils before and after the use of authentic materials?
2. Is there a significant difference between the vocabulary level of Grade 5 learners before and after using authentic materials?
3. In the perspective of learners, what authentic materials at home helped them improve their vocabulary?

Hypothesis of the Study

The study's hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis of the study is: There is no significant difference between the vocabulary level of Grade 5 pupils before and after being exposed to authentic materials.

Methods

Research Design

This pretest-posttest research design aims to find out the effectiveness of using authentic materials found at home in improving the vocabulary levels of learners. The strategy consisted of 40 Grade 5 learners collecting authentic materials like product wrappers, shampoo bottles, powder, cooking ingredients, empty junk food containers, and any material found at home with prints or labels in English. After collecting the materials, learners were instructed to write down 10 words that are not familiar to them based on the texts written on these packets. They looked up the meaning of the words, wrote them down on a piece of paper, and used them in sentences.

At the end of each week, the teacher gave them a vocabulary test using the words they collected. This metacognitive strategy lasted for 15 days or three weeks. At the end of three weeks at 5 to 10 words per day, a pupil had learned about 75 to 150 new words. At the end of the three-week period, the learners were then given the standard 140-word Barton vocabulary test to see if there was an improvement in their vocabulary. The pretest and posttest scores were then compared after the implementation of the metacognitive strategy. The intervention was conducted for three weeks.

Sampling Method

The Grade 5 learners who participated in the study were selected using purposive sampling. The criteria considered in selecting the participants are the following: a) the pupil should have been enrolled in SY

2021-2022 and is actively participating in the class through timely submissions of modules; b) a vocabulary test of beginner level; and c) a Phil-IRI result lower than the independent level. The Barton Vocabulary Test (2012) was used to find out the vocabulary levels of the learners. A total of 40 learners were included in the study.

Proposed Innovation/Intervention/Strategy

The proposed strategy aims to use authentic materials to improve the vocabulary level of learners. This guide contained specific parts to assist learners in the learning process. The intervention allowed Grade 5 learners to monitor their own vocabulary learning by letting them use authentic materials found at home such as labels, used packets, soap boxes, detergent sachets, among others, to choose the vocabulary words. They then selected at least 5-10 unfamiliar words per day for three weeks from the authentic materials they gathered at home, recorded them in a notebook, wrote down their meanings, and used them in sentences to become familiar with new vocabulary. Aside from the meaning of the word, they also identified the part of speech that the particular word falls into.

Aside from this 50-item self-made posttest based on the learners' vocabulary list, the standard *Barton English Vocabulary Test* instrument would be administered to find out if learners' level of vocabulary increased after the vocabulary intervention.

Instrument

The instrument used to measure the vocabulary level of learners is the *Barton English Vocabulary Test*. It was designed in 2012 and updated in 2021, and *consists of the following levels*:

A. Basic User

Breakthrough Beginner

- Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type.
- Can introduce themselves and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where they live, people they know and things they have.
- Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Waystage or Elementary

- Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g., very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment).
- Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters.
- Can describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

B. Independent User

Threshold or Intermediate

- Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.
- Can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken.
- Can produce simple connected text on topics that are familiar or of personal interest.
- Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

Independent User

- Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in their field of specialization.
- Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party.
- Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

C. Proficient User

Effective Operational Proficiency or Advanced

- Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer clauses, and recognize implicit meaning.
- Can express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions.
- Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes.
- Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

Mastery or Proficiency

- Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read.
- Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation.
- Can express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations.

Each of the five levels has **15 questions totaling 75, with the** difficulty of each word determined by the English Vocabulary Profile for levels A2-B2 and the Corpus of Contemporary American English for the final levels. The vocabulary test contains fill-in-the-blank questions to assess the level of learners' **vocabulary** according to standard levels. In the test, the learners has to select the most suitable *word* that matches the sentence in each question. Only learners who get a score of 11/15 can proceed to the next level. Those who get a score below 11 is recorded under the level at which they completed.

Another instrument was a self-made instrument developed by the researcher that contains 50 items of words taken from learners' journal vocabulary word list. At least 50 common words from learners' lists were gathered with the goal of measuring the vocabulary growth of learners.

Data Collection Procedure

Data was primarily gathered using a pretest and a posttest. In between the pretest and posttest is the three-week intervention, consisting of daily collection of vocabulary words from authentic materials found at home. The learners recorded all the words and their meanings, the part of speech of the word, and used

them in sentences. Every week, the learners met with their teacher online for a vocabulary quiz covering the common words they learned.

The pretest was conducted before the three-week vocabulary development strategy. A weekly quiz was provided to the learners, which was capped by a posttest at the end of the third week. The vocabulary development strategy was participated in by learners daily for three weeks.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher considered the ethical issues related to the participants in the research study. The ethical issues were informed consent, the right to privacy, the right to remain anonymous, and the right to confidentiality for the learners who participated in the study (Tuckman, 1999). A consent form was signed by the parents of learners prior to including them in the study. The identities, names, and other information that can identify participants were removed from the data. Any information provided was treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Data Analysis

Frequency, mean, and standard deviation was used to analyze the level of vocabulary of learners before the vocabulary development strategy and after, while paired samples t-test was the statistical treatment used to determine the significant difference of the mean scores on pretest and posttest of learners before and after the use of authentic materials.

Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive comparison of learners’ level of vocabulary before and after the use of authentic materials.

Table 1
Descriptive Comparison of Learners’ Barton English Vocabulary Test Before and After Using the Authentic Materials

Level	Pretest		Posttest		% Difference
	F	%	F	%	
<i>Basic</i>					
A1	0	0	0	0	67
A2	24	60	8	20	
<i>Independent</i>					
B1	11	27.5	9	22.5	50
B2	1	2.5	9	22.5	
<i>Proficient</i>					
C1	3	7.5	8	20	250
C2	1	2.5	6	15	
Total	40	100	40	100	

Table 1 indicates the comparison of learners’ Barton English Vocabulary Test before and after using the authentic materials. As shown in the pretest, 60% (24 learners) of the Grade 5 learners are in the *basic* or A2 level of vocabulary. Learners who fall under this category can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance. For example, very basic personal and family

information, shopping, and local geography. They can also communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Moreover, they can describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment, and matters in areas of immediate need.

At least 30% (12 learners) are at the B1 and B2 or *independent* level, which means that learners can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered at home, school, and leisure, among others. They can also produce simple connected text on topics that are familiar to them or of personal interest. Moreover, they can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes, and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. Meanwhile, only 10% (4 learners) are at the proficient level.

After the three-week intervention using authentic materials, the level of learners' vocabulary increased significantly. As shown in the posttest, only 20% (8 learners) remained in the basic level, which is a marked difference of 67%. Sixteen learners progressed to more advanced vocabulary levels of B2, independent level, and C1 and C2, the proficient level. Compared with the pretest in which the majority of learners are in the basic level, after the posttest, six learners moved up the independent level and another 10 learners moved up the proficient level. This is a significant improvement from the posttest since at least 80% of learners are now in the independent and proficient levels. This means that the vocabulary level of Grade 5 learners improved after the use of authentic materials.

Table 2 presents the result for the second research question, "Is there a significant difference between the vocabulary level of Grade 5 learners before and after using authentic materials?"

Table 2
Significant Difference Between the Pretest and Posttest Scores of Grade 5 Learners

	Mean	SD	t	Df	P
Pretest	31.10	7.97	-15.49	39	.000
Posttest	36.15	6.94			

Note: N = 40

Table 2 shows the pretest and posttest scores of learners before and after using authentic materials. As shown, paired samples t-test was computed to determine whether the mean pretest of learners significantly differs from the mean posttest after using authentic materials. Results show that the mean posttest (Mean = 36.15, SD = 6.94), $t(39) = -15.49$, $p < .001$. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the vocabulary pretest and posttest scores of learners is rejected. This means that the use of authentic materials has a significant effect in increasing the vocabulary size of learners.

Alqahtani (2015) claimed that vocabulary knowledge is often viewed as a critical tool for second language learners because a limited vocabulary in a second language impedes successful communication. He claimed that it is impossible to learn a language without words, and that the communication between human beings is based on words. This concept was supported by Viera (2017) who suggested that vocabulary knowledge is an essential tool for mastering any language skills; it also contributes to the understanding of written and spoken texts. Thus, the more frequent the exposure to vocabulary is, the more confident the learners are to understand and interpret the meaning of unknown words from context.

Alqahtani (2015) averred that words are one of the fundamental components in the mental processes to acquire languages, which are learned either in incidental and intentional ways. Learners acquire language incidentally when they happen to handle a package from Shopee or Lazada that their parents or siblings order. They read the texts in the package and indirectly encounter texts in an authentic manner. For example, product labels in shampoos, alcohol, powder, cooking oil, and other materials found at home contain a rich source of vocabulary that learners can learn from if they pay attention. These materials can therefore be used as authentic texts to grow their vocabulary (Mara & Mohamad, 2021).

The effectiveness of using authentic materials to enhance the vocabulary level of learners has been investigated by Nurriya (2018). The study focused on how authentic materials facilitated vocabulary development. The result of the study revealed that using authentic materials is a very good way to acquire vocabulary and plays an important role in teaching a second language.

Another study is that of Hidayati and Pratiwi (2016) who also investigated the efficacy of using authentic materials in teaching vocabulary. The researchers found out that the use of authentic materials was indeed effective in teaching vocabulary to learners. The same conclusion was found by Ruiz et al. (2015) who likewise found effective the use of authentic materials to improve the vocabulary to learners

Table 3 presents the result for the last research question, “In the perspective of learners, what authentic materials at home helped them improve their vocabulary?”

Table 3

Ranked Classification of Authentic Materials at Home That Helped Learners Improve Their Vocabulary

Categories of Authentic Materials	Ranking
Hygiene/Bath and Body Use	1
Food/Beverage and Vitamins	2
Cooking/Kitchen Use	3
Dishwashing/Laundry	4
Disinfectant/Insecticide	5
Medical Use/Home Utilities	6

Table 3 shows the ranked classification of authentic materials at home that helped learners improve their vocabulary. Based on the document analysis and interviews of learners, the authentic materials at home that greatly helped learners improve their vocabulary are hygiene, bath and body use, which is ranked first. Majority of the photos that learners compiled consist of alcohol, soap, shampoo, lotion, toner, deodorant, powder, feminine napkins, hair styling, among others.

One of the learners who was asked to identify which materials improved her vocabulary said:

“The authentic materials in our home that helped me to improve my vocabulary are the words from the things in our house like shampoo, conditioner, soy sauce, ketchup bottles that contains English words.”

The next classification is food, beverage, and vitamins. Learners usually handle these categories daily. Among these include coffee, milk, junk food, biscuits, canned fruits, canned food, nuts, bread, tea, among

others. Cooking and kitchen materials came next. It consists of cooking oil, condiments, sauces, flour, among others.

Another pupil said: *“Materials that we use in our daily activities like hygienic materials, cosmetics, kitchen materials, among others, helped me improve my vocabulary.”*

This was followed by dishwashing/laundry materials, disinfectant/insecticide, medical use, and home utilities. This shows that learners have the opportunity to learn at home using materials they handle daily and that majority of those are ones that they use personally.

According to Thomas (2014), authentic materials are an excellent resource in any teaching context. Authentic materials are beneficial because they show a real-world use of language and often present content that is of high interest to students. Most authentic materials present current topics in news or culture or help students learn information that is useful in their everyday lives. For this reason, using authentic materials often increases students’ motivation and willingness to take risks with English.

Authentic materials, unlike materials made specifically for teaching, are not created with certain grammatical structures or vocabulary in mind. Instead, they provide an opportunity for students to read or hear language as it is used in a real-life situation. This can help advance students’ language learning by exposing them to new vocabulary and grammatical concepts in a meaningful way.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The use of authentic materials improved the vocabulary levels of Grade 5 learners. Crisis situations led to the use of this alternative method so as not to make learners stagnant in terms of learning new vocabulary words. An integration of various metacognitive strategies such as identifying unfamiliar words, looking up their meaning in the dictionary as well as their part of speech, using them in sentences, journaling, and portfolio compiling were used as activities revolving around the use of authentic materials.

This intervention is guided and monitored by the teacher on a weekly basis. The developed guide adhered to the Policy Guidelines on Daily Lesson Preparation for the K to 12 Basic Education Program (DepEd Order No. 42, s.2016) and the K-12 Language Arts and Multiliteracies Curriculum. Thus, the use of authentic materials is recommended for Grades 4, 5, and 6 learners for them to increase and develop their vocabulary.

2. This study concludes that using authentic materials is effective in improving the vocabulary level of learners. Learners showed marked progress in their vocabulary levels when their pretest and posttest scores are compared, with the posttest scores yielding higher scores. This is because the use of authentic materials taps into the metacognitive ability of learners to monitor their own learning as they are asked to review, to look up the meaning of the words themselves, to use them in a sentence, and to monitor their familiarity of the words. The weekly sessions for discussions and sharing of experiences with classmates also reinforce learning and provides for rich interaction and exchange of new vocabulary words they learned.

While the participants in this study were Grade 5 learners, other grade levels may also benefit from the strategy. It is recommended that the type of authentic materials be adjusted to suit the needs and ability

of learners who want to use it. Teachers may also focus on a particular subject. For example, acquiring science, math, or social studies vocabulary using authentic materials. In this instance, learners may focus on materials that are related to these subjects.

3. Through this study, learners realized that the home environment is also a place in which they can learn. It provides a rich resource for them to develop their vocabulary by paying attention to the materials they come across daily. This practice arouses learners' awareness of opportunities for learning at home and embeds in them a consciousness to learn wherever they are.

It is therefore recommended that learners be exposed to more authentic materials as resources for learning even in school. This will make learning more connected to learners' daily lives and make learning more meaningful. Thus, teachers should develop lessons in which authentic materials are used. Future researchers may also embark on a similar study to test the effectiveness of using authentic materials not only in language but in other subject areas as well.

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