

## Research Article

# Vocabulary Learning Plan for Grade-7 Learners in Bauan, Batangas

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**Abstract:** In achieving language goals, the right techniques and materials should be taken into consideration by the language teachers especially in learning vocabulary of the students who are non-native speakers of the language. Thus, this study attempted to determine the effectiveness of strategies in teaching vocabulary. This study also covered teachers' demographic profile considering the age, gender, length of service, and educational attainment. Descriptive method of research was used in this study and utilized a set of questionnaires as the main data gathering instrument. Frequency, ranking, percentage, weighted mean, composite mean and chi-square were the statistical tools used in quantifying the data gathered. Results of the study revealed that the majority of the Grade-7 English Language teachers involved in the study were eleven, female, baccalaureate degree holders, and in the teaching profession for 0-5 years. It also revealed that the use of context clues in teaching vocabulary skills is very effective. It further revealed that there is significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and assessment of teaching strategies of vocabulary skills. It was recommended in the study that school administrators may conduct various seminars and trainings to help their teachers to have professional learning and development in terms of strategies in teaching vocabularies. The proposed Vocabulary Skills Plan may be used in all schools in Bauan, Batangas to make the teaching of vocabulary skills effective. It was also recommended that future researchers may conduct related or similar research to determine if the proposed Vocabulary Learning Plan is effective in schools particularly in Bauan, Batangas.

**Keywords:** Teacher' assessment, Vocabulary Skills Plan, Demographic profile, Strategies in Teaching Vocabulary Skills.

## Introduction

It is difficult to imagine a language without vocabulary. Whether spoken or written, seen or signed, read or heard, words are an integral part of the communication process. For the same reason the English language is widely used and the world's leading language. It bridges the gap and brings people together, perhaps because it's the only language that links the whole world so closely. The ability to speak English can give many advantages to somebody. This unlocks a realm of a person's information and communication. Student academic performance is aided by a clear grasp of word meanings. Words are the only building blocks of language. A rich vocabulary can help students enhance their communication abilities in all areas, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing. To understand a piece of writing, students need a solid academic vocabulary, which allows them to accept new concepts while still understanding the overall message.

Language learning is based on vocabulary development, which is linked to other abilities; all of these skills are inextricably linked to vocabulary development; it is impossible to learn a language without first mastering its vocabulary (Syafrizal & Haerudin, 2018). One of the most important abilities for teaching and studying a language is the ability to communicate effectively in another language. Reading comprehension, listening comprehension, speaking, writing, spelling, and pronunciation are

all built on the foundation of vocabulary development. Students' ability to communicate effectively in English is primarily based on their vocabulary knowledge.

Language competency is defined by Putra (2020) as "the ability to use a language's four basic abilities efficiently and effectively." Using language in everyday life is limited by the learners' vocabulary. This shows the importance of vocabulary in bridging linguistic gaps. A lack of vocabulary knowledge has been identified as one of the barriers to overcome in various research. This emphasizes the need of focusing on the learners' vocabulary growth. For writing tasks and assessments, English is required in every subject in school. A student's ability to read and comprehend is aided by English. This is equally as vital as being able to communicate effectively in both spoken and written form. It will be beneficial to comprehend what was read or heard. Learning English is all about being able to communicate effectively, and listening, comprehending, and reading are all forms of receptive communication. It is critical to study terminology in order to be prepared for these situations. It has become a crucial component of English instruction.

It is widely acknowledged that students need to know words and be able to use language in order to succeed in school and achieve something in the future. Students' understanding of words has a substantial correlation with academic success. Learners with limited vocabularies are at a disadvantage since teaching entails describing, explaining, demonstrating, and identifying things, all of which require an increasingly complex vocabulary. Texts play a growing importance in instruction with each year of schooling. Factors that may obstruct text comprehension, such as a lack of vocabulary knowledge, are likely to have an increasingly negative impact on students' academic progress. Moreover, vocabulary can be viewed as the main tool for understanding a language particularly English as a second language, as a student should understand the meaning of each word in the sentence in order to understand a sentence. Alqahtani (2015) noted that vocabulary awareness is often seen as a vital resource for second language learners because a restricted second-language vocabulary hinders success. Furthermore, as stipulated in the idea of K-12 Curriculum, over the past two decades, educators around the world have been called upon to prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and help them navigate an increasingly globalized and interconnected environment. Comprehending what was read or heard will be something beneficial. English is all about learning to communicate well; and listening, comprehending and reading are all receptive ways people communicate. To be equipped on these, it is essential to learn vocabulary. It has become a central part in English learning.

Along with phonetics/pronunciation and grammar, vocabulary is one of the most important aspects of learning a foreign language (Pan & Xu, 2011). Furthermore, vocabulary serves as a foundation for language abilities such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is difficult to achieve any level of language fluency without understanding the vocabulary. The foundation of learning a second language is vocabulary. According to Rohmatillah (2017), it means that vocabulary knowledge is an essential component of communicative ability; it is an integral aspect of the language.

Each educational institution must aim for quality education as it is the main objective of the country's current educational system. Batas Pambansa Blg. 232 (The Education Act of 1982) Act No. 74 states that:

*"English was made as medium of instruction in all levels of schooling." The world today is, without a doubt, more globalized than ever, with English as a medium for intellectual pursuits, for international communication, for economic advancement, especially in today's globalizing world (Bernardo, 2009, p.34). As a result, Philippine schools should still strive for students to be able to speak English, as it is commonly used in today's globally competitive world.*

Today, there are various ways to teach vocabulary effectively. Activities involving learners in thinking about the words such as audio-visual materials, direct instruction, context clues, word

games, word sorts and concept maps make it easier for learners to recall the target words. However, when the process of teaching and learning takes place, the teachers would have problems. They have problems with how to teach students to achieve satisfactory results. Teachers should be concerned that vocabulary teaching is something new and different from the native language of the student. A good teacher should be trained with specific and up-to-date methods for himself or herself. To be understood by students, educators should be imaginative and able to master the material and make them interested. Therefore, English language teachers need to learn the right techniques and materials to achieve the language teacher's goal. Until now, student's find it difficult to understand English vocabulary since Filipino students are not native speakers of the language (Alqahtani, 2015).

In connection with this, the researchers aimed to assess the effectiveness of strategies in teaching vocabulary skills for Grade-7 learners in Bauan, Batangas. Schools in Bauan, Batangas, whether public or private still consider the curriculum prescribed by the Department of Education. As educators, the researchers are aware of the important role of various strategies that will result in effective learning. In view of this, this study explored the effectiveness of strategies in teaching vocabulary. Likewise, the demographic profile according to age, gender, length of service and educational attainment. Students of all levels and institutions may benefit from the information provided here, as they can choose methods of learning that fit their classroom situation and assist them to better understand the lesson for vocabulary. In addition, some students may have difficulty determining the best method for acquiring vocabulary and may have no idea where to begin. It is therefore possible to use the findings of this study to help students learn vocabulary more effectively in the classroom by helping teachers determine the best ways to teach vocabulary. Educators must help students comprehend how to learn in their classrooms, according to Kistner, *et al.*, (2015). Therefore, this study could help both students and teachers learn more about how to employ vocabulary learning strategies.

### **Objectives**

This study aimed to determine Grade-7 teachers' assessment on teaching vocabulary in Bauan, Batangas in relation to teachers' demographic profile, the utilization of vocabulary teaching strategies and the respondents' assessment on the effectiveness of strategies in teaching vocabulary, with the end view of proposing strategic vocabulary learning plan which can be used by English Language teachers in teaching vocabulary.

### **Methodology**

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the researchers used the descriptive research design, as it is considered most appropriate to analyze and interpret the data to be collected during the research period. The process of descriptive research goes beyond the mere collection and tabulation of information and data. It involves the interpretation of the meaning of what is described. According to Baraceros (2016), descriptive research describes and interprets what it is. It is concerned with conditions of relationships that exist, practices that prevail; beliefs processes that are going on; effects that are being felt, or trends that are developing. This method was used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents, the utilization of vocabulary teaching strategies and the respondents' assessment on the effectiveness of strategies in teaching vocabulary. The main source of data was a researcher-constructed questionnaire which was validated and tested. The researcher instrument made use of the Likert scale to determine the assessment of the respondents on the effectiveness of strategies in teaching vocabulary. Statistical tools used were frequency, ranking, percentage, weighted mean, composite mean and chi square. The respondents of the study were 11 Grade-7 English Language teachers of schools in Bauan, Batangas.

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **1. Demographic Profile of Grade-7 English Language Teachers**

Ages of the respondents were classified into five groups. 7 or 63.64 were in the age bracket of 20-29, 2 or 18.18 were in the age bracket of 40-49 and 50-59. Then, 0 or 0.00 was in the age bracket of 30-

39 and 60 and above. Most or 9 of the faculty or 81.82 percent of the respondents were female and 2 or 18.18 percent of the respondents were male. Data revealed that most or 8 respondents or 66.67 percent were bachelors’ degree graduates and two (2) faculty members or 27.27 percent were unit earners in MA studies. Hairrell, *et al.*, (2011) defined teacher quality as a set of factors involving teaching certification, educational attainment and degree, and the type of teaching practices used in the classroom. In their studies, they have explained that these qualifications have something to or an important role in teaching vocabulary.

**Table 1. Demographic Profile of Grade-7 English Language Teachers**

<b>Distribution of Respondents</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age in years</b>		
20-29	7	63.64
30-39	0	0.00
40-49	2	18.18
50-59	2	18.18
60 and above	0	0.00
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	2	18.18
Female	9	81.82
<b>Years of service</b>		
0-5	6	54.55
6-10	1	9.09
11-15	2	18.18
16-20	0	0.00
21-25	2	18.18

**2. Strategies used by Teachers in teaching Vocabulary Skills**

The different strategies currently used by the respondents in teaching vocabulary were determined in this study. Teacher’s assessment showed that they used a variety of strategies in their class to achieve comprehensive acquisition and to expand the knowledge of students’ vocabulary. As reflected, teachers preferred using context clues very often in teaching vocabulary. It obtained a percentage of 100 which ranked first among the vocabulary teaching strategies.

Teachers also used word games by incorporating fun ways to teach vocabulary words. It obtained a percentage of 90.91 which ranked second in the list. Ranked third was the use of cross word puzzles which obtained a percentage of 72.23. Teachers also used vocabulary attack strategies to increase students’ vocabulary potential. It ranked fourth with a percentage of 54.55. Moreover, some teachers also appreciate the use of semantic maps, audio visuals, and word sorting. It ranked fifth with a percentage of 45.45.

The teachers cited further that they used direct instruction which help students to effectively acquire and employ targeted vocabulary. It ranked eight with a percentage of 36.36. Likewise, word cube which is a great strategy in employing word parts was also used. It ranked ninth among the vocabulary teaching strategies with a percentage of 27.27. The least in the rank was the use of word walls. It ranked tenth with a percentage of 9.09. These results mean that the respondents incorporated a variety of strategies in teaching vocabulary for the students’ achievement and vocabulary understanding. In connection, studies suggest that vocabulary strategies play a key role in allowing students to direct their own learning. These are effective in allowing students to create an independent learning environment in accordance with their needs, and the level of competence at the target level can be easily achieved. These findings conform with the idea presented in the study of (Fisher and Frey, 2014), that to support the development of vocabulary in the content area, teachers

need to give their students time to read widely, intentionally select words worth of instructions, model their own word solving strategies, and provide students with opportunities to engage in collaborative conversations. This is acknowledged to the studies of Blachowicz, *et al.*, (2013) that the ability to use context clues is an effective independent word-learning strategy because it can enhance children’s comprehension.

**Table 2. Strategies used by Teachers in teaching Vocabulary Skills**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Using context clues	100
Using word games	90.91
Cross word puzzles	72.23
Vocabulary attack	54.55
Audio Visuals	45.45
Semantic Maps	45.45
Word Sorting	45.45
Direct Instruction	36.36
Word Cube	27.27
Word Wall	9.09

**3. Assessment of Grade-7 English Language Teacher in Bauan, Batangas as to Effectiveness of Vocabulary Teaching Strategies**

The teachers cited it was evident that English Language teachers utilized strategies that are effective to the students because it helps them in familiarizing the terms in a context with a mean of 4.45. Moreover, teachers affirmed that the strategies are helpful in developing reading comprehension by understanding meaning of the text with a mean of 4.36. Also, with a mean of 3.27, it proved that this will be a room or chance for allowing them to express ideas. Likewise, this will be a way for boosting self-esteem in presentation with a mean of 4.18.

In connection, it is more likely a tool in developing intellectual curiosity and in searching the unfamiliar words which got a mean of 4.09. Furthermore, it is an aid in promoting interactive discussion as well as in increasing the quality of learning. These got the weighted means of 4, respectively. More so, arousing students’ interest in participating the discussion with a mean of 3.82. In terms of incorporating words into their speaking, this got a mean of 3.73. The lowest mean was 3.64 where students are using words skillfully in writing. As cited by Carranza (2015), provisions for students’ vocabulary learning activities and strategies in English subjects be further emphasized through independent and cooperative learning to improve their vocabulary skills. Likewise, this signifies those various strategies used by English language teacher will enhance and sustain students’ skills.

According to the findings, students learn better when they are able to use the phrases in a real-world setting. They also believed that students’ vocabulary, could be improved by helping them better understand the content of the text they were reading. In addition, the study found that enhancing students' self-confidence in their presentations and encouraging their intellectual curiosity by searching the unfamiliar words are important factors in their academic achievement and vocabulary growth.

The findings indicate that when teaching English to students, and particularly when teaching vocabulary, language should be taught and learned in context. This supports Ratsgoo (2011)'s assertion that vocabulary is best taught in context, not isolated from other contextual instruction, because context can be a particularly potent source of language acquisition, particularly for vocabulary development. Learning vocabulary through context-based instruction also helps students retain the language in their long-term memory and improves their sense of self-autonomy.

**Table 3. Assessment of Grade-7 English Language Teacher in Bauan, Batangas as to Effectiveness of Vocabulary Teaching Strategies**

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Helping students familiarize the terms in a context	4.45
Developing reading comprehension by understanding meaning of the text	4.36
By allowing students to express ideas	4.27
Boosting self-esteem in presentation	4.18
Developing intellectual curiosity in searching the unfamiliar words	4.09
Promoting interactive discussion	4
Increasing the quality of learning	4
Arousing students' interest in participating the discussion	3.82
Incorporating words into their speaking	3.73
Using words skillfully in writing	3.64

**4. Relationship between the profile of the respondents and assessment of teaching strategies of vocabulary skills**

The results showed that the chi-square value for the demographic profile in terms of age, sex, educational attainment and teaching experience are 14.90909091 or 14.91, 4.454545455 or 4.45, 9.454545455 or 9.45 and 2.272727273 or 2.27 respectively. The computed chi-square values are less than the critical value with 0.05 level of significance that led to reject the null hypothesis. Thus, there is significant relationship between profile of the respondents and assessment of teaching strategies of vocabulary skills. This means that age, sex, educational attainment and teaching experience really matters in the strategies currently utilized by the English Language teachers.

The results are connected to the study. As cited by Paula Armstrong (2015), teacher gender may be important in explaining student performance if male and female teachers differ significantly from each other in terms of their ability to teach. Teacher age is controlled for using dummy variables for ten-year bands, and the impact of teachers' age is measured relative to the youngest group of teachers (19 to 29 years of age). Significant coefficients on these variables may indicate either inherent differences in the ability of teachers to improve student performance associated with teacher age, or potentially differences in the training received by teachers. The profile could reflect performance levels for new instructors, experienced teachers, and those with more responsibilities. A clear, well-structured, and widely accepted teacher profile can help align the elements involved in developing teachers' knowledge and abilities, as well as analyze the impact of teacher development programs.

**Table 4. Relationship between Teachers' Assessment on the effectiveness of vocabulary teaching strategies and Demographic Profile**

	<b>Chi-Square</b>	<b>Critical Value</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
Age	14.91	24.99	Reject	Significant
Sex	4.45	9.49	Reject	Significant
Educational Attainment	2.27	5.99	Reject	Significant
Teaching Experience	9.45	16.92	Reject	Significant

**5. Proposed Vocabulary Learning Plan to Enrich English Language Class**

The researchers proposed a vocabulary learning plan to increase students' learning in English class. The proposed vocabulary learning plan contains proposed activities that will enable students to make the learning process closer to the acquisition process, which makes students learn in a more natural way. Also, it encourages, entertains, teaches, and promotes fluency. Since students and teachers cannot possibly ground all of the vocabulary, they are learning in a language during lesson practice. Melanlioğlu (2020) stated that one goal of developing vocabulary practice is to pass on the abilities and routine for learning vocabulary skills to learners. As a means to expand their linguistic

knowledge, good language students should work on their own to pick up more vocabulary and practice dealing with the new words they encounter. That's why vocabulary learning skills and knowledge are needed to enhance students' awareness of the process of vocabulary learning.

One goal of vocabulary development is to teach students the skills and habits of vocabulary learning. Because it is impossible to teach students all of their vocabulary in class, it is critical to teach them how to absorb vocabulary on their own. It may be argued at this point that enhancing learners' ability to cope with new or unfamiliar term is part of improving vocabulary in the target language. Students should be taught vocabulary acquisition techniques that expand their understanding of language learning processes. The method used is determined by the learners' needs, learning styles, skill levels, and task requirements. Learners must first learn how to choose under the instructor's guidance, then on their own. As a result, the strategies can differ depending on the use and location.

### **Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

- 1) Most of Grade 7 English Language teachers are in their 20's, female, baccalaureate degree holder, and 0-5 years in the teaching profession.
- 2) Most of the respondents use various strategies as a means of teaching vocabulary. It promotes student's involvement in vocabulary instruction.
- 3) The respondents considered that the strategies they are using give students a chance to improve their vocabulary skills. Furthermore, the respondents looked for a more creative and right strategies and materials to obtain the meaning or form of vocabulary items. Likewise, it can help in the awareness of the type of vocabulary, the level and characteristics of the students, and the value of the learner's techniques.
- 4) The teachers' assessment on the effectiveness of strategies in teaching vocabulary is influenced by age, sex, educational attainment, and length of service.
- 5) The vocabulary learning plan may enhance teacher's strategy in teaching vocabulary when elaborated, evaluated and carried out.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the collected data, the researcher recommends the following:

- 1) School administrators may conduct various seminars and trainings to help their teachers to have professional learning and development in terms of strategies in teaching vocabularies.
- 2) Teachers may integrate the use of vocabulary skills in other macro skills. They should be open to new ideas and enable students to discover for dealing with new vocabulary.
- 3) Students should be given immediate feedback on their vocabulary outputs so that they may learn how to improve it.
- 4) The proposed vocabulary learning plan may be used in all schools in Bauan, Batangas to make the teaching of vocabulary effective and interactive.
- 5) Future researchers may conduct similar studies in order to further validate the results of the study and to better understand the difficulties that teachers have when teaching vocabulary, with the goal of providing solutions to it.

**Conflicts of interest:** The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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<b>Proposed Activities</b>	<b>Objective/s</b>	<b>Persons Involved</b>	<b>Guidelines</b>
Distinguishable Words	Encourage students to listen with increasing attention.  Distinguish the expressed and intended meaning of a certain word.	Teacher and Students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The teacher will ask the students to write down the numbers 1-20 down the left-hand side of a page.</li> <li>2) Then, the teacher will say 10-15 statements (which can be true or false), each one including one word or expression that they've recently taught and want to review.</li> <li>3) The students will write/or x for each number, according to whether they think it is true or false.</li> <li>4) After that, the student's answer will be checked.</li> </ol>
Picture it Out	Help students to be a keen observer.	Teacher and Students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The teacher will present pictures and visuals that are connected to one another.</li> <li>2) Students will make a make a wise guess through activating their prior knowledge.</li> </ol>



Push a Word	Help students to learn new words and reviving some word knowledge and giving their meaning/s.	Teacher and Students	<b>Group Activity</b> 1) The teacher will write a long word. 2) The students will construct different words from the letters with corresponding meanings, then they will post it on the bulletin board through push pins. 3) The team that has the most correct words and meanings will be announced as the winner.
Sketch the Word	Help students to connect the word to something meaningful to them.	Teacher and Students	1) The teacher will post the word on the board then the students will be asked to read and pronounce the given word five times. 2) After pronouncing the word, they will be asked to sketch and to write something that they can relate to the given word. In this way, the students will apply the target word to a new and familiar context.
Sort Me	Help students in analyzing and categorizing words.	Teacher and Students	1) In closed sorts have students put words into predetermined categories. 2) Open sorts require students to create and discuss their own categories.
Vocab's Alive	Help students to enhance their critical thinking skills through giving the definition of a the word they just heard.	Teacher and Students	<b>Student's Task</b> 1) The students will write any unfamiliar word that they just heard. 2) Students will be asked to answer the given questions such as: What do you think the word means? What does the dictionary say the word means? Write a definition using your own words. Write the antonym. Write the synonym. Make a sketch. Draw a picture that depicts the meaning of the word and make a caption using the word. Write a caption that describes the picture and uses the vocabulary word.
Vocabingo!	Engage students in a happy and light-hearted activities to help them retain information	Teacher and Students	1) The teacher will ask the students to make a BINGO card. They should divide a piece of paper into five rows and five columns with the center box designated as "FREE SPACE". 2) The teacher will ask the students to write words from the vocabulary list on the BINGO card in any order. 3) All the vocabulary words with its definitions are written on a strip of paper which will then be put in a container. 4) The teacher will pull a strip out of the container and will read the definition. The students will highlight the word that matches the definition. The first student to get BINGO will be declared as the winner.
Word Memories	Give students opportunities to review new vocabulary and to use it in a sentence.	Teacher and Students	1) The teacher will give students five minutes during class to check through their vocabulary lists or notebooks and remind themselves of things they've learnt. 2) The students will be challenge in groups to recall as many items as they can and which can remember most. 3) The students will have the items on the board at the beginning of the lesson. Then, they will be asked to give the definition of each word that they included and have them use it in a sentence. 4) The teacher will give points for every word

			with correct meaning and given example.
Word Tree	Help students recognize how words formed from base words and root words.	Teacher and Students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The teacher will create cards which consist of the base words, the meaning of the base words and six or more words that usually contain that part.</li> <li>2) Pictures or even a drawing of a tree will be posted on the board. The cards which contain the base word and its meaning will be put in a word tree while the remaining cards will be mixed up together in one container.</li> <li>3) To play the game, the students will take the cards out of the container and put the related words on its appropriate tree.</li> <li>4) After that, the teacher will check the student's answer.</li> </ol>
Zip Close	Help students to develop critical thinking and creative thinking skills in limited time.	Teacher and Students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The teacher will put a reading passage on the board. There are some deleted terms. It will be covered first.</li> <li>2) Students may use all the strategies they know to guess the missing words.</li> <li>3) When the word is zipped off and answered.</li> <li>4) The teacher will check the student's answer.</li> </ol>

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