# Enhancing Students' English Language Vocabulary Skills through an Online Remediation Program

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*Abstract: Vocabulary acquisition is an integral part of learning a language which involves a challenging process. Hence, the implementation of efficient vocabulary learning strategies should be done among different English classes to make it easier for students to enhance their vocabulary skills. While the pandemic made it more challenging for learners to study and master English vocabulary, the rise of online instructional materials is highly appreciated for it is more convenient for the students to learn. This quasi-experimental study was an attempt to determine the effectiveness of an Online Remediation Program in enhancing the vocabulary skills of Junior High School students. A total of 20 Grade 7 students from University of Saint Louis participated in the online remediation program and answered the vocabulary pre-test and post-test. The researchers utilized pre-test and post-test that were consisted of a 30-item multiple choice to measure the vocabulary skills of the participants. This study followed three phases of data gathering: First, a pre-test was administered to the participants before the utilization of the proposed vocabulary development remediation program. Second, the proposed vocabulary development remediation program was implemented to the target participants. Third, a post-test was administered to the participants after the utilization of the vocabulary development remediation program. Frequency and percentage was used to interpret the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants while independent sample T-test was used to test the significant difference between their pre-test and post-test scores. Results revealed that the post-test scores of the students were higher than their pre-test scores. In addition, the findings showed that there is a significant difference on the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants. Finally, the overall evaluation of the participants to the Online Remediation Program is Excellent. Thus, the study concludes that the utilization of Project STRIVE is effective in enhancing the vocabulary skills of Grade 7 students.*

*Keywords: Vocabulary Skills, Vocabulary Learning, Online Remediation Program, Pre-Test, Post-Test, Student.*

## 1.    INTRODUCTION

Language is a vital part of every individual and a key component of communication. It is an actor that both shapes, and is shaped by the social community in which it plays significant role [1]. Without language, it is difficult to express one's idea to other people in the different areas of the world. We are living in a multilingual world that is becoming globalized and therefore, it is important to know more than one language [2]. Being proficient in two or more languages makes an individual a competent one, most especially when mastering the English language. English language proficiency is the ability of an individual to communicate effectively in English. In today's world, where the medium of instruction in almost every university is English, this is a necessary skill [3]. Considering this close relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language learning, one cannot deny the importance of vocabulary knowledge in general language ability, which is to have the necessary competencies in a language [4-5]. However, among all of the researches about language, only few focused more on the vocabulary development.

Vocabulary development refers to the way individuals learn a word and its meaning. Vocabulary development can be considered in two ways, namely facilitating vocabulary acquisition or fostering vocabulary learning. The former establishes opportunities that the teacher creates from which learners incidentally and implicitly make gains to their vocabulary repertoire while the latter is used to denote explicit and deliberate strategies that teachers used to ensure learners learnt new words [6]. Vocabulary knowledge is an important element in second language (L2) acquisition. By learning new words, students can increase their listening, speaking, reading, and writing vocabularies and can improve comprehension and production in L2 [7].

In all English classes, vocabulary development is an essential skill which needs to be emphasized. Yet it is a reality that quite a number of students still belong to the underachiever's category as manifested by their failing marks [8-10]. The phenomenon of insufficient English mastery occurred, because of the lack of English vocabularies owned by the students; especially concerning to the academic subject-matter, so many students do not understand the oral or/and written English text in doing interaction [11]. Due to the low vocabulary skills of students, many researchers suggest that there is a need for an intervention program to enhance students' vocabulary skills [12-15]. However, the current situation today makes it more difficult to cater the needs of learners. When the World Health Organization declared a pandemic last March 2020, schools shifted from face-to-face to the different learning modalities. Distance learning, for many teachers and students, will not appear to be as effective as face-to-face learning [16]. Hence, teachers should be adaptive by implementing a remediation.

The Project STRIVE: An Online Remediation Program for English Language Vocabulary Enhancement

Project STRIVE stands for **S**ystematized way of **T**eaching through **R**ecorded videos as an **I**ntervention for **V**ocabulary **E**nhancement. This project is an intervention program that aims to provide a flexible way of learning and developing vocabulary skills for students during this

time of pandemic. Prior to the spread of the Corona Virus, teachers in a Private Junior High School in the Philippines use a certain strategy in enhancing the vocabulary skills of the high school students. This strategy is called FWAW (Five Words A Week) that aims to provide students a word with an example from Monday to Friday before the start of the class wherein a student will be the sharer who will present unfamiliar word and other students can interact by giving their own examples after the presentation. However, due to the pandemic, face-to-face learning is not possible and most of the students are currently enrolled in an online learning modality. Hence, there is a need to come up with another intervention. This project is a great a help for the students to learn and enjoy at the same time just like how they enjoy watching vlogs and other entertaining educational videos.

**Mechanics:**
1. Researchers made use of the NEO-LMS as their platform for Project STRIVE.
2. Researchers asked assistance from the Junior High School teacher to let students to enroll in the school Learning Management System (LMS).
3. Researchers uploaded their daily content in the LMS. The daily content involved a one-minute vocabulary video which contained one vocabulary term per day with two sentences example of each given term.
4. Students watched the video updates daily for a month and familiarized themselves with the vocabulary terms discussed in the videos.
5. After one month, the teacher gave a 30-item vocabulary terms containing the terms in the daily videos uploaded in the LMS which assessed the vocabulary skills of the students after engaging in the online remediation program.

The Project STRIVE uploaded a total of 30-videos for a duration of 1 month

## 2.    METHOD

### Research Design
This study utilized a quasi-experimental research design. Specifically, a pre-test and post-test through which the scores of the students will be compared after taking the tests. The participants were taught using the proposed vocabulary development remediation program prior to the prepared post-test.

### Participants of the Study
The participants of the study were Grade 7 Junior High School students of a Private Educational Institution in Northern Philippines. The students' current English teacher gave the list of the participants who were suited to participate in the online remediation program. A total of 20 students enrolled in online learning modality participated the online remediation program and answered the pre-test and post-test. Originally, there were 25 participants from the list however, only 20 responded to the invitation.

### Research Instrument
The main instruments that were used in this study were the pre-test and post-test which were administered to the student participants. Items of the pre-test and post-test were validated by experts on assessment, mathematics, and research instrumentations. The pre-test and post-test

were consisted of a 30-item multiple choice to measure the vocabulary skills of the participants. A table of specification was prepared for fair distribution of items among the topics in vocabulary development.

## Data Gathering Procedure

This research study followed three phases of data gathering:

Pre-treatment Phase The researchers sought permission from the Vice President for Academics through the Junior High School Principal for the conduct of the study. A pre-test was administered to the participants before the utilization of the proposed vocabulary development remediation program to initially determine the level of competency of the target participants. Prior to the conduct of the pre-test, participants were conditioned through informing them in the created group chat that they are to engage themselves in an online remediation program to prepare them in completing the post-test that will be given after.

## Treatment Phase

The participants were engaged in the proposed vocabulary development remediation program for duration of 1 month. Researchers made use of LMS as a platform in uploading one video per day. A total of 30 videos were uploaded in the development remediation program. Throughout this period, the content of the strategy was the same to the content of the pre-test and post-test. Researchers were responsible to update the students of the daily vocabulary vlog through the created group chats.

## Post-Treatment Phase

After the topics on vocabulary development remediation program have been taught to the participants, the same test was administered as post-test however; the test questions and choices from pre-test were jumbled. Only the partner teacher had the authority to forward the Google form link of the post-test to the participants as it was served as their class activity. On the other hand, the researchers communicated with the partner teacher when to conduct it. After the participants took the post-test, their scores was evaluated and compared to determine if there will be any significant difference.

## Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using the following statistical tools:

Frequency and percentage was used to interpret the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants using the following range:

| Range | Qualitative Description |
| --- | --- |
| 28-30 | Outstanding |
| 25-27 | Very Satisfactory |
| 21-24 | Satisfactory |
| 16-20 | Needs Improvement |
| 0-15 | Failed |

Paired-sample T-test was used to test the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants.
Further, mean was used to interpret the data from evaluation using the following range:

| Range | Qualitative Description |
|---|---|
| 3.50-4.00 | Excellent |
| 2.50-3.49 | Very Good |
| 1.50-2.49 | Good |
| 1.00-1.49 | Poor |

## 3. RESULTS

Table 1. Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of the Participants

| Scores | Qualitative Description | Pre-Test | | Post-Test | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| 28-30 | Outstanding | 0 | .00 | 4 | 20.00 |
| 25-27 | Very Satisfactory | 2 | 10.00 | 6 | 30.00 |
| 21-24 | Satisfactory | 6 | 30.00 | 8 | 40.00 |
| 16-20 | Needs Improvement | 11 | 55.00 | 1 | 5.00 |
| 0-15 | Failed | 1 | 5.00 | 1 | 5.00 |
| Mean Score | | 19.90 | Needs Improvement | 23.25 | Satisfactory |

Table 1 shows the Pre-test and Post-test scores of the participants. It shows that the Post-test scores of the students were higher than their Pre-test scores. It can be shown from the table that most of the Grade 7 participants need improvement in their vocabulary skills as shown in their pre-test scores. Meanwhile, their post-test scores revealed that most of the participants have satisfactorily enhanced their vocabulary skills after being engaged in the online remediation program.

Table2. Significant Difference on the Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of the Participants

| Test Scores | Mean | df | t-value | P-value | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pre-Test | 19.90 | 19 | -4.860 | .000 | Significant |
| Post-Test | 23.25 | | | | |

*Significant at .05 level

Table 2 shows the significant difference on the Pre-test and Post-test scores of the participants. The table shows that there is a significant difference on the Pre-test and Post-test scores of the participants. This means that the Post-test scores of the participants were significantly higher than their Pre-test scores. Hence, it can be stressed that the intervention is effective in enhancing the vocabulary skills of Grade 7 students.

Table3. Evaluation of the Participants with regards to the Implementation of the Project STRIVE

| Items | Excellent | Very Good | Good | Poor | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The objectives of the online remediation program (Project S.T.R.I.V.E.) were met. | 14 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 3.70 |
| The online remediation program (Project S.T.R.I.V.E) provides an avenue for the development of vocabulary skills. | 13 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 3.65 |
| The content was organized and easy to follow. | 15 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3.70 |
| The content was appropriate and relevant. | 15 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 3.75 |
| Students discovered new words and meanings through the everyday vlogs. | 15 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 3.75 |
| Students find it easy to learn vocabulary after watching the daily vlogs of the online remediation program (Project S.T.R.I.V.E) | 13 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 3.65 |
| The examples given in the vlogs made students understand the vocabulary better. | 13 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 3.65 |
| The time allotted for the online remediation program (Project S.T.R.I.V.E.) was enough. | 15 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 3.75 |
| The vloggers were prepared and presented the content of the vlogs in a good and friendly manner. | 14 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 3.70 |
| Videos were uploaded consistently every day. | 13 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 3.55 |
| Overall Evaluation | 13 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 3.69 |
| Qualitative Description | Excellent | | | | |

Table 3 shows the evaluation of the participants with regards to the implementation of the Project STRIVE. The result described the overall evaluation as excellent. This means that the objectives of the Project STRIVE were met which is to provide students an avenue for the development of their vocabulary skills. Further, the result revealed that the content uploaded daily was organized, appropriate, relevant, and easy to follow. All participants also find it easy to learn vocabulary after watching the daily vlogs for they discovered new words with meanings and examples. In addition, the result shows that the online remediation program provided an adequate time for the enhancement of the vocabulary skills of the participants. The students also rated the researchers or the vloggers positively for being prepared and

friendly as they present the content of the daily vlogs. However, the table also revealed that there was students who are not highly satisfied of the content's organization and two students who rated the consistency of uploading videos "good" which means that some vlogs were uploaded inconsistently or in different time each day.

## 4. DISCUSSION

**Vocabulary Skills of Grade Seven Students Prior to the Implementation of the Project STRIVE**

Vocabulary had also been traditionally recognized for being one of the primary factors mostly to English with Foreign Language (EFL) learning [17] and the result revealed that the Junior High School Students at a Private Educational Institution in Northern Philippines have low vocabulary competency and that they still need an improvement after completing the pre-test. This is an implication that the instructional strategies they were engaged before participating in the Project STRIVE may be insufficient to support the enhancement of their vocabulary skills. This is in arrangement with the results of Ahmadi, previous studies that a single vocabulary instruction method may not be enough for an ideal learning [18-20]. Prior to the implementation of the Project STRIVE, the participants already had a strategy where they can familiarized themselves in a certain vocabulary but unfortunately this will not guarantee them in having a continuous vocabulary enhancement in this time of new normal learning. There is a low vocabulary competency of the participants because the given strategy that was utilized during the face-to-face weren't effective already in their online learning. The reason why some of them become passive is that they find the old strategy as ineffective already and their interest in learning vocabularies had decreased. Furthermore, the pre-test scores of the participants is an implication that the traditional way of teaching vocabulary would not guarantee the students to learn well because learning vocabulary may vary through speaking, listening, reading, and writing that is critical for them to comprehend. This result of the study agrees with the previous claim that students who are participate in an English class observed to face many complications with vocabulary because of the widespread use of traditional methods [21]. Accordingly, some students are reported to be deficient in language skills, which are required for sustained performance in a variety of fields. Thus, an intervention program is highly needed because some students remain to have low vocabulary skill. Previous studies stressed that such interventions have potential to help learners learn EFL vocabulary [22-24]. Finally, the result shows that students have a low word acquisition scores prior to the implementation of the Project STRIVE. In addition, students who use video instruction or technology as a tool for facilitating the vocabulary acquisition have statistically higher word acquisition scores than those in the non-video intrusion group. The low scores of the Grade 7 Junior High School students indicate that their vocabulary skills need to be enhanced through different strategies aside from the traditional way of acquiring vocabulary.

**Vocabulary Skills of Grade Seven Students after the Implementation of the Project STRIVE**

The study sought to assess the effectiveness of an online remediation program in enhancing the vocabulary skills of Junior High School students. The results revealed that the scores of the participants increased after engaging in an online remediation program. This means that

the Project STRIVE is an effective instructional strategy to enhance the vocabulary skills of the students. The implementation of the Project STRIVE made it easier for the students to answer the post-test because they are provided with context clues discussion about the vocabularies. Unlocking the words by using the answers and contextual clues in the sentence led them to actively engage in the discussion because they are basically developing their vocabulary skill at the start of the lesson or discussion [25].

Meanwhile, students find the Project STRIVE as an instructional strategy that is easier to use in discovering new words. Through the given examples in the videos that were used in different situations, students were able to understand the vocabulary better. In order to improve vocabulary skills, there is a need for students to be exposed to words in different contexts to build background knowledge. Furthermore, the results showed that the participants have met the objectives of the online remediation program. This means that the recorded videos or the daily vlogs provided an avenue for the enhancement of the students' vocabulary skills. This is consistent with the results of previous studies that the model of learning and teaching English vocabularies created based on context creatively and being supported by ICT utilization significantly and effectively improves the students' achievement, especially in English Vocabulary mastery [26-28]. Hence, Project STRIVE can be used as an instructional strategy to commendably enhance students' vocabulary skills.

**Effectiveness of Online remediation Program during the pandemic**
The study also intended to assess the effectiveness of online remediation program through uploading a daily vocabulary vlog using YouTube as the researcher's medium to impart knowledge. The study revealed that the respondents find it easy to learn vocabulary through online. It was showed how a program-internal glossary, an online multilingual dictionary and audio interpretation of such text may help improve reading as well as vocabulary learning in a web-based context. In other words, the utilization of multimedia instructions support resources and provide more tailored study assistance. This implies that through online remediation program via uploading a daily vocabulary vlog are convenient and helpful to the respondents' in acquiring new vocabulary words. In support of this claim, the integration of multimedia in teaching and learning process holds the interests of the learners which imply that teaching with video is important and beneficial [29-30]. Furthermore, it is essential to use creative pedagogies as well as other media outlets to build an effective teaching method, particularly in this time of pandemic. This was proven through the implementation of the Project STRIVE which found successful and effective since it arouses the respondents' attention to learn through videos and develop their vocabulary skills. Moreover, it is relevant to the students for they are not able to engage in a face-to-face class thus, they can learn through online instructions. This result is also in alignment to the previous study which suggests that teachers must also address the challenges faced by learners such as the current situation surrounding them, the availability of instructional materials, and the different modes of learning they are engaged with. It also implies that even though we are facing huge crisis today, teaching vocabulary should be a continuous process [31]. Therefore, online remediation program is effective especially during this pandemic.

### Conclusion and Implications for Further Research

The study concludes that the utilization of Project STRIVE is effective in enhancing the vocabulary skills of Grade 7 students. The online remediation program is one of the flexible ways to encourage students learn new words every day during this pandemic where face-to-face is not possible. Instead of the traditional way of teaching vocabulary, students learned through recorded videos or vlog which made it possible for them to build their vocabulary even without the availability of face-to-face classes. Project STRIVE serves an alternative way of teaching that offers students a fun way of enhancing their vocabulary skills.

English teachers should use the Project STRIVE as one of their instructional materials because it is effective. During this pandemic, teachers are using different Learning Management Systems to deliver the daily lessons in English subject including topics about vocabulary. Some also uses the Google Meet and Zoom application for discussions which may also be effective for the students. Aside from these platforms, the use of recorded videos to help students improve their vocabulary skills is highly recommended. In addition, while English teachers implement this online remediation program, they should consider the time the students could spend in learning. Hence, the program should not be time consuming where students could learn even in just one sitting. Teachers may also launch Project STRIVE to college department or implement the online remediation program to other grade level considering the suitability of the words being used in every video. Moreover, a form of follow up is needed for teachers to monitor if their students really learned a vocabulary each day. They may give students quiz or activities once in a week or allow and require them to create their own example of a word and leave it to the comment section. Recorded videos or vlogs should be creative which encourage the students to watch and learn every day. It should also entail a friendly environment so that students will be able to enjoy the alternative way of learning vocabulary and it should not consist dull moments to maintain the students' interests.

Further, the elements of the videos should be evaluated by video experts to produce good quality vlogs. English teachers may think of other strategies that they can include in the daily vlogs aside from providing students with words, meanings, and examples to aid the increasing number of students with low vocabulary skills. They may also include the etymology of the vocabulary, synonyms, antonyms, and more examples for students to better understand the word they discuss. Meanwhile, students should be exposed to other instructional strategies in enhancing their vocabulary skills aside from just including vocabulary in their modules. Students should be updated daily of different new words to enhance their vocabulary skills. Finally, the implementation of Project STRIVE will greatly help them most especially during this pandemic where most of the students learn through online discussions or online delivery of instructional materials. Hence, students must participate in this program.

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