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Effectiveness of Vocab Voyage on students' vocabulary mastery and writing skills

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Abstract

Aim: This study examined the effectiveness of Vocab Voyage in improving the vocabulary mastery and writing skills of Grade 11 students and determined whether there were significant differences in their performance before and after the intervention. The study also aimed to provide evidence supporting the integration of structured vocabulary instruction with writing activities to enhance classroom literacy instruction.

Methodology: A quantitative quasi-experimental research design employing a one-group pretest-posttest approach was utilized, involving 30 Grade 11 students from Casat National High School. Data were collected using a researcher-developed Vocabulary Mastery and Writing Skills Test administered before and after the implementation of Vocab Voyage. Descriptive statistics, including mean, frequency, and percentage, were used to determine students' levels of vocabulary mastery and writing skills, while paired-sample *t*-tests were employed to determine significant differences between pretest and posttest scores.

Results: The findings revealed that students initially performed at the Did Not Meet Expectations level in both vocabulary mastery and writing skills. Following the implementation of Vocab Voyage, vocabulary mastery improved to the Fairly Satisfactory level, while writing skills also demonstrated notable improvement, although many learners remained below satisfactory performance. Paired-sample *t*-tests further revealed statistically significant improvements in both vocabulary mastery and writing skills following the intervention.

Conclusion: The study concluded that Vocab Voyage is an effective instructional intervention for improving students' vocabulary knowledge and writing performance. While vocabulary mastery showed more consistent gains, writing skills require sustained and differentiated instructional support. The findings indicate that integrating explicit vocabulary instruction with scaffolded writing activities can strengthen classroom literacy instruction and contribute to improved learning outcomes among senior high school students.

Keywords: *Vocab Voyage, vocabulary mastery, writing skills, scaffolded instruction, quasi-experimental, Philippine senior high school*

INTRODUCTION

Language proficiency, particularly in vocabulary and writing, continues to be a significant concern in secondary education worldwide. Recent international assessments have revealed declines in students' literacy performance, highlighting the need to strengthen language and literacy instruction across educational systems. Results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 showed a decline in reading achievement among participating countries, prompting educators to prioritize literacy recovery and language development in the post-pandemic period (OECD, 2023). Vocabulary knowledge is widely recognized as a fundamental component of literacy because it enables learners to comprehend texts, communicate ideas effectively, and produce meaningful written outputs (Nation, 2001; Pagaduan, 2025; UNESCO, 2024).

Globally, educational research has emphasized the importance of explicit and evidence-based vocabulary instruction in developing students' academic language proficiency and writing performance. Contemporary approaches increasingly integrate vocabulary learning with writing activities, differentiated instruction, scaffolded learning, and



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educational technology to support twenty-first-century literacy competencies. Recent studies have shown that systematic and contextualized vocabulary instruction contributes significantly to vocabulary growth, vocabulary knowledge, lexical development, and vocabulary learning outcomes among secondary learners (Tağa & Kalenderoğlu, 2022; Chiang et al., 2023; Teng, 2023). These findings reinforce the continuing importance of vocabulary instruction as a priority area in English language education.

In the Philippine educational context, improving literacy outcomes remains a continuing educational concern. Many Filipino learners experience difficulties in reading comprehension and English language proficiency, creating challenges in academic communication and learning. To address these concerns, schools have implemented competency-based learning approaches and literacy interventions aimed at strengthening language skills and supporting learning recovery. These initiatives highlight the need for instructional innovations that simultaneously develop vocabulary knowledge and writing competence among learners (OECD, 2023; UNESCO, 2024).

At Casat National High School, classroom observations and performance data revealed that Grade 11 students consistently underperformed in competencies related to vocabulary use and written text production. Specifically, the competency "Identifies properties of a well-written text: organization, coherence and cohesion, language use, and mechanics" (EN11/12RWS-IIIgh-4.4), where RWS stands for Reading and Writing Skills, was identified as one of the least mastered competencies among learners. Students demonstrated difficulty in applying appropriate vocabulary when interpreting literary texts and constructing written responses, indicating a gap between vocabulary recognition and productive vocabulary use in writing.

Vocabulary knowledge is a critical component of language learning and plays a significant role in learners' reading comprehension, academic achievement, and writing performance. Learners with limited vocabulary often experience difficulties expressing ideas accurately, organizing information coherently, and producing effective written communication. Recent studies have shown that explicit vocabulary instruction and vocabulary learning strategies contribute significantly to vocabulary growth, vocabulary knowledge, and language development among secondary learners (Chiang et al., 2023; Tağa & Kalenderoğlu, 2022). Furthermore, current research emphasizes that explicit, contextualized, and scaffolded instructional approaches promote meaningful language use and improve writing performance by providing learners with structured support throughout the learning process (Hasan & Bidin, 2023; Hassen et al., 2023). These findings highlight the continuing importance of evidence-based vocabulary and language instruction in improving literacy outcomes and supporting students' language development in secondary education (Haryono, 2024; Tağa & Kalenderoğlu, 2022).

Recent instructional innovations have also explored journey-themed and scaffolded learning approaches to promote learner engagement and language development. These approaches view learning as a progressive process of exploration and discovery while providing structured support that enables learners to move from guided practice to independent performance. Haryono (2024) found that the Voyager Passport Method significantly enhanced learners' vocabulary mastery and reading performance. Similarly, studies on scaffolded instruction have demonstrated that meaningful language practice and guided writing activities strengthen learners' writing proficiency and overall language development (Hasan & Bidin, 2023; Hassen et al., 2023).

While previous studies have investigated vocabulary instruction and others have explored journey-themed learning approaches, limited research has integrated explicit vocabulary instruction with scaffolded writing activities within a single instructional intervention. Furthermore, few studies have examined the effectiveness of a locally developed journey-themed program designed specifically for Philippine senior high school learners. Existing literature has yet to fully investigate how such an intervention can simultaneously improve vocabulary mastery and writing skills among learners in a public-school context.

It is in this context that the researchers developed Vocab Voyage, a five-day journey-themed instructional program that integrates text exposure, explicit vocabulary instruction, and guided writing activities using the literary text *How My Brother Leon Brought Home a Wife*. Unlike previous studies, the intervention combines vocabulary development and writing instruction within a structured journey-themed framework and utilizes a canonical Filipino literary text as the primary instructional resource. Moreover, no identified study has evaluated a locally developed journey-themed intervention of this nature among Grade 11 learners in a Philippine public secondary school setting.

The findings of this study may provide valuable insights for curriculum developers, school administrators, instructional leaders, English coordinators, and teacher training programs in strengthening literacy instruction and supporting the achievement of language learning competencies in senior high school.



Review of Related Literature and Studies

Related Literature

A. Vocabulary Knowledge and Instruction

Vocabulary plays a vital role in language learning, serving as the foundation for comprehension, communication, and written expression. Nation (2001) explains that vocabulary knowledge encompasses both breadth, referring to the number of words learners know, and depth, referring to how well those words are understood and used in various contexts. Effective vocabulary instruction therefore requires opportunities for both learning and meaningful application.

Recent research continues to emphasize the importance of explicit vocabulary instruction. Chiang et al. (2023) found that explicit instruction in vocabulary learning strategies significantly improved secondary learners' vocabulary knowledge and performance through sustained, structured engagement with new words. Similarly, Tağa and Kalenderoğlu (2022) reported that vocabulary instruction integrated with writing exercises improved vocabulary learning and retention. Together, these findings suggest that systematic vocabulary instruction can strengthen vocabulary development and support long-term retention of newly learned words.

Tağa and Kalenderoğlu (2022) also found that vocabulary instruction integrated with writing exercises significantly improved learners' vocabulary learning, retention, and word awareness. Their findings suggest that students learn vocabulary more effectively when they use newly learned words in meaningful writing tasks rather than relying solely on memorization.

Teng (2023) reported that vocabulary-focused instructional activities involving meaningful language production, particularly sentence-writing tasks, significantly enhanced learners' vocabulary acquisition. Similarly, Chiang et al. (2023) found that explicit vocabulary learning strategy instruction significantly improved secondary learners' vocabulary knowledge and vocabulary performance through sustained and structured engagement with new words. These findings reinforce the importance of systematic vocabulary instruction in contemporary English language classrooms.

In addition, global educational initiatives continue to emphasize literacy development as a critical educational priority. UNESCO (2024) identified literacy improvement and learning recovery as essential components of educational quality, highlighting the need for effective instructional practices that support language development.

B. Vocabulary and Writing Performance

The relationship between vocabulary knowledge and writing performance has been widely recognized in language education research. Qian (2002) argued that learners with deeper vocabulary knowledge are better able to communicate ideas accurately and effectively in writing. Likewise, Crossley et al. (2011) reported that lexical proficiency is strongly associated with writing quality.

Recent studies continue to support this relationship. Tağa and Kalenderoğlu (2022) found that students who participated in vocabulary instruction integrated with writing activities demonstrated stronger vocabulary development and retention than those receiving traditional instruction. The study showed that writing tasks provided meaningful opportunities for learners to practice and reinforce new vocabulary.

Likewise, Teng (2023) reported that sentence-writing tasks and word-focused exercises significantly enhanced vocabulary learning among English language learners. Students who actively used target vocabulary in writing activities achieved better vocabulary-learning outcomes than those who relied on passive exposure.

Recent evidence highlights the importance of meaningful and strategy-based vocabulary instruction in supporting learners' language development. Teng (2023) found that learners who engaged in vocabulary-focused activities involving meaningful language production, particularly sentence-writing tasks, demonstrated stronger vocabulary acquisition than those who participated in other word-focused learning conditions. Similarly, Chiang et al. (2023) reported that explicit instruction in vocabulary learning strategies significantly improved secondary learners' vocabulary knowledge and performance through sustained, structured engagement with new words.

C. Journey-Themed and Scaffolded Vocabulary Approaches

Teaching approaches that frame vocabulary learning as a journey, using metaphors of exploration and progress, have gained attention for their motivational benefits. Beck et al. (2013) emphasized that sustained and meaningful vocabulary instruction, characterized by multiple exposures and active use of words in varied contexts, promotes learner engagement and long-term vocabulary development. Haryono (2024) provides direct empirical

support, demonstrating that the Voyager Passport Method significantly enhanced reading literacy and vocabulary mastery among learners.

Mayer's (2005) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning further supports multimodal vocabulary approaches, arguing that combining visual and verbal input enhances memory retention through dual-channel processing. Vocab Voyage incorporates these principles through vocabulary mapping, illustrated context cards, and oral production tasks.

Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD provides the pedagogical rationale for the scaffolded structure of Vocab Voyage. When students receive guided support from the teacher through graduated activities, they achieve beyond their independent capability, and this scaffolded performance eventually becomes internalized as independent competence.

Contemporary research continues to support scaffolded approaches in language instruction. Hasan and Bidin (2023) demonstrated that scaffolding strategies enhanced students' writing performance through structured guidance, while Hassen et al. (2023) found that scaffolding strategy instruction significantly improved EFL students' writing achievement. These findings suggest that scaffolded instructional approaches can promote deeper learning and support learners' gradual progression from guided practice to independent performance.

D. Local Literature on Vocabulary and Writing in the Philippines

In the Philippine context, vocabulary deficiency has been consistently identified as a barrier to writing proficiency among secondary learners. Limited English vocabulary knowledge can affect learners' ability to organize ideas, express meaning accurately, and produce coherent academic texts. This challenge highlights the importance of providing explicit vocabulary instruction and meaningful opportunities for vocabulary application in writing activities (Pagaduan, 2025; Callora & Suñas, 2023).

Pagaduan (2025) found a significant positive relationship between Grade 11 students' vocabulary knowledge and writing proficiency. Learners with greater vocabulary breadth and depth demonstrated stronger writing performance in terms of organization, coherence, cohesion, and mechanics, suggesting that vocabulary development plays an important role in enhancing writing competence.

Similarly, Callora and Suñas (2023) reported that senior high school students exhibited developing levels of writing proficiency, particularly in lexico-grammatical ability and mechanics. The authors recommended vocabulary enrichment and other language-support interventions to address learners' writing difficulties and improve writing competence.

Related Studies

A. Foreign Studies

Several international studies investigated the effects of structured vocabulary interventions on academic writing. Zimmerman (1997) reported that explicit vocabulary instruction contributes positively to vocabulary development and language use. Webb (2005) confirmed that repeated exposure to vocabulary in diverse task formats, particularly writing, deepens word knowledge and increases flexibility of use.

Carlo et al. (2004) conducted an intervention study with bilingual and English language learners and found that direct vocabulary instruction combined with contextualized use significantly improved both vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. Similarly, Tağa and Kalenderoğlu (2022) found that vocabulary instruction integrated with writing exercises significantly improved learners' vocabulary learning, retention, and word awareness. These findings highlight the effectiveness of providing learners with meaningful opportunities to apply newly learned vocabulary in language activities.

Teng (2023) found that learners who engaged in sentence-writing and other meaningful vocabulary activities achieved stronger vocabulary learning outcomes. Likewise, Chiang et al. (2023) reported that explicit vocabulary strategy instruction significantly improved learners' vocabulary knowledge and performance. These findings highlight the value of meaningful and strategy-based vocabulary instruction in supporting vocabulary development.

Haryono (2024), in his experimental study, demonstrated that the Voyager Passport Method, a journey-structured vocabulary intervention, significantly enhanced reading literacy and vocabulary mastery. His study shares strong methodological similarities with the present research but focused primarily on reading outcomes, leaving writing performance largely unexplored, a gap the present study directly addresses.

B. Local Studies

Lorica et al. (2024) examined vocabulary-building activities among junior high school students and found a positive relationship between vocabulary-building activities and language acquisition. The study highlighted strategies such as word games, contextual reading, and charades as valuable tools for English learning.

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Ayong and Dimaano (2024) investigated the use of the interactive digital tool VERBAID among Grade 12 students in Laguna. Using a pretest-posttest design, they found significant improvements in students' vocabulary skills, demonstrating the potential of technology-assisted vocabulary instruction to support language learning.

More recently, Montante (2025) investigated the efficacy of explicit vocabulary strategies among senior high school students in the Philippines. The study found that explicit vocabulary instruction was associated with significant gains in vocabulary knowledge, while students also reported improvements in writing skills and vocabulary retention. These findings highlight the potential of structured vocabulary instruction to support language development among senior high school learners.

Synthesis and Research Gap

The reviewed literature and studies collectively affirm that vocabulary knowledge is an important contributor to language development and writing performance and that structured, scaffolded vocabulary instruction supports improvements in vocabulary mastery and language use. Studies have shown that explicit vocabulary instruction, meaningful vocabulary application, strategy-based learning, and scaffolded activities enhance vocabulary acquisition, retention, and learner performance (Chiang et al., 2023; Teng, 2023; Haryono, 2024; Hasan & Bidin, 2023; Hassen et al., 2023). Moreover, research suggests that integrating vocabulary learning with productive language tasks provides learners with meaningful opportunities to apply newly acquired vocabulary, thereby strengthening language development and literacy outcomes. While foundational theories by Krashen (1982), Schmidt (1990), Nation (2001), and Vygotsky (1978) provide the conceptual basis for vocabulary learning, contemporary empirical studies continue to validate these principles in modern educational settings.

No study has yet examined the effectiveness of a journey-themed, locally designed vocabulary program that simultaneously targets both vocabulary mastery and writing skills using a Filipino literary text as the primary instructional anchor, specifically among Grade 11 senior high school learners in a public school setting. The present study, Vocab Voyage, was designed precisely to address this gap.

Theoretical Framework

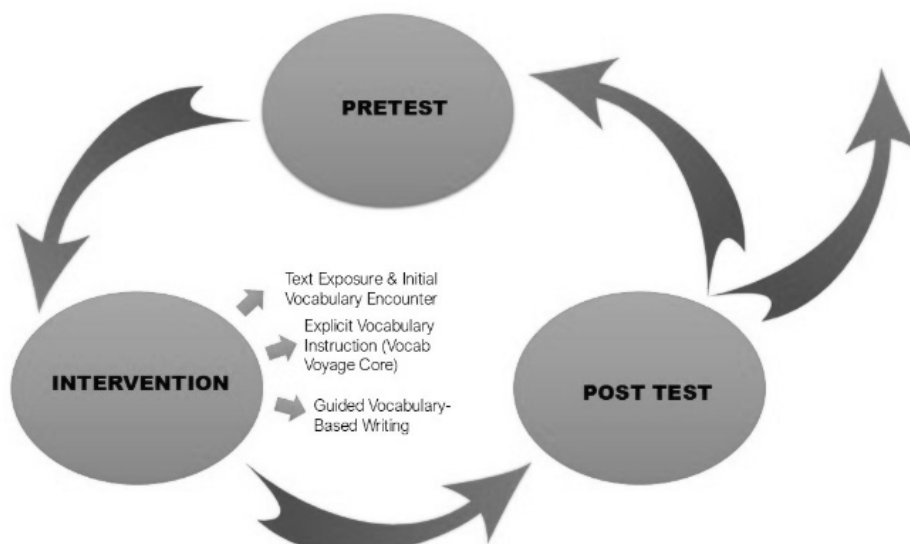
This study is anchored on four major theoretical frameworks that collectively explain how vocabulary is acquired and how it contributes to writing development.

Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982) posits that language acquisition occurs most effectively when learners are exposed to comprehensible input slightly beyond their current level of competence ($i + 1$). This theory supports the use of the literary text "How My Brother Leon Brought Home a Wife" as the primary input vehicle in Vocab Voyage, presenting target vocabulary in a meaningful, engaging context that is accessible yet slightly above the learners' existing vocabulary level.

Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (1990) complements Krashen by arguing that mere exposure to language is insufficient for acquisition — learners must consciously notice and attend to linguistic features before they can internalize them. The explicit vocabulary instruction component of Vocab Voyage, involving vocabulary mapping, synonym-antonym exercises, and context clue activities, is directly aligned with this principle.

Nation's (2001) framework on Vocabulary Breadth and Depth provides the conceptual basis for measuring vocabulary mastery in this study. Nation distinguishes between vocabulary breadth (the number of words a learner knows) and depth (the quality and richness of that knowledge). Vocab Voyage addresses both dimensions: breadth through exposure and matching exercises; depth through sentence production and guided paragraph writing.

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD, 1978) provides the pedagogical rationale for the scaffolded structure of the intervention. Vocab Voyage follows this scaffold-to-independence trajectory: from guided text exposure (Day 2) to explicit instruction with oral practice (Day 3), to guided writing with peer feedback (Day 4), to fully independent writing and posttest (Day 5).

Conceptual Framework*Figure 1. Research Paradigm*

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates a pretest–intervention–posttest cycle designed to determine the effectiveness of Vocab Voyage as an instructional intervention in improving students' vocabulary mastery and writing skills.

The INPUT consists of the Grade 11 students' baseline vocabulary and writing performance as measured by the pretest, establishing the starting point and identifying gaps prior to the intervention.

The PROCESS represents the five-day Vocab Voyage intervention composed of three interconnected components: (1) Text Exposure and Initial Vocabulary Encounter through the literary text; (2) Explicit Vocabulary Instruction (Vocab Voyage Core) using vocabulary mapping, context clues, and oral practice; and (3) Guided Vocabulary-Based Writing Activities involving sentence construction and paragraph writing.

The OUTPUT is the students' posttest performance in vocabulary mastery and writing skills, compared against the pretest through paired-sample t-tests to determine statistical significance.

Statement of the Problem

Vocabulary knowledge is a fundamental component of language proficiency that significantly contributes to learners' ability to comprehend texts, communicate ideas effectively, and produce coherent written outputs. As an essential foundation of literacy development, vocabulary enables students to understand academic content, construct meaningful written responses, and participate successfully in various learning activities. Despite its importance, many senior high school learners continue to experience difficulties in vocabulary mastery and writing performance due to limited exposure to contextualized language learning experiences, inadequate opportunities for meaningful vocabulary application, and insufficient integration of vocabulary instruction with writing activities. These challenges often result in poor academic achievement, low writing confidence, and limited language proficiency.

In the Philippine educational context, improving students' literacy skills remains a priority, particularly in English language instruction where vocabulary development and writing competence are critical learning outcomes. At Casat National High School, classroom observations and assessment results revealed that many Grade 11 students demonstrated difficulties in vocabulary use and written text production. Specifically, learners experienced challenges in applying appropriate vocabulary when constructing sentences and paragraphs, indicating a gap between recognizing vocabulary and using it productively in authentic writing tasks. Vocabulary mastery and writing skills were assessed using a researcher-developed instrument that measured students' understanding of word meanings, contextual usage, and ability to apply vocabulary in sentence and paragraph construction.

To address these instructional concerns, the researchers developed Vocab Voyage, a five-day journey-themed instructional program that integrates text exposure, explicit vocabulary instruction, and scaffolded writing activities using a literary text as the primary learning resource. The intervention was designed to provide structured, meaningful,



and engaging learning experiences that encourage students to acquire vocabulary while simultaneously developing their writing skills.

Given these educational concerns, there is a need to determine whether Vocab Voyage can effectively improve Grade 11 students' vocabulary mastery and writing skills. Establishing the effectiveness of this instructional intervention may provide empirical evidence to support vocabulary-enriched literacy instruction, strengthen classroom teaching practices, enhance curriculum implementation, and guide future instructional innovations aimed at improving English language learning outcomes among senior high school students.

General Objective

To evaluate the effectiveness of Vocab Voyage in improving the vocabulary mastery and writing skills of Grade 11 students.

Specific Objectives

The study aimed to:

1. To determine the level of students' vocabulary mastery and writing skills before the implementation of Vocab Voyage.
2. To determine the level of students' vocabulary mastery and writing skills after the implementation of Vocab Voyage.
3. To determine whether there is a statistically significant difference in students' vocabulary mastery before and after the implementation of Vocab Voyage.
4. To determine whether there is a statistically significant difference in students' writing skills before and after the implementation of Vocab Voyage.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of students' vocabulary mastery and writing skills before the implementation of Vocab Voyage?
2. What is the level of students' vocabulary mastery and writing skills after the implementation of Vocab Voyage?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in students' vocabulary mastery before and after the implementation of Vocab Voyage?
4. Is there a statistically significant difference in students' writing skills before and after the implementation of Vocab Voyage?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference in the students' vocabulary mastery before and after the implementation of Vocab Voyage.

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant difference in the students' writing skills before and after the implementation of Vocab Voyage.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design with a single-group intervention to determine the effect of Vocab Voyage on the vocabulary mastery and writing skills of Grade 11 learners at Casat National High School. In this design, the same group of participants was measured before and after the intervention using identical instruments, allowing changes in students' performance following the intervention to be measured. Although the one-group pretest-posttest design allowed the researchers to evaluate changes following the intervention, the absence of a control group limited the ability to eliminate all potential threats to internal validity. Nevertheless, the design was considered appropriate for evaluating the initial effectiveness of the instructional intervention within the existing classroom context.

A quasi-experimental design was deemed appropriate because true random assignment of students to experimental and control groups was not feasible within the intact classroom structure of the school. The paired-sample t-test was used as the primary statistical tool to determine whether observed differences between pretest and posttest scores were statistically significant.

Population and Sampling

The target population consisted of 62 Grade 11 students enrolled at Casat National High School during the School Year (SY) 2025–2026. From this population, 30 students were selected as respondents through simple random sampling using a lottery method, wherein each student's name was written on a slip of paper, placed in a container, and drawn until the required sample size was reached.

Inclusion criteria: Students were included if they were (1) officially enrolled as Grade 11 students at Casat National High School during SY 2025–2026, (2) present during both pretest and posttest administration, and (3) willing to participate as evidenced by signed student assent and parental consent forms.

Exclusion criteria: Students were excluded if they were (1) absent during either the pretest or posttest, (2) enrolled in special education or alternative learning programs, or (3) unwilling to participate or whose parents/guardians did not provide consent.

The final sample consisted of 30 Grade 11 students — 19 males and 11 females — representing a diverse sample of the Grade 11 student population in terms of academic performance and gender. A sample of 30 participants was considered adequate for the selected quasi-experimental design because each participant served as his or her own comparison during the pretest and posttest, allowing paired statistical analysis.

Research Instruments

The primary research instrument was a researcher-made Vocabulary Mastery and Writing Skills Test, administered as both pretest and posttest. The instrument measured students' vocabulary knowledge and ability to use vocabulary in written production using the literary text "How My Brother Leon Brought Home a Wife" as the source of all target vocabulary. The test consisted of 60 items with a maximum of 60 points, organized into four sections:

- Section A – Matching Type (10 items, 10 points): Assessed students' knowledge of word meanings and definitions by matching target vocabulary to correct definitions.
- Section B – Multiple-Choice Cloze (10 items, 10 points): Measured students' ability to select contextually appropriate vocabulary words to complete sentences.
- Section C – Synonyms and Antonyms (10 items, 10 points): Evaluated students' understanding of word relationships and semantic knowledge.
- Section D – Sentence and Paragraph Construction (30 points): Assessed productive vocabulary use through 15 sentence construction tasks (15 points) and one guided paragraph writing task (15 points).

Content Validation

The instrument was subjected to content validity review by three expert validators: an English language teacher holding a master's degree in English Education, a senior high school research coordinator, and a language assessment specialist.

Reliability Testing

A pilot test was administered to 10 Grade 11 students from a different section not included in the main study. A KR-20 coefficient of .78 for Sections A–C indicated acceptable internal consistency, while a Cohen's Kappa coefficient of .81 for Section D indicated almost perfect inter-rater agreement.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted at Casat National High School during the fourth quarter of SY 2025–2026. The data gathering procedure followed a structured, five-day sequence aligned with the conceptual framework of the study, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Data Gathering Timeline

Day	Activity	Duration/Strategy	Research Tool Alignment
1	Pretest Administration	1 hour to administer Vocabulary Mastery and Writing Skills Test	Sections A–D (Pretest)
2	Text Exposure & Initial Vocabulary Encounter	1 hour guided reading of literary text; vocabulary spotting activity	Context preparation for all test sections
3	Explicit Vocabulary Instruction (Vocab Voyage Core)	1 hour vocabulary mapping; context clue exercises; oral sentence construction	Sections A (Matching), B (Cloze), C (Synonym/Antonym)

4	Guided Vocabulary-Based Writing	1 hour sentence expansion tasks; guided paragraph writing; peer feedback	Section D (Sentence Production)
5	Independent Writing & Posttest	1 hour independent paragraph writing; administered Posttest	Sections A–D (Posttest)

Pretest Administration (Day 1). The Vocabulary Mastery and Writing Skills Test was administered to all 30 participants under standard testing conditions — without notes, dictionaries, or peer assistance — within a 60-minute period.

Intervention Implementation (Days 2–4). On Day 2, students engaged in guided reading of “How My Brother Leon Brought Home a Wife” and conducted a vocabulary spotting activity. On Day 3, explicit vocabulary instruction was conducted using vocabulary mapping, context clue exercises, and oral sentence construction. On Day 4, guided writing activities were implemented, including sentence expansion tasks and a guided paragraph writing exercise with peer feedback.

Posttest Administration (Day 5). Students completed an independent paragraph writing task followed by the same Vocabulary Mastery and Writing Skills Test as the posttest, administered under identical conditions as the pretest.

Treatment of Data

All data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics (version 26). Descriptive statistics such as mean scores to describe average performance, standard deviations to determine score variability, and frequencies and percentages to describe score distribution were computed for both pretest and posttest results. Paired-sample t-tests to determine the significant differences between pretest and posttest scores were conducted for vocabulary mastery and writing skills separately. The alpha level was set at 0.05.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the study. Written permission was secured from the school principal prior to data collection. Informed consent was obtained from parents or guardians through a formal letter explaining the study’s purpose, procedures, voluntary nature, and confidentiality. Participants’ identities were protected through the use of anonymous codes, and all research data were stored securely and used solely for research purposes. Participants were informed that participation was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without academic consequences. Student assent was obtained from all participants. All completed questionnaires and electronic files were stored securely and accessed only by the researchers. The literary text used in the intervention, “How My Brother Leon Brought Home a Wife” by Manuel Arguilla, is part of the official Department of Education (DepEd) curriculum, ensuring all content was age-appropriate and curriculum-aligned.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2

Level of Students’ Vocabulary Mastery Before the Implementation of Vocab Voyage

Level of Performance	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Outstanding	27.30–30.00	0	0.00
Very Satisfactory	24.30–27.29	2	6.67
Satisfactory	21.30–24.29	2	6.67
Fairly Satisfactory	18.30–21.29	3	10.00
Did Not Meet Expectations	0–18.29	23	76.67
Mean = 12.73 SD = 5.99 Level: Did Not Meet Expectations			

Table 2 presents the distribution of students’ vocabulary mastery scores before the implementation of Vocab Voyage. The data show that 23 out of 30 students (76.67%) scored within the Did Not Meet Expectations range. The overall mean score was 12.73 out of 30 (SD = 5.99), equivalent to 42.44%, classified under Did Not Meet Expectations.

The overwhelming concentration of students at the lowest level reveals a critical and widespread deficiency in vocabulary knowledge prior to the intervention. This finding is consistent with Chiang et al. (2023), who found that explicit vocabulary learning strategy instruction significantly enhanced learners’ vocabulary knowledge and vocabulary

performance through sustained and structured engagement with new words. Practically, these results suggest that English teachers should provide systematic vocabulary instruction through contextualized activities, guided practice, and repeated engagement with target vocabulary before expecting learners to demonstrate productive vocabulary use in writing. Such considerations justify the structured and progressive design of Vocab Voyage, which was developed to strengthen students' vocabulary foundation and support their literacy development.

Table 3*Level of Students' Writing Skills Before the Implementation of Vocab Voyage*

Level of Performance	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Outstanding	27.30–30.00	0	0.00
Very Satisfactory	24.30–27.29	0	0.00
Satisfactory	21.30–24.29	0	0.00
Fairly Satisfactory	18.30–21.29	0	0.00
Did Not Meet Expectations	0–18.29	30	100.00
Mean = 6.13 SD = 3.73 Level: Did Not Meet Expectations			

Table 3 shows the level of students' writing skills before the intervention. All 30 students (100%) fell under Did Not Meet Expectations. The mean score was 6.13 out of 30 (SD = 3.73), equivalent to 20.44%. No student achieved Fairly Satisfactory or higher.

The complete uniformity of scores at the lowest performance level indicates a systemic and severe deficiency in students' ability to produce written sentences using target vocabulary. This finding aligns with Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982), which posits that learners must first receive sufficient comprehensible input before they can produce language output. The results further suggest that weak writing skills may limit students' ability to complete curriculum-based writing tasks, express ideas effectively in classroom activities, and develop the literacy competencies necessary for academic success. These findings highlight the need for targeted instructional interventions that strengthen both language input and writing development.

Table 4*Level of Students' Vocabulary Mastery After the Implementation of Vocab Voyage*

Level of Performance	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Outstanding	27.30–30.00	3	10.00
Very Satisfactory	24.30–27.29	3	10.00
Satisfactory	21.30–24.29	5	16.67
Fairly Satisfactory	18.30–21.29	5	16.67
Did Not Meet Expectations	0–18.29	14	46.67
Mean = 20.50 SD = 6.34 Level: Fairly Satisfactory			

Table 4 presents the posttest distribution. The number of students at Did Not Meet Expectations decreased from 23 (76.67%) to 14 (46.67%). Students at Fairly Satisfactory and Satisfactory levels each increased to 5 (16.67%), while 3 students (10.00%) reached Very Satisfactory and 3 (10.00%) achieved Outstanding. The posttest mean rose to 20.50 out of 30 (SD = 6.34), equivalent to 68.33%, classified as Fairly Satisfactory — a gain of 7.77 points from the pretest.

The gains are consistent with Beck et al.'s (2013) argument that vocabulary depth develops through repeated exposure, elaboration, and application. Vocab Voyage's integration of text exposure, explicit teaching, and guided writing provided the multiple encounters with target words that Nation (2001) identified as essential for moving vocabulary from passive recognition to active mastery. Such repeated exposure helps reinforce word meaning and usage, enabling students to participate more actively in classroom discussions and learning activities. As learners become more familiar with vocabulary, they are better able to comprehend texts, communicate ideas, and engage meaningfully in English instruction.

Table 5*Level of Students' Writing Skills After the Implementation of Vocab Voyage*

Level of Performance	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Outstanding	27.30–30.00	7	23.33
Very Satisfactory	24.30–27.29	1	3.33
Satisfactory	21.30–24.29	2	6.67
Fairly Satisfactory	18.30–21.29	2	6.67
Did Not Meet Expectations	0–18.29	18	60.00
Mean = 15.83 SD = 9.71 Level: Did Not Meet Expectations			

Table 5 shows posttest writing skills performance. Unlike the pretest where all students fell under Did Not Meet Expectations, posttest results showed broader distribution: 7 students (23.33%) achieved Outstanding. However, 18 students (60.00%) remained in Did Not Meet Expectations. The posttest mean was 15.83 out of 30 (SD = 9.71), still classified as Did Not Meet Expectations but representing a gain of 9.70 points from the pretest.

The polarized results mirror findings in intervention research, where structured vocabulary programs tend to benefit higher-readiness learners more rapidly. This highlights a critical pedagogical implication: to ensure equitable gains, future implementations of Vocab Voyage should incorporate differentiated writing support such as sentence frames or writing templates for students with weaker foundational writing skills. The findings also suggest the need for curriculum planning that integrates vocabulary development with sustained writing practice, teacher training that equips educators with differentiated writing strategies, and classroom assessment approaches that regularly monitor students' writing progress and provide timely feedback to support literacy development.

Table 6*Paired Samples T-Test Results for Vocabulary Mastery and Writing Skills*

Variable	Mean Pre	Mean Post	Mean Diff.	SD	t-value	df	p (2-tailed)
Vocabulary Mastery	12.73	20.50	7.77	5.85	-7.276	29	p < .001
Writing Skills	6.13	15.83	9.70	8.71	-6.099	29	p < .001

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 6 summarizes the paired-sample t-test results. For vocabulary mastery: pretest mean = 12.73, posttest mean = 20.50, mean difference = 7.77 (SD = 5.85), $t = -7.276$, $df = 29$, $p < .001$. For writing skills: pretest mean = 6.13, posttest mean = 15.83, mean difference = 9.70 (SD = 8.71), $t = -6.099$, $df = 29$, $p < .001$.

The probability values indicate that the observed improvements in vocabulary mastery and writing skills were statistically significant and not attributable to chance. The null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in students' vocabulary mastery and writing skills before and after Vocab Voyage is therefore rejected for both variables. These findings provide strong empirical support for the effectiveness of Vocab Voyage as an evidence-based instructional intervention. The results resonate with Haryono (2024), Montante (2025), and Hassen et al. (2023), who likewise reported significant gains through structured and scaffolded instructional approaches. Furthermore, Hasan and Bidin (2023) demonstrated that scaffolding strategies can enhance students' writing performance through guided and systematic support. Beyond statistical improvement, the findings suggest that explicit vocabulary instruction strengthens vocabulary development, while scaffolded learning supports learners' ability to apply language effectively in writing. The results also imply that teachers may integrate vocabulary and writing activities to strengthen literacy outcomes, while school leaders, curriculum developers, policymakers, and teacher education programs may use these findings to support literacy intervention initiatives in secondary education.

Conclusions

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Students entered the Vocab Voyage intervention with critically insufficient vocabulary knowledge and writing skills. The pretest results — 100% of students below satisfactory in writing and 76.67% below expectations in vocabulary — confirm that Grade 11 learners lacked the foundational lexical preparation needed for productive written expression.
2. The Vocab Voyage intervention produced meaningful and statistically significant improvements in vocabulary mastery, elevating the group mean from Did Not Meet Expectations to Fairly Satisfactory within five days,



demonstrating that a short-term, journey-themed, explicitly scaffolded vocabulary program can yield measurable lexical gains.

3. Vocab Voyage also produced statistically significant growth in writing skills, though with greater variability. The persistence of below-expectation performance for 60% of students in writing indicates that foundational writing skills limitations constitute a separate instructional challenge that vocabulary instruction alone cannot fully address.
4. Vocab Voyage was associated with statistically significant improvements in both vocabulary mastery and writing skills among Grade 11 learners in the Philippine public school context. The significant differences between pretest and posttest scores ($p < .001$ for both variables) indicate that students demonstrated measurable gains following the implementation of the intervention. However, because the study employed a one-group pretest-posttest design without a control group, the findings should be interpreted as evidence of improvements observed after the intervention rather than definitive proof that the gains were caused exclusively by Vocab Voyage.
5. The findings demonstrate that Vocab Voyage represents an effective instructional innovation that may strengthen English language instruction by integrating explicit vocabulary development with scaffolded writing activities. The study contributes to educational practice by providing evidence that structured vocabulary interventions may support curriculum implementation, enhance literacy instruction, and inform professional development initiatives for English teachers.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. English teachers may adopt Vocab Voyage as a regular short-cycle intervention for Grade 11 English classes, particularly when diagnostic assessment identifies vocabulary competencies as least mastered. Teachers may supplement the program with differentiated writing scaffolds, including sentence frames, graphic organizers, and writing templates, to support learners with developing writing skills.
2. School administrators may consider integrating structured vocabulary programs such as Vocab Voyage into the school's English curriculum. They may also support teacher professional development through training on vocabulary assessment, scaffolded writing instruction, and literacy intervention strategies.
3. Curriculum developers may consider incorporating structured vocabulary-writing interventions into English learning competencies, instructional guides, and classroom resource materials to strengthen literacy development among secondary learners.
4. Teacher education institutions may integrate evidence-based vocabulary instruction and scaffolded writing strategies into pre-service and in-service teacher education programs to prepare English teachers to implement literacy interventions effectively.
5. Educational policymakers may consider supporting school-based literacy intervention programs that integrate vocabulary development and writing instruction as part of broader initiatives to improve English language learning outcomes.
6. Future researchers may replicate the study using experimental designs with control groups, examine long-term vocabulary retention, extend the intervention period, investigate individual components of Vocab Voyage, and conduct similar studies across different educational contexts to establish broader applicability.
7. Students may continue applying the vocabulary-learning strategies introduced through Vocab Voyage by maintaining vocabulary journals, using newly learned words in authentic writing activities, and reading literary texts that promote contextual vocabulary development.

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