

# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENGLISH LANGUAGE HABITS AND VOCABULARY SIZE AMONG JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN TALIPAO NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL-MAIN

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**ABSTRACT.** This study investigated the connection between junior high school students' vocabulary size and English language habits at Talipao National High School – Main. It focused on how students' involvement in a variety of activities—reading, writing, speaking, listening, and watching—affects their vocabulary growth. A validated survey and the Vocabulary Size Test (VST) were used to gather data from 100 students using a descriptive–correlational research design. Frequency distribution, weighted mean, t-test, ANOVA, and Pearson correlation were among the statistical techniques used. The results showed that the majority of respondents were female, distributed equally across Grades 7 through 10, and that they frequently engaged in English-language activities, especially listening and watching; speaking and reading, on the other hand, were less practiced. The participants' vocabulary size was larger than normal. Significant variations in language use were found according to gender but not grade level. Students in higher grades showed better vocabulary knowledge, but there were no discernible gender differences in vocabulary size. Crucially, there was no discernible relationship between language habits and vocabulary growth, suggesting that participation in language-related activities does not always result in increased vocabulary. The study recommends creating language-rich programs, incorporating structured language exercises into the curriculum, using interactive teaching techniques, promoting students' active engagement in English, and conducting more research on other variables affecting vocabulary development in the future.

**KEYWORDS:** *English Language, Vocabulary Development, Vocabulary Knowledge, Instructional Strategies, Teacher.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The development of learners' linguistic competence and communication abilities was significantly influenced by their language habits (Aladini & Gheisari, 2025; Shen & Cheng, 2024). These habits were the regular, frequently unconscious patterns of language use people exhibit when speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Irawan, 2023). While bad or inconsistent language habits may hinder learners' capacity to understand and articulate concepts clearly, positive

language habits enable learners to utilize language more successfully and confidently (Irawan, 2023; Aladini & Gheisari, 2025). Establishing positive language habits was essential for junior high school kids to succeed academically and communicate effectively since they are in a crucial period of language and cognitive development (Shen & Cheng, 2024; Irawan, 2023).

Vocabulary size, or the total amount of words a person knows and can employ in context, is one important measure of linguistic aptitude. According to research, second language learners' increased vocabulary knowledge is strongly predicted by prolonged language use through activities like reading and exposure outside of the classroom (Busby, 2024). This theory is consistent with research by Chavez, Valencia, Diamante, et al. (2025), which indicates that grammar-focused simulated learning improves students' capacity to organize and express ideas coherently while also increasing their confidence in professional contexts. Additionally, research has shown that learners' capacity to retain and use new vocabulary over time is improved by frequent and repeated exposure to terms in relevant contexts, such as lengthy reading assignments (Webb et al., 2023). According to these results, language habits are essential to vocabulary development and language proficiency rather than just behavioral routines (Li et al., 2024; Busby, 2024; Webb et al., 2023).

Students in junior high school showed a variety of linguistic patterns that could have an impact on their vocabulary growth (Yasmin et al., 2024). While some children limit their language use to classroom environments, others actively participate in activities that encourage language exposure, such as reading books, keeping journals, or having conversations in the target language (Busby, 2024).

Given this, the current study sought to investigate the connection between junior high school students' vocabulary size and language habits at Talipao National High School-Main. The study aimed to determine the degree to which students' linguistic habits influence their vocabulary growth by examining this relationship. The results may provide educators and curriculum designers with a useful foundation for encouraging positive language behaviors and developing learning settings that support children's ongoing vocabulary and general linguistic competence growth.

## **LITERATURE**

Recent developments in the study of vocabulary in second and foreign languages (L2) demonstrate the role that digital reading and other contemporary language practices have in vocabulary acquisition. Because it increases exposure to language input and offers a variety of contexts for encountering new words, digital reading—defined as reading texts via digital resources that learners can access anytime and anywhere—plays a significant role in facilitating vocabulary development for L2 learners, according to meta-analytic evidence (Zhu, Zhang, & Irwin, 2023). The assumption that regular involvement as a language habit promotes vocabulary expansion is reinforced by the fact that such digital habits enable learners to interact with richer and more diversified lexical environments than traditional print reading alone (Zhu et al., 2023).

Additionally, debates in current literature highlight how text factors and reading tasks affect vocabulary acquisition, supporting the theoretical idea that the type of reading activities affects the caliber of vocabulary input students receive. Conceptual overviews contend that elements like task structure, genre, and text complexity influence how learners encounter and process vocabulary, suggesting that regular reading habits adapted to a variety of texts enhance vocabulary knowledge more successfully than isolated or repetitive input tasks (Webb et al., 2024). These observations are consistent with more general models of language acquisition, which see prolonged and varied exposure as essential to expanding vocabulary depth and size (Webb et al., 2024).

Reading, hearing, and extramural exposure are English language habits that are crucial for vocabulary development, according to recent research. According to a thorough meta-analysis by Webb, Uchihara, and Yanagisawa (2023), meaning-focused input, such as reading and listening, leads to significant vocabulary growth. After exposure, learners usually pick up 9% to 18% of unfamiliar target words right once, with 6% to 17% being retained over time. While purely visual skills, such as watching videos, showed fewer gains, reading and listening yielded comparable outcomes. These results highlight how crucial it is to regularly and meaningfully interact with language-rich content.

Vocabulary size is significantly predicted by extramural exposure, which is defined as English input outside of the classroom. According to research by Busby (2024), Norwegian learners' vocabulary test scores are significantly impacted by the age at which they start engaging in extracurricular English activities. In addition, a long-term study by Sundqvist et al. (2024) shows that vocabulary development is correlated with teenagers' exposure to extramural English through platforms including gaming, social media, and entertainment. A greater vocabulary increases exposure to English, and this link is reciprocal. Furthermore, research by Chavez, Samilo, Cabiles, et al. (2026) highlights the limitations of artificial intelligence in education while emphasizing the vital qualities of human empathy and cultural awareness. In order to develop lexical competence, these studies generally support the significance of interacting with English outside of academic settings.

Vocabulary growth and language habits are essential to successful English language acquisition in the Philippine educational setting. Local academics contend that students' active engagement with English greatly improves their lexical competency, whether through reading, classroom exercises, or teacher-guided vocabulary tactics. The results of Chavez et al. (2025), which emphasize instructors' adaptive strategies—such as contextualized instruction, multimedia integration, and scaffolding techniques—that make reading more accessible and meaningful, provide credence to this viewpoint. Interestingly, the literature on second language instruction in the Philippines depicts vocabulary learning strategies as habits entwined with learners' interactions with English in both everyday life and instructional contexts, including the use of technology-assisted tools and classroom materials (Pascual et al., 2022).

Bellido and Rico (2022) conducted a second local study at Botolan National High School in Zambales that looked at the vocabulary of ninth-grade pupils. The study used additional teaching resources to improve word knowledge. The results showed that students' vocabulary performance was much enhanced when meaningful reading activities were combined with focused vocabulary training. This is consistent with studies by Chavez et al. (2025), which found that school, media, time constraints, and parental language confidence all had an impact on students' preference for English. Ferrer and Carmen (2023) also investigated the methods and perspectives of Filipino students in Grade 11 on the acquisition of English vocabulary. According to their research, many students rely on a limited set of learning strategies even though they understand the importance of language in communication. This suggests that learners' attitudes and methods for expanding their vocabulary have an impact on vocabulary size in addition to language exposure.

In summary, the idea that vocabulary size and English language habits are substantially correlated is consistently supported by contemporary research. Meaningful vocabulary expansion is facilitated by frequent extramural exposure, regular listening exercises, and productive reading habits. But rather than the sheer amount of exposure, the quality of engagement with how students read, listen, and interact with the language seems to have a greater

impact. Vocabulary acquisition and retention are typically higher among learners who approach English through a variety of relevant habits, including as reading while listening, listening to podcasts, and engaging in immersive digital interaction. The significance of developing rich, consistent, and multifaceted language habits in both formal schooling and daily life is highlighted by this data.

## **METHODS**

### **1. Research Design**

This study examined many aspects of respondents' English language habits using a descriptive-correlational research design. Along with an analysis of vocabulary size and English language usage, it provided a demographic profile. While the comparative component examined any significant differences in language habits and vocabulary size based on factors like gender and grade level, the descriptive component described the demographics. The correlational dimension also looked into the connection between vocabulary size and certain language practices. Because it makes it easier to analyze the correlations between the variables without manipulating them, this design was judged appropriate.

### **2. Research Locale**

In Talipao, Sulu, Philippines, at Talipao National High School-Main, this study was carried out. It was specifically implemented in the Junior High School division.

### **3. Participants of the Study**

The junior high school students enrolled at Talipao National High School-Main during the academic year 2025–2026 served as the study's respondents. Out of 498 junior high school pupils, one hundred (100) were chosen as responders for this study. The requirement to include a varied representation of kids from different grade levels and the concepts of statistical significance were taken into consideration while determining the sample size. Stratified random sampling was used to choose the respondents.

### **4.**

### **Sampling**

### **Procedure**

498 students from Grades 7 through 10 at Talipao National High School-Main participated in this study, which used stratified random sampling. In order to ensure equal selection odds and minimize researcher bias, a sample of 100 respondents from each grade was chosen using the fishbowl technique. The objective of this approach was to improve the sample's representativeness and fairness for trustworthy data analysis and interpretation.

### **5. Research Instrument**

The study used a structured questionnaire with three sections: the Vocabulary Size Test (VST), the English Language Habits Questionnaire, and the Demographic Profile. Basic participant information was acquired by the Demographic Profile, which made it easier to analyze subgroup differences. Using a five-point Likert scale specifically designed for junior high school students, the English Language Habits Questionnaire assessed participation in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English. The Vocabulary Size Test, which was modified from Nation and Beglar (2007), measured participants' receptive vocabulary with 30 multiple-choice questions from the first 1,000-word family levels. For junior high students, this methodical approach guarantees relevance and appropriateness.

### **6. Data Gathering Procedure**

In order to carry out a study at Talipao National High School-Main, the researcher formally requested permission. Following approval, they worked with advisors to arrange for data collecting. The goal of the study was explained to the respondents, who willingly took part and

were guaranteed secrecy. To minimize interruption, research instruments were distributed during respondents' spare time, and data collection was done quickly to preserve integrity. After that, the information was arranged and ready for statistical examination.

### 7. Ethical Considerations

The rights and welfare of the participants were protected because this study adhered to ethical guidelines. It received approval from Talipao National High School-Main and gave precise details on the goals and methods of the study. There were no repercussions if one chose not to participate; participation was entirely voluntary. Confidentiality and data anonymization were guaranteed by emphasizing informed permission. The delivery of the questionnaire took place in a secure, non-coercive setting with sufficient response time and participant assistance. In accordance with ethical standards pertaining to minors, such as privacy and non-maleficence, data were safely preserved and utilized only for study.

## RESULTS

### 1. What are the English Language habits of junior high school students in Talipao National High School-Main?

*Table 1 In terms of Leadership and Governance*

	Statements	Mean	S.D	Interpretation
1	I read books, comics, or magazines in English.	3.44	.833	Sometimes
2	I watch TV shows, movies, or videos in English.	3.50	.959	Often
3	I listen to songs or podcasts in English.	3.86	.985	Often
4	I write notes, messages, or posts in English.	3.56	1.076	Often
5	I speak in English with friends or classmates.	3.16	1.051	Sometimes
	<b>Total Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.5040</b>	<b>.60535</b>	<b>Often</b>

*Legend:* (5) 4.50-5.00 = Always; (4) 3.50-4.49 = Often; (3) 2.50- 3.49 = Sometimes; (2) 1.50- 2.49 = Rarely; (1) 1.00- 1.49 = Never

Table 1 shows that junior high school students at Talipao National High School – Main have a weighted mean score of 3.5040 for English language habits, with a standard deviation of 0.60535, indicating that these habits are frequently used. Students frequently watch English-language television, listen to English-language music or podcasts, and write in English, demonstrating a high level of engagement. However, their participation in speaking English with peers and reading English-language novels, comic books, or periodicals is evaluated as Sometimes, indicating a lower level of engagement in these activities.

### 2. What is the vocabulary size of these students?

*Table 2 English Vocabulary size of these students.*

	Statements	Mean	S.D	Interpretation
1	English Vocabulary size	3.50	.927	Above Average

*Legend:* (5) 4.50-5.00 = High; (4) 3.50-4.49 = Above Average; (3) 2.50- 3.49 = Average; (2) 1.50- 2.49 = Low; (1) 1.00- 1.49 = Very Low

Table 2 shows the size of junior high school students' English vocabulary at Talipao National High School-Main. The data shows an Above Average level of vocabulary knowledge with a mean score of 3.50 and a standard deviation of 0.927. This implies that the student respondents have a comparatively high level of vocabulary proficiency in English, enabling them to comprehend and use a sizable number of English terms in communication.

### 3. Is there a significant difference in English language habits when the data are categorized according to their demographic profile in terms of: 3.1 Gender; and 3.2 Grade Level?

*Table 3.1 According to Gender*

Variables	Grouping	Mean	S.D	Mean Difference	t	Sig.	Description
English language habits	Male	3.651	.56077	.25818	2.15*	.034	Significant
	Female	3.393	.61871				

Note. \* Significant at alpha 0.05

Table 3.1 reveals notable gender-based disparities in the English language usage patterns of junior high pupils at Talipao National High School. The results show that gender significantly affects students' participation in English-language activities, rejecting the hypothesis that there are no gender differences.

Table 3.2 According to Grade Level

Sources of Variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
English language habits	Between Groups	1.856	3	.619	1.725	.167 Not Significant
	Within Groups	34.42	96	.359		
	Total	36.28	99			

Note. \* Significant at alpha 0.05

Table 3.2 examines the English language usage patterns of junior high school students at Talipao National High School – Main. The calculated F-value and probability value at the alpha level of 0.05 show no significant variations based on grade level. This confirms that the English language habits of the student-respondents are consistent across the various grade levels, supporting the claim that grade level has no effect on kids' participation in English language activities.

#### 4. Is there a significant difference in English vocabulary size when the data are categorized according to their demographic profile in terms of: 5.1 Gender; and 5.2 Grade Level?

Table 4.1 According to Gender

Variables	Grouping	Mean	S.D	Mean Difference	t	Sig.	Description
English vocabulary size	Male	3.53	.935	.061	.326	.745	Not Significant
	Female	3.47	.928				

Note. \* Significant at alpha 0.05

Table 4.1 examines the extent of junior high pupils' English vocabulary by gender at Talipao National High School. Male and female students have comparable vocabulary sizes, according to the data, which indicate no significant differences at an alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, it is considered that gender has no discernible impact on vocabulary size.

Table 4.2 According to Grade Level

Sources of Variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
English vocabulary size	Between Groups	25.960	3	8.653	14.1*	.000 Significant
	Within Groups	59.04	96	.615		
	Total	85.00	99			

Note. \* Significant at alpha 0.05

Table 4.2 shows that junior high school students at Talipao National High School have

significantly different English vocabulary sizes depending on their grade level. The hypothesis that there is no significant difference in vocabulary size by grade level is rejected since the analysis reveals a noteworthy F-value and probability value, suggesting that grade level considerably affects vocabulary size.

**5. Is there a significant correlation between English language habits and vocabulary size of Junior High School students in Talipao National High School - Main?**

Variables		Pearson <i>r</i>	Sig.	N	Description
Dependent	Independent				
English language habits	Vocabulary size	-.007	.943	100	Not Significant

*Note.* \*\*Correlation coefficient is significant at alpha .01, \*Correlation coefficient is significant at alpha .05  
 Correlation Coefficient Scales Adopted from Hopkins, Will (2002):  
 0.0-0.1 = Nearly Zero; 0.1-0.3 = Low; 0.3-0.5 = Moderate; 0.5-0.7 = High; 0.7-0.9 = Very High; 0.9-1 = Nearly Perfect.

Table 5 demonstrates that among junior high school students at Talipao National High School – Main, there is no significant link between vocabulary size and English language habits ( $r = -.007$ ,  $p = .943$ ). This implies that students' vocabulary size is not considerably influenced by their English language habits, supporting the premise that there is no significant association.

**DISCUSSION**

*1.) On the English Language habits of junior high school students in Talipao National High School-Main:*

The respondents regularly exercise English language habits, as indicated by the aggregate weighted mean of 3.5040. Writing, watching English-language media, and listening to English music or podcasts are frequent activities for students. However, reading English materials and conversing with peers are infrequent. This suggests a moderate level of participation with English language activities, with a preference for passive and digital exposure over active use. These findings support the claim made by Stephen Krashen (1985) that consistent exposure to understandable linguistic input promotes language development. In a similar vein, Jack C. Richards (2008) emphasized that meaningful exposure to English media increases learners' familiarity and confidence in using the language, while Rebecca L. Oxford (1990) acknowledged the impact of language habits and learning strategies on second language acquisition.

*2.) On the English vocabulary size of the students:*

The findings showed that the respondents had an above-average mastery of English language, with a mean vocabulary score of 3.50. This ability is essential for improving students' comprehension and communication skills in English since it enables them to comprehend and use a large variety of words. According to Paul Nation (2001), vocabulary knowledge has a major impact on comprehension and communication skills, making it an essential component of language proficiency. David Q. Wilkins (1972) emphasized that vocabulary is essential for meaningful communication. Norbert Schmitt (2000) also pointed out that linguistic fluency and academic performance depend on expanding one's vocabulary.

3.) *On the difference in English language habits when the data are categorized according to their demographic profile:*

*Gender effects language use more than educational level, according to the study's findings, which demonstrate significant gender differences in English language patterns between male and female students while grade levels show no discernible differences. This is consistent with Zoltán Dörnyei's (2005) findings that learner traits influence language learning behavior, including motivation and gender-related preferences. In a similar vein, Bonny Norton (2013) emphasized how gender and social identity influence language usage and student involvement. Additionally, Rod Ellis (2008) noted that different demographic characteristics had different effects on language learning experiences.*

4.) *On the difference in English vocabulary size when the data are categorized according to their demographic profile:*

Male and female students' English vocabulary sizes did not differ significantly, according to the study, suggesting that vocabulary levels are similar for both sexes. When respondents were grouped by grade level, however, a significant difference became apparent: children in Grade 7 had a significantly lesser vocabulary than those in Grades 8, 9, and 10. This points to a pattern of growing vocabulary size as pupils go up the grade levels. These findings support the hypotheses of Jim Cummins (2000), who claimed that academic language ability grows over time, and Paul Nation (2001), who observed that vocabulary acquisition is progressive through continuous exposure and learning. Furthermore, Michael F. Graves (2006) highlighted how vocabulary growth is cumulative and linked to academic advancement.

5.) *On correlation between English language habits and vocabulary size of Junior High School students in Talipao National High School - Main:*

The study's lack of a significant correlation between vocabulary size and English language habits suggests that participation in English-language activities is not the only factor influencing vocabulary knowledge. This emphasizes the importance of other elements in vocabulary growth, such as classroom instruction, reading comprehension, and the learning environment. While Stephen Krashen (1985) contended that linguistic exposure alone does not ensure vocabulary mastery without meaningful comprehension and interaction, Paul Nation (2001) pointed out that explicit teaching and repetitive exposure have an impact on vocabulary acquisition. Additionally, rather than depending only on isolated language skills, Richard C. Anderson (1984) pointed out that vocabulary acquisition is tightly linked to reading comprehension and academic engagement.

## **CONCLUSION**

According to the study, pupils have moderate English language habits and are more likely to participate in receptive activities (like listening and watching) than in productive ones (like speaking and reading). This is consistent with the claims made by Webb, Uchihara, and Yanagisawa (2023) regarding the significance of meaning-focused input in language development. Xu Pan (2025) goes on to say that incidental exposure in everyday situations like media and listening frequently results in language development. Busby (2024) links students' above-average vocabulary knowledge to consistent participation in language activities that improve lexical competence. The study also reveals that gender affects English language habits but grade level does not, indicating that engagement is influenced by individual behaviors rather

than academic advancement. In contrast, Sundqvist et al. (2024) propose that exposure rises with experience. The claim made by Sundqvist et al. (2024) regarding enhanced vocabulary growth with continued exposure to English is supported by the fact that vocabulary size varies across grade levels but not considerably by gender. Higher grades indicate larger vocabulary knowledge. Higher vocabulary proficiency is correlated with regular usage of English, according to Tantalie (2021). The study does not, however, uncover a significant relationship between vocabulary size and English language practices, indicating that vocabulary development may not result from frequent interaction alone. This bolsters the claims made by Toplu, Tokdemir, and Genç (2023) that comprehension techniques and engagement quality are more important for vocabulary development than exposure frequency alone.

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