

The Impact of the Internet-Based Activities on Developing Grade 4 Students' Performance in English Vocabulary

N. S. Alkawadeh

Department of Curricula and Teaching Methods, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Jerash University, Jerash, Jordan

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Abstract: The current study examined the impact of using the internet-based activities on developing grade 4 students' performance in English vocabulary. In other words, it studied the influence of using internet-based activities on helping grade 4 students to retain and retrieve the words which had previously been learned in different contexts. The participants are 48 students at Al-Zahraa Basic School for Girls in Jordan. The participants were divided into control and experimental groups. Data were collected through using an English vocabulary pretest and posttest. The control group was taught English vocabulary with the help of a conventional method, whereas the experimental group was taught English vocabulary with the help of internet-based activities. The quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed in a mixed method research design by using the paired samples T-Test and the independent samples T-Test. The finding indicated the experimental group's supreme performance in the English vocabulary test compared to the control group. The study provides pedagogical implications to the teaching of vocabulary in the Jordanian context. It recommended the integration of these activities into the English language curricula.

Keywords: grade 4 students, Internet-based activities, English vocabulary, Basic schools.

1 Introduction

The Knowledge of vocabulary is essential for foreign language (FL) teaching and learning. Vocabulary knowledge is considered an essence upon which other language skills are developed. Knowledge of vocabulary enriches listening, speaking, reading, and writing because vocabulary is the main substance that allows the learning, practice, and development of these language skills [1,2,3]. The teaching and learning of vocabulary should be emphasized at the early stages of learning and Basic school students need to build up vocabulary knowledge to be able to improve their FL achievement in reading comprehension, paragraph writing, listening, and dialogue exercises [4,5,6].

The components of students' assessments are based on knowledge of vocabulary as explained in Ref. [7,8]. If younger learners at basic schools could not build up knowledge of vocabulary, they would not be able to communicate in English, do homework, write English sentences, and participate in the classrooms. They will also not be able to understand reading passages, and correctly place appropriate words in their spaces. Also, the basic school students' inability to develop vocabulary knowledge will have further learning problems at the different learning stages ahead [9]. In addition, the teaching of English to basic school students differs from teaching it to adult learners in the sense that the students have different learning traits, capacities, skills, and needs which differ from those of adult learners. Thus, they should be taught English by using different techniques and strategies [10,11], clarified that these techniques and strategies should be fun based to avoid the students' boredom [12].

Therefore, it is necessary to look for various tools that can facilitate the basic school students' learning of vocabulary and help them retain, retrieve and use these words properly in different contexts [13]. In this regard, internet-based activities provide various ways that can encourage basic school students actively learn English vocabulary, retrain English words, and make appropriate use of them in various tasks; whether reading comprehension, paragraph writing, completing missing parts of different dialogue, answering listening exercises, select the odd words and write a similar word, do rearrangement exercises, etc. Vocabulary knowledge can help basic school students to understand language smoothly. Thus, language teachers in basic schools are expected to utilize various teaching strategies and techniques that can motivate their students to learn vocabulary. Using internet-based activities is one of the ways to attract students' interest and attention and boost their English vocabulary learning [14]. Such activities provide a suitable learning environment where basic school students can use language in less formal situations. Such activities can also introduce the targeted learning materials more interestingly to attract students' participation. The variety of internet activities can also make students actively take part because they may include games, songs, short stories, visual images,

*Corresponding author e-mail: n.mawadeh@jpu.edu.jo

etc. which are all interesting activities to students. Therefore, there is a need to examine the impact of applying internet-based activities on the improvement of the performance of grade 4 students in Jordanian in the vocabulary of the English language.

Statement of the problem

The present study investigated the effectiveness of using internet-based activities in teaching English vocabulary to Jordanian grade 4 students. It looked into the improvement which these activities may have on the English vocabulary performance of the experimental group in comparison to the employment of a traditional method for teaching English vocabulary to the control group.

Hypothesis

The current study tested the following null hypotheses:

1. Two groups control and experimental groups do not differ in their English vocabulary pretest.
2. The performance of the experimental group in English vocabulary does not differ from that of the control group in the post-test.
3. There is no statistical difference significant in the two groups' performance in English vocabulary in the posttest.
4. The internet-based activities do not have positive effects on developing the performance of the experimental group in English vocabulary.

Research questions

The current study attempted to answer these questions:

1. What types of performances in English vocabulary pretest do the control and experimental groups have?
2. What is the difference between the control and experimental groups' performance in the English vocabulary posttest?
3. What is the effectiveness of internet-based activities in statistically developing the experimental group's English vocabulary and enhancement?

Research aims

The aims of the present study are:

1. Define the pretest performance of the control and experimental groups in English vocabulary.
2. Identify the types of performances of the control and experimental groups in the English vocabulary post-test?
3. Test the statistical significance of differences, if any, between the control and experimental groups in the posttest.
4. Examine the effectiveness of internet-based activities in developing the experimental group's English vocabulary performance.

Significance of the study

The current study is significant as it:

1. Sustains the policy of the Ministry of Education in Jordan to improve the teaching and learning of English in basic schools.
2. Supports the goal of Al-Zahraa basic school for Girls to improve the English proficiency levels of its students.
3. Highlights the importance of teaching and learning English vocabulary in Jordanian basic schools.
4. Provides solutions to the challenges and difficulties which encounter Jordanian basic school students in learning English vocabulary.
5. Provides insights to policymakers and curriculum development of English at the level of basic schools in Jordan.

Limitations to the study

The present study is limited to Al-Zahraa basic school for Girls. Its findings will be useful to develop the process of teaching and learning English at that school in particular. The results can also be useful to other basic schools in Jordan in terms of teaching implications and curriculum development.

Literature review

In one study, the authors discussed the effectiveness of using Pocable and Pear Deck games in enhancing and encouraging forty Malaysian grade four students to learn English vocabulary. The participants were randomly selected as a purposive sampling. These games are interaction-based online platforms that promote social and individual learning. Data were collected through the instruments of English vocabulary pre-and post-tests and a motivation questionnaire. The English vocabulary test consists of forty questions equally divided into spelling and matching questions. The questionnaire was designed to measure the participants' views on using these two games in learning English vocabulary. Ni, et al. reported that most participants managed to improve their learning of English vocabulary due to the encouragement they received when using these games. The participants improved their ability to retain and memorize the newly taught English vocabulary. These games also developed the participants' collaboration, cooperation, creativity, communication skills, and critical thinking. Ni, et al. emphasized the integration of technology into the ESL curriculum in the Malaysian context because it provides various methods that can be exploited in ESL classrooms. Ni, et al. clarified that technology-based ESL instruction provides students with different learning opportunities not only within the classrooms but also outside it through interactive social communication [15].

In the same way, the author examined the impact of using electronic word guessing games on the teaching of English vocabulary to 32 Indonesian students. Data elicitation was carried out based on the employment of an English vocabulary test as pre-and post-tests. Other instruments were also employed in data collection such as observation, interviews, and questionnaires. The observation was used to collect information about the classroom after introducing the computerized word guessing games. The interviews were conducted to verify data collected from the observation instrument. The interviews collected data on the views of teachers and students on the challenges and benefits of using computerized word guessing games to teach English vocabulary to the participants. At the end, the participants were asked to respond to a questionnaire on the effect of using computerized word guessing games on motivating the participants to learn English vocabulary. Anggraini found that the computerized word guessing games were effective in improving Indonesian students' performance in English vocabulary because these games are a collection of various learning tools. These games were also effective in increasing the participants' motivation to learn English vocabulary; they became more enthusiastic in learning because games create friendly learning competition among the participants who really enjoyed taking part in such activities. Games also increased the flexibility of communication among the students according to them, provided real-world learning context. In addition, games varied the participants' learning styles of English vocabulary. What is more important is the students' confidence building and engagement in the processing of teaching and learning. In addition, the use of electronic word-guessing games facilitates the learning and teaching of English vocabulary. Thus, the use of such an electronic-based technique is necessary for teaching English vocabulary to primary school students. It was also observed that there were some technical difficulties that disturbed the use of these electronic games [16].

On the other hand, the author conducts work to study the effectiveness of using word recognition-based methods through using visual aids on Malaysian ESL primary school students' acquisition of English action verbs. The participants were 50 grade 4 students with different learning capabilities. They were divided into 25 control group participants and 25 experimental group participants. Data collection was carried out through the means of English vocabulary pre-and post-test. The English vocabulary test was divided into two parts, with each part containing an image, closed passage, and fill-in-the-blank exercises. The participants were required to choose the correct answer from a list of three options (A, B, and C). The test was designed based on materials included in the textbooks taught to the participants. The experimental group was taught action verbs by using word recognition-based methods and visual aids while the control group studied action verbs through the use of a traditional method based on memorization. In addition, the training provided to the experimental group used electronically derived instructional materials that helped to sustain the spelling and pronunciation of new vocabulary being taught. Chai, et al. reported that there was outperformance in the learning of English action verbs in favor of the experimental group. That is, the word recognition-based method by using visual aids was found more effective in teaching English vocabulary to Malaysian primary school students compared to the traditional method which was based on memorizing new English vocabulary. That effectiveness was proved in accordance with the significant differences that existed between the English vocabulary performance of both groups in the pre-and post-tests [17].

The author work to investigate the effectiveness of employing the media-based Hangman game in teaching English vocabulary to 19 grade five students in Indonesia. Data were collected by using a 20-question English vocabulary test as a pretest and a posttest. The findings indicated that Hangman game was effective in teaching English vocabulary of daily speech to the participants. the game developed the participants' collaborative learning skills in solving problems presented in the game. In other words, the participants' performance in the post-test was higher than their pre-test performance indicating a better improvement in learning English vocabulary due to the use of Hangman game-based instruction. As such, the employment of media-based hangman games helped to improve the participants' proficiency in

learning English vocabulary. It also reinforced their ability to learn in groups. In this regard, the participants had to work in groups to solve puzzles and select words for the word guess. The game also helped the participants to develop their communication skills as they were required to consult their peers and teacher. The employment of hangman game also provides a suitable learning environment where the participants were at ease practicing the game and discussing solutions of the contained puzzles. The game encouraged the participants to learn new English words, terminologies and actively participate in classroom activities [18].

As well as the author explained the effectiveness of using English songs in teaching vocabulary to 28 grade 6 students in his work. Data were collected through a vocabulary test which served as pre-and posttests. The 50-item vocabulary test consists of two main parts: multiple-choice and matching questions. The participants were trained by using various English songs and instructional materials. Rizkian reported that using English songs was effective in teaching to vocabulary to the participants. The use of English songs as a teaching technique led to better improvement in the student's achievement in English vocabulary. In other words, the use of English vocabulary was useful in teaching English vocabulary. The participants had lower scores of the vocabulary pretest before being taught through the use of English songs. The participants achieved higher scores in the English vocabulary posttest in comparison to the pretest. Rizkiani asserted several benefits of the English song techniques for the purpose of English vocabulary to grade 6 students in Jakarta. It increased the relaxation of both teachers and students and lessened anxiety and stress. The English song technique also helped the students to effectively learn more words. Rizkiani recommended that the arrangement of vocabulary teaching materials requires teachers to be creative, innovative, and successful in selecting useful materials. The good election of teaching materials helps pupils to actively participate in English vocabulary learning activities. Teachers are also required, according to Rizkiani, to select entertainment-based teaching strategies that help increase the student's motivation towards learning English vocabulary [19].

Comments on previous studies

Based on the previous studies presented in this research, the importance of using technology and electronic educational programs which help significantly in improving the effectiveness of education and developing students' ability to recognize new words and teach vocabulary related to a foreign language (English). Therefore, the development and improvement of the education strategy have a significant effect to make a second language (English) easier for learners that help to use this language in an easy way.

2 Method

Research design

The present work used a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative analysis [17, 18, 19, 20]. As for quantification, the current work used statistics descriptive such as mean scores, and standard deviations in accounting for the control and experimental groups' performances in the pretest and posttest of English vocabulary. To compare the two groups' performances in the English vocabulary pretest and posttest one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. As for qualitative analysis, the current study used the descriptive approach to delineate the performance of each group in the pretest and posttest,

Participants

Participants are 24 grade 4 students enrolled in Al-Zahraa Basic School for Girls that are divided into two groups control and experimental with 12 participants for each. Data were collected during the 2nd term of the school year 2022-2023.

Procedure

Data collection started in the 2nd term of 2022-2023 as the forty-eight participants took the English vocabulary pretest. Then, they were divided into a control group and an experimental group with 24 students each. The control group was taught English vocabulary using a traditional method, while the experimental group received instruction using internet-based activities (Appendix A). The activities covered pronunciation, spelling, learning of isolated words, words in context, collocation, and expressions. The activities were selected from reliable online sources such as British Council: vocabulary activities, <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-resources/teaching-secondary/activities/beginner-al/vocabulary-activities>, *Fun Vocabulary Activities for Kids*, <https://www.playosmo.com/kids-learning/vocabulary-activities/>, *Kids Learning Ville: Vocabulary Videos*, <https://www.kidslearningville.com/vocabulary-videos/>, *Learn 4th grade English sight Words*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0bKpcbT7FE>, and *21 Ideas for Teaching Vocabulary*, https://www.giftedguru.com/21_ideas_for_teaching_vocabulary/, for the purpose of operating these videos, the administration of Al-Zahraa basic school was cooperative in providing a Laptop and the internet facility. At the end of the 2nd term, two groups of participants sat for the English vocabulary posttest. The English test was piloted by using 20

Data collection instruments

The Cambridge English Language Assessment test was selected for the target of data collection of the present study (Appendix B). The selected test should meet the criteria of appropriateness to the examined students' proficiency level [21, 22], and it should also reflect the English syllabus being taught to the participants [23]. The Cambridge English Assessment test consists of twenty-five multiple questions and was marked out of 100 marks. That is, each question bears four marks. The test examined the participants' ability not only to understand single words, but also their use in sentence structure, collocations, and expressions.

Data analysis

Table 1 indicates the similar English vocabulary pretest performance between the two groups (control and experimental). The minimum and maximum scores of the control group were (49-54), and those of the experimental group were (50-55). The two groups made similar errors in answering vocabulary-related questions such as their inability to differentiate between the use of expressions like 'no problem' and 'no wonder', 'of course, not' and 'so do I', 'that's fine' and 'I do not know if I can', 'I'd like some' and 'I'll use some', 'Sorry, he's not here' and 'I don't think I do', 'will you take it off?' and 'no, you haven't it', etc. The finding was in favour of accepting the first null hypothesis that there is no difference in the English vocabulary pretest performance among the participants.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the two groups' pretest performance

Participants	MS	SD	Min./Max. Scores
Control	2.63	3.46	49-54
Experimental	2.64	2.44	50-55

Table 2 shows there was an improvement in the English vocabulary posttest perform for the two groups. The number of errors made was less for the two groups in comparison to their pretest performance. That improvement was a result of the instruction provided to the two groups. In their posttest performance, both groups indicated higher degrees of mastering English vocabulary and better understanding of using the newly taught English vocabulary. However, the experimental group participants highly outperformed their control group counterparts in the English vocabulary posttest. Thus, the present study rejected the second null hypothesis that the two groups did not differ in their English vocabulary posttest. This finding was evident as the control group's minimum and maximum scores (56-76) were more less than those of the experimental group (59-90). And the experimental group's posttest mean score (13.79) highly exceeded that of the control group (7.46).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of two groups' posttest performance

Participants	MS	SD	Min./Max. Scores
Control	7.46	10.352	56-76
Experimental	13.79	5.381	59-90

Table 3 introduces the results of the paired sample T-Test, it shows that there was no statistically significant difference in the two groups' pretest performance as the p value was > 0.05. On the contrary, there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups' posttest performance in English vocabulary as the p value was < 0.05. Thus, the present study rejects the third null hypothesis that the two groups' posttest performance in English vocabulary did not significantly differ in terms of statistics.

Table 3: The paired samples T-Test

T	M	SD	N	DF	t-value	Sig.
Pretest control group score	2.63	3.46	24	23	5.341	.006
Posttest control group score	7.46	10.35	24	23		
Pretest experimental group score	2.64	2.44	24	23	8.735	000
Posttest experimental group score	13.79	5.38	24	23		

Table 4 shows the obtained results of the independent samples T-Test, it shows that the experimental group's gained mean score of the post-test (11.15) was largely higher than that of the control group (4.83). Furthermore, there was more variance in the control group's posttest performance in comparison to that of the experimental group according to its standard deviation (6.89) compared to (2.94) for the experimental group which made less errors in using the newly taught English vocabulary. Table 4 also verifies the effectiveness of using internet-based activities in teaching English vocabulary to the experimental group in comparison to the traditional method used for the control group's received instruction. The finding is evident as the p-value was < 0.05. Therefore, the present study rejects the fourth null hypothesis that internet-based activities do not have a positive effect on teaching English vocabulary to the

experimental group. The finding is compatible with those reported [17, 18, 19, 20, 25]

Table 4: The independent samples T-Test

Group	N	M Gain Score	SD	DF	t-value	Sig.
Control	24	4.83	6.89	24	3.394	0.000
Experimental	24	11.15	2.94	24		

3 Results and Discussions

Discussion

The findings of the current study showed that both groups (control and experimental) had similar performances in the English vocabulary pre-test. In other words, they made similar errors in answering vocabulary-related questions such as their inability to differentiate between the use of expressions like 'no problem' and 'no wonder', 'of course, not' and 'so do I', 'that's fine' and 'I do not know if I can', etc. The finding was in favor of accepting the first null hypothesis that there is no difference in the English vocabulary pretest performance among the participants.

On the other hand, there was a noticeable difference in the post-test performance of the two groups. Even though there was an improvement in the two groups' post-test performance due to the employment of the traditional method and the internet-based activities, the experimental group highly outperformed the control group. Thus, the present study rejected the second null hypothesis that the two groups' performance does not differ in the English vocabulary posttest. The difference in the two groups' post-test performance had a statistical significance in favor of the experimental group. Therefore, the current study rejected the third null hypothesis that posttest performance in English vocabulary does not have a statistical significance between the two groups of Jordanian grade 4 participants. Furthermore, the experimental group's better performance in the English vocabulary posttest compared to that of their control group counterparts confirmed the effectiveness of using the instruction based on the internet activities in comparison to the traditional method of teaching English vocabulary to the participants. Therefore, the present study rejected the fourth null hypothesis that internet-based activities do not positively affect the experimental groups' performance in the English vocabulary posttest. Therefore, the obtained results are in agreement with some studies as [17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25].

4 Conclusions

The present study found the use of internet-based activities effective in teaching English vocabulary to Jordanian grade 4 students. These activities helped to develop the participants' mastery of English words and improve their performance in the English vocabulary posttest compared to the pretest. Due to the use of these internet-based activities, the students were able to successfully learn, understand and use the newly taught English vocabulary. The resulting benefits were also extended to other features of vocabulary learning including the student's mastery of words' spelling and pronunciation. Thus, the English curriculum planning for the grade 4 students should take into consideration designing syllabi that give room for the use of internet-based activities not only for the purpose of teaching English vocabulary but also for teaching other components of English language skills. That is, the use of these activities can also be extended to teaching listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills. Therefore, it is the role of curriculum planners to integrate internet-based activities into the teaching of English to Jordanian grade 4 students. It is also necessary for the language teaching in Jordan to select the internet-based appropriate teaching materials that can help reinforce their students' comprehension and learning of various components of English language skills including English vocabulary.

5 Recommendations

According to the results obtained, the study recommended for future research:

1. The study is replicable to investigate the effectiveness of using internet-based activities in developing basic school students' language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
2. A study can investigate the impact of using internet-based activities on motivating basic school students towards learning English.
3. A study may discuss the effect of using internet-based activities on basic school students' learning styles and strategies to learn English.
4. A study can explore the effect of using internet-based activities on how language teachers plan their lessons and manage English classrooms.

Conflicts of Interest Statement

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Ethics Statement

This research did not require ethical approval. Data Availability Statement Data associated with the manuscript is public and has been referenced appropriately.

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Online sources:

- British Council: Vocabulary Activities <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-resources/teaching-secondary/activities/beginner-a1/vocabulary-activities>
- Fun Vocabulary Activities for Kids, <https://www.playosmo.com/kids-learning/vocabulary-activities/>,
- Kids Learning Ville: Vocabulary Videos, <https://www.kidslearningville.com/vocabulary-videos/>,
- Learn 4th grade English sight Words, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0bKpcbT7FE>,
- 21 Ideas for Teaching Vocabulary, https://www.giftedguru.com/21_ideas_for_teaching_vocabulary/,

Appendix A

Some of the internet-based Activities

British Council: Teaching English

Vocabulary Activities

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-resources/teaching-secondary/activities/beginner-a1/vocabulary-activities>

- [Spot the vocabulary](#)
- [Collocation pelmanism](#)
- [Quick revision games](#)
- [Word association recitation](#)
- [The revision box](#)
- [The comparison game](#)
- [Stop the bus](#)
- [Adopt a word](#)
- [Lexical threads](#)
- [The memory game](#)
- [Making it up - Phrasal verb stories](#)
- [Word grid](#)

- [Poetic introductions / Picture game](#)
- [Snake-word](#)
- [Definitions - Get rid of it](#)
- [Word guessing games](#)
- [Wall dictionary](#)
- [Same, opposite or different dictation](#)
- [Vocabulary box](#)
- [Hot seat](#)
- [Vocabulary phonemic revision activity](#)
- [Vocabulary self-study activities](#)

Appendix B

English Vocabulary Test

<https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/test-your-english/for-schools/>

Cambridge: English Language Assessment

1. Could you tell me your surname?
Would you like me to spell it? Do you like my family name? How do I say that?
2. This plant looks dead.
It's in the garden. It only needs some water. It's sleeping.
3. I hope it doesn't rain.
Of course not. Will it be wet? So do I.
4. Are you going to come inside soon?
Forever. Not long. In a minute.
5. Who gave you this book, Lucy?
I bought it. For my birthday. My uncle was.
6. Shall we go out for pizza tonight?
I know that. It's very good. I'm too tired.
7. Do you mind if I come too?
That's fine! I'd like to. I don't know if I can.
8. There's someone at the door.
Can I help you? Well, go and answer it then. He's busy at the moment.
9. How much butter do I need for this cake?

I'd like one. I'll use some. I'm not sure.

10. How long are you here for?

Since last week. Ten days ago. Till tomorrow.

11. Have you guys had enough to eat?

That's all right. Is there any more rice? It's not the right time.

12. That's my coat over there.

Will you take it off? No, you haven't! Here you are.

13. Let's go by bus.

The train was expensive. We'll buy a ticket. It'll take too long.

14. Do you know my brother Charlie?

Sorry, he's not here. I don't think I do. I know.

15. Would you like some ice in your drink or not?

I hope so. Yes, I shall. I don't mind.

16. I hope I haven't you any trouble by changing the arrangements.

put caused made done

17. The floor is wet: don't run or you might!

stoop spill slip spin

18. When you come to my house, your camera with you.

take show fetch bring

19. Paul arrived at the shop as the manager was closing for the day.

even just still right

20. I would to stay at home and relax for a change.

rather better prefer enjoy

21. Is there of food for everyone?

adequate enough sufficient plenty

22. Lily says she's happy at school but she's complaining.

rarely sometimes always often

23. the step when you go in.

Consider Mind Attend Look

24. stay the night if it's too difficult to get home.

At all costs By all means In all On the whole

25. No Hannah is happy when you think how many prizes she has won recently.

surprise problem question wonder