

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW
MANAGEMENT & HUMANITIES

[ISSN 2581-5369]

Volume 5 | Issue 2

2022

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Designing Supplementary Vocabulary Exercises to Enhance Vocabulary for 10th Graders

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ABSTRACT

It cannot be denied that vocabulary is considered to be the beginning of learning a language and determines the success of learners. For this reason, teaching and learning vocabulary need special attention from both teachers and learners. However, the design of vocabulary exercises in the English textbooks used in a school program in Viet Nam is little, which is a small part of the vocabulary designed in the Language section and a review exercise in Looking Back one. The study is aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of using supplementary vocabulary exercises to enhance vocabulary for 10th graders and collect students' feedback on the benefits and drawbacks of the supplementary vocabulary exercises. Thence solutions are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of the supplementary vocabulary exercises. The study was carried out using a quasi-experimental research design and survey. The study's participants were 41 students of which 20 students were selected randomly to the experimental group (using a set of supplementary vocabulary exercises) while 21 of them were assigned to the control group (non-using supplementary vocabulary exercises). While all 41 students were asked to participate in pre-tests and post-tests, only those in the experimental group responded to questions about the difficulties when using supplementary exercises and their desire to use them. Following the use of supplementary exercises, the finding reveals that the students' vocabulary was improved significantly after 15 weeks of the experiment. Furthermore, students' feedback on the use of supplementary exercises is generally active, and recommendations for using a set of supplementary exercises are offered in order to make the supplementary exercises more relevant and efficient.

Keywords: *vocabulary, supplementary exercises, 10th graders.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is considered to be the beginning of learning a foreign language and determines

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the success of learners. According to the famous linguist, Wilkin D.A once said that “Without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed.”

Whether spoken or written, learners need a vocabulary to communicate and understand others. And vocabulary plays an important role in all language skills e.g. listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Nation, 2001). Furthermore, Rivers and Nunan (1991) argue that acquiring a vocabulary sufficient language is essential for successful second language use because without an extensive vocabulary we would not be able to use the structures and functions we may have learned to communicate intelligibly. For this reason, teaching and learning vocabulary needs special attention from both teachers and learners.

However, the design of vocabulary exercises in the school program in Viet Nam is very little, which is a small part of the vocabulary designed in the Language section and a review exercise in Looking Back one. Therefore, it is very difficult for students to memorize and develop their vocabulary.

For the above-mentioned reasons, doing supplementary exercises on vocabulary is really necessary for high school students in Viet Nam. To carry out the research, the researchers initially measured the effectiveness of using supplementary vocabulary exercises. After that, the students' feedback on the benefits and drawbacks of the supplementary vocabulary exercises were collected. Then, solutions are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of the supplementary vocabulary exercises.

II. IDENTIFY, RESEARCH AND COLLECT THE IDEA

(A) Key concepts

Vocabulary

A student's vocabulary is a collection of terms that they are familiar with (Linse, 2005:121). There are certain professionals who provide vocabulary definitions. Hatch and Brown (1995:1) defined vocabulary as a list of terms for a specific language or a list or group of words that individual language speakers may be using. Furthermore, according to Webster Dictionary (1985:1073), vocabulary is defined as a list or collection of words, generally alphabetically organized and explained, or lexicon, stock of words used in language or by class, personal, or other means.

Meanwhile, "Vocabulary can be characterized, basically, as the words we teach in the foreign language," says Carter (1987). A new piece of vocabulary, on the other hand, may consist of more than one word: for example, half-brother and sister-in-law, both of which are made up of

two or three words yet represent the single idea. A useful approach is to refer to vocabulary "items" rather than "words" in all such circumstances. Furthermore, Burns (1972) defines vocabulary as "a person's, classes, our profession's bank of words." Vocabulary is important to language and critical to regular language learning, according to Zimmerman, as cited in Coady and Huckin (1998).

Vocabulary, according to Walch (2003:1), is the collection of words you hear and read during your life. It means that knowing the pronunciation and meaning of a word isn't enough; you also need to grasp how to apply it in everyday situations.

Based on the theoretical basis above, vocabulary is defined as the total number of words required to transmit ideas and represent the speaker's meaning. It is for this reason that learning vocabulary is critical.

Supplementary exercises

Supplementary exercises are those materials that are quite helpful in improving the quality of teaching and learning. These aids are supplementary devices by which the teacher tries new concepts or words, establishes new ideas, makes interpretations, ensures correct appreciation of facts, reteaches, and reviews his instruction.

Supplementary exercises have great importance in the teaching of English because of the sensory experiences they provide to children. According to Dash, true education of the intellect can only come through proper exercise and training of bodily organs, hands, feet, eyes, ears, and nose. Research done by Cobun (1968) indicates that 100% of learning occurs when teaching appeals to all the senses of the learner. The role of supplementary material is to stimulate children's interest in the learning task, imagination, events, the power of observation, and motivation for further knowledge. They help to reduce meaningless and excessive verbalism on part of the teacher. Supplementary materials provide direct, first-hand, and vicarious experiences about people, places, objects, and happenings. They help to elicit pupils' participation in the teaching-learning process and create a better environment in the classroom.

The use of supplementary materials has a great influence in making the learning process easier (Hermínia and Herrera 2012). Tomlison (1998) considers that supplementary material is "anything which is used by teachers or learners to facilitate the learning of a language. Brewster, Ellis, and Girard (1992) go further and define supplemental learning materials as "any and all non-textbook resources teachers and staff would use to facilitate student learning".

Bierner (1992) argues that the teacher should be aware that the textbook is not the only resource in the classroom. It can be used in the class but there are other materials that may be used in

second language learning and teaching. Cameron (2011) also says that teachers sometimes use textbooks to cover their teaching needs and textbooks do not always fulfil their syllabus at all. Bierner claims that the first step to supplement the book and motivate the students is to understand how they learn. Then supplements may be designed to help the students learn better. According to Spratt, et al (2005) supplementary materials try to cover the gaps that a textbook cannot cover, and Herrera and Hermínia (2012) say that using supporting materials in an English language class makes it more interesting and motivating.

The use of supplementary material in the classroom makes a huge difference in education. Nowadays, things have changed and a teacher's job is not only to use that power for teaching but also for taking advantage of every additional aid and use it wisely to achieve the objectives of the class (Herrera and Hermínia).

Type of supplementary exercises

Nation (2001) recommends the following exercises for vocabulary learning. These exercises are believed to help the students acquire all aspects of vocabulary learning: meaning, form, and use.

Meaning	Word and meaning matching Labelling Sentence completion Crossword puzzles Semantic analysis Completing lexical sets
Form	Following spelling rules Recognizing word parts Building word family tables
Use	Sentence completion Collocation matching Collocation tables Interpreting dictionary entries

(B) Previous research

A lot of research has been done to analyze the effectiveness of using supplementary materials in improving vocabulary. The research was carried out by Windyaningrum, Brigitta E. (2011) about "Supplementary Materials to Teach Vocabulary Based on Task-Based Learning for Seventh Graders". This study was aimed to help High School teachers provide interesting supplementary materials for seventh-grade students by designing integrated task-based vocabulary supplementary materials. The results of the study showed that the designed supplemental materials were very helpful for seventh graders and teachers in teaching and learning vocabulary and it inspired English teachers to develop creative activities to help students develop vocabulary while learning.

A study was conducted by Vera Figueroa (2012) on the use of supplementary materials in EFL classes found that the right use of supplementary material is essential to provide meaningful learning experiences and improve students' vocabulary.

Anuyahong, Bundit (2018) conducted research on using English vocabulary supplements for advanced learning engineering and business vocabulary from college students. The results show that the effectiveness of EFL supplementary vocabulary learning materials for students in this experiment is 80.14 / 82.94, higher than the defined criteria (80 / 80). It has been proven that the EFL supplementary vocabulary learning material for this group is very effective.

Another research in Viet Nam aimed to enhance the student's vocabulary retention through supplementary activities was done by Quan Thi Minh Nguyet. This research was done in four steps: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. She applied paper flashcards to the first cycle which got the students excited in class and they got to be more involved in the lesson. Students were able to express some definitions or try to use new words learned to speak English more in class. In the second cycle, she used digital flashcards and noticed a marked improvement in the students' use of sesame. Students were interested in complementary activities to improve vocabulary.

It is noticeable that there are many studies related to the design of vocabulary exercises to help students improve their vocabulary in teaching English and the effectiveness of this method is to improve their vocabulary. From there, students can confidently use learned vocabulary in communication. This study was conducted to evaluate the impact of using supplementary exercise for the improvement of the vocabulary of the 10th graders.

III. METHODOLOGY

(A) Research design

The researchers have used an experimental research design which consisted of an experimental group and a control group randomly selected from a class of the senior high school in Viet Nam. The pilot trial was carried out with 41 students and all had the same level of English ability in order to ensure that there are no significant differences in students' knowledge. This study was aimed at evaluating the impact of using supplementary exercises on enhancing our students' vocabulary. Afterwards, the post-questionnaire was delivered to students at the end of the study aiming to find out their opinion of using supplementary exercises and their desire of the use, the advantages of this technique, as well as potential solutions to make it more effective.

(B) Participants

The study's participants were 41 people in the 10A1 class in Hiep Hoa high school No.2, Viet Nam. The random group of 20 people served as the experimental group while the other group served as a control group.

All of these students were required to take a pre-test, and a post-test, but only the experimental group filled in the feedback survey questionnaire on using supplementary exercises and suggestions on how to improve the design of supplementary exercises to make them more effective.

(C) Data collection instruments

Tests

Before carrying out the experiment, the pre-test was given to the students with 50 multiple choice questions on vocabulary in 60 minutes based on vocabulary the students had learnt before. The researchers then marked and calculated the students' test scores to assess students' initial vocabulary level.

The post-test included 100 multiple choice questions on vocabulary done in 120 minutes that was being done at the end of the experiment. This test would cover the vocabulary that the students had learnt from unit one to unit ten of the grade 10th syllabus. The score of the post-test would be compared to the score of the pre-test to measure the effectiveness of using supplementary vocabulary exercises to enhance vocabulary for the students.

The questionnaires

The survey questionnaires were conducted to gather students' opinions about their attitudes toward using supplementary exercises and collect students' feedback on their advantages and difficulties when practising supplementary exercises, and recommendations to better design them.

Procedure of the study

The experiment took place in the second semester of the academic year 2021-2022. 41 students from class 10A1 in Hiep Hoa high school No.2, Viet Nam participated in the research. The exercises were designed which related to the vocabulary of the topics of the textbooks that students are learning in the English curriculum in high schools by MOET Viet Nam. The students practised supplementary exercises to improve vocabulary as described in the table below:

Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduced the research, instructed steps in carrying out the study for students. - Created a Zalo group including the researchers and 20 participants. - The students did the pre-test.
Week 2 Topic 1: Family life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gave the students the supplementary exercises to practice. - The students submitted their exercises to the researchers.
Week 3 Topic 02: Your body and you	
Week 4 Topic 03: Music	
Week 5 Review 1	The students did vocabulary review exercises related to topics 1, 2, 3.
Week 6 Topic 04: For a better community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gave the students the supplementary exercises to practice.
Week 7	

Topic 05: Inventions	- The students submitted their exercises to the researchers.
Week 8 Topic 06: Gender equality	
Week 9 Review 2	Vocabulary review exercises related to topics 4, 5, 6.
Week 10 Topic 07: Cultural diversity	- Gave students the supplementary exercises to practice. - Asked them to submit their exercises to the researcher in the classroom.
Week 11 Topic 08: New ways to learn	
Week 12 Topic 09: Preserving the environment	
Week 13 Topic 10: Ecotourism	
Week 14 Review 3	Vocabulary review exercises related to topics 7, 8, 9, 10.
Week 15	- Asked them to do the post-test after they practised 10 topics. - Asked them to do the post-questionnaires.

IV. RESEARCH RESULTS ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

(A)The impacts of supplementary exercises on students' vocabulary.

Independent Samples Test								
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-	Mean Differen	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the

						tailed)	ce	Differen	Difference	
								ce	Lower	Upper
Pre - test	Equal variances assumed	1.805	.187	1.919	39	.062	.46857	.24423	-.02544	.96258
	Equal variances not assumed			1.946	30.519	.061	.46857	.24078	-.02282	.95996

Table 1. Results of the Independent Samples Test in the Pre-test

As can be seen in table 1, Sig. (or p-value) is greater than 0.05, (Sig. = .187). The researchers can confirm that the two groups are similar in terms of qualifications and competencies. There is no significant difference in the standard deviation of both groups (less than 0.011), the more certain showing that the control group and the experimental group have similar qualifications, not much difference.

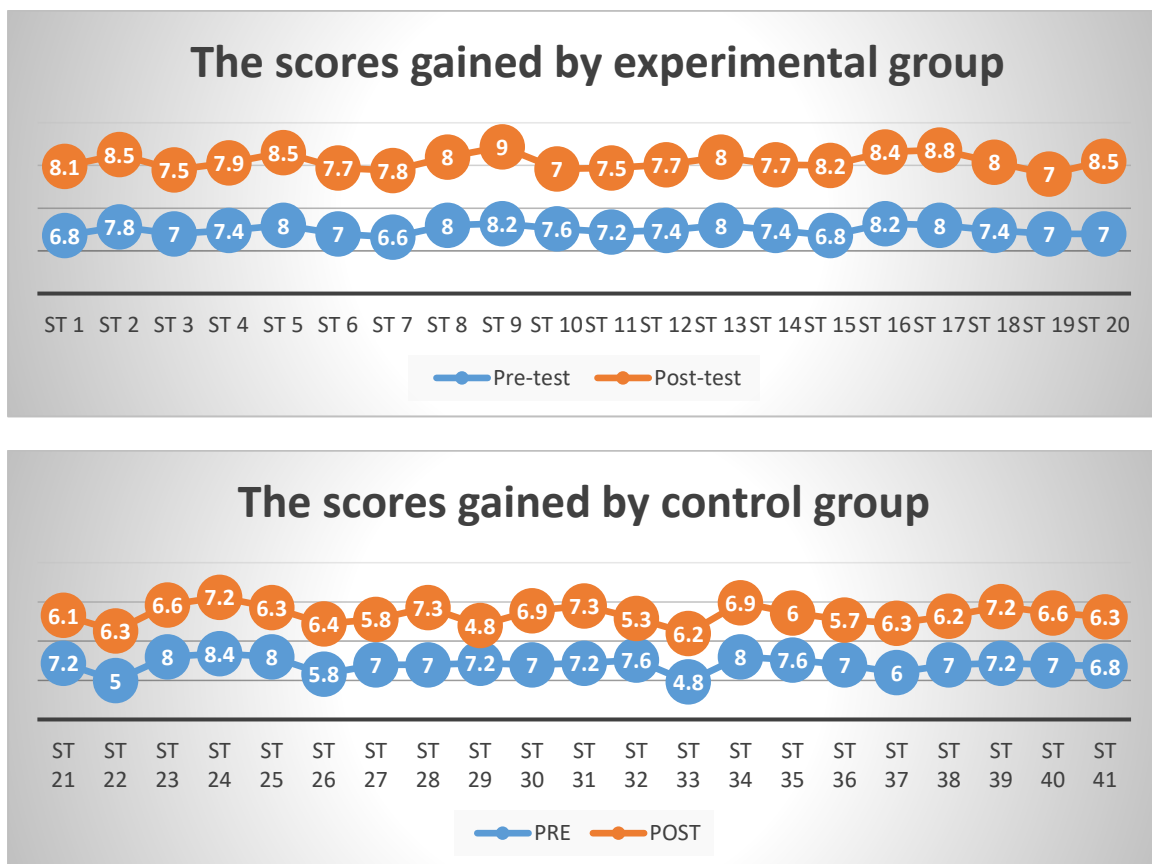


Figure 1. The test scores of students

The graph shows that all students in both groups had above the average pre-test scores of 5 to 8.4 points. Specifically, there is a difference between the scores of the experimental group (the group that used the supplementary material) and the control group (the group that did not use the supplementary exercise). However, when looking at the scores of the experimental group after doing additional exercises, the marks have increased although they are not really high. It can be clearly seen that the test scores of the group using supplementary materials rise from 1 to 2 points, while the scores of the control group tend substantially unaltered from the pre-test. In order to have more analysis, the average scores by students are computed and shown in the following bar chart:

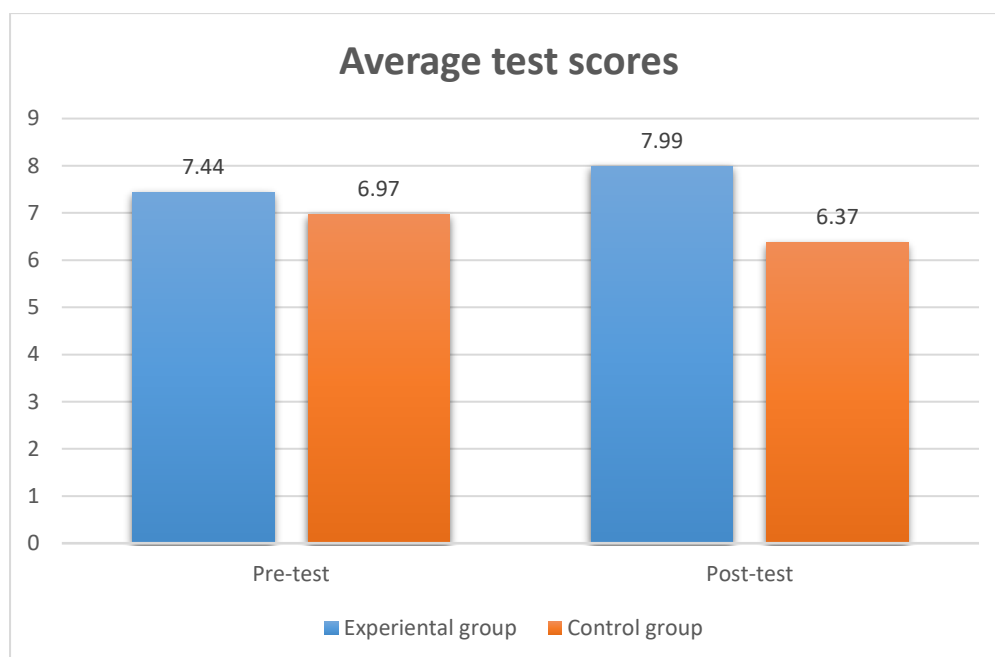


Figure 2. Average the test scores of students

Through the bar graph, it can be seen that there is a difference between the pre-test scores and the post-test scores of both the control group and the experimental group. Although, it has not been a rather large difference in the post-test scores of the experimental group compared with the control group. Specifically, the mean scores of the previous tests of the experimental group and the control group were almost the same 7.44 and 6.97, respectively. However, it can be seen that after participating in practice using vocabulary supplementary exercise, the experimental group gained higher mean scores than the control group (1.62 points higher). In other words, the mean score of the test of the experimental group was 7.99 while the score of the control group was only 6.37. It can be concluded that the use of supplementary exercises has an impact on the improvement of students' vocabulary.

(B) Students' attitude toward practising via supplementary exercises in questionnaires.

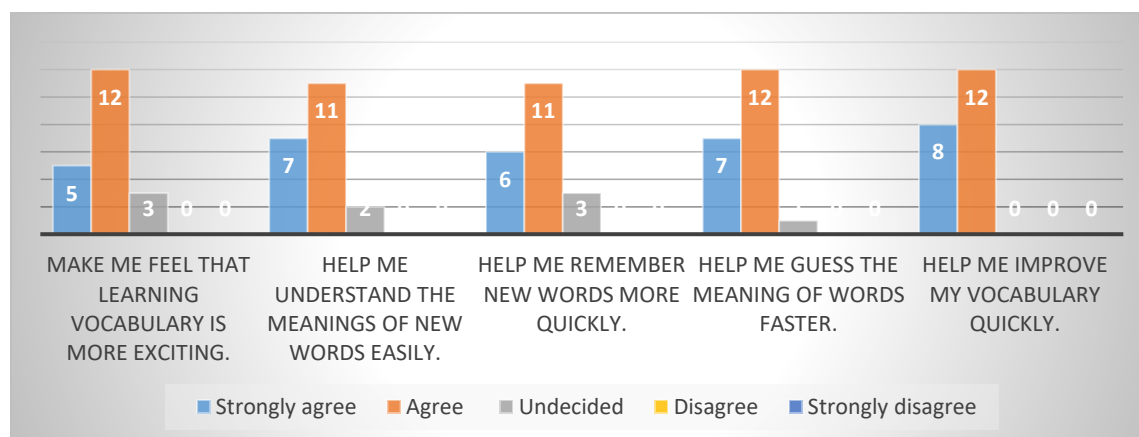
	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
1. Using supplementary exercises for vocabulary learning is enjoyable.	9	9	2	0	0
2. I like to review vocabulary through the supplementary exercises.	7	1	12	0	0
3. I understood the purpose of supplementary exercises clearly.	7	9	4	0	0
4. I have strictly followed the request of the teacher when participating in the experiment.	7	8	3	2	0
5. I have not experienced any technical difficulty with supplementary exercises	3	5	8	3	1
6. It was easy to practice with supplementary exercises	5	7	6	2	0
7. I will continue to use supplementary exercises to improve my vocabulary.	7	12	1	0	0
8. I feel more confident in my vocabulary.	7	5	8	0	0
9. Doing supplementary exercises is a useful method to help me enhance my	7	10	3	0	0

vocabulary.					
10. Students should do supplementary exercises more often to improve their vocabulary	5	13	2	0	0

To obtain information about students' attitudes towards the practice of vocabulary supplementary exercises, the researchers used a questionnaire consisting of 10 questions about the interests, confidence, and effectiveness of using the vocabulary supplementary exercises to learn new words. The results showed that all of them found using this method very enjoyable. Learners enjoy reviewing the vocabulary they have learned through doing supplementary exercises. Under the guidance of the researchers, all the students understood the purpose and correct use of this method. However, among the students participating in the experiment, two students said that they did not really strictly follow the teacher's request when participating in the experiment, the rest all did some work and submitted the work on time.

Four out of twenty students including students 4, 5, 11, 17 reported in questionnaires that they had some technical difficulties with the supplementary exercises, namely that they could not submit their papers on time due to network connection errors. All students said that they really found it easy to practice with the exercises and continued to use the exercises to improve their vocabulary after the experiment was over. Interestingly, all of the participants got used to practising the supplementary exercises and felt more confident about their vocabulary. All agreed that the supplementary vocabulary exercises are a useful self-study tool and should be widely adopted.

(C) Students' opinions on the advantages of supplementary exercises.



The researchers conducted a survey questionnaire on student feedback after the use of supplementary exercises. As can be seen from the chart, 85% of participants agreed that applying supplementary exercises helped them feel more interested in learning vocabulary. In addition, 18 out of 20 students said that this method helped them understand the meaning of words more easily and memorize them faster. In particular, all students said that practising the supplementary exercises assisted them in guessing the meaning of words faster and improved their vocabulary significantly.

(D) Students' suggestions for making the supplementary exercises more relevant and efficient.

Suggested solutions	Frequency
1. Teachers should extend topics beyond the main curriculum for students' practice.	15
2. Teachers should give instructions clearer for students to understand what they need to do.	5
3. Teachers should insert some examples of the exercises to make it easier for students to understand.	7
4. The choice of colours in a set of supplementary exercises should be considered more.	4

To make the supplementary exercise more relevant and effective, the students recommended expanding vocabulary topics. In addition, giving instructions and adding examples to the exercises were also recommended for the purpose to help students understand the task clearly. Finally, designing supplementary exercises with eye-catching colours also helps students get more excited when practising. With the suggestions above, the researcher can somewhat design more complete and effective supplementary exercises.

V. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study show that using vocabulary exercises is beneficial for learners' vocabulary development. Furthermore, most of the students had an optimistic attitude towards the documentary dubbing activity. By comparing the group that used supplementary exercises and the group that did not use supplementary exercises, the study showed that there was a rather large gap between these two groups. The students' vocabulary scores on the later test were higher than the scores on the previous test. This illustrates that there is a significant relationship

between the use of supplementary exercises and vocabulary improvement.

First, there are more chances for the students to practice vocabulary besides the exercises available on 10 common topics in the English textbooks in Vietnam. Based on the actual situation, all students have to study online due to the epidemic, they do not have many lessons to practice new words. Therefore, the set of supplementary exercises will help students self-review and expand their vocabulary. Second, with a diverse approach to exercises, students are more confident in the tests and understand the basic test-taking tips. As a result, motivation and interest in learning vocabulary through supplementary exercises are developed, which has a significant relationship with the language proficiency of high school students. Finally, significant improvement in students' vocabulary through supplementary exercises is promoted. Students have more autonomy in learning their vocabulary and are therefore able to retain the words for immediate and future use. In summary, vocabulary supplementary exercises have potential value for the vocabulary development of 10th-grade students in particular and foreign language learning in general and should therefore be included in the syllabus or supplementary documents.

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