Using Output Tasks to Improve 11th Graders' English Vocabulary: An Action Research Project

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ABSTRACT: *The study adopted an action research design to investigate the effectiveness of output tasks in increasing vocabulary for grade-11 students at a high school in Vinh Phuc Province, Vietnam. The study was conducted for 40 participants whose English proficiency was assessed at the levels of A2 or B1. In the study, several output tasks, mostly creative ones that involved prompting students to actively use their vocabulary in spoken or written production, were incorporated into the lessons using the textbook Tiếng Anh 11- Global Success. To assess the impact of the output tasks, the researcher employed multiple data collection tools. Pre-and post-study tests assessed improvement in the students' vocabulary knowledge, while questionnaires mainly explored their attitudes towards the implemented activities and vocabulary learning. The teacher's observation also helped provide valuable insights into students' engagement and learning progress. After the two action research cycles, the results revealed that the students made satisfactory progress in their English vocabulary. The results also indicated that the students held positive attitudes towards the output activities in particular and vocabulary learning in general. This study, therefore, has pedagogical implications for the use of output tasks in facilitating English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) vocabulary acquisition.*

1. Introduction

Vocabulary is a key component of language proficiency, and students with a wide lexical range can understand and learn new materials with ease. Wilkins (1972) highlighted the need to focus on teaching vocabulary to EFL students by claiming that "without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed." This verifies the significant role of vocabulary in language acquisition. However, the researcher noticed some problems with English vocabulary among her students. By monitoring their learning process and conducting vocabulary proficiency tests at the beginning of the academic year, the researcher found that the students struggled to retain the vocabulary they had learned. The issues with vocabulary became worse when vocabulary was assessed beyond simple recall. The students could hardly use new words effectively in written and spoken communication. This highlighted a critical gap between initial exposure to vocabulary and successful long-term memory and active use of the words. Besides, there was a lack of motivation among students when it came to acquiring lexical knowledge. Such problems faced by English learners could be attributed to the traditional teaching method and lack of vocabulary recycling tasks in the textbook. The review book on teaching, learning, and testing vocabulary by D. V. Vu & Peters (2021) mentioned a common procedure of teaching vocabulary found in many EFL classrooms in Vietnam. In the book, the authors stated that Vietnamese EFL teachers might write a list of new English words on the board at the start of the lesson, provide Vietnamese equivalents, demonstrate pronunciation, and then ask the learners to repeat the words several times. In the next lesson, the teacher might ask some learners to demonstrate their memorization of the words by writing the correct spelling on the board. D. V. Vu & Peters (2021) eventually suggested that Vietnamese EFL teachers should help their students practise employing activities that emphasize the value of utilizing words frequently in speaking and writing. Considering this suggestion and noticing the current vocabulary issues, the researcher adopted an action research project on using output tasks to facilitate the learners' vocabulary acquisition.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Output Tasks and the Output Hypothesis

Output tasks are defined as the tasks that ask learners to generate the language on their own (Willis & Pinter, 2005). Students can practise utilizing the language they have learned or express their own thoughts and opinions through output tasks. This is aligned with what is stated by Richards & Rodgers (2001), who defined output tasks as "tasks that require learners to produce language to complete the task." They argued that output tasks are essential for language learning because they help learners practise using the language, promote learners' autonomy and creativity, help them develop their problem-solving skills, and encourage them to focus on both form and accuracy.

Regarding lexical instructions, an output task is referred to by Beck et al. (2013) as an activity in which students must produce something, such as writing a sentence or a paragraph using a new vocabulary or creating a presentation about a new vocabulary concept. Such productive tasks are important for vocabulary learning because they help students practise using the words in a meaningful way.

The *output hypothesis* is a theory of second language acquisition (SLA) that was proposed by Swain (1985), who defined the *output hypothesis* as "the act of producing language that constitutes, under certain circumstances, part of the process of second language learning". The hypothesis states that learners acquire language through the process of producing language, or output. Swain (1985) argued that when learners produce language, they are forced to focus on the form of the language as well as the meaning.

The *output hypothesis* has been supported by a number of studies since it helps learners develop their second language skills in a number of areas, including grammar, vocabulary, and pragmatics (Hinkel, 2005). The *output hypothesis* has been influential in language teaching, and it has led to the development of a number of teaching methods that focus on output, like task-based learning.

2.2. Types of Output Tasks

According to Richards & Rodgers (2001), there are four types of output tasks that can be used to teach a variety of language skills and elements, including vocabulary. *Information gap tasks* involve learners having different facts and needing to communicate with each other to complete the tasks. *Problem-solving tasks* require learners to work together to solve a problem. In *decision-making tasks*, learners take opposing sides of an issue and argue their case. Finally, *creative tasks* provide students with opportunities to use their imagination to produce something new in the target language. *Writing a poem*, *designing a poster*, or *creating a story* are typical examples of *creative tasks*.

Regarding vocabulary classroom instructions, Beck et al. (2013) emphasized that output tasks are crucial for helping learners learn new words and use them in their own communication. They put them into two categories - *receptive productive* and *generative productive tasks*. *Receptive productive tasks* require students to produce a response that is based on something they have read or heard. *Generative productive tasks* ask students to produce something new, such as writing a poem or a story, or making a presentation that uses new words or about a new vocabulary concept. The latter is generally considered to be more effective because they require students to use the words in a more creative and thoughtful way. Beck et al. (2013) then listed a number of examples of productive tasks that can be used to teach vocabulary, including s*entence writing*, *story writing*, and *role-playing*.

2.3. Output Tasks and Vocabulary Acquisition

Vocabulary can be thought of as having a receptive vein when it is first introduced to or encountered by learners. But new knowledge does not become productive until the student can truly use the lexical items; this is when the learner develops a more sophisticated schema for the word and its relationships with other lexical items (Nation, 1990). Regarding the importance of output tasks in vocabulary gains, Brown (2005) maintained that output is essential for vocabulary acquisition, and he identified four main roles of output, namely (1) retrieving lexicons from students' memory, (2) providing

feedback from the teacher or from other learners, (3) offering greater frequency of using words and (4) engaging students in communication. Brown (2005) also stated that output should be graded appropriately for the learner's level of language proficiency, by which he meant that higher-level learners should be given opportunities to produce words in more open-ended contexts, such as having a conversation or writing an essay. In conclusion, output tasks play a vital role in vocabulary acquisition and they should be graded appropriately for the learner's language proficiency.

2.4. Previous Studies

Several studies support the use of output tasks for vocabulary acquisition. For instance, Kaivanpanah et al. (2020) investigated the effect of input-based and output-based tasks with different and identical involvement loads on Iranian EFL learners' incidental vocabulary learning. The study showed that both input-based and output-based tasks led to incidental vocabulary learning, but output-based tasks were more effective. This was because output-based tasks required learners to engage with the language more deeply and think about the meaning of the words they were using. Additionally, high involvement loads encouraged learners to pay more attention to the language and notice new words. The implications of the study for teaching practice is that teachers should focus on using output-based tasks with high involvement loads in their classrooms in order to maximize students' incidental vocabulary learning.

It is indicated in another article that output can have a positive effect on second language (L2) vocabulary acquisition regarding the aspects of noticing, retrieval, and retention. The author found that learners who participated in output-based activities outperformed learners who did not on tests of vocabulary noticing, retrieval, and retention. The study suggested that teachers should provide learners with opportunities to produce language in order to help them develop their L2 vocabulary. This could be done by incorporating a variety of output-based activities into the classroom (Kwon, 2007).

To compare the effectiveness of input and output tasks, Bao (2019) investigated the usefulness of input and output tasks in enhancing EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition. The study concluded that output tasks (definition and combining) were more effective for vocabulary acquisition than input tasks (matching and choice). These findings suggested that incorporating output tasks in vocabulary instructions can be beneficial for learners at all proficiency levels. By putting output tasks in relation with other elements, various studies also affirmed the effectiveness of output tasks in increasing vocabulary gains for English language learners. For example, Nowbakht (2015) examined the benefits of understandable input, output, and corrective feedback on the receptive learning of L2 vocabulary items. The study's findings showed that the group that produced output and, if needed, received feedback outperformed the group that only received input. This study highlighted the benefits of incorporating output and corrective feedback alongside comprehensible input for effective vocabulary acquisition in language learning. Likewise, Sarani et al. (2013) investigated how task type and involvement load affected the learning of vocabulary, suggesting that when productive and receptive tasks were under the same load, productive tasks were shown to be more effective than receptive ones.

There are also a number of studies investigating the effectiveness of certain types of output tasks. The study on output and vocabulary gains (Holster & Delint, 2012) Girsai (2008 compared the effects of mechanical output tasks (e.g., matching words to definitions, translating words from one language to another) and creative output tasks (e.g., writing a story using new vocabulary words) on vocabulary gains over one semester, suggesting that creative output tasks may be more effective for long-term vocabulary gains than mechanical output tasks. The study on collaborative output by Nassaji & Tian (2014) looked at how vocabulary acquisition in a L2 language is influenced by coproduction of language forms, or collaborative output and it showed that collaborative output plays a supportive role in helping L2 vocabulary learning.

From a different perspective, the study by Shirzad et al. (2017) advocated both input and output hypotheses and indicated that at a lower level, exposure to new language was more important than the type and sequence of presentation. The research, thus, suggested further investigation should focus on different levels of language proficiency.

In Vietnam, the experimental study by Duong et al. (2021) examined how spoken input-based and output-based activities differ in their effects on vocabulary knowledge. The study also examined whether exposure to such productive tasks leads to greater learning gains than exposure to input-only (no follow-up task) instructions. The results revealed that participants who only received L2 input gained noticeably less vocabulary than those who participated in input- and output-based tasks, and the vocabulary gains for the input-based and output-based tasks were equal.

2.5. Research Gap

Although there have been many endeavors to investigate the role of output tasks in teaching vocabulary, most of the teaching contexts were in foreign countries. Surprising results may be yielded when output tasks are applied in EFL classes in Vietnam. There is still uncertainty about the extent to which output activities help improve vocabulary acquisition and retention for secondary Vietnamese students. On top of that, most of the studies, both international and national, used experimental research design, so there should be an action research project to investigate the extent to which output tasks help increase students' vocabulary gains. The author ultimately proposes a new direction for investigation- a study to figure out the degree of effectiveness of output tasks in improving vocabulary for learners at a high school, where the students have higher English proficiency than that of the participants in the research by Shirzad et al. (2017).

Taking into account the literature and its research gaps, this study used an action research design to (1) determine the effectiveness of output tasks in increasing 11th graders' vocabulary and their attitudes towards using output tasks in lexical classroom instructions and

(2) provide pedagogical implications for further improving vocabulary teaching procedures in the Vietnamese classroom context.

In this study, two research questions were addressed:

(1) To what extent do output tasks help improve 11th grader's English vocabulary?

(2) What are 11th graders' attitudes towards output tasks in improving their English vocabulary?

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This project used action research design. According to Burns (2009), action research is a self-reflective and systematic approach to inquiry, with the aim of identifying problems encountered by the participants and conducting further investigation to bring about critical changes in practice. The study followed the 4-step cycle of action research supported by Burns (2009): plan, act, observe and reflect.
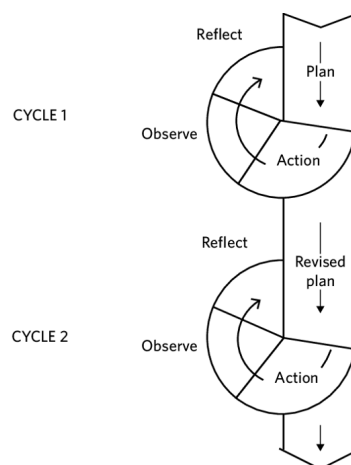

Figure 1. Two-cycle Action Research Model (Burns, 2009)

Plan: Planning the action

The problems of low motivation in vocabulary sections and poor lexical gains among students, as hypothesized by the researcher, might result from the lack of vocabulary recycling activities in the textbook and conventional methods used in lexical instructions. The researcher, therefore, decided to employ output tasks (mostly creative tasks) as supplementary activities after words were presented and practised through input exercises.

Action: Putting the plan into action

According to the procedure, the action took place during eight weeks (from week 10 to week 17 of the school year 2023-2024). The pedagogical intervention, the use of output tasks in this study, were implemented after the first four lessons of unit 3 and unit 4 (Getting started, Language, Reading, and Speaking) after several topic-related words had been introduced to the students. Diverse output activities including *information gap* (*surveying* and *questioning*), *sentence writing*, and *storytelling* were respectively incorporated in the next four lessons (Listening, Writing, Communication and Culture, and Looking Back and Project) and performed within 5–7 minutes. All the output tasks revolved around the target words that the students had learned in the previous lessons with the textbook.

Observe: Observing the results of the plan

The researcher observed how students performed in class and how their vocabulary was improved following the use of output tasks. The classroom interaction, class atmosphere and students' reaction to the teacher were noted down in an observation checklist, focusing on how properly the students used the target words and how actively they responded to the teacher's requests when they joined the output activities. In this stage, the researcher observed and took notes during her teaching process.

Reflect: Reflecting and planning for further action

After 4 weeks of implementation of some output tasks, the author, by observing the students' involvement in the tasks and their ability to fulfill them, found that storytelling appeared to be too challenging for students to perform in such a short period of time. The author figured out that the activity required spontaneous use of the target vocabulary, which was unfeasible as the students needed time to organize ideas and rehearse their stories. The author then decided to make some changes to the task of storytelling. Accordingly, instead of asking students to create a story immediately in the class, the teacher assigned the task as homework to groups of four students. Afterwards, they told their newly-created stories at the beginning of the next lesson. This meant that there was a need for another cycle of action research.

In the second cycle, the author kept students performing output tasks such as *information gap* (*surveying* and *questioning*) and *sentence writing* at the end of the lessons in unit 4, but required students to work in groups of four and create a story using all the target words at home. This gave students more time to fulfill the task, making the task more achievable for the students.

3.2. Research Method

The study adopted the mixed-method approach, which involves collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting both qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). In this study, quantitative data were gathered through the use of a pre-test, a post-test and five-point Likert scale statements in the questionnaire; and qualitative data relied on open-ended questions and the teacher's observation.

3.3. Participants

The participants in this research included 40 grade-11 students (30 girls and 10 boys) at a high school in Vinh Yen City, Vinh Phuc Province, Vietnam. Students in this class, aged 17, had a wide range of academic abilities. Regarding English proficiency, the learners, assessed at levels of A2 and B1, have a fairly good understanding of basic grammar and vocabulary but could not communicate effectively in speaking and writing. They were also familiar with the learner-centered philosophy of education and therefore, were able to work individually or in groups to perform language tasks rather effectively.

3.4. Data Collection Tools

Following the mixed-method approach meant that the teacher relied on both quantitative and qualitative data for analysis. The following instruments were utilized to investigate how much the output tasks help improving students' vocabulary acquisition and how students responded to the output tasks regarding vocabulary gains.

3.4.1. Tests

In the study, the students took two tests-a pre-test and a post-test conducted in week 1 and week 8 of the research respectively. The two tests were of a similar format and designed based on the

Table 1. Summary of the Two Cycles

	Phrases	Intervention	Instruments
Cycle 1 (Weeks 1-4)	Plan		Questionnaire Pre-test
	Act	Information gap (surveying and questioning): Target vocabulary in Unit 3 Sentence writing: Target vocabulary in Unit 3 Story telling: Immediate use of target vocabulary in Unit 3	
	Observe and Reflect		Observation
Cycle 2 (Weeks 5-8)	Plan (Revised)		Finding from observation
	Act	Information gap (survey and questioning): Target vocabulary in Unit Sentence writing: Target vocabulary in Unit 4 Storytelling: Delayed use of target vocabulary in Unit 4	
	Observe and Reflect		Post-test Questionnaire Observation

Vocabulary Knowledge Scale by Nation (2001). The tests were expected to provide reliable data for investigating the usefulness of output tasks in increasing lexical gains for EFL students.

The tests included four tasks. *Word-definition matching* (10 questions) and *sentence completion* (10 questions) were used to assess receptive vocabulary knowledge. *Sentence writing,* in which students use some given target words and *word writing*, based on phonetic transcription, aimed to evaluate students' productive vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation and spelling.

3.4.2. Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a tool used to collect data from respondents regarding their attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, and feelings. The first section with 8 statements featured five-point Likert scale, ranging from *strongly agree, agree, neutral, agree*, and *strongly disagree* on the scale (Likert, 1932). This scale is a popular tool used in surveys and questionnaires to measure attitudes, opinions, and perceptions. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 7 open-ended questions with a view to obtaining detailed

information about the students' perceptions of output tasks after their application.

The questionnaires were distributed to students during weeks 1 and 8 of the study. The questionnaire delivered to students in the first week aimed to collect information about students' attitudes towards vocabulary learning before the intervention. At the end of the 8th week of the study, information targeting students' attitudes towards vocabulary as well as the output activities was gathered through five-point Likert scale statements and open-ended questions in the questionnaire. By comparing the two sources of data, the teacher gained an insight into the effectiveness of using output tasks in increasing learners' vocabulary gains and their perception of the output tasks in learning vocabulary.

3.4.3. Observation

In this research, the researcher used an observation form to note down the information regarding students' participation and performance during the application of the output tasks. The notes helped the teacher evaluate appropriateness of activities and make some amendments when

needed. During the 8 weeks of the study, the researcher also watched how the output tasks helped them remember more lexical items.

4. Results

4.1. Findings from the Pre-test and Post-test

In order to measure the changes in the forty 11th graders' vocabulary after the two cycles of action research, the pre-test and post-test were administered and then performed by the students. The pre-test and post-test results were also collected and analyzed to find answers to the research question (1). To determine whether the results of the pre-test and post-test differed statistically, a paired sample T-test using IBM SPSS software was employed. The comparison statistics of the two tests are shown in the tables of a paired samples t-test investigating the effect of the output tasks on vocabulary knowledge in general and vocabulary knowledge regarding its aspect of being receptive and productive.

The statistics show the mean score for receptive knowledge increased from 7.30 in the pre-test to 7.70 in the post-test, indicating a positive effect of the intervention. Similarly, the mean score for productive knowledge also increased, from 3.96 in the pre-test to 4.98 in the post-test. Consequently, there is a higher mean score on the post-test (6.6125) compared to the pre-test (5.9625). This difference, though seemingly small, holds significance. The higher post-test score suggests that students made a moderate improvement in vocabulary after they were engaged in the output tasks. Both receptive and productive knowledge showed statistically significant improvements from the pre-test to the post-test, suggesting that using the output tasks was successful in improving both receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge. However, the results suggest that the output tasks had a stronger effect on productive knowledge than on receptive knowledge.

The paired-samples t-test for receptive knowledge, productive knowledge, and vocabulary knowledge as a whole yielded statistically significant results ($p = 0.031$, 0.000, and 0.000, respectively), suggesting that the improvement in the test result is unlikely to be due to chance.

However, the strength of the evidence for the two specific aspects of vocabulary knowledge is slightly different. While both of the p-values for the paired samples t-test are statistically significant at the alpha level of .05, rejecting the null hypothesis that there is no difference between the pre-test and post-test scores, the p-value for the paired samples t-test is .000, which is more statistically significant for productive knowledge than the results for receptive knowledge.

The statistics provide the most crucial evidence for an improvement in students' vocabulary after the use of some output tasks. The mean difference between pre-test and post-test scores is -0.65, indicating an improvement in vocabulary knowledge scores after the intervention. The t-value (-4.132) and a significance level of $p = 0.000$ further confirm that this improvement is statistically significant.

In conclusion, the paired samples t-test analysis provides strong evidence that using the output tasks as an intervention in the action research led to a statistically significant improvement in

Table 2. Paired Samples Statistics of the Test Scores

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Receptive knowledge (Q.1->20)	Pre-test	7.3000	40	1.62828	.25745
	Post-test	7.7000	40	1.31461	.20786
Productive knowledge (Q.21->30)	Pre-test	3.9563	40	1.69737	.26838
	Post-test	4.9813	40	1.54980	.24505
Vocabulary knowledge (Q.1->30)	Pre-test	5.9625	40	1.55822	.24638
	Post-test	6.6125	40	1.24801	.19733

Table 3. Paired Samples Test of the Test Scores

		Paired Samples Test							
Mean		**Paired Differences**					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Lower	Upper				
Receptive knowledge (Q.1->20)	Pre-test - Post-test	-.40000	1.13341	.17921	-.76248	-.03752	-2.232	39	.031
Productive knowledge (Q.21->30)	Pre-test - Post-test	-1.02500	1.06036	.16766	-1.36412	-.68588	-6.114	39	.000
Vocabulary knowledge (Q.1->30)	Pre-test - Post-test	-.65000	.99486	.15730	-.96817	-.33183	-4.132	39	.000

Table 4. Ranges of Test Scores

	Mark <=3.5	3.5<mark<5	5<=Mark<8	8<= Mark<9	9<= Mark <=10
Pre-test	2	10	24	2	2
Post-test	0	3	28	6	3

vocabulary knowledge among the 40 participants of the research.

To facilitate a deeper analysis of the effectiveness of the intervention, the results from both the pre-test and post-test were categorized into distinct mark ranges in Table 4.

The table shows in detail the number of students getting different ranges of grades in the pre-test and post-test, providing a clearer comparison of student performance before and after the intervention and highlighting shifts in achievement across different levels of marks. The number of students with an under average mark sharply fell from 12 (30% for pre-test) to 3 (7.5% for post-test). There was an increase in the number of students receiving the mark of 5 and below 8. Additionally, a considerable increase in the number of students with good marks (>= 8) could be noticed, from 2 (5% for the pre-test) to 6 students (15% for the post-test). However, the figure for students receiving marks of 9 and above does not change much between the pre-test and post-test, but it still rose from 2 to 3 students in the post-test. It can be concluded that there is

a positive effect on students' performance during and after the use of output tasks in enhancing students' lexical acquisition.

In summary, it can be said that there is a positive change in students' performance, showing an improvement in their vocabulary after the use of the output tasks.

4.2. Findings from the questionnaire
4.2.1. Likert scale-based statements

For the questions from 1 to 8 (Q.1 to Q.8), with the purpose of gathering information about the students' attitude towards learning vocabulary and using output tasks in vocabulary acquisition, the researcher relied on Descriptive statistics from IBM SPSS and got the results as in the table below.

The findings from the analysis of Q.1 to Q. 8, assessing the attitudes of students toward using the output tasks (*information gap, sentence writing* and *storytelling*) for vocabulary learning, suggested that students generally held a positive view of these output tasks. The data were presented using descriptive statistics, including

mean, standard error of the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, variance, range, minimum (Min), and maximum (Max). The mean values for Q.1 to Q. 8 were mostly clustered in the range of 3.4 to 3.9, indicating that students' responses leaned toward positive attitudes regarding the use of output tasks for vocabulary acquisition. In other words, a substantial portion of students had a favorable attitude towards the use of output tasks for vocabulary learning.

The lowest mean fell on Q. 2 (remembering vocabulary), suggesting that students generally felt that it took some effort to remember new vocabulary. In contrast, the mean value for Q. 4 (interest in output tasks) is the highest, signifying that the output tasks were highly favored by students.

By thoroughly examining the responses of the students, several features of teaching and learning English through output tasks were explored. Most students admitted that the output tasks used in the research helped them remember words as well as properly using the words in different contexts. Respectively marked 5/5 by 11 and 13 students, accounting for 27.5% and 32.5%, Q.1 and Q. 4 were also among the questions which received the most maximum points from the respondents. This revealed that the output tasks practically helped increase students' interest in learning vocabulary and their ability to use words in speaking and writing.

Overall, the findings suggest that students in the study viewed output tasks, such as *information gap*, *sentence writing* and *storytelling*, as beneficial tools for remembering lexicons and getting to use them in new contexts. The positive attitudes, as reflected in the data analysis, would motivate educators to explore and integrate these output tasks into their teaching methods to enhance vocabulary instruction and students' learning experience.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Attitudes towards the Output Tasks

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic
1. You are motivated to learn new vocabulary	40	3.00	2.00	5.00	3.8000	.14850	.93918	.882
2. You find it easy to remember new vocabulary	40	2.00	2.00	4.00	3.4250	.09397	.59431	.353
3. You can properly use new vocabulary in writing and speaking	40	3.00	2.00	5.00	3.6500	.12685	.80224	.644
4. You enjoyed the tasks of using vocabulary	40	3.00	2.00	5.00	3.9250	.14495	.91672	.840
5. The tasks of using vocabulary were easy to perform	40	3.00	2.00	5.00	3.7750	.12653	.80024	.640
6. The tasks of using vocabulary help increase your vocabulary	40	3.00	2.00	5.00	3.8250	.13343	.84391	.712
7. Your teacher provided enough support for you to complete the tasks of using vocabulary	40	3.00	2.00	5.00	3.6000	.12300	.77790	.605
8. Your teacher gave useful feedback on your performance of the tasks	40	3.00	2.00	5.00	3.5750	.09397	.59431	.353

4.2.2. Open-ended Questions

Designed in the form of open-ended questions, Q.9 to Q.15 provided the researcher with an insight into students' perceptions of the output tasks. Both qualitative and quantitative data were then organized, analyzed, and charted for comprehensive results and vivid demonstration.
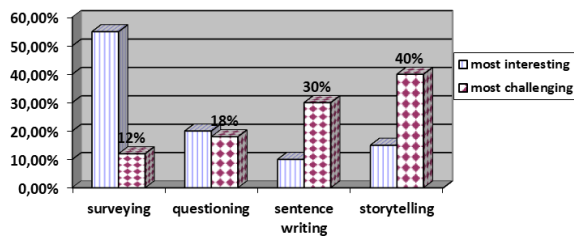

Figure 2. Chart of Students' Perceptions of the Output Tasks

The chart compares the students' perceptions of the four tasks employed in the study, regarding their level of excitement and difficulty. As illustrated in the bar chart, the majority of the students posed (55 %) claimed that they might enjoy the task of *doing a survey* for a number of reasons. One prominent reason stated by most participants was the opportunity to collect interesting facts from classmates, boosting real life communication. This contextualized vocabulary learning and made lexical gains more practical. A large number of respondents highly valued the survey activity due to its nature of collaboration. As the activity was conducted among all students in the class, it encouraged interaction and teamwork and thus made the learning experience more enjoyable. The other activities like *questioning, storytelling,* and *sentence writing* were most favored by modest percentages of voters, accounting for 20%,15%, and 10% respectively.

Concerning what was perceived as most challenging, *storytelling* came first. Nearly half of the students (40%) considered this activity taxing, and the explanation for this was students' poor sentence structure. Most of the students regarding storytelling as the most challenging, stated that stories involved complex sentence structures with clauses and transitions, with which they were still struggling. A quarter of students claimed that they found it hard to maintain coherence when creating a story. In

other words, keeping track of the storyline while also focusing on using the target words correctly was too demanding for them. Other psychological factors like fear of making mistakes and lack of confidence were also listed as the culprits of difficulty during the fulfillment of the storytelling task. With more than a quarter of the students surveyed (30%), sentence writing came second in the challenge rate. The reason for this was similar to that for storytelling with the involvement of the grammatical factor. On the contrary, *information gap* activities such as *surveying* and *questioning* seemed effortless for the majority of the students, since a modest percentage of the participants viewed these as the most challenging tasks (12 % for *surveying* and 18% for *questioning*).

The chart showed an inverse ratio between the figures of students perceiving the tasks as the most interesting and most challenging. This meant the more difficult the activity was to perform, the less fascinating it was for the students.

When the output tasks were linked to vocabulary learning, all of them, regardless of their degree of difficulty and interest, were described as helpful. A nearly absolute percentage of the students (96%) put ticks on all the four items in Q. 11, suggesting that these output activities were equally effective in assisting learners' vocabulary acquisition. The information gathered from the sub question 'why' revealed that using the words repeatedly in new contexts really helped increase the learners' exposure to the words in real life communication. It could be inferred that output activities provided a crucial bridge between understanding and application, leading to better memorization, improved fluency, and increased confidence in using new vocabulary.

When asked for some suggestions to make the productive tasks more engaging and effective in Q. 12, the respondents proposed numerous ideas. The ones mostly suggested were an increase in time allotted for each activity and integration of technology in the performance of the tasks. "*I think we need more time for practicing. 5 minutes was too short. Imagine that when the party is at its full swing and you have to leave.*" Likewise, one student wrote: "*we were sometimes actively discussing the when suddenly we hear 'stop' or 'time's up' from the teacher. This deprived us of interest*". Another typical claim from the

students was "*I wish the activities were more visually appealing. I mean I would like the teacher to give us more time to tell the story with the aid of digital posters or PowerPoint slides.*" The participants also suggested interesting ideas for improvement of the tasks, including more constructive feedback and reflection as well as varied activities.

The answers collected from Q. 13 varied but could be categorized into three aspects. Numerous respondents had trouble giving spontaneous answers when participating in the *information gap* or *sentence writing* activities. "*Although I remembered the meaning of the new words and was able to interpret the questions using those target words in the questioning activity, I sometimes could not answer immediately. I was not a responsive person*", one student confessed. Another student stated: "*I remembered the words, but I could not think of the context to use some words, so I could not write interesting sentences using the words. I instead made similar sentences used in the book or left the word out*". Grammar concern was also a big challenge faced by the participants, since they found it hard to write grammatically correct sentences in the *sentence writing* and *storytelling* activities. "*I could write sentences and even a story, but I was not sure if I had used proper grammar, or I had only put the words together to convey what I was trying to*" (extracted from participants' responses). The last category emphasized the problem with collaboration. Numerous students thought that when participating in the *survey* activity, they were confused about who they should ask first. As for the *storytelling* task, they found it hard to agree on the story's plot and equally divide the task among the members.

Q.14 and Q.15 in the questionnaire provided a wealth of data about students' feelings and reactions after acquiring the lexical items through the activities of applying vocabulary in new contexts. Virtually all the students maintained that they experienced a positive feeling following their effective memorization of the words and successful application of them in different real-life situations. These are cited in the students' responses to Q.14: "*What a sense of content when I could understand the words, remember their meaning, pronunciation, and spelling!*", and "*I had never been confident like that before as I knew I could use words I have learned to express my own opinion*". Due to the fact that the output activities used in the research left encouraging emotions on the students, 87% of the students expected the teacher to continue to incorporate these output activities in lexical classroom instructions.

4.3. Findings from the Teacher's Observation
4.3.1. Students' Engagement

In general, the students actively participated in the output tasks assigned by the teacher, and most of them appeared motivated and interested in joining the activities. However, as for the activity of *sentence writing*, some students seemed to lose interest and could not complete the task as required.

4.3.2. The Output Tasks

By observing students perform the tasks, the author discovered that most of the tasks encouraged deeper understanding and application of vocabulary, as the students understood the questions using the target words and also were able to use the words to express their own ideas. In short, the output tasks were appropriate for the students' levels and learning styles.

4.3.3. The Teacher's Scaffolding

Admittedly, the teacher did not provide adequate support and guidance for students. This could be drawn from the fact that some weak students were sometimes left behind in the questioning activity while the stronger ones raised their voice most of the time. Moreover, due to the time constraints for each activity, the teacher did not offer sufficient constructive feedback needed to help students improve their vocabulary use.

Overall, by carefully analyzing the teacher's observation, the author gained valuable insights into the positive effectiveness of output tasks in teaching vocabulary. The information from her observation suggested that using output tasks not only reinforced students' vocabulary but also increased their motivation and confidence when applying lexical items in practical use.

5. Conclusions

5.1. An Improvement in Vocabulary Acquisition

The goals of the study were (1) to examine the extent to which the use of output tasks helps improve 11th graders' English vocabulary and (2) investigate students' attitudes towards these output tasks. For these purposes, the research has discovered a positive change in their English vocabulary after the learners' performance of some output tasks. This effectiveness might result from the interactive nature and meaningful use of words in new contexts during the process of mastering new words in language learning. The findings of the study are in agreement with those by Nassaji & Tian (2014), who argued that when working in groups rather than alone, learners generated noticeably more correct target English words. The result is also consistent with the study by Holster & Delint (2012), who explained that creative output tasks require learners to use new vocabulary in a meaningful way, helping learners to acquire the words more effectively.

The finding that there was a meaningful difference in test scores in the period of action research is supported by Kwon (2007), who found that learners who participate in output-based activities outperformed learners who did not on the tests of vocabulary. After a pre-test and a post-test were administered, they reported that the use of output tasks improved students' learning outcomes. According to the findings from the t-test in this research, it is safe to reject the null hypothesis and accept the hypothesis that using output tasks such as *information gap* (*surveying* and *questioning*), *sentence writing*, and *storytelling* would improve students' vocabulary. The outcomes are also in line with the findings of the reviewed studies.

Though both receptive and productive knowledge showed statistically significant improvements from the pre-test to the post-test, the statistics suggest a potentially stronger effect of the output tasks on productive knowledge compared to receptive knowledge. This could be explained by the nature of the intervention, which emphasized tasks involving active use of vocabulary like writing sentences and engaging in conversations.

The data from Q. 8, which gathered information on feedback from the teacher, suggest that the students should have received more constructive feedback while performing the productive tasks. In other words, the supportive role of feedback in vocabulary gains during the application of output tasks is established. This is consistent with the results of the study by Nowbakht (2015), who stressed the benefits of including output and corrective feedback together with input for effective vocabulary acquisition in language learning.

5.2. Positive Attitudes towards Vocabulary Learning and the Output Tasks

The findings confirm the hypothesis of the researcher that output tasks would increase motivation when students master new lexicons. This is demonstrated by a positive shift in students' attitudes toward vocabulary learning. Students became more motivated and enthusiastic about gaining new vocabulary thanks to the creative use of output tasks rather than the passive practice in the conventional teaching approach. The increased motivation and positive attitudes may stem from the integration and personalization nature of the output tasks.

Before carrying out the study, the researcher was nervous and uncertain about the research findings. She wondered whether the students could remember vocabulary better with a new technique of using output tasks such as *information gap* (*surveying* and *questioning*), *sentence writing*, and *storytelling*. The data collection and analysis showed in improvement in the vocabulary tests, justifying the effectiveness of the method the author decided to use. Although the students held different views on different output tasks, they generally expressed a positive attitude towards the use of output tasks in teaching vocabulary.

From the research findings, the researcher concludes that output tasks could result in a moderate improvement in 11th graders' vocabulary and that students held favorable attitudes towards these tasks. These findings support the potential of incorporating output tasks into language learning to enhance students' vocabulary acquisition. It will be possible for other teachers to apply output tasks in increasing their students' vocabulary.

The author suggests that future research should be conducted to explore the application of output tasks in teaching other English language skills and elements. Additionally, since the output tasks, as suggested by the participants, need to be adapted to personalize students' learning experience, further research on using more customized output tasks should be implemented to yield more significant results.

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