

DYClan Words: A Tool for Language and Literacy Development – a book review

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In today's increasingly globalized and information-driven world, proficiency in language and communication is fundamental for both academic success and personal development. DYClan Words, authored by Mr. Michael S. Yanga, the President of Dr. Yanga's Colleges Inc. (DYCI), is a four-volume series of vocabulary booklets specifically designed for junior high school students, spanning Grade 7 to Grade 10. Each volume is carefully structured to provide progressive development in comprehension and lexical knowledge. Mr. Yanga, a recognized language enthusiast and educational leader, authored the series as part of his broader commitment to improving English language proficiency among learners, combining both pedagogical expertise and personal passion.

Each volume of DYClan Words is organized into three interrelated sections: (1) short passages embedding curated vocabulary, (2) exercises on correct usage, and (3) idiomatic expressions with contextual explanations. The initial section engages students in reading passages designed to introduce unfamiliar words in meaningful contexts, facilitating inferential comprehension and active engagement with new vocabulary. The second section provides exercises that reinforce the correct application of newly acquired vocabulary within syntactically accurate sentences, fostering structural and semantic understanding. The third section presents idiomatic expressions, illustrating culturally embedded uses of language and thereby enhancing learners' awareness of linguistic nuances beyond literal meanings. Collectively, these sections provide a comprehensive and scaffolded approach to language acquisition, guiding learners from recognition through application to cultural and contextual literacy.

In terms of the Educational Role of Language (ERL) framework, the design of DYClan Words aligns closely with multiple strands. The series supports the major strand of Language and Education by serving as a structured instructional tool for vocabulary and comprehension enhancement. It also contributes to Language and Cognitive Development, as learners engage in higher-order cognitive processes such as inference, application, and synthesis within contextualized language exercises. Furthermore, the inclusion of idiomatic expressions addresses Language and Intercultural Communication, fostering learners' understanding of culturally mediated meanings. The series additionally engages minor ERL strands, including Language and Literacy, through the systematic development of reading comprehension and vocabulary, and Language and Social Interaction, by equipping learners with the linguistic skills necessary for effective communication in both academic and everyday contexts. As such, DYClan Words exemplifies a resource that integrates cognitive, linguistic, and cultural dimensions of language learning.

The pedagogical effectiveness of DYClan Words has been empirically validated. According to Dela Cruz and Vendivel (2025), the series significantly improved comprehension and vocabulary skills among junior high school students at DYCI. Pre-test data indicated that most learners initially demonstrated average to above-average levels of comprehension and vocabulary. Following the intervention, post-test results revealed substantial gains, with a notable increase in the proportion of students achieving excellent comprehension and a marked reduction in the below-average category. Statistical analyses further corroborated these findings. Paired-samples t-tests indicated significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores for both comprehension ($t = 15.250$, $p < .001$) and vocabulary ($t = 8.111$, $p < .001$), providing strong evidence of the intervention's positive impact. Additionally, a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.374$, $p = 0.001$) was observed between post-test comprehension and vocabulary scores. Linear regression analysis further demonstrated that vocabulary scores significantly influenced

comprehension outcomes ($F = 40.679$, $p < .001$; $B = 0.384$), highlighting the integral relationship between lexical knowledge and reading comprehension. These results underscore DYClan Words as an evidence-based educational resource with measurable impact on junior high school learners' language proficiency.

Among its strengths, DYClan Words demonstrates a thoughtful, progressive design across four volumes, scaffolding skills development from Grade 7 through Grade 10. Its structured approach, combining narrative and expository passages, exercises, and idiomatic expressions, promotes comprehensive skill-building in vocabulary, comprehension, and cultural literacy. Authorship by Mr. Yanga adds both credibility and inspirational value, reflecting a fusion of personal passion and professional expertise. Additionally, empirical validation of the series enhances its relevance and applicability within educational settings.

However, there are areas for potential improvement. The vocabulary could be expanded to include discipline-specific or academic terms to prepare students for advanced study better. Idiomatic expressions might benefit from additional cultural or historical annotations to provide richer contextual understanding. Moreover, incorporating a broader range of genres, such as persuasive and expository texts alongside narratives, could expose learners to varied registers and purposes within English, further enhancing reading comprehension and critical literacy skills.

In conclusion, DYClan Words is a meticulously designed, research-informed, and highly practical series that addresses the cognitive, linguistic, and cultural dimensions of language learning. Its multi-volume structure ensures systematic skill development, and its empirical validation confirms its effectiveness in enhancing vocabulary and comprehension among junior high school learners. The series contributes meaningfully to the ERL framework by integrating structured instruction, cognitive engagement, and cultural literacy, making it a valuable resource for students, educators, and researchers alike. By combining passion, scholarship, and evidence-based design, DYClan Words exemplifies how educational tools can advance language development while providing avenues for ongoing research and application in diverse educational contexts.