



Probing teachers' vocabulary teaching stratagems: Secondary schools in focus

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Abstract

The main objective of this study was to inquire vocabulary teaching stratagems used by grade nine teachers in Secondary Schools in Debre Tabor town. The study used a descriptive survey design that involves quantitative and qualitative methods. Questionnaire, classroom observation and interview were used to gather the necessary data for the study. Twelve English teachers from both grade nine and ten were selected through comprehensive sampling for the questionnaire. Four of the teachers who were only teaching grade nine students were observed four times in their actual classroom and interviewed. And data were collected from ninety randomly chosen grade nine students through questionnaire. Thus, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and mean were employed in analyzing the quantitative data. The qualitative data were analyzed and reported. The overall findings of the study showed that teachers did not use the various vocabulary teaching strategies in the English classes. Teachers most frequently used definition, antonym and synonym; contextualization was occasionally used. Based on the findings, it is recommended that creating meaningful vocabulary teaching opportunities through various vocabulary teaching strategies were supposed to be practiced widely.

Keywords: probing, stratagem, teaching, technique, vocabulary

Introduction

The history of second language teaching can be traced back to Romans. During this period and afterwards different approaches to language teaching have been introduced. Sometimes, vocabulary had a good place in language teaching methodologies, other times it was entirely ignored (Allen, 1983; Tylor, 1991 and Schmitt, 2000) [2, 21].

The method of language teaching has been changing from grammar translation to direct method and then to communicative approach. However, it was only during the communicative approach that the prominent role of vocabulary knowledge in second or foreign language learning and teaching has been recognized. The current popular communicative approach to language teaching has emphasized meaningful interactive activities over form. It is also recognized that the vocabulary learning techniques that students use have greater impact on the success of their vocabulary learning (Hatch and Brown, 1995) [9].

The teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in Ethiopian educational settings can be associated with the introduction of modern education in the country. In Ethiopia, modern education was introduced at the turn of the 20th century (Diribsa, 1999) [6]. The history of foreign language learning and teaching in Ethiopia, therefore, is traced back to the early 20th century.

English is a language that students learn in all levels of Ethiopian schools, colleges and universities. It gives the impression that English is delivered as a distinguished discipline in all levels of schools, and it is a medium of instruction for all school subjects other than the local language (Abebe, 1997) [1].

Currently, a greater consideration is being given to English language teachers and students to make them proficient enough in the application and use of the micro-skills and macro-skills. Particular consideration is given to the

enhancement of students' vocabulary since words play an important role in expressing feelings, emotions and ideas to others during communication. This means that without the mediation of vocabulary, no amount of grammatical or other types of linguistic knowledge can be thought of in second language communication (Miller, 1996) [16].

It is important for the teacher to employ effective and dynamic teaching techniques/strategies that will empower the students to master the required tasks. Stahl (1999) [22] found that vocabulary instruction directly improves comprehension. He points out that as the difficulty of words in a text increases, understanding of the text decreases. Therefore, it is critical for students to have a deep understanding of vocabulary to understand new concepts. Vocabulary is also used to communicate to the world what we know. Individuals who can express themselves precisely with appropriate language are more likely to make a positive impression on their employers, colleagues and clients.

McCarthy (1990) [15] declares that knowledge of vocabulary enables us to communicate our needs. This increases our chances of getting our needs fulfilled. Knowledge of words also enables us to understand the needs of others. Moreover, vocabulary is positively related to higher status occupations. It is essential to academic, social and professional success. The teacher's role in ensuring this success is critical. However, EFL teachers still have problems in practicing different vocabulary teaching strategies.

This study, therefore, aimed at investigating vocabulary teaching stratagems used by grade nine teachers' in Debre Tabor Secondary and Preparatory School, Debre Tabor. To this end, the study above all attempted to answer the following research questions in particular.

1. What strategies do teachers employ to teach vocabulary?
2. How often are the vocabulary teaching strategies used

by teachers?

Literature Review

Vocabulary Theory

Diamond & Gutlohn (2006) ^[5] define that vocabulary is the knowledge of words and their meanings. This means that without establishing a strong vocabulary base comprehension and use of a language will not be achieved. In addition, the student should be able to recognize words and know their meanings as well. Thus, when a student is effectively able to recognize and use a word in different contexts, speak, write, pronounce the word well, she/he has the knowledge and meaning of that word. Additionally, Hubbard (1983) ^[11] suggests that vocabulary is a powerful carrier of meaning.

Nevertheless, some authors suggest more complex definitions about vocabulary. Nation (2001) states that vocabulary knowledge implies knowing a word in the spoken form and the written form can be recognized and understood in and out of context rather than guessed at. Moreover, Henriksen (1996) ^[10] states that vocabulary knowledge is often defined as the ability to give a target language paraphrase. This means that vocabulary knowledge requires the ability to react to words that students do not need to think about. The words just come into students' minds to be used in an effective and natural way. When students have knowledge of a word, they do not take much time to think about the word. They just have to use the word naturally and appropriately.

In a nutshell, vocabulary knowledge requires not only word meanings knowledge, but it requires the usage of the words in the appropriate context and in a natural way and also includes the relationship between new words acquired and the ones already acquired. Therefore, teachers should use techniques that teach the meaning of words in context and help students associate the new vocabulary learned and what they already knew and help students memorize the words and their meanings.

Krashen (1998, p. 33) ^[13] noticeably states: *Vocabulary is crucial to communication. If acquirers do not recognize the meanings of the key words used by those who address them, they will be incapable to participate in the conversation. And if they desire to express some ideas or ask for information, they must be able to produce lexical items to convey their meaning.*

Vocabulary is noticeably a vital element within a language as the great majority of meaning is carried lexically; and, therefore, something to be taken into consideration both in Second and Foreign Language Teaching (McCarthy 1990) ^[15]. Vocabulary teaching is one of the most important components of any language class. The main reason is the fact that it is a medium, which carries meaning, learning to understand and express the meaning is what counts in learning languages. As pointed out by Harmer (1992:14) ^[8], "Words are the building blocks of language and having a good supply of them is very important for students' right from the beginning of their English learning."

Approaches to Vocabulary Teaching

Providing vocabulary instruction is one of the most significant ways in which teachers can improve students' reading and listening comprehension and speaking fluency and can be one of the most challenging that a teacher can do well. Thus, what students learn depends not only on what

they are taught but it depends also on how they are taught according to students' developmental level, and their interests and experiences (Curtis and Longo, 2001) ^[7]. This belief requires that much closer attention should be paid to the methods chosen for vocabulary instruction.

Explicit Vocabulary Teaching

Explicit vocabulary instruction is deductive. Swerling (2006) ^[23], Curtis and Longo (2001) ^[7] argue that in explicit vocabulary instruction the meaning of words is presented directly, and then they can be illustrated with examples or using visual aids. Students benefit from explicit vocabulary instruction through the use of context to determine word meanings as well as from opportunities to see and hear how words tend to be used. Additionally, according to Blachowicz (2005) ^[4] explicit vocabulary should use definitional information and contextual information about word meanings. Therefore, explicit vocabulary instruction is effective for providing information or developing step-by-step skills.

Implicit Vocabulary Teaching

Implicit vocabulary instruction is in-deductive. According to Swerling (2006) ^[23], implicit vocabulary instruction encourages deducing word meanings from context by engaging in oral language experiences at home and at school or while reading books. Vocabulary growth occurs naturally when students read and listen to each other on a daily basis, that is, students internalize the word meanings in contexts but incidentally. Additionally, Hunt and Beglar (1998) ^[122] suggest that implicit vocabulary instruction is mainly student-centered. This is to say that implicit vocabulary teaching seeks a high level of student involvement in observing and investigating. It takes advantage of student's interest, curiosity, creativity and the development of interpersonal skills.

Independent Vocabulary Teaching

Independent vocabulary instruction refers to instructing learners how to be independent vocabulary learners. According to Oxford (1990) learners can understand a lot of words through systematic guessing and through the use of a dictionary. One relevant technique to listening and reading success involve the use of contextual clues. Contextual clues are the reasons for many correct guesses about the meaning of written passages. Suffixes and prefixes are useful contextual clues to foster word meanings. For instance, teachers teach learners that the prefix 'un-' is the opposite of the word that it follows. So, when learners read or hear the word 'unhappy', they should be able to draw that unhappy is the opposite of the word happy. Similarly, teachers can teach that the suffix '-ment' makes that word a noun. For example, if learners know that the word 'to improve' is a verb and when they read or hear the word 'improvement', learners should be able to conclude that the word improvement is a noun and get the meaning of the mentioned word by themselves. Further, teachers must help learners develop techniques for independent word learning and support them in becoming aware of when and how to implement these techniques in self-selected situations.

Methods

Participants

The target populations of this study were English teachers,

who were teaching both grade nine and ten students and grade nine students of Debre Tabor Secondary and Preparatory School in Debre Tabor town. Grade nine students were selected for the study since the researcher had personally witnessed the problem under investigation at this level.

Comprehensive sampling was used to select the teacher participates. This means that all grade nine and ten English teachers took part in the study; they were twelve teachers (seven males and five females).

Simple random sampling technique was applied to choose the student participants. There were nine sections with fifty students in each section. So, four hundred and fifty students were taken as total population for the study. Ninety students were opted for questionnaire. The participants were randomly selected from the total population of students through simple random sampling technique. All English teachers were involved in the questionnaire. The four teachers who were teaching only grade nine students were used as subjects for both classroom observation and interview.

Instruments

To obtain adequate information for the study, data collection tools were employed, conspicuously, questionnaire, classroom observation and interview.

Questionnaire

In order to gather relevant data for the study, questionnaire with appropriate items were designed and administered to both teachers and students. The questionnaire composed of twenty Likert-type closed-ended items were given to the participants. To get information about the techniques of vocabulary teaching, teachers and students were required to provide the frequency with five-point Likert-scale that constitute always, usually, sometimes, rarely and never. The scale values ranged from 5 to 1, respectively.

Teacher Questionnaire

The questionnaire for teachers was consisting of ten Likert-type items. The questionnaire includes eleven items, which were designed to identify the teachers’ frequency of practice of the techniques of vocabulary teaching with the statements of five-point Likert-scales ranging from 5 to 1 (always=5, usually=4, sometimes=3, rarely=2 never=1). Besides, open-ended items were included.

Student Questionnaire

The students’ questionnaire was developed by adapting the teachers’ questionnaire and modifying it so that it would fit the students’ level of understanding. A total of ten items of the questionnaire for the classroom practices of their teachers’ vocabulary teaching techniques were coded with

statements on five-point Likert scales ranging from 5 to 1 (5=always, 4=usually, 3=sometimes, 2=rarely and 1=never).

Classroom Observation

Observation as a research method has a number of advantages for researchers. For example, it helps them to gather sufficient information about the physical environment and human behavior that can be recorded directly by the researcher without having to rely on the anticipatory accounts of others. Classroom observation is a systematic, purposeful, and selective way of watching and listening to an interactive phenomenon as it occurs (Kumar, 2005) [14]. Observation is one of the methods of data collection used in this study.

All grade nine English teachers, four, were observed during their vocabulary lesson periods. Each teacher was observed four times using a structured observation checklist. The observation checklist incorporated items which are all concerned with vocabulary lesson presentations at different times.

Interview

There were five interview questions for teacher participants. Four of the teachers were interviewed. The interview was deliberately done to maximize the reliability of the data obtained through questionnaire. This is also believed to help the researcher to cross-check the respondents’ response to the questionnaire.

Succinctly, classroom observation, questionnaire and interview were used to collect data for this study. Classroom observation was used to collect data that could help the researcher to know whether or not teachers exercise vocabulary teaching techniques in the classroom. Questionnaire, on the other hand, was mainly used to collect data that could help the researcher to explore whether or not teachers are aware of vocabulary teaching techniques. The third instrument, interview was used to collect data that could strengthen the data obtained through observation and questionnaire.

Data Analyses

The collected data were analyzed, interpreted and discussed accordingly. Quantitative data which were collected from the respondents were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Science students (SPSS 20.0) software analysis. The quantitative data collected through close-ended questions were entered into the computer and statistically described in terms of mean, percentage and frequency. Finally, the qualitative data obtained through interview were narrated.

Results and Discussion

Vocabulary Teaching Strategies

Table 1: Frequency, percentage and mean of responses to items related to classroom practices of vocabulary teaching strategies (Source: Questionnaire, 2019)

Item	Statement	Responses					Total	Mean	
		5	4	3	2	1			
1	How often do you use definitions to convey the meaning of words during vocabulary teaching?	F	8	3	1	0	0	12	4.60
		%	66.7	25.0	8.3	0	0	100	
2	How often do you tell your students words that always collocate with the word that you are teaching?	F	0	0	2	7	3	12	1.80
		%	0	0	16.7	58.3	25.0	100	
3	How often do you present other words with the same meaning (synonyms) to the word being taught?	F	8	4	0	0	0	12	4.70
		%	66.7	33.3	0	0	0	100	

4	How often do you teach the meaning of a word in relation to words with opposite meaning?	F	9	2	1	0	0	12	4.70
		%	75.0	16.7	8.3	0	0	100	
5	How often do you use pictures/diagrams for vocabulary teaching?	F	0	1	3	3	5	12	2.0
		%	0	8.3	25.0	25.0	41.7	100	
Grand Mean									3.60

Key: 5=Always, 4=Usually, 3=Sometimes, 2=Rarely, 1=Never, F=Frequency, %=Percentage

As can be seen from the table above (see item number 1), slightly over a half of the respondents (66.7%) replied that they always used definition to convey the meaning of new words during vocabulary teaching. Another 25.0% of the respondents answered that they usually used definition in their vocabulary teaching. And 8.3% of the participants sometimes used definition to express the meaning of new words in their vocabulary teaching.

In reply to item number 2, 16.7% of the respondents said that they sometimes used collocation in their vocabulary teaching. 58.3% of the teachers responded that collocation was rarely used in the classroom. But, 25% of the teachers never used collocation in their vocabulary teaching. Collocations did not get enough attention. But, according to Nattinger (1988) [19], with the help of collocations, the learner keeps the words in memory and can easily infer the meaning from the context. Therefore, collocations should be given a prime consideration in vocabulary teaching.

With reference to item number 3, 66.7% of the participants responded that they always used synonyms in the actual classroom. And 33.3% of the respondents replied that they

usually employed synonyms in their vocabulary teaching. In item number 4, 75.0% of the teachers always used antonyms in their vocabulary teaching. 16.7% the respondents replied that they usually used antonyms in the actual classroom. And also 8.3% of the participants sometimes practiced antonyms in their vocabulary lesson. This means that synonyms and antonyms were the most frequently used techniques.

The reply to item number 5 revealed that 8.3% and 25.0% of the teachers usually and sometimes were using pictures or diagrams in their vocabulary teaching, respectively. The other 25.0% of the respondents rarely practiced vocabulary through pictures or diagrams. However, 41.7% of the participants replied that they never used pictures and diagrams in their vocabulary teaching.

Based on the above facts one can conclude that definition, synonym and antonym were the most frequently used strategies of vocabulary teaching. The result of the computed aggregate mean value is 3.60. This indicates that many of the techniques were not practiced as often as they should.

Table 2: Frequency, percentage and mean of responses to items related to classroom practices of vocabulary teaching strategies (Source: Questionnaire, 2019)

Item	Statement	Responses					Total	Mean	
		5	4	3	2	1			
6	How often do you use reading texts to teach new vocabulary items?	F	2	3	6	1	0	12	3.46
		%	15.4	23.1	53.8	7.7	0	100	
7	In using reading texts for vocabulary teaching, how often do you help your students to guess the meaning of words by indicating to them useful strategies and specific clues?	F	2	3	6	1	0	12	3.46
		%	15.4	23.1	46.2	15.4	0	100	
8	How often do you connect the word to many other words which have meaning relationship by establishing a kind of network system (word web, word map, mind map, word association)?	F	1	1	2	3	5	12	2.10
		%	7.7	7.7	15.4	23.1	46.2	100	
9	How often do you use different techniques of teaching vocabulary according to their suitability?	F	0	1	3	7	1	12	2.51
		%	0	7.7	30.8	53.8	7.7	100	
10	After teaching words, how often do you ask your students to use the words in their own sentences to check whether they have learned them correctly?	F	1	1	1	3	6	12	2.00
		%	7.7	7.7	7.7	30.8	46.2	100	
Grand Mean								2.71	

Key: 5=Always, 4=Usually, 3=Sometimes, 2=Rarely, 1=Never, F=Frequency, %=Percentage

As revealed in Table 2, the response to item number 6 disclosed that 15% of the teachers always used reading texts to teach new vocabulary items. 23% of the respondents replied that they usually employed reading texts to teach new vocabulary items. But, most of (54%) the teachers sometimes used reading texts in their vocabulary teaching. 8% of the respondents rarely practiced reading texts to teach new vocabulary items in their actual classroom. In connection to this, item number 7 reported that 15% of the respondents always taught their students to guess the meaning of new words from their context. 23% of the teachers usually practiced them. 46% of the teachers sometimes taught their students to guess the meaning of new words by indicating useful strategies and specific clues. But, 15% of the participants rarely taught their students through context. According to Nation (1990), guessing the meaning of new words from context is the best way to acquire new vocabulary items. When students consciously consider the context in which the word occurs, they are inferring the

meaning. This technique is effective as students construct their own working definition for a word. This method of acquiring the meaning and the new word is best done through reading.

Vis-à-vis to item number 8, 8% of the teachers always used and 8% of them usually employed vocabulary network system such as word web, word map, mind map and word association. The other 15% of the respondents replied that they sometimes used vocabulary network system such as word web, word map, mind map and word association. 23% of them rarely taught through vocabulary network system. But, most of them (46%) never practiced it in their actual classroom.

To the degree that practicing different techniques of vocabulary teaching according to their suitability is concerned, responses of the teachers to item number 9 indicated that 8% of the participants usually practiced them. 31% of the teachers sometimes used the techniques according to their suitability. However, most teachers (54%)

rarely practiced it. The other 8% never used varied techniques of vocabulary teaching according to their suitability. Similarly, in item 10, 8% of the teachers always asked their students to use words in their own sentences to check whether they have learnt them or not. Most teachers did not let their students communicate with their teacher or their peers in the classroom. 8% of them usually practiced it. The other 8% of the respondents responded that they sometimes asked their students to use words in their own sentences. 31% and 46% of the teachers rarely and never, respectively, used it in their actual classroom. The result of the computed aggregate mean value is 2.71. This indicates that the techniques were not practiced as often as they should.

To the extent that classroom observation is concerned, almost all teachers frequented few of the techniques of vocabulary teaching, but dominantly, all of them used definition, antonyms and synonyms. A few of the teachers sometimes used contextualization as a method of teaching vocabulary. Collocation as a technique of vocabulary teaching was almost never practiced by any of the teachers. It was only practiced by T₂ in the third observation. The remaining techniques like vocabulary network (word map, word web, mind map, word association), polysemy, homonym and hyponym were totally ignored in their classroom vocabulary teaching, but these techniques are suggested in the students' textbook.

Interview data obtained from the teachers showed that most of them had awareness on the importance of vocabulary

teaching techniques. But, most of the teachers were not eager to use the techniques because the techniques and the activities which are provided in the textbook don't have close link to each other, that is, they are different. And the teachers are unable to adapt the activities. This has negative effect on the students' vocabulary learning.

The teachers' responses to the four open-ended items revealed that there were factors that hampered the practice of vocabulary teaching techniques in English classes. Almost no induction and training was given to teachers concerning how to teach vocabulary through different techniques. Most teachers do not have adequate knowledge on vocabulary teaching techniques. Besides, lack of sufficient teaching materials indirectly or directly affected the teachers' attempt of practicing the techniques of vocabulary teaching in English classes.

The respondents suggested their own ideas how to enhance high school students' vocabulary knowledge or their vocabulary learning skills. In replying to this, most of the respondents reported that they needed training to be given to them on how they practically use the techniques to teach vocabulary. In general, it seems that many of the barriers to practice vocabulary teaching techniques may be reduced if the teachers get adequate training on how they practically practice vocabulary teaching through different techniques and have got sufficient teaching materials on vocabulary teaching strategies.

Teachers' Vocabulary Teaching Strategies

Table 3: Frequency, percentage and mean of responses to items related to classroom practices of their teachers' vocabulary teaching strategies (Source: Questionnaire, 2019)

Item	Statements		Responses					Total	Mean
			5	4	3	2	1		
1	How often does your teacher use definition to explain the meaning of words during his/her vocabulary teaching?	F	51	30	9	0	0	90	4.42
		%	53.1	35.4	11.5	0	0	100	
2	How often does your teacher teach you words that always collocate with the word that he/she is teaching?	F	0	0	0	59	31	90	1.64
		%	0	0	0	63.5	36.5	100	
3	When the teacher teaches a word, how often does he/she give you other words that have the same meaning with the word he/she is teaching?	F	48	37	5	0	0	90	4.41
		%	50.0	40.6	9.4	0	0	100	
4	How often does your teacher explain the meaning of words in relation to other words with opposite meaning?	F	47	41	2	0	0	90	4.44
		%	48.9	45.8	5.2	0	0	100	
5	How often does your teacher use pictures/diagrams to teach vocabulary?	F	0	0	1	38	51	90	1.50
		%	0	0	1.0	43.8	55.2	100	
Grand Mean								2.99	

Key: 5=Always, 4=Usually, 3=Sometimes, 2=Rarely, 1=Never, F=Frequency, %=Percentage

As disclosed in the above table (see item number 1), 53% of the students replied that their teacher always used definition to convey the meaning of new words during their vocabulary learning. The other 35% of the students responded that their teachers usually used definition in their vocabulary teaching. 12% of them answered that definition was rarely used in their actual vocabulary learning. As regards to item number 2, 64% of the participants reported that collocation was rarely used in their vocabulary learning. But, 37% of the students replied that they never learnt vocabulary through collocation.

The classroom observation also showed that all the observed teachers used definition in their classroom teaching. According to McCarthy (1990) ^[15], vocabulary instruction solely based on definition may help students acquire the meaning hardly enable them to use the word item in the real communication. An integration of collocation to definition

provides prime opportunity of using the target vocabulary with other words in a harmonious relation and enables learners to attain effective communication in writing and speaking. Therefore, its absence in vocabulary teaching can be one of the sources of learners' limitations of using English for communication.

In reply to item 3, 50% of the students reported that their teacher always used synonyms in the actual classroom. 41% and 9% of them responded that their teachers usually and sometimes used synonyms in their vocabulary learning, respectively. As regards to item number 4, 49% of the respondents replied that their teachers used antonyms in their vocabulary learning. And also 46% of the students responded that their teachers usually practiced the meaning of new words in relation to other words with opposite meaning. Synonyms and antonyms emerged to be one of the most frequently used techniques. This is from the fact that

teachers, students and textbook writers are traditionally fond of demonstrating new vocabulary items in terms of other words with the same meaning. The researcher observed the practice of antonyms and synonyms in all the four sessions of observations. However, it was observed that the teacher constructed a table of three columns on the blackboard where ten words were given in the first column and students were asked to provide synonyms and antonyms in the second and third columns, respectively. This sort of vocabulary presentation is believed to promote learners' memory of words after learning has already occurred which in turn improves the pace of vocabulary acquisition. Similar conclusion was arrived during observation in that teachers seemed to be keen on synonyms and antonyms as they often insist on getting students list down as many synonyms as possible for a word being taught. All techniques of vocabulary instruction may not be equally

useful for different types of words. Certain words can be better conveyed through verbal techniques and some others may require visual displays. In relation to this, there was a concern to know whether pictures /diagrams could be used by their teacher. 1% of the respondents answered that their teachers sometimes used pictures and diagrams in their vocabulary learning. The other 44% of them replied their teachers rarely practiced pictures or diagrams in their vocabulary lessons. However, 55% of the students reported that their teacher never taught them through pictures or diagrams. Pictures/diagrams were not employed during classroom observation. But, responses of the students' interview pointed out that pictures/diagrams were suggested in the text book. When this is explained in terms of mean, the mean value of the responses for these items is 2.99 which indicate low practice of vocabulary teaching techniques in the classroom.

Table 4: Frequency, percentage and mean of responses to items related to classroom practices of their teachers' vocabulary teaching strategies (Source: Questionnaire, 2019)

Item	Statements	Responses					Total	Mean
		5	4	3	2	1		
6	How often does your teacher use reading texts to teach new words?	F 2	15	41	21	11	90	4.41
		% 2.1	15.6	42.7	21.9	11.7	100	
7	In using reading texts for vocabulary learning, how often does your teacher help you by indicating useful strategies and specific clues to guess the meaning of words from context?	F 3	10	39	17	21	90	4.18
		% 3.1	13.5	40.6	19.8	22.9	100	
8	How often does your teacher connect a word to many other words which have meaning relationship by establishing a kind of network system (word web, word map, mind map, word association)?	F 1	1	2	33	53	90	1.82
		% 1.0	1.0	2.1	40.6	55.2	100	
9	How often do you use different techniques of learning vocabulary according to their suitability?	F 1	3	5	32	49	90	4.42
		% 1.0	3.1	7.3	37.5	51.0	100	
10	After learning words, how often does your teacher request you to use the words when you are speaking and writing in the class?	F 1	1	3	31	54	90	3.91
		% 1.0	1.0	3.1	34.4	60.4	100	
Grand Mean								3.75

Key: 5=Always, 4=Usually, 3=Sometimes, 2=Rarely, 1=Never, F=Frequency, %=Percentage

As can be seen from the table above (see item number 6), 2% of the respondents replied that their teacher always used reading texts to teach new vocabulary items. 16% of the students responded that their teachers usually practiced in the actual classroom. Besides, 43% of students reported that their teacher sometimes taught them through reading texts. 23% and 18% of them replied that their teachers rarely and never employed reading texts in their vocabulary learning, respectively. Teaching vocabulary through context was occasionally employed during classroom observation. With reference to item number 7, 3% and 14% of the students responded that their teacher always and usually taught them by indicating useful strategies and specific clues to guess the meaning of new words from context, respectively. Most of the students (41%) replied that their teacher used contexts or contextualization in their vocabulary learning. 20% of them answered that it was rarely practiced. 23% of them replied that their teacher never used contextualization in their vocabulary learning. Therefore, contextualization was used as a stratagem of vocabulary learning in the actual classroom. Item number 8 disclosed that 1% of the students responded that their teachers always taught them through meaning relationship by establishing a kind of network system such as word web, word map, mind map and word association. The other 1% of them reported that their teachers usually used it. Their teacher sometimes, 2%, used a kind of network system in vocabulary teaching and learning. 41% of the respondents replied that their teacher rarely practiced

vocabulary network system in the actual classroom. On the other hand, most of (55%) the respondents reported that their teacher never used vocabulary network system as a technique of vocabulary teaching. And so it was concluded that the teacher did not employ vocabulary network system - word web, word map, mind map, word association. In learning vocabulary, different techniques can be used according to their suitability. But, 1% and 3% of the students responded that they always and usually used different techniques of vocabulary learning according to their suitability, respectively (see item number 9). 7% of them sometimes used them. On the other hand, 38% the respondents reported that they rarely used different vocabulary teaching techniques according to their suitability. 51% of them never practiced the techniques. With regard to item number 10, 1% of the students replied that, after learning vocabulary, their teachers always asked them to practice the words when they are speaking in the class and outside the class. The other 1% and 3% of them reported that their teacher usually and sometimes used it, respectively. 34% of the respondents answered that their teacher rarely asked them to do it. But, 60% of the participants responded that their teacher always asked them to practice the words when they are speaking in the class and outside the class. In general, the data from students' response clearly showed that definition, antonyms and synonyms were frequently employed by their teachers. Contextualization was occasionally used. However, collocation, vocabulary

network, word association, pictures and diagrams were totally ignored though they were suggested in the students textbook. When this is explained in terms of mean, the mean value of the responses for these items is 3.75 which indicate moderate practice of vocabulary teaching techniques in the classroom.

Conclusions

Based on the analyses and discussions made in the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

- The overall findings of the study disclosed that teachers did not employ various vocabulary teaching techniques during their vocabulary instruction. Vocabulary teaching was found to be ineffective in the school. The students were poor in their vocabulary.
- Teachers most frequently used techniques of vocabulary teaching such as definition, antonym and synonym. Using only these techniques is not good for the students' vocabulary improvement.
- Teachers sometimes used contextualization as a method of vocabulary teaching to help students use words in a variety of circumstances.
- Reading is considered as the most effective approach to vocabulary presentation. It was found that teaching vocabulary through reading was rarely used.
- It was found that teachers rarely used collocation as a method of vocabulary teaching in their actual classroom.
- It was found that techniques of vocabulary teaching such as vocabulary network (word association, word map, mind map, etc.), pictures, diagrams, etc. were neglected in the teachers' vocabulary presentations.

Recommendations

Based upon the findings of the study and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

- Teachers should develop favorable tendency to the primacy of using different vocabulary teaching techniques in the process of teaching and learning vocabulary so that they will be able to consider the techniques as the major component in their vocabulary lessons. And teachers are encouraged to use the techniques according to their suitability.
- Techniques of vocabulary instruction such as collocation, contextualization, homonym, hyponym, vocabulary network, pictures and diagrams need to be used as often as definition, synonym and antonym.
- The students need to be aware of the merits of vocabulary learning through various techniques so that they become motivated and thereby actively play their roles in using the techniques in their vocabulary learning.
- Instructional and reference materials on vocabulary instruction are vital factors for the practice and implementation of vocabulary teaching techniques. And fulfilling the necessary vocabulary teaching materials should be the concern of the school administration and other stake holders.
- In fact teachers are principal change agents, considerable effort should be made to change them first. Teachers should be updated with recent changes or innovations. This could be achieved through continuous training such as seminars, workshops and in-service training programs.

Conflicts of interest

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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