

Explicit Vocabulary Learning Strategies in Promoting Vocabulary Knowledge (A case study Jabel Awlia Secondary school for girls)

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Abstract:

This study examines the use of vocabulary learning strategies knowledge. This study briefly, outlines some common vocabulary teaching strategies, and discusses the effectiveness of explicit, rich vocabulary teaching and learning strategies. In addition, this study aims to develop word consciousness within our students and maintain their interest in words. The population of this study was selected from two groups consisted of 60 students. The researcher assumed testing to be the data collection tool. That is because testing is used to measure certain areas of difficulty and concern when acquiring a second language. The first group was given a test to examine the effects of neglected vocabulary learning strategies. The second group was trained to use vocabulary learning strategies such as (collocation, word mapping, infer meaning etc.). The group studied about 16 lessons. This study hypothesized that most of the Sudanese EFL Learners of Jebel Awlia fail to retain vocabulary they learnt before and unable to use vocabulary learning strategies. The study showed that, vocabulary learning strategies can help students to understand and use new words confidently. The result showed that students' performance in learning vocabulary in English language is very low. The aim of this study is to identify and analyze the frequent problems that face learners in vocabulary knowledge.

Key words: collocation, word formation, context clues, inference strategy

INTRODUCTION

The term vocabulary is the knowledge of meaning of words. But this definition is totally complicated because words are divided into at least two forms: oral and written. Besides,, words knowledge include two forms, receptive –which related to the way people know and understand and productive form – the vocabulary that people use when they write or speak Hiebert, Elfrieda and Kamil, M (2005, P.3). It is clear that the ability to develop all learning skills depends on vocabulary Smith, R (2010, p.xii) claims that *"Research has repeatedly revealed that a good vocabulary goes hand in hand with academic success"* Besides, the more process that are involved the learning of a word, the superior the retention and the recall. Learning a word involves consider its formal shape, other words that shares the same sound, or semantic field in which it belongs, synonyms for it and the kind of sentence pattern in which it fits Crack & Lockhart (1992) cited in Carter (2000,p.203). Learning new vocabulary can improve writing abilities; enable anyone to speak to groups with confident. In, addition, it can increase the ability to learn different subjects, and help in doing tests in school, Bonet, D (1992, P.9). Presumably, learning vocabulary develop oral and written comprehension. Willis, J (2008, p.85) claims that *"With enhanced vocabulary, students grow in skills of verbal fluency, writing, and comprehension"*.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vocabulary instruction now beginning to attract the attention of applied linguists after a long time of relative neglect (Carter, D 2002, p.xv). Since the late 1970s, however, there has been a great deal of interest in vocabulary teaching, especially in Great Britain where lexical research projects were in any case undertaken in the late 1960s. Carter, D (2002, p. 184). Vocabulary instruction plays a crucial role in vocabulary

growth in school-age children Beck, Meckeown & Kucan) cited in Hiebert & Kamil (2005, p.46). When students have low vocabulary range of vocabulary, they might not Understand and communicate effectively Chall, J & Baldwins (1990) cited in Willis, J (2008, P.81) claims that *"if vocabulary isn't enriched by 3rd grade, children have declining comprehension scores in the later elementary years"*.

McCarthy & O'Dell (1997, p.4) suggest some strategies of learning words. Firstly, learning words that go together with associate meaning is a useful thing to organize and retain them. Besides, words with the same grammatical relation which help learners to build vocabulary knowledge. In addition, learning words which have the same root for example, price/ priceless/ overpriced. Finally, pictures and diagrams are the best ways of studying vocabulary. Definitely, learning word formation and roots are important factor to vocabulary knowledge Bonet, D (1992, p.45) pointed out that *"By learning some of the common prefixes, suffixes and roots you can increase your vocabulary by several thousand words with much difficulty"*. As soon as children begin kindergarten their vocabulary range in oral production can be between 2,500 and 5000 words by the end of kindergarten Mckewon & Beck (1988) cited in Willis, J (2008, p81).

Vocabulary learning like any desired knowledge-building behavior must be reinforced in rewarding manner to maintain motivations. Motivated students are more likely to take more notice of meanings words whose meaning they don't know, use strategies to understand challenges words, and recognize relationship between words Willis, J (P.85). Vocabulary knowledge in young children directly affects their later success in learning to read Willis, J (2008, P.80). Effective vocabulary instruction requires providing learners to multiple exposures to a word's meaning. This doesn't mean more repetition of drill of the word and a synonym or a definition, but seeing the word in different contexts- in sentences, with

difference and elaborated information in order to place it in her/his long term memory Stahl cited in Kamil and Hiebert (2004, p.108). Scott cited in Hiebert & Kamil (2005,p.85) mentioned some principles for effective vocabulary instruction:

1. Create multidimensional word schema with students
2. Support students' abilities in connection and using word association between words.
3. Provide opportunities to use concepts
4. Develop students' ability to group words that related together.

It seems that there is a need for direct instruction vocabulary items required for specific text. In addition, effective vocabulary teaching can positively impact on student's comprehension, there for it ought to be rich, intensive and provide essential words full of information and cover wide ranges of topics Kamil & Hiebert (2005, p.7). Building strong vocabulary is a great challenge encounter second language learners, because of the size of the task and the different types of vocabulary ought to be learned Stahl (2005) cited in Hiebert, L & Kamil, M (2005,p.112). Learners will acquire new words so quickly through using pictures or multimedia Willis, J (2008, P.109) said that *"To make knowledge of the word a multisensory experience, consider including illustrations, photographs, computers images, and videos where the word is acted out-allowing students to encounter information both sound and sight"*. To sum up, providing students to multiple vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary lessons should include illustrations, photographs, computer images, and videos. The knowledge with looking to visual representations could help students to retain and recall new words Willis, J (2008, p.109). Besides, research studies show that learners can remember new words quickly, if they think about them in relation to their own knowledge and use them in meaningful context. Words relationship is the best strategy anyone can use to find the meaning of words

McCarthy & O'Dell (1997, p.7). Stahl (2005) cited in Hiebert, E & Kamil, M (2005, p.98) pointed out that "*children must learn 10 words a day to make normal progress in vocabulary development, we then need to find ways to facilitate this learning*". A large number of words need to be taught by using different activities. Vocabulary learning helps learners to obtain good language knowledge and it's significant for vocabulary acquisition. Stahl (2005) cited in Kamil, M & Hiebert, L (2005, p.8) mentioned some methods that improve vocabulary such as semantic mapping, diagrams that use graphics. Another method- the key word method-use words that highlight salient features of meaning.

Smith, C (1997, P.189) suggested some ways to expand learning vocabulary:

1. Learn synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms.
2. Learn prefixes and suffixes.
3. Learn words with groups.
4. Discover meaning from context.
5. Create word maps and webs.
6. Play the analogies game.
7. Searching words in dictionaries and thesauruses.
8. Learn roots, Latin and Greek words.

Stahl and Fairbanks (1986) cited in Hiebert & Kamil (2005, p.105) suggested some ideas for vocabulary instruction:

1. Effective vocabulary instruction should give variety and contextual information about a word.
2. Effective instruction requires learners to link unknown word to their previous knowledge.
3. Effective vocabulary teaching involves exposing to a large quantity of words from different texts.

This study hypothesized that most of the Sudanese EFL Learners of Jabel Awlia fail to retain vocabulary they learnt before and unable to use vocabulary learning strategies.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study is to show the benefits of developing students' lexical knowledge. Besides, the research tried to show role of developing vocabulary learning strategies in the acquisition of English as foreign language.

AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of this study is as follows:

1. To examine the EFL Sudanese students' abilities in using vocabulary learning strategies
2. To discover the difficulties that face L/2 learners to recognize and retain the vocabulary taught before.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Khartoum, Sudan in 2016. The participants in this study were secondary school students in third class in Jebel Awlia. They were regular students. They have studied English syllabus SPINE series for six years. They were all girls. Their ages were between (17-18). Two groups of 66 students were selected to represent the population or the informants from whom the researcher indented to draw the samples. The first group was given a test to examine the effects of neglected vocabulary learning strategies. The test consisted of six questions. Question one was about analyzing words part of speech, question two about gap filling, question three about prefixes and suffixes, question four is multiple choice, question five was about synonyms and antonyms. A pretest was administered to 30 students. It took one hour. The test was invigilated by the researcher himself. The second group was trained to use vocabulary learning strategies such as (collocation, word mapping, infer meaning etc.). The group

studied about 16 lessons. Then a post was administered by a researcher himself at school.

RESULTS

Paired Sample Statistics

	Mean	N	St.Deviation	St.Deviation Mean
Pair1 pretest	15,0303	33	11.01273	1.91707
Post test	18,3030	33	10.92155	1.90120

This table displays the means of the pretest (15,0303) and the post test (18,3030). Comparing to the two means, it is clear that students' performance in the post test is significantly better than the pre test.

		Paired Samples Test					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	PRETEST - POSTTEST	-3.27273	2.28135	.39713	-4.08166	-2.46380	-8.241	32	.000

Table (2) displays the students' performance in vocabulary learning strategies test. It shows the mean (3.27) and standard deviation (2, 28). These values indicate that the students' performance in the post test is significantly better than the pretest (, 00).

DISCUSSION

Teachers can offer multiple opportunities to teach new words use and apply word learning strategies in the classrooms. Vocabulary must be explicitly taught to English language learners if they are to catch up to grade- level standards. At the same time, this vocabulary instruction must be part of a comprehensive language/ literary programme. Studying vocabulary must bring fun and enjoyment through different reading texts and interactive and collaborative Activities and

games. Vocabulary learning strategies help learners to obtain good language knowledge and it's significant for vocabulary acquisition. All forms of communications require a large number of vocabularies. Teaching vocabulary should be taught in every curriculum, because vocabulary is more than learning words relation and using them in context.

In addition, effective vocabulary teaching can positively impact on student's comprehension, there for it ought to be rich, intensive and provide a great range of words. The result showed that students' performance in vocabulary is very low, and the mean for the experimental test was (15,0303).

CONCLUSION

Teachers should teach word- learning strategies and foster word consciousness. Thus, vocabulary program should be designed to develop overall level of vocabulary awareness. It is essential to help students to increase vocabulary knowledge and encourage their awareness of words as special interest Willis (2008, p.84).

In addition to that, the study tried to explains the reasons behind the lack of vocabulary learning strategies knowledge. Teaches should help students to increase vocabulary knowledge and encourage their awareness of words as special interest.

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