VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF TEACHING ENGLISH

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Abstract: The purpose of the study is to prove a hypothesis related to the different ways of teaching vocabulary and their effectiveness. Sixty students were chosen and divided into two groups of 30. These groups have been instructed on words in two different techniques; one of which is teaching vocabulary in discourse and context whereas the other is teaching words by providing only the word definitions. A vocabulary test composed of four parts has been constructed and applied before and after the instruction. The test has been applied in two steps as a pretest to show the selected words are unknown by the students and as a posttest to evaluate the effectiveness of both techniques. There is not a statistically significant difference in post-test scores of the two groups. As a result, presenting the target vocabulary items in context and by definitions does not make a remarkable difference in terms of overall performance. The test has been applied in two steps as a pretest to show the selected words are unknown by the students and as a posttest to evaluate the effectiveness of both techniques.

Keywords: vocabulary teaching; linguistic competence, learning styles, vocabulary in discourse and context.

   Introduction: In learning a foreign language, vocabulary plays an important role. It is an element that links the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing altogether. In order to communicate well in a foreign language, students should acquire an adequate number of words and should know how to use them accurately. Vocabulary acquisition is increasingly viewed as crucial to language acquisition. However, there is much disagreement as to the effectiveness of different approaches for presenting vocabulary items. Moreover, learning vocabulary is often perceived as a tedious and laborious process. Although there have been great changes in views toward the nature of vocabulary, there is much more need to the expansion of the methods of teaching vocabulary. Practitioners in the field of EFL/ESL suggest several types of "deliberate vocabulary teaching" techniques, including 'collocation activities', pre-teaching of vocabulary', 'post-listening/reading vocabulary exercises', 'using word cards', and ' studying word parts' (e.g. Nation, 2003). But a very influential view of vocabulary acquisition claims that we acquire most words through exposure to language input, particularly reading input, rather than by deliberately committing words to memory (Nunan, D. 1995). A great deal of attention has been drawn to the study of teachers' alternation between the target language and the first language in the classroom. According to Richards, J.C. (1976) as a common phenomenon in foreign language classrooms, code-switching between the target language and the first language is widely adopted by teachers in the process of teaching to build a bridge from known (the first language) to unknown (the target language)

Literature Review: Yin Mee (2002) also emphasizes that language learning should not be considered by teachers and textbook producers as a linguistic activity through a grammatical syllabus which is deprived of stimulating content. Moreover, she advocates the importance of contextualizing language use for language learning by referring the idea of literacy which provides different text types to contextualize the teaching of grammar. Hence, the decontextualized, sentence-level presentation of grammar that dominates many pedagogical materials by following a discrete-point approach should be redesigned as a contextualized language instruction (Schneider, 2005). The use of stories particularly authentic animated ones for children might provide not only rich, varied, and contextualized language but it might also provide opportunities to the language teacher for presenting and practicing language through tasks and activities derived from story themes which enable teachers to contextualize the whole lesson (Tosun, 2008). In addition, the emphasis in class would be on encouraging students to develop strategies such as inferring the meaning of new vocabulary items from the context in which they appear and teaching them to make use of both verbal and non-verbal cues to determine meaning. The courses in ELT program do not include a course precisely aimed at educating student teachers in terms of contextualization but contextualizing language teaching has been emphasized in different methodology courses in the teacher education program. Therefore, this study aims to investigate student teachers' perspectives about creating context to make language input more comprehensible for learners who are learning a new language. A vocabulary test composed of four parts has been constructed and applied before and after the instruction.

Teachers are different personalities and being involved in the learning/teaching process, they are given the chance to be individuals. The teacher as a personality with his or her own beliefs, experiences and values can be seen as the humane dimension that goes beyond the traditional views (Farrell, 2007; Freeman & Johnson, 1998).This dimension can be of extreme importance when considering teacher education as an interactive process in which many individuals take part (Kerry & Mayes, 1995; Maynard & Furlong, 1995). The underlying assumption is that the process of teaching practice has two basic educating strategies: training and development (Freeman, 1989). Both of these strategies are seen as essential parts of preparing student teachers for their job. At the same time, the underlying assumption is that observation is a powerful tool which gives participants opportunities to gather data and gain insights into the classroom (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000; Mackey & Gass, 2005; Wajnryb, 1992). Many of the reviews and summaries of the classroom observation research, such as that of Walberg (1991), have consistently found that a number of classroom behaviors significantly relate to students' academic achievement.

Methodology: The test consists of pre-test and post-test. The test used was vocabulary test to see the improvement of student's vocabulary. The test for pre-test was the same as for the post-test. Before the researcher gives the treatment to the students, the test was tried out to the students who are not the sample of this research. The aim of the try out test is to know the validity of the test. The try out test administered about a week before giving pretest to the sample students. It aims to give the researcher time to analyze the result of try out test to find the validity of the test.

This was a descriptive study using qualitative and quantitative approach. The instruments used were observation sheet and interview sheet. The objects being observed were 7 Basic classes to know how this strategy was employed. Besides, 7 lecturers who teach Basic

Vocabulary Course were interviewed. Basic Vocabulary is a course which is offered at the first semester of the study. In other words, the students who enroll in this course are the first semester students. The context clues strategy is taught early at the beginning of the semester (meeting 2) before introducing any other reading strategies, especially vocabulary learning strategy. The researchers firstly observed how the context clues strategy was implemented in the classroom and took note of any important findings. The notes were written in the observation sheet. The item observed were 1) how lecturers introduced context clues strategy, 2) how context clues was implemented, and 3) how context clues was used by the learners to infer word meaning. Therefore, the lecturers were interviewed to gather and to triangulate the data. The interview method was also used to know the lecturer perception of how context clues is implemented in the language classroom and what obstacles they found during teaching the strategy to the learners. Having finished collecting the data, the qualitative data was analyzed using Miles and Huberman data technique analysis and quantitative data was analyzed using percentage method. The quantitative data were then described narratively. The findings are described below and some are highlighted for further discussion.

Besides, according to the lecturers, the students' learning outcomes have not improved significantly due to certain obstacles faced by both lecturers and students, such as the low ability of student vocabulary or lack of interest or knowledge about the topic of the text being read. Students would be quite capable to implement the strategy only if the level of difficulty of the vocabulary is in accordance with their abilities, and the topic of the reading is a topic that they already mastered. The lack of vocabulary (low level vocabulary proficiency), according to the lecturers, greatly affects the ability of students to determine the clues / hint needed in the process of guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words. This was proven when their students stated that almost all of the vocabulary in the text was difficult. The worst case was they did not know the meaning of the clue itself. In addition, the students' low interest in reading was said as one of the causative issues of their low learning result. As the result, the implementation of context clues strategy did not run as smooth as it should be.

Discussion and Conclusion: The aim of this study was to see how using contexts (zero, reduced, and high contexts) affected the vocabulary learning and retention of upper intermediate EFL learners. The results revealed that teaching vocabulary in contexts (zero, decreased, and high) had a substantial impact on upper-intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary learning and retention. In both the post-test and delayed post-tests, learners in high and reduced contexts performed slightly better than those in zero context. It was discovered that having context improves the performance of EFL learners at the upper-intermediate level as opposed to when no context is given. This suggests that understanding and remembering the meaning of words is much easier when presented in context.

Furthermore, the delayed post-test findings supporting the high context group's dominance backed up Brown, D.F. (1980). They conclude that context will aid learners in inferring the meaning of unfamiliar terms and improving retention. Contextual hints, according to Cohen, L., & Byrnes, K. (2007), create connections between the unfamiliar word and idiom, their meanings, the context, and the learner's background information. The results support Innaci, D. Loyola, D. Praveen Sam. (2017) assertion that guessing a word's meaning from background cues is the most effective strategy of all.

The second and third items observed were how context clues strategy was implemented in the reading classroom and how the learners used it. Some of the lecturers directly gave several paragraphs to the learners and instructed them to read silently. The learners were not firstly instructed to find the meaning of unfamiliar words, but are demanded to comprehend the context of the text being read. Once they successfully engaged to the text, they are instructed to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words which have been underlined in the text. Then, the learners begun to guess the meaning by using any clues or hints surrounded. Another strategy used to implement this was by explaining any type of clues that have been stated or provided in the text, such as definition, restatement, antonym/synonym, examples, inferences, or word structural analysis. This was done to assist the learners that they sometimes do not need to seek for all clues since some of them have been done for them.

For a variety of factors, the current research was bound to have certain limitations. The study's participants became one of the study's main limitations. Environmental extraneous factors may have influenced the participants' output because they were chosen from different groups at the same institute and thus were taught in different settings. Among the environmental variables, we can refer to "noise, temperature, adequacy of light, time of day, and seating arrangements" (Brown, 1995). Another downside of this research was the length of time it lasted. The therapy lasted just ten sessions because the researcher had to follow the university's program and other manuals rather than the ones used for the current report. Furthermore, since this research only concentrated on vocabulary instruction, the findings cannot be applied to other language abilities.

Conclusion: This study has been carried out upon the hypothesis that teaching vocabulary in context indicating the use and function of the word is comparatively more effective than teaching vocabulary by providing only the dictionary definitions of words. However, the results indicate that generally there is no great difference between the performances of the subjects of two groups who were instructed in different ways. Presenting the target vocabulary items in context and by definitions does not make a remarkable difference in terms of overall performance. On the other hand, the subjects are inclined to perform better on test tasks which are consistent to the way they have been instructed. They are highly successful in the sections parallel to the way they have been taught.

This study portrays a preliminary effort to empirically examine the efficacy of CLIL on the vocabulary learning and retention of EFL learners. More research is needed related to this study for a thorough understanding of this issue and for confirmation of the findings stated in this research. This is particularly true when considering that there might be additional variables that would add different intrapersonal effects based on learning styles preferences which were not included in this study.

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