

The Impact of First Language and Audio-Visual Aids on Students' Vocabulary Achievements

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المستخلص

تهدف الدراسة إلى معرفة تأثير اللغة الأولى والمساعدات السمعية البصرية في تطوير مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية لطلاب الصف الأول في قسم إدارة الأعمال في كلية الإدارة والاقتصاد - جامعة الأنبار. كان عدد المشاركين ١٤٨ طالباً وطالبة، تم تقسيم المشاركين إلى مجموعتين، المجموعة (١) تم تعليمهم المفردات عبر اللغة الأولى (باستخدام تقنية الترجمة)، وتم تعليم المجموعة (٢) المفردات عبر الوسائل السمعية والبصرية (باستخدام برنامج الرسوم المتحركة و اليوتيوب). تم استخدام الاختبار القبلي و البعدي لجمع بيانات الدراسة. تم استخدام اختبار تاء الاحصائي لإثبات فرضية الدراسة "لا يوجد فرق دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى الدلالة ٠,٠٥ بين متوسط درجات طلاب المجموعة " ١ " وطلاب المجموعة " ٢ " في اختبار تحصيل المفردات البعدي والذي يعزى الى طرق التدريس ". أظهرت النتائج أن درجات الطلاب في اختبار التحصيل، الذين قاموا بدراسة المفردات بطريقة اللغة الأولى (الترجمة)، كانت أعلى من درجات الطلاب الذين قاموا بدراسة المفردات بطريقة الوسائل السمعية والبصرية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة الأولى، الوسائط السمعية – المرئية، تحصيل الطلبة للمفردات.

Abstract

The study aims at investigating the impact of the first language and the audiovisual aids in developing first-grade students English language vocabulary at the Department of Business Management at the College of Management and Economics – University of Anbar. The participants were 148 students, the participants were divided into two groups, group A has been taught the vocabulary via the first language (using translation technique), and group B has been taught the vocabulary via the audiovisual aids (using designed animation program and YouTube). A pretest and a posttest have been used to collect the data of the study. A t-test has been used to prove the hypothesis of the study "there is no statistical significance difference at 0.05 between the means scores of the students in group "1" and the students in group "2" in the post achievement vocabulary test due to the teaching methods". The results revealed that the students' scores in the achievement test, who taught vocabulary via the first language method, were higher than the students' scores who taught vocabulary via the Audio-Visual Aids method.

Keywords: First Language, Audio-Visual Aids, Vocabulary Achievements

Background of the Study

From the researcher's long experience in teaching English language at the levels of preparatory schools and universities, it is noticed that learning English language focus on learning the vocabulary in the first rank, then follows learning the grammatical rules in the second rank. Both the English language teachers and the students are used to follow the translation method to know the meaning of any new vocabulary, and they even learn the grammatical rules by using translation method from English to Arabic language. Although the new English textbooks series are designed on the Communicative language Teaching Method, but the teachers and the students still use the translation method in teaching English language. Due to the spread of the Covid-19 epidemic and the quarantine that followed it which forced all the educational institutions to use distance learning, education has become electronic in all Iraqi schools and universities till to the present day February 2021. Thus, it is the time to change the students' vocabulary learning behaviors and change students' learning behaviors.

Statement of the Problem

The students who study a course of English language as English for Specific Purpose (ESP) at the Iraqi universities focus primary on two language techniques, namely vocabulary and grammar. As the students norm is to learn vocabulary in the first rank, it is worth to investigate the best method that can help students to retaining and recalling vocabulary for longer time. The researcher reviewed the literature that investigate the lexical and vocabulary learning and teaching strategies, and found that the most strategies used and have significance effect were the first language (translation method) and the audiovisual aids techniques. In addition, the researcher has distributed an open question to elicit students' need to develop, the skills that they need to develop, and the most students' responds were focus on developing their vocabulary in English language.

Aim of the Study

The study aims at revealing the effect of using the first language (translation method) and the audiovisual aids method in teaching vocabulary. In other word, to reveal which teaching method can enable students to retaining and recalling vocabulary for longer time and use them in suitable context.

Hypothesis of the Study

The research tries to prove the following null hypothesis "There is no statistical significance difference at ($\alpha= 0.05$) between the mean scores of the students who learn vocabulary via the first language and those who learn vocabulary via audiovisual aids method in the achievement posttest"

Significance of the Study

The outcomes of the study will redound to the significance of teaching vocabulary as a basic block to learn the English language, and the significance of using the first language and the audiovisual aids method in teaching which can accelerate students' vocabulary learning.

Limits of the Study

The outcomes of the study are limited to the following:

- 1- Participants:** The participants were 148 male and female students from the first grade at the Department of Business Management.
- 2- Location:** The study was conducted at the College of Management and Economics – University of Anbar, Iraq.
- 3- Time:** The study was conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2020-2021.

Definition of Terms

First Language: The first language, what is commonly used as the mother tongue, is the language system that one is exposed from his/ her birth, or it is the language that one acquired at the age of early-childhood (Al-Khayyat, 2019: 18).

Audio-Visual Aids: The audio visual aids are materials that direct students hearing and sights toward instructional materials such as recorded conversation, dialogue, educational play, authentic conversational situation (Al-Khayyat, 2016: 281).

Vocabulary: The vocabulary is the lexical words that one acquired through learning or exposing to authentic situation in the life. For Students who learn a foreign language, they learn the new vocabulary (the meaning of words) by using dictionary or from the teachers and peers (Al-Khayyat and Shareef, 2018: 32).

Literature Review

From the researcher's experience in teaching English language as EFL at the university level, he notices that there are many factors and variables that affect learning English language, as the ultimate goal of learning

English language in Iraq, is to be able to express ideas and exchange information. To achieve this goal, one needs to have a good amount of vocabulary that s/he can use to communicate.

Teaching and learning vocabulary have several strategies to be followed. Several studies have proved the positive relationship between learning vocabulary and reading achievement, writing achievement, speaking achievement, and listening achievement (Wu et al, 2013: 162). Vocabulary learning is a problem-solving task. To learn vocabulary means to solve problem, a learner adopts some strategies to find the meaning of a word(s), to try to understand a written text or listening to a conversation (Gu, 2003: 2).

Al-Khresheh and Al-Ruwaili (2020: 292) mention some popular learning vocabulary strategies as follow:

- Discovery strategies:
- Social strategies.
- Determination strategies.
- Consolidation strategies.
- Metacognitive strategy.
- Cognitive strategy.
- Memory strategy.
- Social strategies.

Table. 1 show the relationships between the learning vocabulary strategies.

Table (1): Schmitt's Taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (1997)

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Vocabulary learning Strategies | Discovery Strategies | Determination Strategies. | First language. |
| | | | Analyzing speech. |
| | | | Guessing. |
| | | | Dictionary |
| | Social Strategies | Asking questions | Cooperating. |
| | | | Images. |
| | Memory Strategies. | sounds | Actions. |
| | | | Centering learning. |
| | | | Evaluating. |
| | Metacognitive strategies | Planning. | Practice. |
| | | | Input and output. |
| | | | Guessing. |
| | Cognitive Strategies. | Overcoming. | |
| | | | |
| Compensation | Overcoming. | | |
| | | | |

In addition to the above mentioned strategies, students who study English language as a foreign language can use different approaches to learn and to know the meaning of the new vocabulary such as by inferring the

meaning from the context, the use of audio-visual aids, and the use of dictionaries. The English language teachers who are interested in teaching vocabulary, may use and adopt the naturalistic approach, which focus on implicit techniques for vocabulary learning, or even adopt direct method to (Laufer, 2005).

To be able to understand a given information, one needs to know the meaning of the words, the grammar and sentence structures do not obstacle understanding an information. Knowing the meaning of vocabulary means understanding the delivered message, but the lack of grammar and the sentence structures block the process of communication. In one hand a person can understand the meaning of a sentence even with minimum vocabulary, but on the other hand he/ she cannot compose a sentence without the knowledge of the system rules of the language (Subon, 2016).

In fact, students at the university level are ill-equipped to use vocabulary learning strategies effectively. The lack of time, materials, training courses, and even the lesson plans are free of vocabulary portion, in other words, the teaching vocabulary is not existed within the teaching process, the students know the meaning of the new words either by looking in a dictionary or from the teacher's explanation. Many researchers prove that knowing good amount of vocabulary, to enrich vocabulary-bank, plays a significant role in enable students and the learners to express their ideas, thought, feeling, and deliver messages correctly (Al-Khresheh and Al-Ruwaili, 2020: 289).

Schmitt (2008) emphasizes that using the mother tongue in teaching the foreign language has a significant effect on learning the vocabulary of the target language, this has been investigated by many searchers. It is advised to link the first language with learning the vocabulary of the foreign language, such process is significant in the initial phase of learning the foreign language. The learner in this stage needs to use the first language as a method that facilitates the learning process and breaks the fear of learning a foreign language.

The researcher, in the present study, believes that learning the English vocabulary by using the first language can save time and the effort of the learners. If the students use guessing strategy, they need to know large number of English vocabulary in order to be able to guess the meaning of the new word from the surrounding clues. Anuthama (2010) states that using explicit vocabulary teaching strategies have many advantages such as the learners do not face difficulty in learning, and feel familiar with the teaching method.

The audiovisual aids is also used as a common tool that the English language students use in learning vocabulary. The input that the students expose to via hearing and reading is last for long term in students'

memory, for example students could learn vocabulary via television, in other word by video-caption (to listen to a word and read its transcription on television) (Suarez and Gesa, 2019: 498).

In addition, the mobile assisted language learning has been used in teaching vocabulary. Cavus and Ibrahim (2009) used SMS as a method to teach technical vocabulary. The study revealed that the SMS influencing students' vocabulary achievement, that means students develop their vocabulary- bank when they received instruction via mobile- messages. Lu (2008) found that students have positive attitudes toward learning vocabulary via mobile assisted language learning.

Google workspace for education (G-suite) is also considered as a rich instructional source. Al-Khayyat (2021) use Google Classroom and Google meet in teaching English language at the university level, and found that the instruction via Google classroom has increased students' English language performance in general, and English grammar and vocabulary in specific. In spite the fact that the postgraduate students have negative attitudes toward learning English language in general and learning grammar and ESP vocabulary in particular.

Fauzi (2015) has distinguished between teaching vocabulary methods for primary school students and preparatory students. The audiovisual aids as instructional tool is useful to attract the students' attention, and can be helpful to prolong students attention-span.

The significance reason behind using audiovisual aids in teaching English vocabulary are as follow: audiovisual aids present real language from the native speaker, audiovisual aids present authentic contact with the foreign culture, audiovisual aids provide opportunity to interact with English language, and audiovisual aids motivate students to learn English vocabulary (Stenpleski and Arcario , 1992).

Mansourzadeh (2020) uses audiovisual aids to teach English vocabulary and concludes that using pictures in teaching English vocabulary can help the learners to comprehend the difficult vocabulary easily by seeing the photos, also make learning vocabulary interesting, and the class more active.

Previous Related Studies

Saricoban and Ozturan (2013) investigated the impact of mobile assisted language learning in vocabulary achievement. The participants were 36 students from Civil Aviation Department at a state university in Turkey. A posttest and a questionnaire were used to collect the data of the study. The result revealed that learning vocabulary via mobile phone is an effective and enjoyable way and has a significant impact on students' vocabulary achievements.

Camo and Ballester (2015) investigated the role of the First language students' retention of English vocabulary. The participants were 34

students from fifth grade at a Catalan primary school. Translation method, pretest and posttest were used to collect the data of the study. the results show that using the first language in teaching new English lexical results in students retaining more lexical items, and recalling them for longer periods of time.

Fauzi (2015) investigated the advantages and disadvantages of teaching English vocabulary using audiovisual aids. The participants were from the first grade of SDN 2 Sawahan of Surakarta. A test, interview, and observation were used to collect the data of the study. The results revealed that there were positive effect lf using audiovisual aids in teaching vocabulary and also there were some advantage of using audiovisual aids in teaching English vocabulary.

Al-Khayyat (2016) investigated the effect of using audiovisual aids in teaching English language, and the vocabulary techniques. The participants were 24 grade-1 university students from the Petrochemical Engineering Department, Faculty of Engineering at the University of Anbar during the first semester of the academic year 2014-2015. Pretest and posttest were used to collect the data of the study. The results revealed that there was significant difference between the participants' achievements in the post achievement test for the favor of the experimental group.

Contreras (2017) investigated the impact of using audiovisual aids to develop EFL vocabulary learning. The participants were from the third grade of Prado Veraniego School. An artifacts, an observational and Inquiry were used to collect the data of the study. The results revealed that that students learnt many vocabulary via audio videos activities.

Suarez and Gesa (2019) investigated the effect of captioned video on school and university students' vocabulary learning. 57 EFL students from Grade-10 and 60 university students were participated in the study. "Captioned episodes from a TV series containing the Target Words (TWs) were used to collect the data of the study. The findings revealed that there were significant differences between the experimental and control groups in the vocabulary learning for the favor of the high school participants, but not among university students.

Al-Khresheh and Al-Ruwaili (2020) investigated the vocabulary learning strategies (include the first language) that used by Saudi EFL learners. The participants were 219 Saudi learners of English. A vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire consisted of 42 items was used to collect the data of the study. The outcomes revealed that the Memory Strategy by using the first language was the most preferable one to learn vocabulary, followed the determination strategies, social strategies, and metacognitive strategies respectively. While the Cognitive Strategies were found to be the least preferable for the participants.

The information mentioned above foster the significant of teaching vocabulary and the role that the vocabulary plays in developing students' ability to communicate in English language. The present study hopes to add to the literature the best vocabulary teaching method that the teachers need to be aware in teaching English language in the Iraqi context. To the researcher best knowledge, no study has conducted the role of using the first language and the audiovisual aids in teaching English vocabulary in the Iraqi universities.

Methodology

The researcher adopts semi-experimental design to conduct the study. The participants of the study were divided into two groups, each group has taught the vocabulary by a specific teaching method.

The Participants of the Study

The participants were 148 grade-first Business Management students who study at the Department of Business Management at the College of Management and Economics – University of Anbar. The researcher divided the participants randomly into two groups. Group 1 has been taught the English vocabulary via the First language (Translation), while Group 2 has been taught the English vocabulary via the audiovisual aids. Table 2 shows the distribution of the participants of the study.

Table 2: The Participants of the Study

| Groups | Males | Female s | Tota l |
|----------------|--------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Group 1 | 37 | 38 | 75 |
| Group 2 | 39 | 34 | 73 |
| Total | 76 | 72 | 148 |

Instrument of the Study

To collect the data of the study, a pretest and posttest have been designed. The tests have consisted of 5 questions which measure students' knowledge of English vocabulary and the use of appropriate word in suitable context. Each question is allotted 10 marks.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

To calculate the validity of the tests, the tests have been given to a jury committee specialist in English language teaching (TEFL) and applied linguistics. The jury members' recommendations and suggestions have been taken into consideration.

The reliability of the instruments was calculated by distributed the tests to a pilot sample consisted of 28 students who are recruited at evening-study at the same department. The pilot are not included in the groups of the study. After 10 days the same test has been distributed to the same pilot sample under the same condition.

The reliability computed by using Pearson Correlation between the implementations of the tests. The internal consistency reliability values was 0.86 and the values of the stability index was 0.84, and its values for the test dimensions ranged from 0.84-0.88. The outcomes of the analysis indicate that the results were acceptable.

The Variables of the Study

The independent variable is the teaching methods, and the dependent variable is the students' vocabulary achievement scores on the posttest.

Procedures of the Study

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic quarantine, the researcher taught the participants via Google Classroom and Google Meet platforms.

Both groups have been taught the English textbook entitled "New Headway Plus Beginner Student's Book".

- 1- To equalize the participants, they have been set to a pretest.
- 2- The results of the pretest have revealed that there was no difference between the participants on the level of vocabulary achievement. Table 3 shows the results of the pretest.

Table 3: Participants' scores in the pretest

| Groups | N | Means | St.D | Df | T- Value | | Sig. |
|---------|----|--------|-------|----|----------------|---------------|------|
| | | | | | Calculate d | Tabulate d | |
| Group 1 | 75 | 23.032 | 7.012 | 28 | 1.92 | 2.033 | 0.05 |
| Group 2 | 73 | 25.044 | 9.64 | | | | |

- 3- Group 1 has been taught the vocabulary that exist in the text book by using the first language, by translating the vocabulary from the English language into Arabic language.
- 4- Group 2 has been taught the vocabulary that exist in the text book by using the audiovisual aids. The researcher used videos, pictures, animation, YouTube, and voice-messages.
- 5- The participants practiced the experiment for eight weeks, each week four hours.
- 6- At the end of the experiment the participants have been set for an online posttest.
- 7- The results of the participants have been statistically analyzed.

Results of the Study

To prove the null hypothesis of the study "There is no statistical significance difference at ($\alpha= 0.05$) between the mean scores of the students who learn vocabulary via the first language and those who learn vocabulary via audiovisual aids method in the achievement posttest", a T-test was used. The participants' mean scores of the both groups of the study are shown in table 4.

Table 4: Participants' mean scores and standard deviation in the posttest.

| Groups | N | Means | St.D | Df | T- Value | | Sig. |
|------------|----|-------|-------|----|----------------|---------------|------|
| | | | | | Calculate d | Tabulate d | |
| Group 1 | 75 | 37.12 | 10.03 | 58 | 5.129 | 2.000 | 0.05 |
| Group 2 | 73 | 31.26 | 6.18 | | | | |

Table 4 shows that the mean scores of the participants on group 1 and group 2 are 37.12 and 31.26 respectively. This indicates that the group 1 participants achievement in vocabulary (who taught by using first language) is better than that of the group 2 participants vocabulary achievement (who taught by audiovisual aids).

The T-test formula for the both independent groups was used to show whether the difference between the two groups is significant or not. Table 4 shows that the calculated T-value of the vocabulary posttest is 5.129 under significance of 0.05 , whereas the tabulated T-value is 2.00. This indicates that there is a significant difference between the two groups at 0.05 level of significance and under 58 freedom degree. This indicates that the null hypothesis of the study is rejected.

Discussion of the Result

The result of the study reveals that the students who study the English vocabulary via translation method (using L1) are able to retain and recall the vocabulary for longer time, and also can memorize more vocabulary than the students who study vocabulary via audiovisual aids.

This result can be attributed to the fact that Iraqi universities students tend to use the first language even in the courses that are designed in English language such as the scientific textbooks and sources. The students tend to use the language that is more familiar with, which they use it in their daily life. The students translate words unconsciously, that means when they memorize the vocabulary, when they read or listen to them they unconsciously translate a sentence or a phrase into Arabic language to be able to understand the receive messages.

Learning vocabulary via the audiovisual aids consume students' time and efforts in order to infer the meaning of a word from the guessing or from the surrounding context. During the experiment, the instructor (the researcher) did not interfere and provide students with feedback. The students did their best to find the meaning of any new word. Thus, they spend more time and effort in learning the new English vocabulary.

Conclusion

There are several advantages of using audiovisual aids in teaching English vocabulary such as the ability of controlling the classroom, using interesting method of teaching, creating fun and joyful atmosphere, students can recall the material at anytime and anywhere, finally when students listen and see the vocabulary they can recall it easily.

Also, there are several advantages of using the first language in teaching English vocabulary such as it save time and efforts, students use familiar teaching method, the students' vocabulary-bank can be increased smoothly and in a short time, students can form sentence by translating the utterance from Arabic language into English language with taking care of the differences of the two language systems, and translation is the most easiest method for both teacher and students in learning English vocabulary, thus the Grammar Translation Method was the first school which used as a tool to teach any foreign language, which was first introduced in the early 19th century till the mid of the 20th century, this means that old method never die.

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