A PRELIMINARY STUDY ON ENGLISH VOCABULARY TEACHING TECHNIQUES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT
Received:	**24/6/2022**	This article aims to study the difficulties in teaching English vocabulary of primary school teachers and students; at the same time, studying and
Revised:	**30/6/2022**	applying effective English vocabulary teaching and learning techniques for grade 5 students of Tuan Chau Primary School, Quang Ninh; from
Published:	**30/6/2022**	there, proposing vocabulary teaching techniques for English teachers to apply in teaching, meeting the increasing requirements in teaching and
KEYWORDS		learning English. This study used the experimental method, divided the research objects into two groups to apply teaching techniques, thereby,
English vocabulary		proposed appropriate English teaching and learning techniques for teaching English vocabulary. Research results showed that the use of
Teaching and learning		pictures was the most effective method in teaching vocabulary, markedly pronunciation, spelling, and meaning of words and level of
Techniques		interest in the classroom for 5th grade students of Tuan Chau Primary School, Quang Ninh.
Primary School		
Tuan Chau		

This article aims to study the difficulties in teaching English vocabulary of primary school teachers and students; at the same time, studying and applying effective English vocabulary teaching and learning techniques for grade 5 students of Tuan Chau Primary School, Quang Ninh; from there, proposing vocabulary teaching techniques for English teachers to apply in teaching, meeting the increasing requirements in teaching and learning English. This study used the experimental method, divided the research objects into two groups to apply teaching techniques, thereby, proposed appropriate English teaching and learning techniques for teaching English vocabulary. Research results showed that the use of pictures was the most effective method in teaching vocabulary, markedly pronunciation, spelling, and meaning of words and level of interest in the classroom for 5th grade students of Tuan Chau Primary School, Quang Ninh.

NGHIÊN CỨU SƠ BỘ VỀ KỸ THUẬT DẠY TỪ VỰNG TIẾNG ANH CHO HỌC SINH TIỂU HỌC

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THÔNG TIN BÀI BÁO		TÓM TẮT
Ngày nhận bài:	**24/6/2022**	Bài báo này nhằm nghiên cứu những khó khăn trong dạy học từ vựng tiếng Anh của giáo viên và học sinh cấp tiểu học; đồng thời, nghiên cứu
Ngày hoàn thiện:	**30/6/2022**	ứng dụng các kỹ thuật dạy và học từ vựng tiếng Anh một cách hiệu quả cho học sinh lớp 5 của Trường Tiểu học Tuần Châu, Quảng Ninh; từ đó,
Ngày đăng:	**30/6/2022**	đề xuất các kỹ thuật dạy học từ vựng để giáo viên tiếng Anh ứng dụng trong giảng dạy, đáp ứng yêu cầu ngày càng cao trong dạy và học tiếng
TỪ KHÓA		Anh. Nghiên cứu này sử dụng phương pháp thực nghiệm, chia đối tượng nghiên cứu thành hai nhóm để áp dụng các kỹ thuật dạy học, từ đó, đề
Từ vựng tiếng Anh		xuất những kỹ thuật dạy và học từ vựng tiếng Anh phù hợp. Nghiên cứu đã chỉ ra việc sử dụng tranh ảnh là phương pháp mang lại hiệu quả cao
Dạy và học		nhất trong hoạt động dạy học từ vựng, đặc biệt là phát âm, chính tả, nghĩa từ và niềm yêu thích của học sinh lớp 5 Trường Tiểu học Tuần
Kỹ thuật		Châu, Quảng Ninh.
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Tuần Châu		

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1. Introduction

English is the medium of international communication. In order to meet the needs of modern society, English teachers need to pay more attention to the development of learners' abilities and focus more on successful and effective methods. According to scientists, the age from six to 12 is the ideal time to learn another language along with the mother tongue because children have a good memory to attain new things during that period. Specifically, the 5th grade is the final class of primary education level at which students are taught more vocabulary to improve communication.

Komachali & Khodareza [1] stated that vocabulary learning is important because it is needed by learners to acquire a lot of words so they can use the vocabulary in any needs especially academic needs. Young [2] pointed out vocabulary in four ways: the meaning of words, how the words are used, root words, prefixes, suffixes and analogies. While Hornby [3] defined vocabulary in three ways: total number of words (with rules for combining them) which make up a language, range of words known to a person and containing a list of words with definition or translation. Kumar & Murthy [4] claimed that English has the richest vocabulary of any language. English teachers should focus on the teaching of vocabulary from a different perspective and pay attention to a word's function, pronunciation and basic meaning. Lelawati et al. [5] pointed out that it is very important for all people who learn a language to understand and improve vocabularies because the more vocabulary we know, the better we can understand the meaning of the words. According to McKay [6], young English learners are children aged 5 to 12 who are learning a foreign language or a second language. Each learner has different characteristics in learning English vocabulary, so teachers need to provide appropriate methods for students in the lessons. Teaching children aged six, for example, as they are in their early year learning a new language, they hardly know how to write a word, the solution can only be teaching meaning first [7].

The ultimate goal of teaching and learning English is to help students understand and study well the language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. To enable students to develop these 4 skills, vocabulary is the foundation to be focused on. There are various methods of teaching English vocabulary, however, how to help students memorize and make use of vocabulary seems to be still difficult for both teachers and students. For primary school students, English vocabulary is mainly focused in teaching and learning. Thus, teachers need to find effective ways to teach vocabulary both to help students memorize vocabulary and actively involved in learning activities. This will help them to love the subject and remember vocabulary better.

For the above-mentioned reasons, an exploratory study on vocabulary teaching techniques at a primary school is conducted with the hope to help them improve their English vocabulary, then, so as to improve the quality of teaching and learning English.

The research aims at exploring the techniques to teach English vocabulary for students of primary schools to help teachers and students understand thoroughly the importance of English teaching and learning vocabulary. Having students study vocabulary effectively is meant to create premise basis for them to learn English effectively and apply vocabulary in communication.

The aims of the study are:

- To find out difficulties in teaching and learning English vocabularies for English teachers at a primary school.

- To study the theory related to vocabulary, psychology features of primary students and some application of techniques for teaching vocabulary.

The study focused on techniques to teach English vocabulary to 5th graders at a primary school in Quang Ninh.

In fact, there are various techniques the teacher can use to teach primary students to pronounce vocabularies well. It requires much of time and effort. However, due to the limitation

of time, resources and knowledge of mine as well as some other condition, this study only focused on difficulties that 5th graders encounter when they learn English vocabulary and study some effective techniques to teach vocabulary for 5th graders.

2. Methodology

2.1. Data Collection Instruments

Survey questionnaires and interviews were employed for both primary students and English teachers. The researchers carried out the survey in Tuan Chau Primary School with two English teachers and 36 grade 5 students. They took part in survey questionnaires, interviews and two tests.

This survey has following purposes:
- To find out the difficulties in teaching and learning English vocabulary.
- To explore useful techniques applied in teaching and learning vocabulary.

The researcher used survey questionnaires to get information about teaching and learning English vocabulary in Quang Ninh province. In this survey questionnaire, two sets of questionnaire are conducted (one for students, one for teacher). Teachers and students were asked to tick the most suitable answers which correspond with their opinion.

2.2. The study experiments

2.2.1. Teaching through pictures

Pictures are very useful in teaching vocabulary to encourage and motivate the students to learn the language. The purpose of picture is to provide a stimulus which will elicit a particular response from the learner. The picture represents some action and in order to learn the appropriate words to describe the action itself must not be in question. Using pictures as teaching aids can give a great help to the teacher in the class. The students will not always be successful in learning English just by listening to the explanation from the teacher or by reading many books. Therefore, pictures are chosen as teaching aids in teaching vocabulary to the elementary school.

Teaching vocabulary following topics such as: jobs, drinks, food, family, weather, animals, etc, is effective and interesting way to promote the learning English vocabulary of students, especially primary students. Teacher had better using related pictures to attract the involvement of their students.

Teacher shows some pictures on the blackboard, and then teacher speaks aloud and points to the related pictures. Students repeat the words.

2.2.2. Teaching vocabulary through games

Using crossword games can be an alternative solution to handle this problem. Games help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. Games usually involve friendly competition and they interest learners in the lessons.

Teacher provides some clues and then students complete the crossword.

Word order

This game will help students memorize spelling of words. Because it is quite easy to do, children eagerly enjoy taking part in the order arrangement. When choosing this game, primary teachers should select what use pictures to illustrate the content of game.

Teacher divides class into two groups, and then she hands out the photo to students. She offers them to work in group in 5minutes.

English quiz

A quiz is a form of game or mind sport in which the players (as individuals or in teams) attempt to answer questions correctly. Quizzes are also brief assessments used in education and

similar fields to measure growth in knowledge, abilities, and/or skills. Quizzes are usually scored in points and many quizzes are designed to determine a winner from a group of participants - usually the participant with the highest score.

Teacher also divides class into two groups, and then she hands out the photo to students. She offers them to work in group in 10 minutes.

Word search

A word search is a word game that gives letters of a word in a grid that usually has a rectangular or square shape. The objective of this puzzle is to find and mark all the words hidden inside the box. The words may be horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Often a list of the hidden words is provided, but more challenging puzzles may let the player figure them out. Many word search puzzles have a theme to which all the hidden words are related. Obviously, this game is useful for spelling of primary students. Moreover, this game also promotes the intelligent of children.

Teacher hands out the photo of word search to every student in class, and then he guides the rules of this game. 7 minutes are allowed time to find these words.

Guess the word

Guess Word is a game about guessing words. Guessing the secret word is a matter of strategy and logical thinking and quite simple. Playing this game can make students' brain work. Teachers should apply more and more kind of games to attract the interest of students; moreover, this game can promote the thinking of children.

Teacher also divides class into two groups with the names like Sun and Moon, and then he hands out the photo to students. The teacher asks students to work in group in five minutes. Then students guess the word.

2.2.3. Teaching vocabulary through audio-visual aids

Audio-visual aids in the classroom can enhance teaching methods and improve student comprehension. Today's technology offers many choices to the informed educator who wishes to capitalize on a new generation's appetite for multimedia presentations. Lesson plans that incorporate the use of audio-visual aids should be consistent with curriculum objectives and not segued improperly. The most common audio-visual aid in teaching vocabulary for primary students is using funny songs. Teacher can teach them to sing a song such as Alphabets song, or let students fill in the blank all the words in the song while hearing the song from radio.

Teacher hands out the lyric of song, and then she turns on the radio. Students will learn the song through radio.

3. Results and discussion

After conducting the research, some effective techniques are suggested for English teachers to apply in teaching vocabulary to primary school students. Those techniques were highly remarked for its effectiveness and usefulness in teaching English vocabulary.

3.1. The results of pre-test

The pre-test is a vocabulary test for all participants (36 students) before treatments. The test aims to assess the level of students in English vocabulary. Here is a figure showing the results of pre-test for the experimental and control groups.

Obviously, there were nine participants in the experimental group who got score over 7, which was the highest number displayed on table 1. In contrast, eight participants in the control group achieved these scores. Among thirty- six participants in both groups, there was a balance about number of participants who had the scores varied from 6 to 7, with 6 students, only 4 participants in the control group and 3 participants in the experimental group had the lowest scores under 6.

Table 1. *Average scores of pre-test*

Participants	Pre-test result	
	Control Group (n = 18)	**Experimental Group (n = 18)**
C1	6	6.4
C2	6.4	7.2
C3	7.2	5.2
C4	6.8	6
C5	8	8.4
C6	4.8	7.2
C7	7.2	6.0
C8	5.6	7.6
C9	7.6	5.2
C10	5.4	8.4
C11	8.4	6.4
C12	7.6	7.2
C13	6.8	6.4
C14	7.6	8.0
C15	7.2	6.8
C16	6.4	5.6
C17	5.6	7.6
C18	6.4	7.6
Mean	**6.72**	**6.84**

Table 1 also illustrated the average total score of the experimental group was 6.84 and the average total score of the control group was 6.72. This means that the average total score of the experimental group was slightly higher than the average total score of the control group. The average total score difference between two groups was 0.12. In other word, the English levels of all participants in two groups were not different.
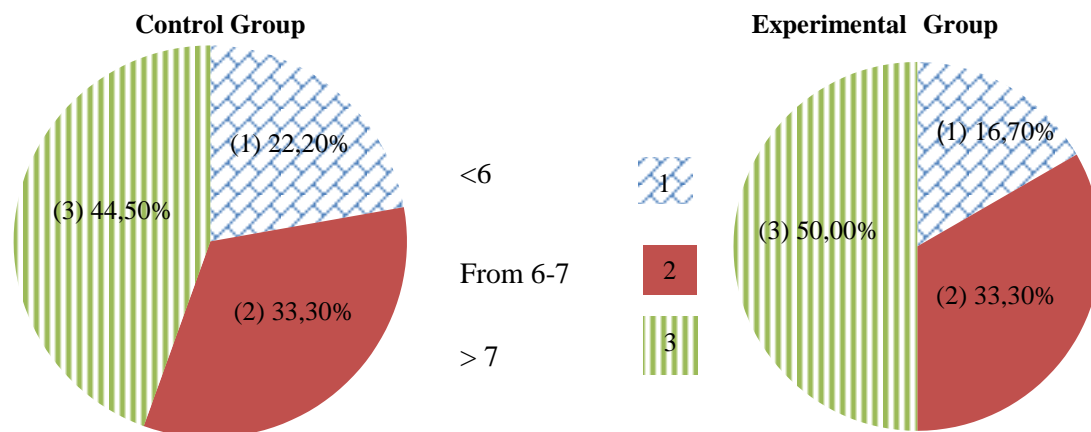
Figure 1. *Percentage of scores on pre-test*

It is evident from the information provided that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups. The scores of all participants in the control group and the experimental group were arranged from lowest to highest, into three parts: under 6, from 6 to 7 and over 7.

In the control group, the proportion of participants having the highest score, ranking over 7 was 44.5%. This was higher than the figure from 6 to 7 score, at 33.3%. Meanwhile, the number of participants reached the highest score, ranking over 7 was 50% in the experimental group. The percentages of participants' number of scores from 6 to 7 were equal at 33.3% in two groups. Finally, participants had the lowest score (under 6) in the control group and treatment group, accounting for 11% and 22% respectively (Figure 1).

In brief, this data showed the equality in level of proficiency of the two groups before the treatment.

3.2. The result of post-test

The post-test is a vocabulary test for all participants after treatments. The test aims to check the effectives of using techniques in teaching to primary students. Here is a figure showing the results of post-test for the experimental and control groups.

Table 2. *Average scores of post test*

Participants	Post-test result	
	Control Group (n = 18)	**Experimental Group (n = 18)**
C1	6.4	7.2
C2	6.8	7.8
C3	7.7	6.8
C4	6.8	7.2
C5	8.4	9.2
C6	5.8	8
C7	7.6	7.6
C8	5.6	7.6
C9	7.2	6.4
C10	6.4	9.2
C11	8.4	7.2
C12	7.6	7.8
C13	7.6	7.2
C14	8.2	8.8
C15	7.2	7.6
C16	6.4	6.4
C17	6.0	8.4
C18	6.8	8.2
Mean	7.05	7.7

Table 2 also shows that after using teaching techniques of teaching through series of picture shown on the projector with the experimental group, the average score of students (M = 7.7) was higher than the control group (M = 7.05). It can be concluded that the new method of teaching vocabulary retained many meanings of words learned than the old teaching method like translation into Vietnamese.

To make it easier to understand, table 2 compares the number of participants and percentage of participants' number of scores on the post-test of the control group and experimental group with different scores.

Table 3. *Result of post-test*

Score of level	Control group		Experimental group	
	Number of students	**Percentage**	**Number of students**	**Percentage**
Weak (<6)	2	11.1%	0	0%
Average (from 6-7)	7	38.9%	3	16.7%
Fair (from 7-8)	6	33.3%	8	55.5%
Good (from 8-9)	3	16.7%	3	16.7%
Excellent (>9)	0	0%	2	11.1%
Total	18	100%	18	100%

It is clear that there were 11.1% of participants in the experimental group could reach the highest score of vocabulary over 9; whereas the figure for the control group was 0%. Similarly, the percentage of students having score from 7-8 was the highest, accounting for 55.5% which was higher than the figure for the control group, at 33.3%. The data also indicates that 11.1% of

participants in the control group had the lowest score under 6; while 0% of participants in the experimental group had under 6 score. This result suggested that the experimental group has made more progress than the control one during the course in the process of teaching vocabulary by series of pictures shown on the projector (Table 3).

3.3. Comparing the results of the control and experimental groups

After the experiment, both groups were tested again. After the examination of the post- test results, there was a significant difference between the control and experiment group in term of their vocabulary knowledge.

The purpose of this comparison is to show the effectiveness of using techniques of new teaching vocabulary comparing with the use old method teaching. Therefore, teachers can offer the best method of vocabulary teaching that not only helps students interested in the subject but also help them master the application vocabulary for later.

Table 4, 5 and 6 show the results obtained from the pre-test and post-test which were made by two groups.

Table 4. *Pre and post test scores on vocabulary knowledge of control group*

Improvement	Post-test	Pre-test	Gain
Mean	7.05	6.72	0.33

Table 5. *Pre and post test score on vocabulary knowledge of experimental group*

Improvement	Post-test	Pre-test	Gain
Mean	7.7	6.84	0.86

Table 6. *Average score of control group and experimental group*

Group	Mean (Pre-test)	Mean (Post-test)
Control group	6.72	7.05
Experimental group	6.84	7.7

The tables indicate that the participants in both groups gained more knowledge of words after post-Test. However, there was a significant difference between control and experimental group. The mean of vocabulary in the experimental group increased an average of 0.86 after 8 weeks. The vocabulary knowledge went up from 6.84 to 7.7. Whereas the control group improved only 0.33 (from 6.72 to 7.05) vocabulary knowledge mean at the sametime.

To sum up, the experimental group vocabulary knowledge mean was higher than the control group. The series of picture shown on the projector procedure had a positive effect on the improvement of leaning English vocabulary at Tuan Chau Primary School.

4. Conclusion

Vocabulary is very important and necessary in the English language. To master the English language, students need a lot of vocabulary. In communication, vocabulary is part of the sentence. Students need vocabulary to broaden their knowledge.

In general, this study has been carried out with the aim to investigate the current vocabulary English teaching and learning situation at a primary school in Quang Ninh. Therefore, it is necessary to point out workable and various techniques to attract the interest of primary students in order to improve the effectiveness in teaching and learning English vocabulary.

With the purpose of research the opinion of teachers and students on the reality of teaching and learning English, especially teaching English vocabulary, the survey which was carried out with the hope to find out workable and effective techniques to teach vocabulary in each English lesson. Some suggested techniques to teach English vocabulary for primary schools in Quang Ninh were demonstrated with the wish to contribute some interesting and effective techniques to teach English vocabulary for students at a primary school in Quang Ninh. This research was completed with a special care and attention in order to bring pleasant lessons which attract the

involvements of students.

In particular, the research provides teachers with many strategies to help improve the quality of teaching because today, technology has been developed a lot, applying IT to teaching and learning English vocabulary is not a new topic. Teaching English through series of pictures shown on the project has helped many learners succeed in gaining vocabulary in particular and succeeding in communication in general. Teachers should know how to apply widely in their lectures to achieve the best results for learners in the process of acquiring English. Hence, the researcher can apply this technique to introduce vocabulary to grade 5 at Tuan Chau Primary School in Quang Ninh to achieve the highest academic results.

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