

Strategies of Junior High School teachers in teaching vocabulary

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Abstract: This study determined the strategies used by the Junior High School teachers in Tabaco National High School in teaching vocabulary school year 2022-2023. Specifically, it answered the following sub-problems: 1) What are the strategies in teaching vocabulary used by the Junior High School teachers?; 2) What is the level of usage of the strategies in teaching vocabulary along discovering meaning of new vocabulary terms, retaining the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary terms, expanding the knowledge of new vocabulary terms, d. connecting word meaning with semantic mapping and e. using visual materials and situations?; 3) What are the effects of the strategies in teaching vocabulary to reading comprehension?; 4) What are the challenges met by the teachers in the use of strategies in teaching vocabulary?; and 5) What creative intervention materials may be proposed to address the challenges met? This research study utilized a quantitative research methodology specifically the descriptive-survey method. It determined the level of usage of the strategies in teaching vocabulary using a validated researcher-made instrument. The respondents of this study were twenty-six (26) Junior High School teachers of Tabaco National High School. The statistical measures employed were frequency counts, percentage, weighted mean and ranking. The results revealed that the teaching strategies used by the Junior High School teachers in Tabaco National High in the first area which is discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms that obtained the highest frequency is inductive reasoning with twenty-three (23) out of twenty-six (26) total respondents or 88.46 %. In the area, retaining newly learned vocabulary terms, the teaching strategy that received the highest frequency of twenty-five (25) or 96.15 % is in practice. In expanding the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary terms, the teaching strategy with the highest frequency is in association with twenty-four (24) respondents or 92.31 %. The teaching strategy in connecting word meaning with semantic mapping with the highest frequency of twenty-three (23) or 88.46 % is contextualization. In the area using visual materials and situations, the teaching strategy with the highest frequency of twenty-six (26) or 100.00 % is obtained in pictures. The area on the level of usage of the strategies in teaching vocabulary with the highest average weighted mean of 4.44 is obtained in connecting word meaning the semantic mapping. This is followed by retaining newly learned vocabulary terms with 4.41; using visual materials and situations with 4.31 and discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms with 4.20. These ratings have an adjectival description of always. The area with the lowest average weighted mean among the five (5) areas is expanding the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary terms with 4.16 and an adjectival description of often. The over-all average on the level of usage of strategies in teaching vocabulary has a value of 4.30 with an adjectival description of always. The effects of the strategies to the reading comprehension showed that all the five (5) areas that were covered in this study obtained an adjectival description of high. The weighted averages were as follows: discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms with 4.19; followed by retaining newly learned vocabulary terms with 4.11; connecting word meaning with semantic mapping with 4.09; expanding the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary terms (4.08) and using visual materials and situations with 4.06. The over-all average of the effects of the strategies in teaching vocabulary has a value of 4.12 and with an adjectival description of high. The challenges in each of the areas that obtained the highest ratings are in discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms, the challenge with the highest frequency of twenty-five (25) which is first in rank is complexity of word knowledge; in retaining newly learned vocabulary terms, the challenge which is first in rank with a frequency of twenty-three (23) is lack of focus of learners; and in connecting word meaning with semantic mapping, the challenge with the highest frequency is obtained in lack of interest to use semantic map with twenty-four (24). In addition, the challenge with the highest frequency in the area using visual material and situation is unavailability of materials with twenty-five (25) or first in rank and in discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms, the challenge that obtained the highest. Creative interventions materials may address the challenges met by the teachers in the use of teaching strategies.

Keywords: Teaching vocabulary, Reading comprehension, Junior High School teachers, Word meaning

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INTRODUCTION

In this period of globalization and multilingualism, learning a new language has a lot of opportunities. Learning the English language is beneficial especially in the 21st century since it is the most widely spoken language; thus, the lingua franca of the world. A great part of learning the English language rests on the ability to build vocabulary. In fact, vocabulary knowledge is a fundamental aspect of language learning. Learners must be able to learn words to communicate the language. Thus, language learners have to fully comprehend vocabulary knowledge of each new word they encounter. Filipino learners studying the English language used various ways to learn new words. They apply many approaches and varied ways to build their vocabulary. When learners encounter new words, they sometimes guess their meanings as well as their usage from available clues. While most students proceed to look for the meanings in the dictionary; others will try to use the word actively. Each of these tasks requires metacognitive judgement, choice and use of cognitive strategies for vocabulary learning. Vocabulary is an important tool to understand a second language like English because a limited vocabulary hinders successful communication. Language uses words and vocabulary; thus, for a learner to use the language, he has to know the correct word to use. Learners with the most sufficient vocabulary achieve more than those with limited word knowledge. In a public school like Tabaco National High School (TNHS) where heterogeneous students are common, English teachers are confronted with many struggling language learners. The English teachers are important in helping students develop their vocabulary. While the language teachers encourage their students to acquire an extensive vocabulary, students face problems communicating themselves fluently and find speaking practices tiring. Teachers teach the same teaching method; however, some students acquire the language successfully and others fail. It is therefore evident that once a student is poor in vocabulary all aspects of literary skills are affected. This greatly caught the interest of the researcher to study the strategies of Junior High School teachers in teaching vocabulary, particularly in TNHS to contribute in the teaching of vocabulary in the school.

Statement of the problem

This study aimed to look into the strategies used by the Junior High School teachers in Tabaco National High School in teaching vocabulary school year 2022-2023. Specifically, it:

1. Identify the strategies in teaching vocabulary used by the Junior High School teachers;
2. Determine the level of usage of the strategies in teaching vocabulary along discovering meaning of new vocabulary terms, retaining the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary terms, expanding the knowledge of new vocabulary terms, connecting word meaning with semantic mapping and using visual materials and situations;
3. Determine the effects of the strategies in teaching vocabulary to the reading comprehension of students;
4. Identify the challenges met by the teachers in the use of strategies in teaching vocabulary; and
5. Developed creative instructional materials to address the challenges met.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The quantitative design was followed in this study. The descriptive-survey method of research was used. Sanchez (1998) explained that descriptive research includes all studies that purport to present facts concerning the nature and status of anything which one may wish to study. This employed the survey design since it gathered data using a survey questionnaire. The effects of the strategies in teaching vocabulary to the reading comprehension were likewise explored. The challenges met by the teachers in the use of strategies in teaching vocabulary were identified.

Respondents and locale of the study

The respondents of this study were the Junior High School teachers of Tabaco National High School. There are twenty-six (26) teachers handling English subjects in the Junior High School of Tabaco National High School who provided the data of this study.

Research instrument

A validated survey-questionnaire was the instrument used to collect the needed data. IT is composed of four (4) parts. The first part of the research tool covers the identification of the different strategies used by the Junior High School teachers in Tabaco National High School handling English subjects in teaching vocabulary. The respondents were asked to tick from the different strategies presented. Multiple responses were allowed. The second part explored the level of usage of the teaching strategies along discovering meaning of new vocabulary terms, retaining the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary terms, expanding the knowledge of new vocabulary terms, connecting word meaning with semantic mapping and using visual materials and situations. The respondents were directed to encircle the number that corresponds to the level of usage of the specified teaching strategy along the above areas. A five-point Likert scale guided the respondents in their answers.

The third part of the questionnaire looked into the effects of the strategies in teaching vocabulary to the reading comprehension of the students. Each of the areas covered have the same set of effects and the respondents were requested to encircle the number of their choice. The same scaling was employed which is a five-point Likert scale. The last part of the research tools was about the challenges met by the teachers in teaching vocabulary. There were five (5) pre-identified challenges presented which serve as options for the respondents. Each of the area have five (5) items. They were allowed to check which among the challenge or challenges affect their teaching of vocabulary. Multiple responses were also allowed.

Treatment of data

The researcher used descriptive measures in analyzing the data gathered. To identify the strategies in teaching vocabulary used by the Junior High School teachers, frequency count and percentage were employed. The level of usage of the strategies in teaching vocabulary along discovering meaning of new vocabulary terms, retaining the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary terms, expanding the knowledge of new vocabulary terms, connecting word meaning with semantic mapping and using visual materials and situations was computed using frequency and weighted mean. The same statistical measures were applied to determine the effects of the strategies in teaching vocabulary to the reading comprehension of student. Frequency and ranking were utilized to identify the challenges met by the teachers in the use of strategies in teaching vocabulary.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The teaching strategies used in teaching vocabulary

The teaching strategies used by the Junior High School teachers in Tabaco National High in the first area which is *discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms* that obtained the highest frequency is *inductive reasoning* with twenty-three out of twenty-six (26) total respondents or 88.46 %. It is followed by using dictionary with twenty-one (21) or 80.77 and deductive reasoning with twenty (20) or 76.92 %. *Gamified activities* obtained a frequency of 16 or 61.74 % and lastly, *creating word cards* with nine (9) or 34.61 %. In the area, *retaining newly learned vocabulary terms*, the teaching strategy that received the highest frequency of twenty-five (25) or 96.15 % is in *practice* while *review* obtained only *twenty-three (23) or 88.46*. This is immediately trailed by vocabulary listing with twenty-two (22) or 84.61 %, *listening* with eighteen (18) or 69.23 % and *looking for morphological resemblance* with eleven (11) or 42.31 %.

In *expanding the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary terms*, the teaching strategy with the highest frequency is in *association* with twenty-four (24) respondents or 92.31 %, *class discussion* with twenty-two (22) or 84.61 %, *colocation* with nineteen (19) or 73.08 %, *discourse* with fourteen (14) or 53.85 % and *reading all forms of published and unpublished texts* with nine (9) or 34.61 %. The teaching strategy in *connecting word meaning with semantic mapping* with the highest frequency of twenty-three (23) or 88.46 % is *contextualization* which is followed by *connection* with twenty-two (22) or 84.61 %. The teaching strategy that followed next is *word finding* with nineteen (19) or 73.08 %, *familiarization* with seventeen (17) or 65.38 % and *semantic mapping* with sixteen (16) or 61.54 %. In the area *using visual materials and situations*, the teaching strategy with the highest frequency of twenty-six (26) or 100.00 % is obtained in *pictures*, followed by *printed materials* with twenty-five (25) or 96.15 %; *graphics* with twenty-two (22) or 84.61 %, audio visual and files with eighteen (18) or 69.23 % and gestures and mime with thirteen (13) or 50.00 %.

The level of usage of the strategies

The level of usage of the strategies in teaching vocabulary along discovering meaning of new vocabulary terms, retaining the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary terms, expanding the knowledge of new vocabulary terms, connecting word meaning with semantic mapping and using visual materials and situations was determined by computing the weighted mean and numerical rating is provided by an adjectival description.

a. *Discovering Meaning of New Vocabulary Terms*. The teaching strategy that obtained the highest numerical rating on the level of usage on the area *discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms* is *using dictionary* with a weighted mean of 4.37. This is followed by *gamified activities* with 4.31 and *inductive reasoning* with 4.24. These teaching strategies have an adjectival description of *always*. The remaining two (2) strategies have an adjectival description of *often*. These are *creating word cards* with 4.05 and *deductive reasoning* with 4.02. On the average, the level of usage of the strategies along discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms has a weighted mean of 4.20 with an adjectival description of *always*.

b. *Retaining Newly Learned Vocabulary Terms*. All the five (5) teaching strategies on the level of usage in teaching vocabulary along *retaining newly learned vocabulary terms* obtained an adjectival description of *always*; although the said strategies have varying weighted mean values. The teaching strategy with the highest weighted mean is reflected in *listening* with 4.63; followed by *review* (4.41); *practice* with 4.38; *vocabulary listing* with 4.36 and *looking for*

morphological resemblance with the lowest value of 4.25. The average weighted mean has a value of 4.41 and with an adjectival description of *always*.

c. *Expanding the Knowledge of Newly Learned Vocabulary Terms*. There are two (2) teaching strategies that were rated with an adjectival description of *always*. These are *association* with a weighted mean of 4.41 and *class discussion* with 4.35. The remaining three (3) strategies have an adjectival description of *often*. These are *discourse* with 4.06, *colocation* with 4.02 and lastly, *readings all forms of published and unpublished texts* with 3.98. On the average the level of usage of strategies along *expanding the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary terms* has a value of 4.16 with an adjectival description of *often*.

d. *Connecting Word Meaning with Semantic Mapping*. The teaching strategy in terms of *connecting word meaning with semantic mapping* with the highest weighted mean of 4.74 is obtained in *connection*. This is followed by *semantic mapping* with 4.41, then *word finding* (4.38); *familiarization* with 4.36 and lastly *contextualization* with 4.32. All the above numerical ratings have an adjectival description of *always*. The over-all average of the level of usage of strategies in teaching vocabulary along connecting word meaning with semantic mapping has a value of 4.44 which has an adjectival description of *always*.

e. *Using Visual Materials and Situations*. The teacher-respondents rated three (3) teaching strategies on the level of usage along *using visual materials and situation* with an adjectival description of *always*. These are *printed materials* with 4.53; followed by *pictures* with 4.48 and *graphics* with 4.31. The rest of the teaching strategies have an adjectival description of *often*. These are *audio visuals and files* with 4.13 and *gestures and mime* with 4.06. The average weighted mean on the level of usage of the strategies in teaching vocabulary along using visual materials and situations has a value of 4.31 and an adjectival description of *always*.

effects of the strategies to reading comprehension

All the five (5) areas that were covered in this study obtained an adjectival description of *high*. The weighted averages were as follows: *discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms* with 4.19; followed by *retaining newly learned vocabulary terms* with 4.11; *connecting word meaning with semantic mapping* with 4.09; *expanding the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary terms* (4.08) and *using visual materials and situations* with 4.06. The over-all average of the effects of the strategies in teaching vocabulary has a value of 4.12 and with an adjectival description of *high*.

Challenges Mey by the Teachers in the Use of Strategies in Teaching Vocabulary

In discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms, the challenge that obtained the highest frequency of twenty-five (25) which is first in rank is complexity of word knowledge, followed by limited information resource with twenty-three (23) which is second in rank and inadequate exposure to reading materials with twenty-one (21) or third in rank. The challenge that follows next is weak educational commitment of learners with nineteen (19) or fourth in rank and lack of encouragement from teacher with fifteen (15) or fifth in rank.

In retaining newly learned vocabulary terms, the challenge which is first in rank with a frequency of twenty-three (23) is lack of focus of learners; followed closely by lots of workloads with twenty-two (22) or second; and weak support of the school head with twenty-one or third in rank. The challenge which was personal and emotional problems had nineteen (19) responses or

4th in rank and lastly, mismatch of prior knowledge of students and grade level with thirteen (13) or fifth in rank.

The challenges in expanding the knowledge of new vocabulary terms are also identified. The challenge which is indolence of students has a frequency of twenty-three (23) with a rank of first; lack of access to modern sources of information with twenty-one (21) or second; financial constraints with nineteen (19) or third in rank; comfortable with traditional way of teaching with eighteen (18) and afraid to try new ways of learning with fourteen (14) and rank of fifth. In connecting word meaning with semantic mapping, the challenge with the highest frequency is obtained in lack of interest to use semantic map with twenty-four (24) or first in rank; insufficient time with twenty-two (22) or second in rank, and poor level of cognitive skills of students with twenty-one (21) or third in rank. The challenge identified as fourth in rank with nineteen (19) is negative attitude of students towards the activity. Ineffective grouping of students during group activity has a frequency of seventeen (17) and a rank of fifth.

The challenge with the highest frequency in the area using visual material and situation is unavailability of materials with twenty-five (25) or first in rank. It is followed by high cost of visual materials with twenty-two (22) or second in rank; then lack of training on development of innovative learning materials with twenty (20) or third in rank. The challenge with a rank of fourth and with a frequency of seventeen (17) is fear of technology and the last challenge with a frequency of fifteen (15) is weak support of parents and administrative staff.

Creative instructional materials to address the challenges met

The researcher proposed to address the complexity of word knowledge of the students; the use of online remediation program may help in discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms. This remediation program will select those who are below average in a pre-test assessment and will be given assignments using social media application like Facebook Messenger wherein the teachers will provide twenty (20) new words for the students to understand every three (3) days or the use of You Tube to upload a vlog where the new words to be learned are used.

In order for the students to retain newly learned vocabulary and for them to focus on the vocabulary terms, games may be used in the classroom and more application activities are to be conducted. The teacher may prepare activities like word games where students may be asked to construct sentences out from the newly learned vocabulary terms and produce simple stage presentation using different words at the end of the week.

The English teacher may encourage the use of semantic in the class by introducing it with complete direction and interesting process. The teacher has to introduce clearly the objectives of the activity and what they need to accomplish. The use of brainstorming, think-pair-share may support the brainstorming activity. For words that are unfamiliar, the presenter may be asked to give brief definition or description. Categorize words using Think Aloud. Draw circles and lines to show relations. If the students could not get the idea of categorization, the teacher will demonstrate. Guided practice with partners may reinforce learning and continue the activity. Later when students are familiar with the activity then they may be venture into independent practice.

The unavailability of materials may be resolved by using indigenous materials. These materials may be developed by both students and teachers in the classroom which will be used a week before the lesson. The teachers need to reinforce the current vocabulary of students and

complexity of word knowledge by providing more reading materials both manual and online for the students to appreciate the art and culture of reading.

CONCLUSIONS

Based from the findings, the researcher concludes:

1. The teaching strategies that obtained the highest frequencies in the all five (5) areas on teaching strategies used by Junior High School teachers in Tabaco National High School are the following: in discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms, it is inductive reasoning; in the area, retaining newly learned vocabulary terms, the teaching strategy that received the highest frequency is in practice; and in expanding the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary terms, the teaching strategy with the highest frequency is in association. Furthermore, in the area connecting word meaning with semantic mapping, strategy with the highest is contextualization and in the area using visual materials and situations, the teaching strategy with the highest frequency is obtained in pictures.

2. The area on the level of usage of the strategies in teaching vocabulary with the highest average weighted mean is obtained in connecting word meaning the semantic mapping. This is followed by retaining newly learned vocabulary terms; using visual materials and situations and discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms. The area with the lowest average weighted mean among the five (5) areas is expanding the knowledge of newly learned vocabulary.

3. There effect of the strategies in teaching vocabulary of the Junior High School teachers in Tabaco National High School is high.

4. The challenge identified by most of the English teachers in Tabaco National High School along discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms is complexity of work knowledge in retaining newly learned vocabulary terms is lack of focus of learners; in connecting word meaning with semantic may is lack of interest to use semantic map; in using visual material and situation is unavailability of materials and in discovering the meaning of new vocabulary terms is complexity of word knowledge.

5. Creative intervention materials may address the challenges met by the teachers in the use of strategies in teaching vocabulary.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based from the findings and conclusions, the researcher offers the following recommendations:

1. The Junior High School teachers of Tabaco National High School may be encouraged to attend trainings and seminars about effective use of classroom strategies on vocabulary development.

2. New learning resource materials and reading activities may be conducted by English teachers in Tabaco National High School to strengthen the culture of reading thereby expanding the newly learned vocabulary.

3. The classroom teachers may conduct regular on the performance of Junior High School students in vocabulary through contests and performances.

4. The Department Head in English, the school principal of Tabaco National High School and the Education Program Supervisor in English be provided with the list of the challenges met by the teachers in the use of strategies for appropriate action.

5. The intervention materials may be submitted to the English Department Head for consideration.

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