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Teaching L2 Vocabulary: What Goes on in the ESL Classroom?

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ABSTRACT

Students' lack of vocabulary knowledge has been an on-going concern among English as a Second Language (ESL) practitioners. Despite the consensus on the critical role of vocabulary instruction in language learning, many studies argue that teachers often dismiss vocabulary to focus more on grammar, reading and writing. It is unclear whether this neglect is due to overemphasis on exam-oriented system or teachers' lack of awareness of lexical importance. The present study aims to investigate the vocabulary teaching strategies of twenty secondary school teachers and the pedagogical challenges they face in the classroom. A descriptive research design was employed, where data were gathered through a qualitative survey in the form of open-ended interview questions. Using grounded theory analysis (Charmaz, 2006) the data were then categorized and coded using thematic analysis. Findings from the current work suggest that teachers considered vocabulary to be significant, but they do not have a grounded approach in teaching it. Instead, they rely on a limited range of approaches in the classroom. Practical implications for effective vocabulary instructions in the ESL classroom are presented.

KEYWORDS: ESL learners, vocabulary instructions, Malaysian ESL classroom, L2 vocabulary acquisition

Introduction

Central to second language (L2) vocabulary research is the investigation of vocabulary teaching methods, English Language Learners' (ELLs) vocabulary learning strategies and the development of ELLs' vocabulary. Literature in L2 vocabulary acquisition in the Malaysian context have so far

suggested three main conclusions: i) vocabulary is associated with the four language skills; ii) students have limited vocabulary knowledge and iii) there is a lack of emphasis in the teaching of vocabulary. These conclusions illustrate the reality of L2 vocabulary development in Malaysian classrooms and the lexical plight in which ELLs are trapped in. Despite numerous findings in support of vocabulary instruction, its status as a significant medium for language success is not reflected in pedagogical practices (Ashrafzadeh & Nimehchisalem, 2015; Huda, 2016; Kaur, 2013). This fact is disconcerting given the amount of L2 research supporting vocabulary instructions.

Looking at the literature, many prominent vocabulary studies (Coxhead, 2010; Dronjic, 2019; Hulstijn, 1997; Hunt & Beglar, 2005; Laufer, 2013; Mann, 2007; Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2008; Schmitt & Meara, 1997) have provided the key notions of L2 vocabulary acquisition and spurred the growth of best classroom practices. However, many English teachers prefer to rely on their own beliefs and resources when teaching vocabulary. As echoed by (Nation, 2001), a common theme in several vocabulary teaching studies is that practical applications for vocabulary teaching found in research journals are not applied in the classroom. This mismatch between theory and practice can be attributed to several factors. Borg (2013) argues that teachers generally do not read academic journals. Additionally Moody et al. (2018) affirm that teachers are less likely to spend time identifying the theoretical basis of instructional practices as their teaching demands limit their free time. Hence, various aspects of vocabulary instructions, from theory to assessment to current, practical applications, are relatively unknown to them. As Greenwood (2004, p. 28) has aptly declared, “There is a great divide between what we know about vocabulary instruction and what we (often, still) do.”

Teachers play a monumental role in mediating effective vocabulary instructions through the acquisition of the four main language skills. To ensure success, an assessment of students’ vocabulary levels should be done before any strategies can be prescribed. According to Nation (2001) it is important for teacher and students to know what vocabulary level they should concentrate on especially at the preliminary stage of a course. This should be followed by a well-structured vocabulary programme which combines explicit teaching and incidental vocabulary learning. At present however, it is not known whether teachers know how to integrate effective approaches in the classroom. Therefore, an investigation on teachers’ vocabulary instruction and assessment strategies is warranted. This will determine if gaps exist between theory and practice.

The current study is guided by the following research objectives:

- 1) To discover the average amount of time dedicated to vocabulary instruction within a single English lesson.
- 2) To explore the various instructional approaches used by ESL teachers in teaching vocabulary.
- 3) To explore teachers’ perceptions toward the importance of vocabulary instruction in ESL education.

Based on these objectives, four research questions are presented:

- 1) What are teachers’ perceptions and experiences regarding the significance of vocabulary instruction in the ESL classroom?
- 2) How do teachers approach the assessment of their students’ vocabulary knowledge in the classroom?

- 3) How much time is spent teaching vocabulary in one single English lesson?
- 4) How is vocabulary taught in the ESL classroom?

Literature Review

Literature in second language teaching practices have suggested that formal vocabulary teaching has always been influenced by linguistic and psycholinguistic trends. Many vocabulary learning theories divide vocabulary study into two distinct approaches: explicit vocabulary teaching and implicit vocabulary learning (Hulstijn, 2001; Nassaji, 2003). The incidental or implicit vocabulary learning approach is derived from the naturalistic approach to language. Advocates of this method propose the learning of vocabulary through context alone and argue that direct vocabulary instructions are dispensable. Instead, new lexical items are learnt incidentally through context sentences and phrases which are primarily meaning-focused. Within this motion, the use of monolingual dictionaries is heavily prescribed while definition and translation of lexical items are avoided (Takač, 2008). In place of translation and definition, learners are encouraged to acquire new vocabulary through text inferences, extensive reading activities, participation in authentic oral communication and listening to authentic discourse.

Given that frequent words are repeated in texts and conversations, incidental learning allows for repeated exposures or ‘recycling’ of target language vocabulary. These multiple exposures to lexical items are deemed important for successful vocabulary acquisition since vocabulary is said to be incremental in nature (Schmitt, 2000). Despite its merits, the implicit approach is not without flaws. Firstly, the act of inferring meaning of words from context may not be achievable for all types of learners. According to Schmitt (2000), this skill requires sufficient degree of knowledge and inference skills. Furthermore, even if the conditions are fulfilled, inferencing may lead to incorrect guessing. Sökmen (1997) further reiterated that incidental learning is a slow and inefficient process which does not guarantee long term retention. In a similar vein, Paribakht and Wesche (1999) also argued that the approach only works for more advanced vocabulary acquisition.

The second approach in vocabulary instruction is explicit vocabulary teaching where vocabulary development follows a systematic and logical structure. Teachers are expected to introduce new lexical items to learners and explicitly teach them the word meaning and usage. In other words, the explicit approach is teaching vocabulary out of context by using, for instance, word lists or word cards. This concept is said to be related to the field of psychology in the sense that the more a learner engages with a word, the more likely the word will be retained for future use. Hulstijn (1997) reiterated that the keyword method is an example of explicit learning method which requires deep processing. Pressley et al. (1982) described the keyword technique as a two-stage procedure for recalling new words that have an associative element. Several studies have supported that the application of this method is effective for vocabulary acquisition in terms of facilitating second language word retention (Brown & Perry, 1991; Pressley, M., Levin, J. R., & Miller, 1981; Piribabadi & Rahmany, 2014). According to Schmitt (2000), the explicit approach is suitable for rank beginners as it provides valuable introduction to a word. This is especially useful for the teaching of high frequency words which create learners’ first lexical foundation. Schmitt (2000) also emphasizes that the acquisition of basic words cannot be left to chance; it should be taught as quickly as possible. This approach however has its own drawbacks. Among them is the fact that

learners may not be able to learn everything the teachers teach; some lexical aspects may be missed. Furthermore, explicit teaching may not provide sufficient opportunities for learning collocations and higher-level knowledge, which are deemed valuable for language success.

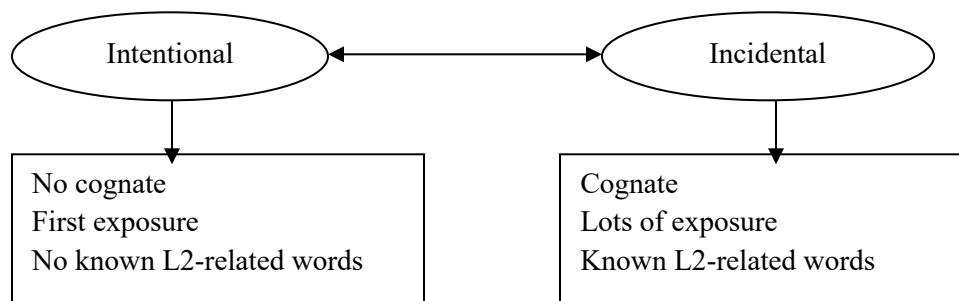


Figure 1. Incidental and intentional learning (Gass 1999, p. 322)

Figure 1 presents Gass's (1999) framework for a schematic representation that captures the differences between incidental and intentional learning. According to Gass, the ease with which a word might be learned depends on several factors. On one end of the continuum are attributes that facilitate intentional learning. On the other end are features that suggest a substantial amount of background knowledge which allow learners to access them with less deliberation. In other words, the framework suggests that it is more feasible to learn a vocabulary item incidentally if (a) there are recognised cognates between the native and the target language, (b) there is significant L2 exposure, or (c) other L2 related words are known. The attributes accompanying intentional versus incidental learning are based on the belief that there are two types of learning: one that requires compelling effort and one that is effortless.

Considering arguments in the literature, it is ideal to incorporate both approaches in vocabulary instructions according to students' level and target vocabulary. A contemporary approach to teaching vocabulary is a synergy between incidental learning and explicit teaching. The two approaches should not be viewed as opposing ends but as pedagogical tools that complement each other. As Schmitt (2000) has aptly suggested, a well-structured vocabulary programme should be a balanced concoction of explicit teaching and incidental learning activities.

Method

Design

The current work employs the descriptive research design which aims to illustrate secondary teachers' instructional practices in teaching vocabulary. This involves tapping information about regarding respondents' vocabulary teaching and assessment strategies. Prior to the data collection, the researcher explained to the respondents the nature of the study and ethical issues involved. Written consent was then obtained from all respondents. Surveys were distributed electronically in the form of a google link via WhatsApp.

Respondents

The respondents comprised twenty secondary school teachers who were English majors. Out of twenty respondents, fifteen were female and five were male. All the respondents were teaching in secondary schools in a rural district of Sabah, called Kudat. They had all taught at secondary schools since beginning their careers as full-time teachers. Levels taught ranged from Form 1 to Form 5. Regarding vocabulary training or workshop, it was discovered that only three respondents reported having received training in teaching vocabulary. Respondents' teaching experience ranged from 1 to 30 years with over 75% having 6 or more years of experience.

Instrument

The instrument for data collection is a set of ten open-ended survey questions pertaining to participants' vocabulary teaching instructions. Specifically, the survey gathered basic demographic information and asked respondents for their views and feedback about vocabulary teaching and learning, current assessment practices and the teaching approach they were currently using to support students' vocabulary growth. Questions regarding years of teaching experience and time spent teaching vocabulary in a single lesson were also included in the survey. It must be noted that the selection of questions was influenced by the researchers' own assumptions. For instance, questions on vocabulary approach and assessment strategies were included as the researcher assumed schoolteachers do not apply research-based practices and strategies in the classroom. Getting authentic view from the teachers would yield interesting insights and provide novel contribution to the literature of vocabulary teaching in the Malaysian context.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data were analyzed using grounded theory analysis (Charmaz, 2006). Initially, a constant comparison method was used to identify patterns and themes. Themes were identified through an iterative process in which commonalities and differences of their responses were identified and coded. Coding is the main analytic process in grounded theory. It is "the process of defining what the data are about...Coding means naming segments of data with a label that simultaneously categorizes, summarizes, and accounts for each piece of data" ...to make "analytic interpretations" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 43). These codes help understand what is happening in the social situation being studied. In the present study, codes were grouped to form themes which illuminated teachers' perceptions of teaching vocabulary and their actual actions when they included vocabulary teaching in their classrooms. As mentioned earlier, qualitative data are richer in that they reflect what goes on in the classroom.

Findings

In order to determine the teachers' vocabulary teaching strategies and the pedagogical challenges faced in the classroom, an online survey with open-ended questions was conducted. In total, 20 secondary school teachers responded to the survey. Questions focused on teachers' vocabulary teaching practice and their strategies in assessing students' vocabulary knowledge. Interviewees were also asked about their demographic profile such as gender, age and years of service.

Research Question 1: What are teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the significance of vocabulary instruction in the ESL classroom?

To gauge teachers' awareness of the importance of vocabulary, they were asked whether they thought vocabulary was important. All respondents agreed that the teaching of vocabulary was crucial and 16 out of 20 respondents provided their own justifications as to why they think so. In analysing the interview data, four themes emerged. Table 1 presents a collection of responses from respondents which are categorised into four different themes.

Table 1. Respondents' justifications on why vocabulary is important

Reasons		Comments
For overall mastery of English	T1	It helps students improve the four skills in English
	T2	Vocabulary is needed in mastering a second language
For comprehension	T3	Students will be able to understand text and audio better
	T4	So students understand how to do English tasks
	T5	Vocabulary can provide clear instruction to students
	T6	It helps students to get input of the lesson
	T7	With higher vocabulary skills, students can respond better
For writing	T8	Helps students construct better sentences
	T9	Vocabulary skills are the rudiments of forming sentences
	T10	Important unit used to build sentences
	T11	It's important for writing
General usefulness	T12	It's fun and helpful for students
	T13	It's useful
	T14	It's the core of language and more advanced level opens up new world for learners
	T15	It helps students improve their schemata
Irrelevant reasons	T16	Students need guidance

N=16

Vocabulary is important for the mastery of English

As presented in Table 1, the data revealed that all respondents had positive justifications for the importance of teaching vocabulary. The first theme that emerged was vocabulary is important for the overall mastery of English. T1 reported that, "vocabulary helps students improve the four skills in English" and T2 supported this by saying, "vocabulary is needed in mastering a second language".

Vocabulary is important for comprehension

The second theme that emerged was the importance of vocabulary in comprehending lessons in English. Out of 20 respondents, 5 expressed this view. T3 reported that with good vocabulary, students will be able to understand text and audio better. Similarly, T4 said that with good vocabulary students understand how to do English tasks. In a similar vein, T5 believes that vocabulary can provide clear instruction to students while T6 said that vocabulary helps students

to understand the input of the lesson. Finally, T7 reported that students can respond better with higher vocabulary knowledge.

Vocabulary is important for writing

The third theme that emerged was the importance of vocabulary for writing. Four teachers suggested that vocabulary was critical for good writing performance. As T8 put it: ‘vocabulary helps students construct better sentences’. In the same vein, T9 stated, ‘‘vocabulary skills are the rudiments of forming sentences.’’ T10 considered vocabulary to be an important unit used to build sentences.

Vocabulary is generally useful

Four teachers considered vocabulary to be generally useful for students as it is ‘‘fun and helpful for students’’ and ‘‘it helps students to improve their schemata’’. Similarly, T14 also argued that vocabulary is ‘‘the core of language and more advance level opens up new world for learners’’. In the present study, all the teachers (N=20) collectively agreed that vocabulary in language learning is crucial. The finding of the present study was higher than that of Zheng (2012) who found that only 60% of teachers in his study perceived that vocabulary plays an important role in language teaching.

Research Question 2: How much time is spent teaching vocabulary in one single English lesson?

An important enquiry of the current work was to determine how much time was devoted to teaching vocabulary in one single English lesson. Table 2 presents the data for this question. As presented, 40% of respondents spend between 5 to 10 minutes teaching vocabulary in one single lesson, whereas 35% of respondents spend between 11 to 20 minutes. Only 10% of respondents spend between 21-30 minutes teaching vocabulary. Finally, 15% of respondents spend between 21 to 40 minutes on vocabulary instruction in one single lesson.

Table 2. Amount of time spent teaching vocabulary

Duration	No. of teachers	Percentage
5 to 10 minutes	8	40%
11 to 20 minutes	7	35%
21 to 30 minutes	2	10%
31 to 40 minutes	3	15%

N=20

As shown in Table 2, only 15% of the teachers spent more than 30 minutes to teach vocabulary in the classrooms. This indicates that teachers would rarely spend an extensive amount of time to teach vocabulary during English lessons. One possible explanation is that teachers are often laden with the pressure of completing items in the national English syllabus; there is hardly time

for vocabulary. Moreover, they tend to focus on preparing students for high stakes exams than teaching vocabulary which appears to be too time-consuming.

Research Question 3: How do teachers approach the assessment of their students' vocabulary knowledge in the classroom?

To address Research Question 3, teachers were asked whether they test their students' vocabulary knowledge. If they answered 'Yes' they needed to describe how the vocabulary assessment was done.

Table 3. Assessment of students' vocabulary knowledge

Teachers' approach to vocabulary assessment	Percentage
Teachers who did not do anything	20% (N = 4)
Copying new words	5% (N = 1)
Some forms of in-class assessments	35% (N = 7)
Teachers lacked knowledge and skills in assessing vocabulary	40% (N = 8)

Table 3 shows whether teachers gave some forms of tasks/tests to strengthen students' vocabulary learning. As presented, 20% of the teachers reported that they did not assign any tasks to consolidate students' vocabulary learning after teaching vocabulary. 35% of them gave some kind of tasks such as asking questions to check students' understanding of the words; giving them quizzes to reinforce their vocabulary learning and making sentences using the new words. Most of the teachers (40%) were unable to state clearly what they did after vocabulary instruction. They gave vague responses such as "check their writing", "giving them extra tasks to test understanding" and "reading and writing" which indicate their ambiguity pertaining to vocabulary assessment. This shows that they lack knowledge and skills in assessing vocabulary.

Research Question 4: How is vocabulary taught in class?

Research Question 4 aimed at tapping teachers' vocabulary instruction strategies in the English classroom. To obtain this data, teachers were asked to describe how they would normally conduct vocabulary lessons. Findings revealed that teachers either fall into two categories: intentional vocabulary teaching or incidental vocabulary learning approach. Table 4 outlines the activities reported by the teachers according to these two approaches.

Table 4. Activities conducted to teach vocabulary in the secondary classroom

Incidental	Intentional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give students a text and ask them to do groupwork • Sentence building • Show grammar items through videos • Reading texts • Language games • Sing songs • Reading and doing information transfer • Guess meaning of words from context • Assume meaning of words from context • Listening activities and guess meaning of words from context • Show story cartoons and ask them to explain it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using dictionary to find meaning of words • Using picture dictionary • Word search • Spelling bee competition • Dictation • Matching word with pictures • Matching words with their meaning

As presented, there were more evidence of incidental learning compared to intentional approach. Overall, the activities reported are varied and ranged from the more common to the least common. With regard to incidental learning approach, teachers seemed to incorporate vocabulary teaching through reading, writing and listening activities. Some teachers used a more enriched approach using songs, language games and cartoon strips. With regard to the intentional approach, teachers in the current work seemed to depend on more traditional methods. Activities included the use of dictionary to teach the definition of words, spelling bees and dictations. Other common exercises such as words and picture matching were also reported. A surprising aspect of the data is the fact that no respondents reported combined approaches in their teaching.

Limitation of the Study

The current study has several limitations which can be addressed in future research. First, as data were collected from a small number of English secondary teachers in rural Sabah, the findings may not be directly applicable to vocabulary teaching in other contexts. Second, teachers' vocabulary instructions were investigated solely through an online survey. While the reported practices revealed interesting data, triangulation through lesson observations would be more insightful. A fruitful direction for further research would be to explore how different vocabulary approaches can make a difference in students' vocabulary development.

Discussion

With regard to the first research question, all respondents agreed that the teaching of vocabulary was crucial. Their justifications for its importance can be summarised within four main reasons: for the overall mastery of English, for comprehension, for writing and general usefulness. This collective perspective underscores the respondents' awareness of the intrinsic value of vocabulary in language learning. However, while the respondents' awareness is commendable, it prompts questions about the pedagogical methods employed in vocabulary teaching and whether the

acknowledged importance translates into meaningful integration within classroom activities. The alignment of this finding with Muhamad and Kiely's (2018) study suggests a persistent pattern in educators recognizing the significance of vocabulary, yet it raises concerns about the gap between acknowledgment and effective implementation.

In response to the second research question, it was discovered that teachers in the current study would rarely spend an extensive amount of time to teach vocabulary during English lessons as they tend to focus more on preparing students for high stakes exams. Even though they acknowledged the importance of vocabulary, this was not reflected into their classroom practice. This inconsistency between awareness and action echoes findings by Muhamad and Kiely (2018), who also documented that the respondents in their study considered vocabulary to be less of a priority in classroom settings. Other scholars (Attardo & Brown; 2005; Mardali & Siyyari, 2019) have also found similar result where the instructors' beliefs and vocabulary instruction practices were not in line with each other. Despite acknowledging the significance of vocabulary acquisition, teachers' practices in the classroom indicate a divergence from this recognition. This points to a potential misalignment between educational priorities and the actual implementation of effective language teaching strategies in the ESL context. Further exploration is warranted to understand the dynamics that contribute to this discrepancy and to propose targeted interventions that align teachers' awareness of vocabulary importance with more impactful instructional practices.

Concerning the third research question, it was found that none of the teachers employed a standardised measure to evaluate their students' vocabulary proficiency. Instead, they relied on non-standardized approaches like spelling tests and common language activities. This aligns with the findings of the second research question, where vocabulary was given less priority in the classroom. This is concerning because vocabulary tests are crucial for identifying areas that require more attention and focusing on specific words, providing valuable insights into students' knowledge. According to Schmitt (2000), vocabulary serves as a fundamental building block of language, making it essential to assess learners' understanding. Schmitt (2000) also opines that the most obvious purpose of a test is to know if students have learned the words they were expected to learn. Without a proper assessment, teachers would not be able to identify students' vocabulary gaps. In the realm of second language acquisition, vocabulary holds a foundational role, demanding significant time and effort from both teachers and learners. Given the paramount importance of vocabulary in the overall language system, assessing learners' vocabulary knowledge is imperative. As noted by Read (2000), vocabulary tests serve to evaluate how well students have mastered vocabulary skills taught to them. Results from the tests can reveal learners' levels of proficiency and provide a basis for teachers to establish desired learning objectives and plan appropriate vocabulary activities to meet their students' needs.

The final key finding was that a higher number of teachers used incidental learning approach compared to explicit vocabulary teaching approach. It is reasonable to infer that some educators may lack awareness of effective pedagogical approaches grounded in theoretical and research support. Alternatively, teachers might be hesitant to implement theory-based teaching approaches in the classroom, aligning with the perspective of earlier scholars (Berne & Blachowicz, 2008; Kutlay, 2013) who argue that teachers often do not perceive the practical impact of research on their instructional practices. This situation is concerning, given the intricate nature of vocabulary teaching, which cannot be effectively addressed through a singular approach. While the intentional or explicit approach proves valuable for teaching basic words, it is imperative that instructional

activities extend beyond conventional dictionary methods and word matching tasks commonly reported by teachers. Explicit instruction may be particularly beneficial for teaching high-frequency words, acknowledged as prerequisites for language use (Schmitt, 2000). In contrast, students grappling with low-frequency words necessitate substantial support, best delivered through clear, explicit teaching methods. On the other hand, incidental learning facilitated through extensive reading or communicative activities can effectively convey less frequent words. The crux lies in recognising intentional and incidental learning as equally valuable and complementary methods, a viewpoint emphasised by Nation (2001, p. 232), who states, “learning vocabulary from context and direct intentional learning are complementary activities, each one enhancing learning that comes from the other.” These two perspectives on vocabulary learning should not be seen as opposing dichotomies but rather as a spectrum of strategies (Hunt & Beglar, 2005; Nation, 2001).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The current work investigated vocabulary teaching strategies employed by twenty secondary school teachers in a rural school in Sabah. The objective was to identify the specific approach used in vocabulary instruction and whether teachers assessed their students’ vocabulary knowledge. The findings of this study reveal a common perception among all participants that vocabulary teaching holds significance in English as a Second Language (ESL) education. However, it also highlights a lack of both pedagogical and theoretical knowledge in vocabulary instruction among the teachers. Furthermore, the study indicates a low priority given to vocabulary teaching in the classroom, as reflected in the respondents’ reports on the limited time allocated to teaching vocabulary during a single lesson. In its entirety, this investigation provides valuable insights into second language (L2) vocabulary teaching, carrying significant implications for L2 teachers and educationally.

One of the suggestions proposed in this study is to close the gap between research and practice. In this regard, there should be initiatives that bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and classroom practices. Priorities should be given to the integration of best practices derived from theoretical frameworks and research into the day-to-day teaching practices. This may involve developing professional development programmes that specifically address effective strategies for vocabulary enhancement, ensuring teachers are equipped with the necessary tools. Apart from that, there should also be collaborative efforts between researchers, educators, and curriculum developers to ensure that evidence-based best practices are seamlessly integrated into the school curriculum. To strengthen the hands of teachers in facilitating students’ vocabulary growth, it is important to equip them with not only practical skills but also theoretical knowledge.

Secondly, the findings suggest that teacher development is of critical importance in students’ vocabulary growth. Educational policymakers should prioritise and advocate for a more prominent place for vocabulary development in the English language curriculum. This involves incorporating specific objectives and guidelines to ensure a structured and intentional focus on vocabulary enhancement. To begin with, policymakers should develop resources, training, and support systems that empower teachers to implement vocabulary development strategies effectively. The provision of these resources will facilitate discussions and training programmes for educators to enhance their understanding of the critical role of vocabulary in language acquisition. These

programmes can also help identify teaching limitations and gradually help teachers make headway in vocabulary teaching.

Finally, the findings elucidate the need for educational policymakers to promote vocabulary development within the framework of the English language curriculum. To substantiate this endeavour, a call for greater transparency is warranted, specifically addressing the role of vocabulary in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Educational policymakers should engage in systematic reviews and discussions, fostering a clearer characterisation of the pedagogical approaches that best facilitate vocabulary acquisition and retention. In short, this paradigm shift underscores the significance of integrating vocabulary instruction seamlessly into the broader curriculum and acknowledging its foundational role in linguistic competence. It is time that vocabulary takes the centre stage in classroom pedagogy and not be treated as an add-on anymore.

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