

VOCABULARY LEARNING PRINCIPLES AND TASKS IN EFL CLASSROOMS: A STUDY ON THE HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL IN BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT: *The research was conducted to explore the effect of vocabulary learning principles and tasks (VLPT) on developing higher secondary level students' vocabulary knowledge. Looking into the use of vocabulary learning principles and tasks contributing to vocabulary development, the study examined the key aspects that might develop the students' EFL vocabulary. A Mixed-method approach was employed for data collection and data analysis. To elicit the relevant data, the study used: questionnaires from 100 students, in-depth interview with 10 teachers. The findings of the study showed that VLPT had a positive and strong connection with vocabulary learning achievement and it was found helpful for developing students' vocabulary knowledge. It was also found that EFL students studying at HSC level were not sufficiently aware of the significance and effectiveness of VLPT in classes. The findings of the study have some pedagogical implications for both the teachers and students. The teachers may systematically introduce and reinforce VLPT that can help students as active vocabulary learners. The investigation will also provide information to the teachers on how effectively VLPT may impact on developing students' vocabulary achievement. The study has pedagogical implications for raising awareness about VLPT among EFL learners.*

KEYWORDS: vocabulary learning principles and tasks, EFL, higher secondary level, achievement.

INTRODUCTION

A word is a microcosm of human consciousness (Vygotsky). Without using words, we cannot communicate, we cannot live for a second. 'The word is the basic unit of the language system' (Maniruzzaman, 2004). So naturally, there appears the importance of scientific study for teaching and learning vocabulary. The Acquisition of vocabulary and the importance of vocabulary learning play a more pivotal role in learning a second/foreign language. Learning vocabulary engages the process through which knowledge is built up over a sequence of varied acquaintance with the word. When teachers teach vocabulary in language classes, they can provide only a few for instruction. The rest is to be done by the students themselves and they face many problems in learning vocabulary. The scenario is not different in the case of Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, most of the Higher Secondary students have problems to learn vocabulary and to use them appropriately. As a result, it becomes a huge work for the language teachers to teach their students the necessary

vocabulary items in English within such a short span of this level. Moreover, without rich vocabulary, the students face various problems in comprehending and producing major skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English (Hayet, 2018). Sequentially, they will not be able to become communicatively competent in the target language. They may even remain far away from achieving the desired result in higher studies since most of the reference materials are available in English. Providing vocabulary instructions is one of the most effective ways through which EFL teachers in Bangladesh can facilitate higher secondary learners' development of communicative competence in English. Because weak knowledge of vocabulary causes learners' comprehension ability to suffer and this troubled comprehension creates barriers in achieving the target competence level in all major skills.

Vocabulary learning is an important part of language learning, particularly in foreign or second language learning. While learning vocabulary, learners apply vocabulary learning principles and tasks (VLPT) which play a vital role in vocabulary acquisition as well as vocabulary instruction. The VLPT intended to create awareness, foster motivation, and a positive attitude towards learning English and make effective learners for academic and professional success through lifelong learning. The study was designed to improve EFL students' at the higher secondary level of education in Bangladesh by examining the impact of VLPT on students' vocabulary development. Here the primary focus is how VLPT is properly used to learn EFL vocabulary at the higher secondary level to building meaning from a text. The students need to be aware of the tasks and they should use them for better performance. VLPT allows the students to successfully meeting the challenges reading and writing texts of different types. Through using VLPT properly, the students of HSC level can enlarge their knowledge, explore, observe and discover the unknown, take decisions, think critically, develop self-consciousness and self-assertion which are very important learning outcomes. If the students' at the HSC level focusing on frequently used vocabularies, focusing on the ways of learning vocabularies, guessing the unknown meaning from the context, using word cards for cultivating vocabularies, using dictionaries, involving learning from receptive skills, giving deliberate attention to sounds, grammar, spelling and discourse, learning word from word families, memorizing unknown words, they can develop learning vocabularies for academic success.

The research conducted in search of a possible solution to the problems for which students at the HSC level cannot attain their desired efficiency in cultivating vocabulary. Attempts are made to discover the limitations and to scrutinize the scope of the problems for which the students at the HSC level face difficulties to reach their goal. This paper intends to discover the instructional principles and classroom tasks to be implemented for cultivating vocabulary which will benefit the students to a great extent. It also greatly helps the teachers put on insights into their teaching. This is an empirical study and it provides solid research evidence to describe how to implement different principles and classroom activities for learning vocabulary that will be of great significance and interest for the students of higher secondary level as a whole. The instruments are easily applicable to future studies conducted at other levels of education in Bangladesh. So the study will play a vital role as the results and recommendations can practically help the students of all levels with real assistance.

Vocabulary is the words of the language and it carries the meanings of language. Lessard-Clouston (2013) defined vocabulary as ‘the words of a language, including single items and phrases or chunks of several words which convey a particular meaning, the way individual words do.’ Vocabulary is an important issue in the content area of a language and vocabulary learning is an essential part and fundamental factor in foreign language learning. Effective activities and instructional principles of learning vocabulary influence learners’ vocabulary development and help them to understand and learn new words, make sense of new vocabulary by integrating it with what they already know, and remember the meaning of words (Hayet, 2018). As a part of language learning, the students must be aware of these vocabulary learning principles and tasks. The VLPT plays a vital role in vocabulary acquisition as well as in vocabulary instruction.

Therefore, the objectives of the study are to examine the difficulties that the students face in learning vocabulary in English at the Higher Secondary level in Bangladesh. The study also attempts to employ vocabulary learning principles and tasks (VLPT) in EFL vocabulary at the higher secondary level. The purpose of this study is to determine in what ways the students used VLPT to develop their vocabulary knowledge for comprehending the texts. Keeping in mind the research objectives, the researcher formulated the following research questions:

1. What difficulties do the HSC level students encounter while leaning EFL vocabulary?
2. To what extent are vocabulary learning principles incorporated at the higher secondary level?
3. What are the most common vocabulary learning tasks employed by the higher secondary students?
4. Are the instructional principles and classroom tasks properly interlocked to learn EFL vocabulary at the higher secondary level?

Principles for learning vocabulary

Teachers and students need to pay attention to certain guiding principles when applying classroom tasks. These principles suggest that it is important to give students opportunities to choose what principles they will use to learn vocabularies and how they will do that. Teachers need to be curious while following these principles as giving students too much freedom may be unhelpful. Nunan (2003) put forward the following principles of learning vocabulary:

Focus on the frequently used vocabulary: The first principle is based on what words to learn. Some useful vocabularies can be used in a wide variety of circumstances and these higher frequency words give learners the best return for their learning outcomes. These words are used over and over in everyday speech. It is most efficient to learn these most useful vocabularies to the least useful. If the students can learn the higher frequency vocabularies and use them in language learning, they can get the maximum benefits from these vocabularies. According to Nunan (2003), the most useful vocabulary or higher frequency word depends on the goals of the learners. Academic Wordlist (Coxhead, 2000) is sufficient to learn if learners want to do academic study in senior high school or university. This Academic Wordlist occurs frequently in a wide range of

academic texts. After knowing these high-frequency words, students can learn low-frequency words.

Focus on the ways of learning vocabulary: This principle emphasizes on how words should be taught and learned. For learning vocabulary, learners need to focus on the vocabulary in the most appropriate way which includes vocabulary learning strategies. The vocabulary learning strategies are:

Guessing: Sökmen (1997) points out that guessing from context is a useful principle in vocabulary learning and should be covered in a language classroom. The vocabulary guessing principles (VGP) refer to the plans and procedures students use to guess the contextual meaning of words, (during reading or listening) for comprehending the meaning. Guessing from the context was regarded to be the best way to cultivate vocabulary. Nation (2001) gives importance to the sources of vocabulary learning through guessing from the context which is the incidental learning of vocabulary. Meara (1994) adds to what Nation believes by claiming that incidental learning occurs as a result of learning something else, and the more the learners engaged in guessing the meaning, the more they learn the meaning of new words. Some problems may arise if learners mainly acquire vocabulary through guessing. For example, acquiring vocabulary through guessing in context is probably a rather slow process given the limited amount of time learners can afford in class. When students come across words that they don't know, they guess the meaning to solve comprehension problems. Guessing is needed when students encounter an unknown word of a foreign language.

Using word cards: Learning vocabulary from word cards is an effective way to cultivate vocabulary. In word cards, the students will write the English word on one side and the first language translation on the other. The use of the first language helps the students' to understand the meaning easily and clearly. The students can learn vocabulary from the cards at the time of their free moment. That means, using word cards for comprehending the meaning of a word is deliberate learning. Deliberate learning always achieves faster and stronger vocabulary learning results.

Using dictionaries: Using a dictionary can also be helpful to know the meaning of the new word in the foreign language (Yu-Ling, 2005). It is an important tool for improving vocabulary acquisition. Dictionary can help the learners to look up the unknown words that they encounter from the context. Bilingual dictionaries have been found to result in vocabulary learning which plays an important role for advanced learners. However, while using a dictionary, the learners should be very careful as there might be different definitions or meanings (connotative meaning) for only one word. In this case, the learners have to search for the most suitable word. (Prichard, 2008).

Encourage learners to become autonomous learners: Autonomous learners can acquire vocabularies frequently. They understand that they are responsible for their own learning like knowledge of what to learn, skills in choosing the best options, and the ability to evaluate progress. Teachers can play a vital role to make them autonomous learners by training the learners in the various ways of learning, providing genuine opportunities for choosing what to learn and how to learn, providing encouragement and feedback. The students can work in groups or pairs without

taking help from the teachers. Students participating in group work with their peers have the opportunity to develop their vocabulary knowledge in an authentic situation.

Classroom Tasks for learning vocabulary

To guide students in learning EFL vocabulary, the teacher can design certain tasks according to principles. Tasks are exercises intended to facilitate learning and in which there is an objective to reach. A task is defined as, “any structured language learning endeavor which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the tasks. Task is therefore assumed to refer to a range of work plans which have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning-from the simple and brief exercise type, to the more complex and lengthy activities such as group problem, solving and simulation, and decision making.” (Breen, 1987, cited in Nunan 1989). Some classroom tasks for learning vocabulary proposed by David Nunan (2003) are outlined here:

Meaning-focused input activities: Meaning focused input involves learning from receptive skills (reading and listening). By reading regularly especially doing a regular extensive reading is an important means of vocabulary development. Knowledge of vocabulary is an important component of L2 competency and extensive reading provides learners with exposure to input that can accelerate their acquisition of new vocabulary (Krashen,1989; Taguchi, Maass, & Gorsuch, 2004). Krashen (1989) opines that acquisition of vocabulary is associated with “the language faculty, the mental organ specialized for language vocabulary learning through input is increased by guessing unfamiliar words, by reflecting on the new vocabulary, by learners quickly previewing a reading text” When the learners listen to the lecture of the teacher, he/she can explain the meaning of the new words.

Deliberate learning activities: It involves direct study and giving deliberate attention to sounds, grammar, spelling, and discourse. It includes:

Memorization: Memorization is the process of committing something to memory. Memorization of first language translation is an important deliberate vocabulary learning task. It is one of the corroborating tasks in which learners are involving in finding the connection between the new words and the previously learned words (Schmitt, 1997).

Word family/word webs: Word webs are a very good activity for developing students’ vocabulary skill. If a reader knows the basic meaning of a word family, he can easily understand the meaning of related words. In the word web, the students can put a word into the center by adding other vocabularies that are related to the keyword. By doing this, the students can cultivate vocabularies related to the main words.

Repetition and reading aloud: Repetition and reading aloud are the foundation of memorizing vocabulary and literacy development. Reading aloud includes think-aloud or collaborative elements and emphasis intentionally on the meaning “within the text”, “about the text” and “beyond the text” (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006, p.33). It provides the students with a demonstration of cultivating vocabulary through fluent reading. It reveals the rewards of reading and develops

the listener's interest in books and the desire to learn vocabularies. On the other hand, repetition is a good way to long term memory. The more time the students are exposed to a word, the stronger their understanding becomes.

Extensive reading: Vocabulary is the heart's blood of reading skill. Without the knowledge of vocabulary, no one can read and understand. Extensive reading is an important activity that can be used in substantial vocabulary learning. This kind of activity provides opportunities to cultivate vocabulary by looking up the meaning of words in a dictionary. Krashen (1985) postulated that the best way to learn vocabulary is 'reading for pleasure'. He believes that extensive reading is one of the best ways to enhance vocabulary. However, one should bear in mind that the difficulties learners face in reading are that they should know approximately 95% of the words surrounding a particular vocabulary (Lufer, 1992, cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

Challenges faced by the HSC level students in EFL vocabulary:

Vocabulary is an imperative component of English language, and the inclusion of vocabulary into the curriculum arouses problems for the students at the higher secondary level for several reasons. For instance, many students at this level cannot understand the idea of what the teachers say in English classes. Moreover, they cannot understand the message of what they read and cannot produce their own messages through spoken and written words or sentences to express themselves. The following is commonly observed difficulties which a student at the higher secondary level may face while giving instruction:

- Lack of availability of contextual vocabulary
- Lack of relevant wordlists
- Improper classroom activities
- lack of enthusiasm for vocabulary learning
- lack of unique/ innovative vocabulary teaching technique.
- limited learning environments
- Over-dose use of native language in classrooms
- lack of new ideas
- too much dependence on the teachers
- find English vocabulary difficult to memorize.
- grow a natural antipathy/ indifference towards English words.
- The lesson plan and teaching activities are not conducive to learning.
- They are not used to adopting classroom tasks that might help them improve vocabulary retention skills.

Previous Works on Teaching and Learning ESL/EFL Vocabulary

Yali (2010) conducted a study on teaching techniques used by the teachers in teaching vocabulary at MTs Surya Buana Malang, Indonesia. The main objective of this study is to find out the

techniques used to teach vocabulary to the students. The researcher found that some techniques are important like visual technique, mime and gestured techniques, the use of illustrative situations, contextual guesswork techniques, etc. which can be applied by the students to develop their vocabulary knowledge.

Li (2012) investigated a research to find out ESL China students' non-verbal ability, multiple-meaning vocabulary, morphological awareness through using the task like Listening Comprehension Test, Reading Comprehension Assessment, and Summary writing. The main purpose of the study is to examine the problems faced by ESL China students in reading comprehension due to insufficient vocabulary. The subjects of the study consisted of 246 China ESL students from the Xi'an region in China. The findings revealed that there were no significant differences among the three groups in age, nonverbal intelligence, and word reading ability, but they differed substantially in reading comprehension. Inferior reading comprehension might arise from vocabulary difficulties. The study suggested that effective vocabulary instruction can play a vital role to develop students' reading competency. The findings had implications for the teaching and learning of English in the Chinese context.

METHODOLOGY

The research is a data-based effort. The researcher started conducting a survey for the study. The respondents (randomly selected) were the students and the teachers of the higher secondary level especially the students and the teachers of some colleges of Bangladesh. The respondents were selected both from urban (50%) and rural (50%) colleges. The sampling areas included 3 higher secondary government and 3 non-government colleges under 3 districts.

The researcher used mixed methods research (MMR) approach combining aspects of both qualitative and quantitative methods for collecting and analyzing data. The data were collected using a questionnaire for students, an in-depth interview schedule for teachers. Based on the research questions and research objectives, the researcher prepared the questionnaire. The students' questionnaire was developed taking into consideration the EFL context of Bangladesh, had 13 items relating to instructional principles and classroom tasks. These questions were close-ended having the options from the range of always to never (five-point likert scale- Likert, 1932). A number of 100 EFL college students willingly took part in the study and responded in the questionnaire survey.

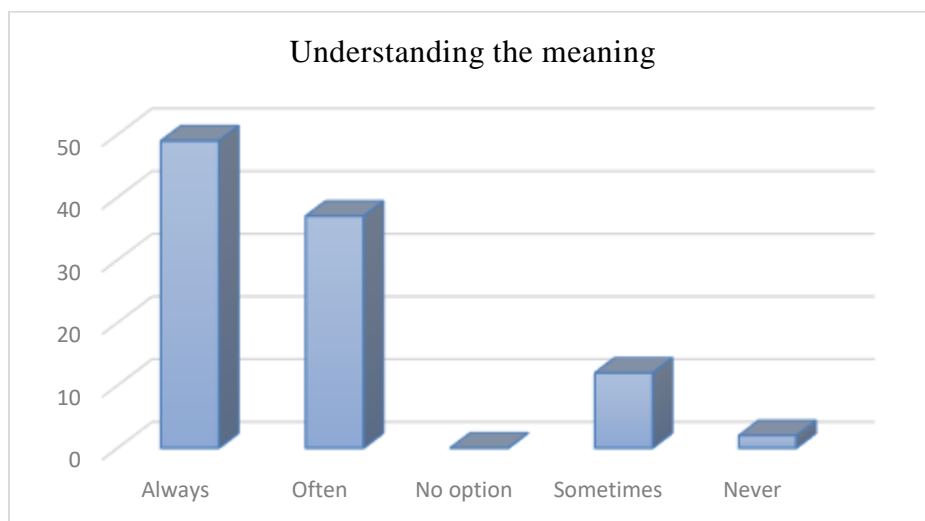
In addition to the questionnaire; a formal interview (2 open-ended questions) with ten teachers was conducted. Before starting the interview, the researcher gave a brief introduction about the research and the purpose of the interview which intended to encourage the interviewee to be a positive participant by giving truer and deeper responses. The researcher asked the questions to the teachers individually (conducted face to face by the researcher himself) and they were requested to respond to the questions according to their own opinions. After collecting data, both qualitative and quantitative methods supported by necessary statistical tools were used for analyzing them.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

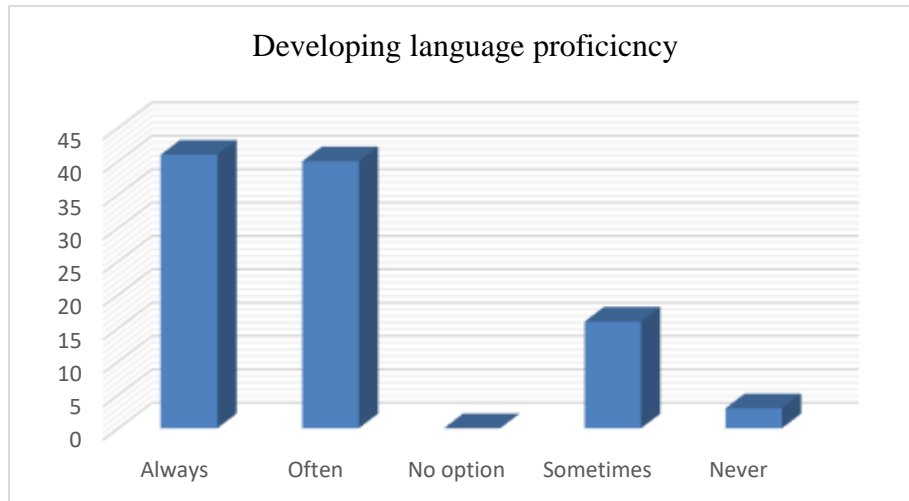
Findings of the Student Questionnaire Survey

This section includes 13 questions (Q1-Q13) which covered 13 issues of learning EFL vocabulary including vocabulary learning principles, classroom tasks, and vocabulary strategy use. The participants were the students of HSC level studying in different government and non-government colleges. The study sought to uncover the vocabulary learning principles and classroom activities of EFL vocabulary utilized by the HSC students. In Q1, the students were asked if they try to understand the meaning of every word in a text. In response to this question, it was found 86% students significantly ('always' and 'often') used to understand the meaning of every word in a text. They took much effort to understand the meaning of every word significantly. The findings showed only 14% students insignificantly seek the meaning of every word to understand the text.

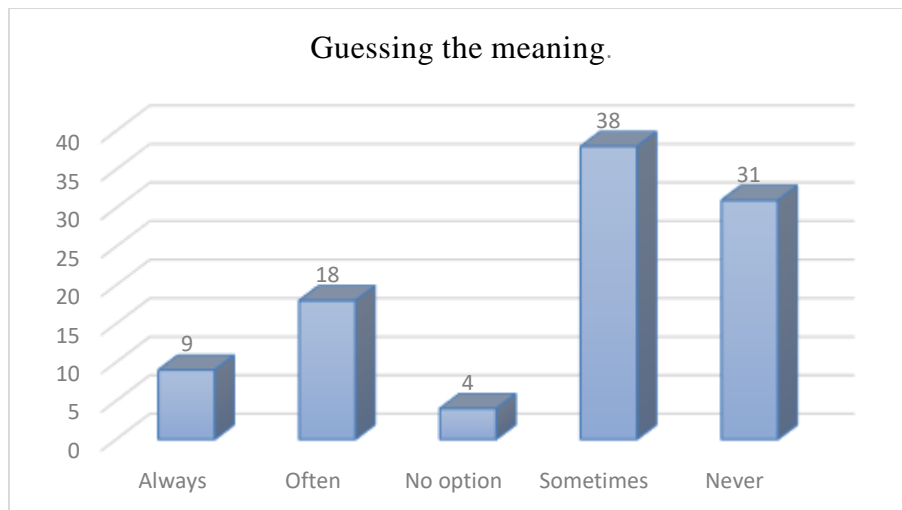
Figure 1



In the student Questionnaire Survey, Q2 asked whether learning vocabulary improves the students' language proficiency or not. In response to the question, it was found that 81% students significantly responded 'always' or 'often' and said that learning a sufficient amount of vocabulary is the key to improve their proficiency. The rest of the respondents opined that vocabulary knowledge sometimes or never is connected with improving proficiency.

Figure 2

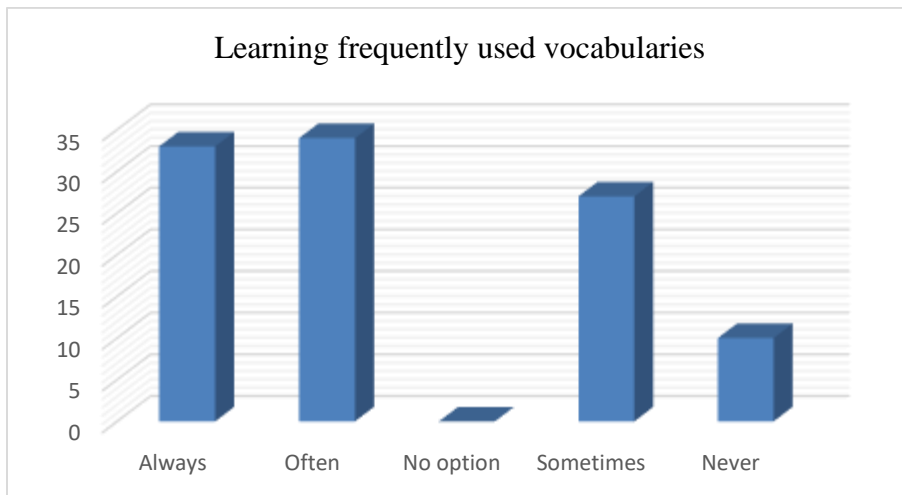
In the Q3, the students were questioned if they guessed the meaning of any words/sentences from the context if they did not understand the meaning. It was found that 27% students agreed that they 'always' or 'often' emphasized to guess the meaning from context. Most of the students showed a negative attitude towards it. 38% students replied sometime and the rest 35% replied in negative/no option that they never guess the meaning from context if they did not know the meaning. This indicated that most of the students did not focus on context to guess the meaning which created impediments to learn vocabulary. Guessing is useful when the students do not understand the meaning of a particular word/words.

Figure 3

The Q4 inquired whether the teacher asked the students to focus on the frequently used vocabularies. It was found that nearly 67% students agreed that they were asked 'often' or 'always'

to learn the most frequently used vocabularies. The findings also showed that 33% students insignificantly focused on learning frequently used vocabularies. The most frequently used vocabularies are higher frequency vocabularies which are commonly used vocabularies.

Figure 4



SL	Questions	Response				
		Always	Often	No option	Sometime s	Never
		1	2	3	4	5
		Significant Frequency%	Significant Frequency%	Insignificant Frequency%	Insignificant Frequency%	Insignificant Frequency%
Q1	I try to understand the meaning of every word in a text	49	37	0	12	02
Q2	Learning vocabulary improves my	41	40	0	16	03

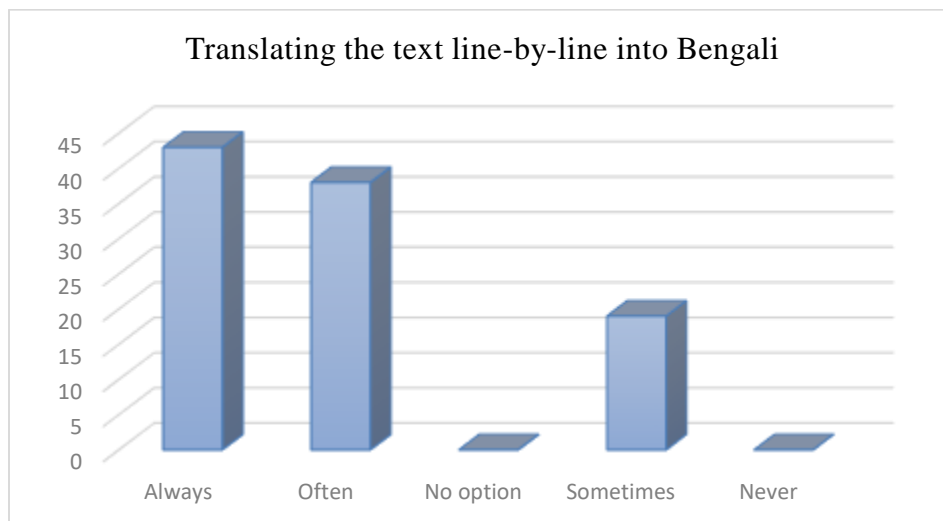
SL	Questions	Response				
		Always	Often	No option	Sometimes	Never
	language proficiency					
Q3	I guess the meaning of any words/sentences from the context if I do not understand.	09	18	04	38	31
Q4	The teacher asks me to learn frequently used vocabulary first.	33	34	0	27	10
Q5	I translate the text line-by-line into Bengali	43	38	0	19	0
Q6	If I don't understand something such as a word or phrase, I take help from the dictionary	39	35	0	18	8
Q7	I use word cards or notebooks for taking notes of difficult words to increase and maintain my stock of vocabulary.	15	17	10	25	33
Q8	Repetition and reading aloud help	31	33	0	24	12

SL	Questions	Response				
		Always	Often	No option	Sometime s	Never
	me to memorize vocabulary.					
Q9	The teacher encourages us to become autonomous learners.	11	18	20	23	28
Q10	The teacher uses parts of speech, synonym-antonym of a new word while teaching its meaning and pronunciation.	20	13	20	16	31
Q11	The teacher creates an appropriate classroom environment which encourages me to learn vocabulary.	10	13	7	33	37
Q12	I read extensively which help me to develop fluency in reading and promote vocabulary acquisition.	15	20	10	20	35
Q13	The teacher encourages cooperative learning by using small group work and pair work to	12	17	0	30	41

SL	Questions	Response				
		Always	Often	No option	Sometime s	Never
	discuss vocabulary related problems					

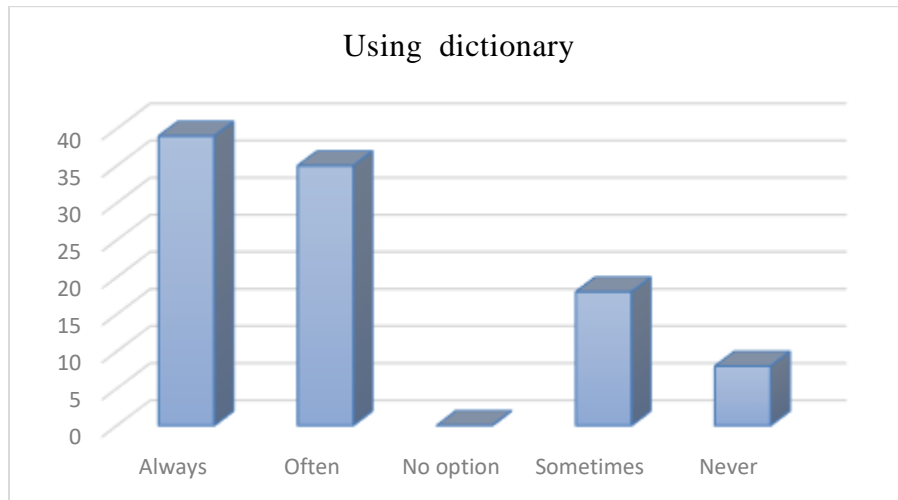
The SQ5 inquired whether the students translate the text line-by-line into Bengali. In response, it was found that nearly 81% students disclosed that they significantly practiced this classroom activity to comprehend the text better. Translation is a complicated task during which the meaning of the source language text should be conveyed to the target-language readers. The students need the ability to encode the meaning and form in the target language utilizing the decoded meaning and form of the source language.

Figure 5



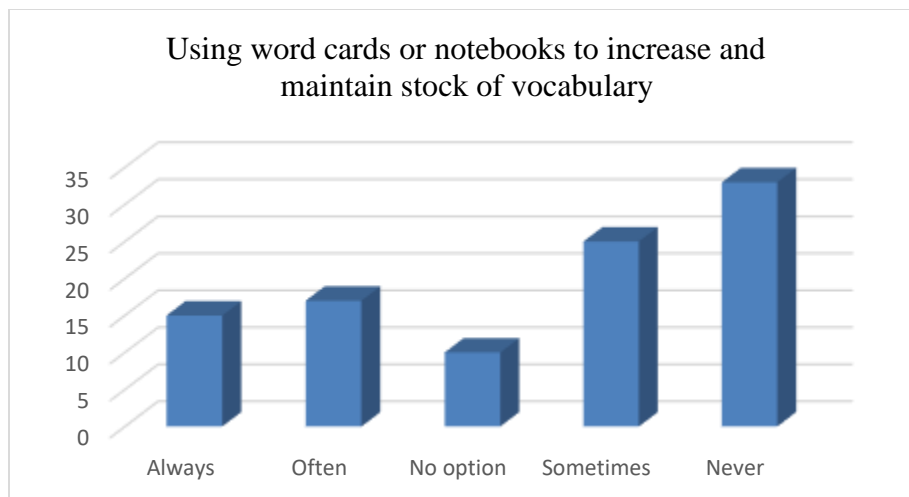
In Q6, students were asked whether they take help from the dictionary if they don't understand something such as a word or phrase. It was found that 74% claimed that they seek help from the dictionary when they encounter problems to comprehend the meaning of a word or phrase. The study showed that a small number of students disclosed that they don't take help from the dictionary when they don't understand the meaning as they ignore the unknown meaning.

Figure 6

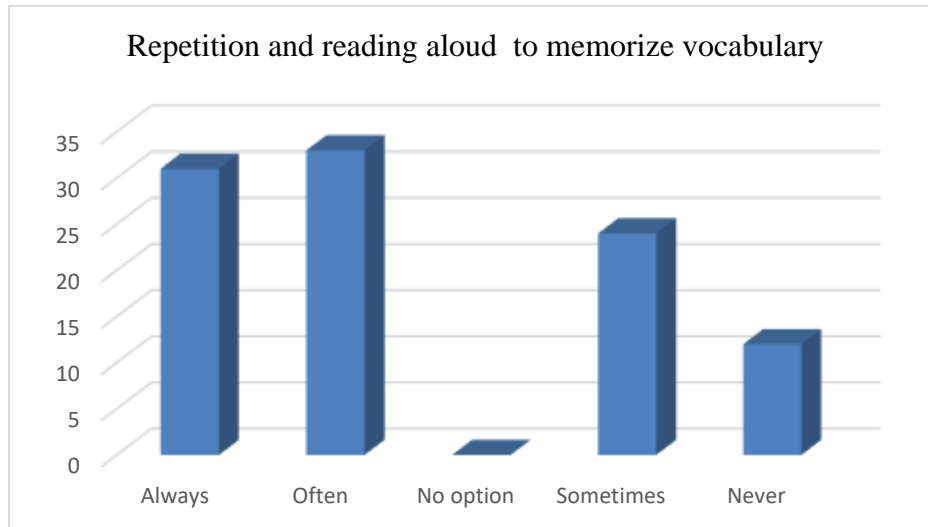


In Question Q-7, the students were asked if they use word cards or notebooks for taking notes of difficult words to increase and maintain their stock of vocabulary. From the students' responses, it was found 68% students insignificantly ('sometimes', 'neutral' or 'never') use word cards for taking notes. Only 32% students agreed that they 'always' or 'often' take note of difficult words by using word cards. The study showed that this was one of the major reasons for their deficiencies in vocabulary.

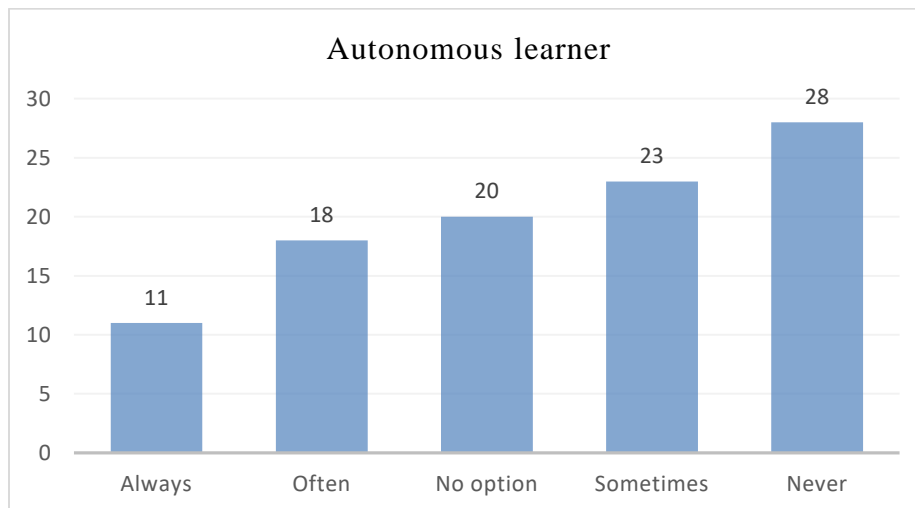
Figure 7



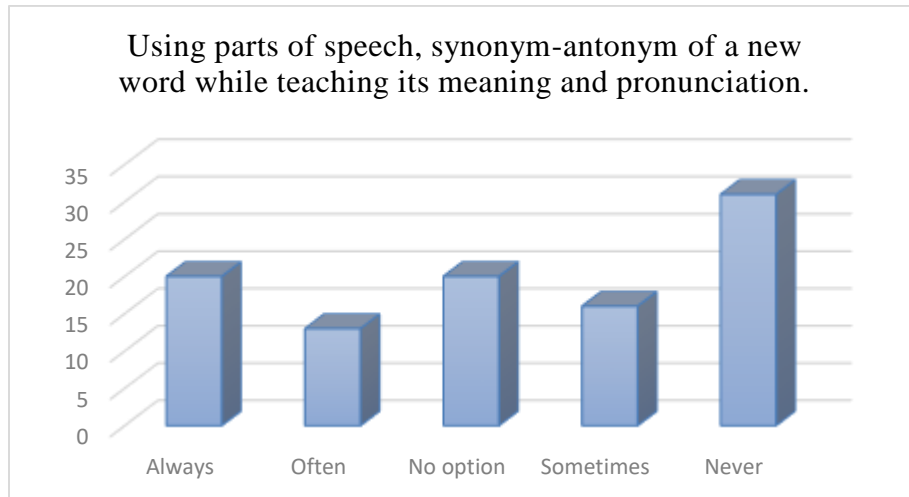
In Q8, the students were asked whether repetition and reading aloud help them to memorize vocabulary. It was found that nearly 64% students significantly claimed that repetition and reading aloud, as a means of the vocabulary learning task, help them to memorize vocabulary. The study also showed that 24% students sometimes did these tasks to memorize their vocabulary. The rest of the students (12%) never repeat or read aloud as a means of vocabulary learning task to memorize vocabulary.

Figure 8

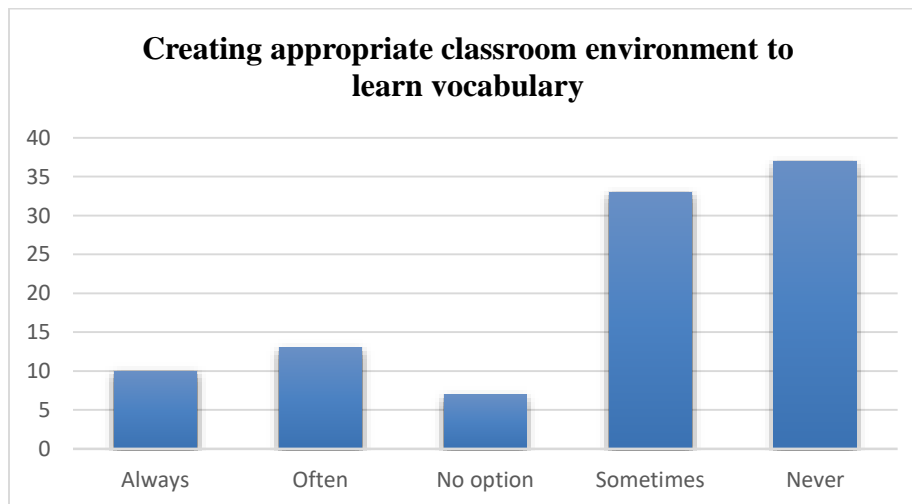
In question 9, the students' were asked whether their teacher encourages them to become an autonomous learner. The study showed that only 29% students replied that their teachers "always" or "often" encouraged them to be autonomous learners. It was a matter of regret that most of the students (71%) insignificantly answered that their teachers (neutral/sometime/never) were reluctant regarding the matter.

Figure 9

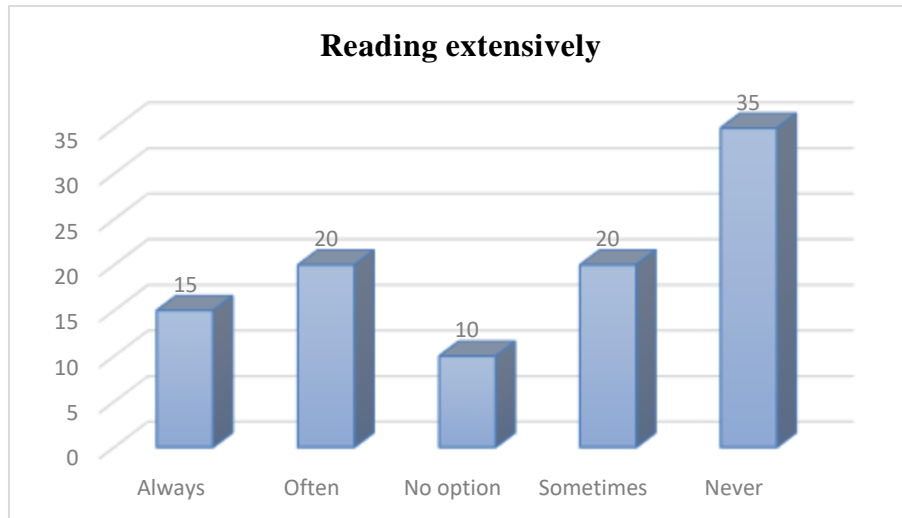
In the student Questionnaire Survey, Q10 asked whether the teacher use parts of speech, synonym-antonym of a new word while teaching its meaning and pronunciation. It was found that 33% students replied that their teachers teach them vocabulary using parts of speech, synonym-antonym and a vast majority of respondents (63%) answered that their teachers "sometimes" or "never" use these techniques for the means of vocabulary learning.

Figure 10

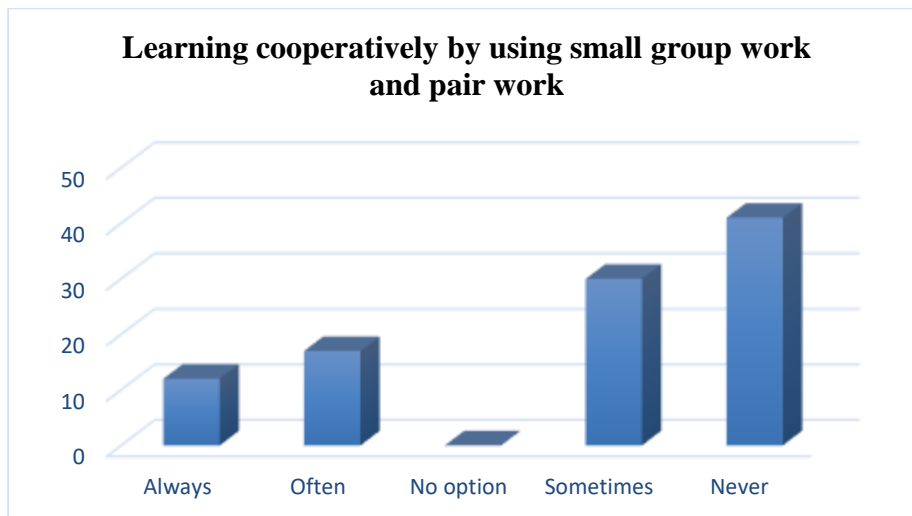
The result of Q-11 revealed that 23% students replied that their teacher “always” or “often” create an appropriate classroom environment which encourages them to learn vocabulary. On the other hand, major portions (77%) of participants replied that their teachers did not create a suitable environment for learning vocabulary. The findings indicated that there was a gap between teacher-student relationships which results in a lack of appropriate classroom environment.

Figure 11

In Q-12, the students were asked if they read extensively which help them to develop fluency in reading and promote vocabulary acquisition. In reply, 35% students claimed that they “always” or “often” read extensively. It was found 65% students insignificantly (‘sometimes’, ‘no option’ or ‘never’) read extensively which may help them to develop fluency in reading and promote vocabulary acquisition. Extensive reading reinforces vocabulary learning and improves learners’ vocabulary knowledge.

Figure 12

In Q-13, the students' were asked whether their teacher encourages cooperative learning by using small group work and pair work for vocabulary development. It was found that 29% students claimed that their teachers arranged small groups for classroom tasks and activities in EFL vocabulary classes significantly either "always" or "often". The study showed that students participating in group works are a key factor in practicing vocabulary in the class. When students can verbalize their ideas, listen to one another, share realistic discussion, they are much more engaged in vocabulary development and fluency.

Figure 13

FINDINGS OF THE TEACHER IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Teacher Interviews on Vocabulary Teaching

Teaching vocabulary plays an important role in developing students' vocabulary knowledge and overall success. If they are not properly instructed for learning vocabulary properly, their learning can be affected. Therefore, it was important to know from the teachers how they work on teaching vocabulary. It was found that 7 (70%) teachers among 10 wrote the unknown and difficult words on board for knowing the meaning from the students while teaching vocabulary. They also asked the individual students or the whole class to form new sentences using these words, explain the meaning and usage of the word both in Bangla and English. If the students face problems, the teachers translated and explained the text in Bangla. The teachers also taught synonyms and antonyms which helped the students to enrich their vocabulary knowledge. One of the teachers (T4) said:

For developing students' vocabulary knowledge, I describe every section of the text; I write the unknown and difficult words on boards, I ask the class to comprehend the meaning based on the context. If the students fail to say the meaning of the word/words, I explain using the mother tongue.

During the interview, it was found that 6 (60%) teachers taught high-frequency list vocabulary based on the textbook. Those teachers gave a list of words for word meaning in English. These teachers claimed that the way vocabulary was tested in the present examination system made them examination-oriented. For this reason, they taught frequently used vocabularies based on texts. To support this view T3 remarked:

We have to highlight on common vocabularies found in textbooks as we cannot overlook the preparation for the final examination. This impedes students' vocabulary development.

Teacher Interviews on Implementation Technique and Tasks

Teachers' proper instructions can help students to perform better in developing vocabulary knowledge and make the classroom a systematic place where it is easier for them to monitor classroom in group or pair work activities. When teachers are asked what type of instructional techniques and principles they usually apply in the class to implement a classroom task, it was found from the interview that mostly preferred (90%) to teach vocabulary in a whole class approach though they asked questions to individual students. They did not prefer to practice pair/group activities in class. In this connection, T9 said:

The whole class activity works well as using this approach, teachers' can ask any kind of questions and students get the chance to write an answer to the question. The written responses allow us to check the answer which is more feasible than an oral answer.

A total of 6 teachers said that they suggested the class work together, read together, and asked them to guess the meaning of a word from the context. It was also found that they motivated students by deliberately practicing the activities like: guessing from words/text, guess from the title/graph/pictures/chart. The study revealed that guessing from context was very important for

cultivating students' vocabulary knowledge which helped the students to activate their prior knowledge, predict the themes and main ideas the author had highlighted.

During the interview, 7 (70%) teachers emphasized monitoring classroom activities for evolving students' vocabulary acquaintances. They strongly instructed their students to follow reading aloud so that they can monitor students' fluency, pronunciation, accent, and intonation. However, 3 (30%) teachers wanted their students to read silently as it helped them to concentrate on learning vocabulary items and to focus their attention on the text. On the other hand, Most of the teachers said that they instructed their students to read extensively. Through extensive reading students can encounter a lot of vocabularies and they can learn new vocabulary with pleasure.

CONCLUSION

The study investigates the challenges faced by the higher secondary level students in learning EFL vocabulary. To overcome these challenges, vocabulary learning principles and tasks (VLPT) has given priority. The findings of the study showed that VLPT had a positive and strong correlation with vocabulary learning achievement and it was found beneficial for developing students' vocabulary knowledge. It was also found that EFL students studying at HSC level were not adequately aware of the importance and effectiveness of VLPT in classes. Thus the findings portray the intervention as a viable method for developing vocabulary knowledge of the HSC learners. In fact, determining the useful vocabulary, planning a suitable lesson to carry on the activities, and training the learners with suitable or helpful strategies are the principle issues to assist the learners both for achieving self-motivation and acquiring a handsome word stock needed for successful communication. The study suggested that learners need more instructions or direction from the teachers for developing their vocabulary knowledge. Learners should be made more aware of VLPT so that they can apply them in their learning situations.

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