Research Article

Challenges in the Accurate Use of Vocabulary Among Second-Language Learners

Yuluxi Yogeswaran[1], M.J.F Sujani[2], MB Nowzath[3], M.R Rishad Muhammed[4]

1. Department of English, Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education; yuluyo1994@gmail.com
2. Department of English, Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education; sujanifathima@gmail.com
3. Department of English, Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education; nowzathmnf@gmail.com
4. Department of Arabic Language, Linguistics and Translation, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka; rishadhakeemi96@gmail.com

Abstract. Nowadays the vocabulary learning plays an important role in language teaching especially in the context where English is taught as a foreign language. This is because lexical competence is now seen a heart of language learning and the ultimate goal of language teaching is to improve the language competence of the learners. Additionally, vocabulary has been recognized as an important factor for language learning because insufficient vocabulary knowledge leads the learners to

encounter difficulties in second language learning. Learners can significantly improve their language competence by developing their ability to use of vocabulary learning strategies. However, the present study primarily aimed at investigating how KM/KM/R.K.M.Girls' Vidyalaya, students deals with vocabulary problems. Data was gathered for this study through Interview, Questionnaire and pre-test, post-test. Interviewing teachers and students and written assignment given to students. Individual attention was paid on the 20 samples from the pre-test marks. The average marks of the selected sample at the level were 50%. However, when the post-test had been it was 80%. These research finding are significant important since this will help the teachers to further their teaching methods and find ways to help students avoid marking error in subject-verb agreement. The result of this finding is the identification of difficulties in vocabulary learning and the possibilities to rectify them. The difficulties find outed were: Knowing the meaning of the vocabulary, Memorizing the spelling and writing with the correct spelling, Motivation in learning, The student's talent in language, The student's interest in vocabulary learning. Some suggestions and recommendations have been made to address this problem. They include giving sample exercises and practices to students, giving some teaching techniques to the teachers to be implemented in the classroom. All these efforts are meant for remedies to solve the problem in learning vocabulary in writing.

INTRODUCTION

English is the most popular foreign language in Sri Lanka. This language played a key role in the process of social stratification which took place after the collapse of feudal and colonial system. After teaching English language for so many years in schools, why do students hesitate to follow this subject in school level? Such as Sri Lanka's education structure is divided into Junior, Secondary, Senior Secondary, Collegiate and tertiary. This study focuses on Secondary level. This research aims to find the difficulties of using vocabularies for the students of grade-07 R.K.M.G.V.

Therefore, "most students do not develop rich vocabulary that enables them to communicate freely and appropriately in English. drawn researchers' interest within the mainstream of SLA since the late" 1980s (Nation, (1997). And particularly the 1990s (Sanchez& Manchon, (2007). With the explosion of such studies, a central focus of scholarly investigations has been devoted to the concept of vocabulary learning strategies, there is little research to lead teacher on encouraging secondary language learners to develop their reading skill on the learn new vocabularies words which are crucial study about students to learn new vocabularies words, they feel the lessons are somewhat difficult.

Especially, they a common problem in correct usage of vocabularies "These lexical chunks include such phrases as "good morning" and "nice to meet you" and they are the key to communication and developing student skills" (Sánchez & Manchón, (2007).The stronger students' vocabularies are, the more complex

material they will use that will benefit them, allowing them to communicate and understand others much better. Errors in memorizing new words and researcher must overcome these difficulties and problems using new methodology with prepared activities related to them.

Therefore, researcher had well planned and designed some activities to make the students easier to memorize and practice words using earliest methodology. This study will help students to avoid common difficulties when writing. It will also help them to correct grammatical structures and understand appropriate usage in context.

The study addresses key research gaps in understanding the difficulties encountered in the correct usage of vocabulary among Grade 7 second-language learners at R.K.M.G.V. While existing literature on vocabulary acquisition is extensive, it often overlooks the unique challenges faced by this specific age group and educational context. This research bridges gaps by focusing on the local cultural and educational frameworks, exploring effective vocabulary learning strategies, and examining the direct impact of vocabulary proficiency on writing skills, particularly in error reduction and grammatical accuracy. Additionally, it addresses the psychological barriers, such as anxiety and motivation, that hinder vocabulary usage, aiming to enhance students' confidence and engagement. By providing practical insights for educators and students, the study contributes to improving vocabulary teaching and learning in similar contexts.

Aim and Objective of the Research
- To describe what is English vocabulary for grade -07 students
- To identify the difficulties when using vocabularies
- To suggest the ways to solve the difficulties
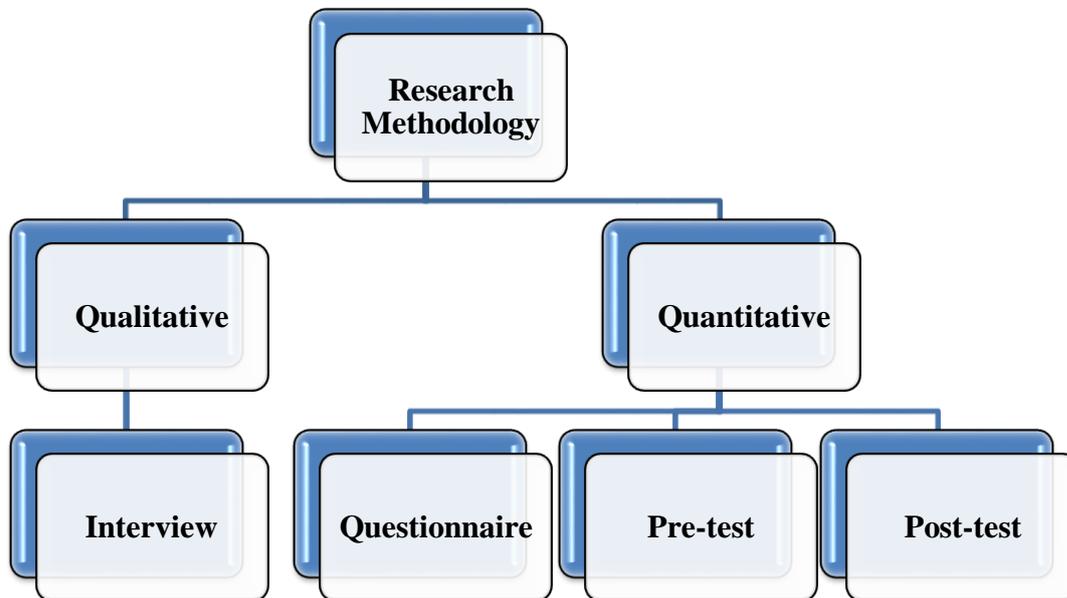
Research Questions
- What are the difficulties of using vocabularies in writing of grade -07 students?
- What are the reasons for that causes?
- What are the solutions to eradicate them?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
There are many of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were used to implement the tasks successfully outside the classroom for the research. Those are the primary and secondary data were used for data collection. A pre-test, post-test questionnaire are the primary data and newspapers, books, are the secondary data were used to evaluate the vocabulary skills and an interview was conducted within the students and teachers to identify the causes that vocabulary ability. This research was conducted at R.K.M.G.V which is located in Kalmunai zone.

It is the Girls School in Karaitivu. The population of this current study includes 74 students from R.K.M.G.V, Grade-07 Students.

Research Design

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The data obtained from R.K.M.G.V Grade-07 students were analyzed descriptively in order to reveal the progress in the vocabulary learning. The researcher used interview, questionnaire and pre-test to collect data and for the analyzing.

Interview Analysis and Findings

As previously mentioned, the interview session was divided into 05 sections. Within each section there were different types of work to be done separately by the students. The total allocated marks for each section was 20. The following table elaborates the marks of presented students (18 students) for the interview. Here, the researcher indicates all 05 section's marks separately and the total marks of each and every student.

When implementing the interview for all students it was convinced that the real standard of their ability in using vocabulary in learning. Therefore, the researcher decided to take 60 as a cut-out marks out of 100 marks. Most of the students found it very easy to use vocabulary properly. Out of 18 students 07 students were unable to achieve the cut-out marks because of their inability and inadequate knowledge about vocabulary and where to use them and how to use them properly. So, the researcher takes this as a challenge and motivate the poor scored students to score well in the 25 upcoming sessions. After conducting the interview researcher used

some strategies to develop student's vocabulary skills they were; by reading books, reading articles, watching movies, listening to music, etc.

Total Marks of the Interview Session

After calculating, the marks of interview session from the students in the table blow follows,

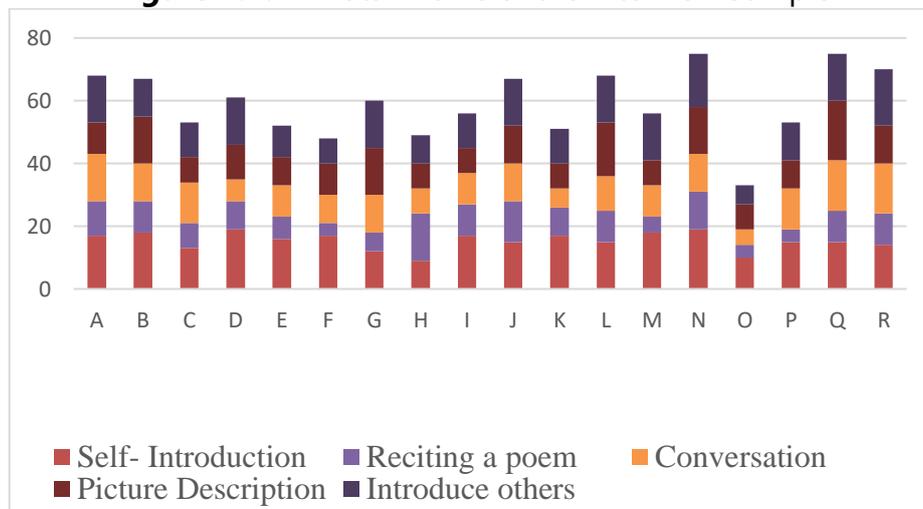**Table 4.2.1 -** Total Marks of the Interview Session

Students	Self-Introduction	Reciting a poem	Conversation	Picture Description	Introduce others	Total
A	17	11	15	10	15	**68**
B	18	10	12	15	12	**67**
C	13	8	13	8	11	**53**
D	19	9	7	11	15	**61**
E	16	7	10	9	10	**52**
F	17	4	9	10	8	**48**
G	12	6	12	15	15	**60**
H	9	15	8	8	9	**49**
I	17	10	10	8	11	**60**
J	15	13	12	12	15	**67**
K	17	9	6	8	11	**51**
L	15	10	11	17	15	**68**
M	18	5	10	8	15	**56**
N	19	12	12	15	17	**75**
O	10	4	5	8	6	**33**
P	15	4	13	9	12	**53**
Q	15	10	16	19	15	**75**
R	14	10	16	12	18	**70**

This table shows that total marks of the 18 students in the interview implementation. The table has seven columns. The first columns represent the self-introduction, the second columns represent the reciting a poem, the third columns represent the conversation, the fourth columns represent the picture description and the fifth columns represents the introduce others. Interestingly ten students got more than 60 marks. One student got lower than 35 marks. Seven students got lower than 60 marks. Ten students got above 50 marks but less than 60marks but the best of three students got highest 75 marks. (Table 4.2.1)

Total Marks of the Interview Session Sample

The following figures illustrate the marks of interview session from the students.

Figure 4.2.2 - Total Marks of the Interview Sample

The below bar chart shows that totally marks implementing the interview of 18 students. There is self- introduction, reciting a poem, conversation, picture description, introduce others. According to the details given in this chart the highest students marks of the 75. The lowest students mark of the 33. Some students mark of an average. More students' equal marks. Researcher find, the most like the students are self-introduction and introduce others. The least like students are picture description, reciting a poem. (Figure-4.2.2)

Questionnaire Analysis and Findings

Here, in this session students were given a written format question paper to evaluate how they are understanding the questions and selecting the right answer. Here, altogether 10 questions were provided. Where, 08 yes/no questions and 02 short answer writing questions. For this session all 20 students were presented. Here, marks allocated were 10 (01 marks per question). Finally, it was calculated into percentage format.

$$\text{Marks} = \frac{\text{Particular Marks}}{\text{Total Allocated Marks}} * 100\%$$

Total Marks of the Questionnaire Session

After calculating, the marks of questionnaire session from the students in the table below follows,

Table 4.3.1 - Marks of questionnaire session

Students	Marks	Marks (%)
A	5	50%
B	8	80%

C	7	70%
D	5	50%
E	4	40%
F	3	30%
G	2	20%
H	5	50%
I	2	20%
J	6	60%
K	4	40%
L	5	50%
M	3	30%
N	4	40%
O	1	10%
P	6	60%
Q	4	40%
R	7	70%
S	3	30%
T	5	50%

The above table shows that questionnaire session of 20 students. The table has three columns. The first column represents the students, the second column represents the marks and third columns respectively marks percentages of the students. According to the details given in the table, the highest percentage of 80% and lowest percentage of 10%. Other than those mentioned in the table. An equal percentage of 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70% each. More students are equal percentages. (Table 4.3.1)

Total Marks of the Questionnaire Session Sample

The following figures illustrate the marks of questionnaire session from the students.

Figure 4.3.2 - Marks of questionnaire session sample
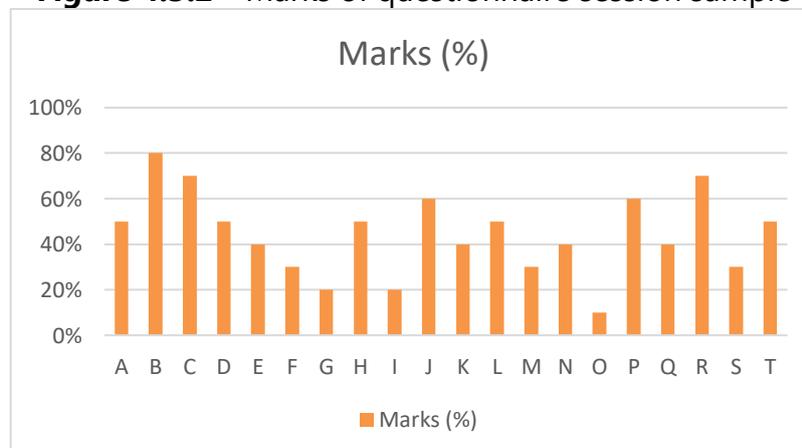
The above bar chart shows that questionnaire session of 20 students. According to the table the highest of the student C. As a percentage it 80%. The lowest of the student O. As a percentage it 10%. Other than those mentioned in the table. An average of the students A, D, H, L, T. As a percentage it 50%. A more equal percentage it's 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%. (Figure 4.3.2)

According to the questionnaire session, comparing to the previous session students didn't participate and didn't show their best in this method. From this, researcher identified that students are facing vocabulary problem while writing. The difficulties not only happen in the form of words but also the difficulties happened because of the lack of understanding the vocabulary. This was the main difficulty to overcome by the students, it was also a challenge for the researcher. The cut-out marks of this session are 50% out of 100%. Out of 20 students only 05 students passed the cut-out marks others were failed. The main reason was the laziness of reading the paragraph and understanding the meaning and underline the correct answer. The way to rectify these difficulties is to memorize the numerous vocabularies and the meaning of them and remember them once in a while. It will lead the students to have a vast knowledge about the vocabulary and they can shine in their own future.

Pre-test Analysis and Findings

The research methodology used by the researcher to evaluate the vocabulary learning was the Pre-test. This method consists of mainly 04 parts. Each part contains 05 questions. Each question carries 05 marks for the easy calculation. All 20 students participated in the pre-test. Before doing the pre-test, researcher analyzed the previous result obtained from the interview and the questionnaire. After evaluating researcher identified that students are using vocabulary well in the verbal form (Interview). In this method they need to know the meaning and spelling. In the case of questionnaire, the students need to know the meaning and need to answer the asked questions. But 75% of students failed in this method.

According to this the researcher realized, students had difficulties in writing vocabularies. The researcher helped them by teaching the way of spelling of the word and knowing the meaning and where to use them. So, the researcher understands that, if students need to succeed in the vocabulary skill they need to know both meaning and the spelling. If anyone of these mandatory requirements (meaning, spelling) failed, students won't get the ad equate knowledge in vocabulary learning in writing. The researcher trained and motivate the students with several activities to face the last tool which is used to test the knowledge of the students of knowing the meaning and spelling. To break down the difficulties the researcher conducted vocabulary games for the students. They did very

enthusiastically. After doing all these activities students were prepared for the pre-test.

Total Marks of the Pre-test

The lower marks obtained below 80 from the whole class students pre – test marks show in the table as follows,
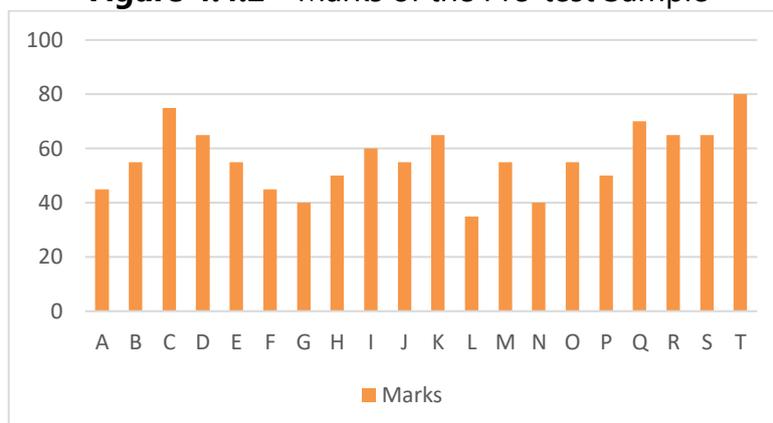
Table 4.4.1 - Marks of the Pre-test

Students	Marks
A	45
B	55
C	75
D	65
E	55
F	45
G	40
H	50
I	60
J	55
K	65
L	35
M	55
N	40
O	55
P	50
Q	70
R	65
S	65
T	80

The shows above table and graph illustrates the marks range of each and every student who had participated in the Pre-test. Comparing to the other sessions the student's marks range had been increased in this session. So, in this the researcher came across 100% of students were able to pass the cut-out marks of 50. Researcher came to a conclusion that the research purpose became successful to an extent. (Table 4.1.1)

Total Marks of the Pre-test *Sample*

The following figures illustrate the marks of the Pre-test from the students.

Figure 4.4.2 - Marks of the Pre-test Sample

The above bar chart shows that total marks of the pre-test of 20 students. According to the table the highest of the student T. As a mark it 80. The lowest of the student L. As a mark it 35. Almost equal and average marks of the students. (Figure 4.4.2)

This chapter depicts the results of the Interview, Questionnaire, and Pre-test activities made by the researcher to evaluate and analyze the vocabulary learning difficulties. In each session difficulties were identified and rectified. As the result the last pre-test shows the 57% success.

Post-test Analysis and Findings

The final research methodology used by the researcher to evaluate the vocabulary learning was the Post test. This method consists of mainly 04 parts. Each part contains 05 questions. Each question carries 05 marks for the easy calculation. All 20 students participated in the post test. After doing the post test, researcher analyzed the result obtained from the interview, questionnaire and the pre-test. After evaluating researcher identified that students are using vocabulary well in the verbal form (Interview). In this method they need to know the meaning and spelling. In the case of questionnaire, the students need to know the meaning and need to answer the asked questions. But 75% of students pass in this method.

According to this the researcher realized, students had difficulties in writing vocabularies. The researcher helped them by teaching the way of spelling of the word and knowing the meaning and where to use them. So, the researcher understands that, if students need to succeed in the vocabulary skill they need to know both meaning and the spelling. If anyone of these mandatory requirements (meaning, spelling) pass, students won't get the very good knowledge in vocabulary learning in writing. The researcher trained and motivate the students with several activities to face the last tool which is used to test the knowledge of the students of knowing the meaning and spelling. To growing up the difficulties the researcher

conducted vocabulary games for the students. They did very enthusiastically. After doing all these activities students were prepared for the post test.

Total Marks of the Post-Test Sample
The following figures illustrate the marks of the Pre-test from the students.

Figure 4.5.2 - Marks of the Post-Test Sample
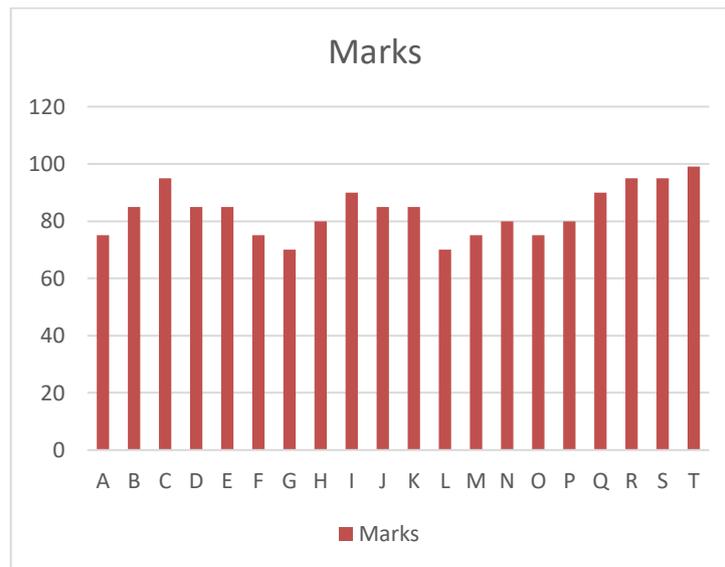
The above bar chart shows that total marks of the post-test of 20 students. According to the table the highest of the student T. As a mark it 99. Almost equal and average marks of the students. Six students obtained more than 90. (Figure 4.5.2)

This chapter depicts the results of the Interview, Questionnaire, Pre-test and Post-test activities made by the researcher to evaluate and analyze the vocabulary learning difficulties. In each session difficulties were identified and rectified. As the result the last post-test shows the 100% success. In the pre-test many students scored below 50 and a few obtained below 60. But after the treatment of the research intervention all the students got more than 75.

Comparisons of Pre-Test and Post-Test
After calculating, the marks of comparisons pre- test and post -test from the students in the table below follows,

Table 4.6 - Marks of Comparisons Pre- Test and Post –Test

Students	Pre-test Marks	Post-test Marks
A	45	75
B	55	85

C	75	95
D	65	85
E	55	85
F	45	75
G	40	75
H	50	80
I	60	90
J	55	85
K	65	85
L	35	75
M	55	75
N	40	80
O	55	75
P	50	80
Q	70	90
R	65	95
S	65	95
T	80	99

This above table shows that clear difference between pre-test and post-test with the same students. One of the students who got 35 marks in pre-test could get 75 marks in the post-test.

Comparisons of Pre-Test and Post-Test Sample
The following figures illustrate the marks of the comparison's pre- test and post -test from the students.

Figure 4.6.1 - Marks of the Comparisons Pre- Test and Post –Test Sample
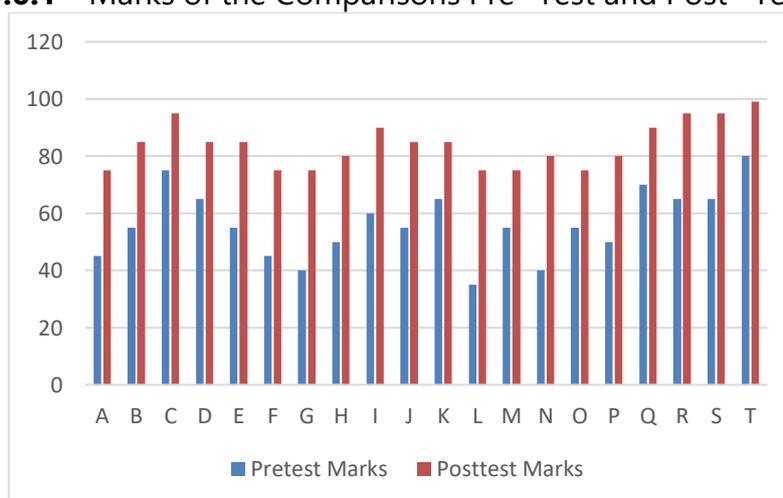
The above bar chat shows that following two different ways to understand the improvement view. Pre-test shows in the blue colour and post-test shows orange

colour column. These two graphs show obviously the performances of 20 sample. Furthermore, they show the vast improvement and the marks they obtained. Almost all the students have got double the marks when it is compared to the pre-test marks of them. (Figure-4.6.1)

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

the researcher presents the discussion for this finding of the study. From this research that has been done about the difficulties in vocabulary learning faced by the grade-07 students of R.K.M.G.V. Based on the research there were many difficulties faced by the students. They were knowing the meaning of the vocabulary, memorizing the spelling and writing with the correct spelling, motivation in learning, the student's talent in language, the student's interest in vocabulary learning.

To overcome these above-mentioned difficulties, the researcher put forward some solution to solve the difficulties raised in vocabulary learning. They are vocabulary test drills, easy reading texts, listening to song or radio, reading story books, speaking and writing in their own can improve the student's motivation in vocabulary learning.

The researcher analyzed focus not only is vocabulary an important part of learners writing and reading comprehension, but knowing what words mean also allows students to make connections between previously learned information background knowledge and new information. Studies have shown that students with greater background knowledge about a topic learn more, remember more, and are more interested in what they are learning. Dictionary definitions are not necessarily designed to give the clearest explanation for a word; in fact, they are designed to save space. Alternatively, descriptions rather than definitions can be used to explain and exemplify words by illustrating the word in sentences or explaining it in contexts in which it is commonly used. This helps students gain a clearer understanding of the word and how it is generally used. For all practical purposes, the number of potential vocabulary games is infinite. Some games, such as word walls in which students are encouraged to look and listen for new words and add them to a classroom poster are ongoing throughout the course of a year. Other games are confined to smaller periods of time. Vocabulary games are engaging and give students opportunities to extend their knowledge about specific vocabulary terms. Each game should be followed by an opportunity for students to return to their vocabulary notebooks to record new knowledge and information about various terms

After presenting the result of the research, the researcher would like to propose some suggestions which will be useful for the following parties. For the teachers, it is hoped that this research can encourage them to consider a better way in teaching vocabulary to improve the student's ability in vocabulary learning. The teacher can also apply interesting methods to develop the student's ability, use the

interesting materials like storytelling, games, etc. That will not make the students bored. Students the result of the study indicates that the ability of Grade-07 students of R.K.M.G.V in vocabulary learning is in poor category. It had been proved by the finding the difficulties in the vocabulary tests. It is hoped that the students increase their ability. The students need to enrich their experience in vocabulary learning. They also need to increase their motivation and interest to learn vocabulary well. In so doing, the students will have many vocabularies and will not find difficulties in finding the word 's meaning.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

There are some few things that can be drown as the conclusion from the research conducted. This study revealed that problems or difficulties faced by the grade-07 students in vocabulary learning were various. The difficulties faced by the students were almost all of the students had difficulties in pronouncing the words, how to write and spell, different grammatical form of a word known as inflections was one of the causes of student's difficulties in learning vocabulary.

In addition, the students found difficulties in choosing the appropriate meaning of the words and also still confused in using the word based on the context. The students are also still confused when they found words or expression that are idiomatic. There were some factors that caused student's difficulties in learning vocabulary. They are, the written form is different from the spoken form in English, the number of words that students need to learn is exceedingly large, the limitation of sources of information about words, the complexity of word knowledge. Knowing a word involves much more than knowing its dictionary definition. Causes of lack of understanding of grammatical of the words, the incorrect pronunciation is often caused by the lack of sound similarity between English and the student's native language.

Moreover, the findings show various emergent strategies were reported to be employed to cope with the vocabulary learning problems. In this situation, the students relied on different strategies to handle the problems.

Hopefully, "Using a dictionary" and guessing from the context were common strategies which were reported to be employed by all 20 students who were selected for the study encountered vocabulary difficulties. Watching an English-speaking film and listening to English songs were other reported strategies by few students to remember newly learnt words. The use of films and songs in this study is consistent with the results of the study conducted by the researcher.

Recommendation

Based on the findings the following are the recommendation for practice:

Recommendation for the Students

For students, to effectively and accurately produce vocabulary, they have to spontaneously recall the words. The student's maximum comprehension is determined by his/her knowledge of words. Learn key words that students will need to comprehend text and learn the content in those texts. Students must learn to define a word, recognized when to use that word, its multiple meaning and spell that word. Some ways, to do this is through pictures and symbols. It is also important to assess the students' use of words in writing and speaking.

English vocabulary can be tricky, particularly if it is not a student's first language. Identical words can often have different meaning depending on the context in which they are used. Here are 3 tricks and tips to help the students to increase their vocabulary.

1. Take a systematic approach to vocabulary practice: Students can incorporate this practice into their daily classroom routine this way. Following up and testing can affirm and solidify the words they have learnt.

2. Learning vocabulary in chunks: we all know that learning vocabulary in chunks is useful and improves accuracy and fluency. If we can allow students to also see how much time can be saved by learning this way, they are more likely to pick this up as something they do automatically. Words used out of context can destroy the understanding of a sentence. The moment the sentence is pre-formed, a range of vocabulary can be inserted, giving students the added confidence that their structure is corrected.

3. Use a dictionary: good learner dictionaries give students so much help with getting a grasp on vocabulary. If they are taught how to use them properly, they will increase their depth of understanding. With correct usage of good dictionary such as Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, students will know how vocabulary is pronounced.

Since, the current study investigates how the teaching efficacy of English teachers effected by various problems and challenges, it is appropriate to consider the source which promote or are likely to promote the efficacy of teachers of English. As a researcher suggest that the student's poor performance made the researcher feel discourage and frustrated. This study helped the students who are interested in learning English in many ways respectively. Because a good number of students are quite confused while they are using these vocabularies.

Recommendation for the Teachers

Teachers as instructors at schools must remind their students that, if they write in English they must think in the targeted language. So that, they do not bring in any feature of their mother tongue or first language. In this case, the teacher should explain why certain constructions are not grammatical. In this respect, it would require the teacher to have a good command of English language as well as a good knowledge of the mother tongue or the first language of the students.

Teachers must explain to students the exceptions to the rule in the English language regarding grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Teachers can discuss with their students on how to identify their errors and what the possible causes are. This would bring a greater understanding of the pedagogical and psychological factors that contribute to the vocabulary errors.

A variety of techniques in teaching writing can be introduced. Some examples may include self-correction without indication of mistakes, peer correction, understanding mistakes, mistakes underlined and coded and searching the correct techniques. However, it would be better if teachers can come out with their own authentic teaching materials and the teacher should give more practices in order to make the students understand the materials more and also help the students to reduce the vocabulary difficulties which are often made by them. More emphasis should be given to written exercises and practice in the classroom.

To teach vocabulary effectively the teachers must learn the skills necessary to apply the best approaches. Students should be encouraged by the teachers to learn new vocabulary daily at least 05 words per day but in short spurts. This is the best way to make it stick. Teacher can ask students to answer the questions based on descriptions or creates their own fill in the blank assignments, Game, puzzles, songs and real-Life objects are important tools to make efficient vocabulary learning. Word association is an activity that can be used with large classes and limited resources. How it works: write a word on the board and then get the students to say the first word that pops up in their head which has a relation to the word on the board is a good idea to go around the class getting each student to give a word. If a student can't come up with the word this is the perfect opportunity to go over the vocabulary learning.

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