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Submitted and Defended by:

Wafa SAHRAOUI

Investigating Primary School Pupils' Difficulties in Learning English Vocabulary
The case of Temmami Lakhdar Primary School at Biskra

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Board of Examiners :

Dr.	Lamri SEGUENI	MCA	Biskra		Chair
Mrs.	Yasmina BENZIDA	MAA	Biskra		Supervisor
MR.	Walid AOUNALI	MAA	Biskra		Examiner

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Declaration

I, **SAHRAOUI Wafa**, hereby declare that this submitted work is my original work and has not previously been submitted for any institution or university for a degree. I also declare that all of the cited and quoted sources in this work are put forward in the references list. This work was certified and completed at Mohammed Khider University of Biskra, Algeria.

Certified:

Miss. SAHRAOUI wafa,

Master student, Section of English Language, Branch of Sciences of the Language.

Signature:

Dedication

First and foremost, I would like to praise Allah the Almighty for blessing me
during my studies and for helping me to finish this thesis successfully.

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sisters and brothers, as well as my dear friends for their endless support and
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Abstract

Teaching vocabulary in primary school is crucial for pupils' English level development, however it certainly poses several difficulties to pupils that hinder successful language acquisition. This dissertation aims at answering the following questions; what are the difficulties that primary school pupils face in learning English vocabulary?, what are the common factors that contributes to those difficulties? and what are EFL teachers' attitudes towards the effectiveness of using visual materials in teaching English vocabulary?. The research questions led us to hypothesise the following: (1) pupils encounter difficulties in learning English vocabulary when it comes to memorisation, short attention span and pronunciation. To collect data, we used a descriptive qualitative research approach relying on three different data collection tools; a classroom observation, a structured interview for the observed classroom teacher and a questionnaire for six primary school teachers. The study found that pupils face difficulties in pronunciation, spelling, comprehension, and differentiation of similar words. These difficulties arise from disparities between written and spoken English, limited classroom resources, huge number of new English words that pupils acquire per session, and overcrowded classrooms. The study suggests that incorporating visual aids like flashcards enhances pupils' engagement, motivation, and English vocabulary acquisition.

Key Words: English Vocabulary; Difficulties; Primary school pupils

List of Abbreviations

EFL   English as a foreign language

ESP   English for Specific Purposes

ESL   English as a Second language

MNE   The Ministry of National Education

TPR   Total Physical Response

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General Introduction

Introduction

As English continues to be the dominant language in different areas internationally, the importance of teaching English as a foreign language has never been greater. Many countries took the step towards introducing English language education into primary schools not only in English speaking countries but worldwide. Algeria as an example has officially introduced English language instruction in primary schools at third year level starting starting from the academic year of 2022/2023. Many studies suggest that teaching English earlier improves the chances of success in mastering the language since children's brain is more receptive to learning new words. As vocabulary plays a crucial role in language acquisition, it is very challenging to teach it especially in primary school. Thus, addressing pupils' difficulties in learning English vocabulary provides valuable insights into their needs at this specific level and enhances the teaching-learning experience by suggesting effective strategies that can reduce the amount of those difficulties.

1 Statement of the Problem

Richards and Rodgers (2001) states "building up a useful vocabulary is central to learning of foreign language at primary level". Given the importance of teaching vocabulary as a starting point in primary school, we specifically chose to focus on this starting point as a challenging area for our research paper. Teaching vocabulary in primary school is very important in developing pupils' level in English and should not be neglected. However, it certainly poses many challenges for pupils that may impede them from acquiring the English language successfully. Accordingly, when acquiring vocabulary pupils may encounter difficulties in terms of pronunciation, memorization, short attention span, etc. Addressing pupils' difficulties in learning vocabulary is crucial to the success of the teaching-learning process. Thus, this study aims to help both teachers and pupils be aware of the nature of vocabulary acquisition difficulties faced by primary school pupils, the reasons behind those difficulties and the effective methods used to reduce them.

2   Aims of the Study

The present study aims to:

1. Shed light on the common difficulties that primary school pupils face when learning vocabulary and the basic factors that contribute to those difficulties.

2. Discuss the role of visual materials in promoting pupils' vocabulary learning.

3   Research Questions

The present research raises the following questions:

RQ1: What are the difficulties that primary school pupils face in learning vocabulary?

RQ3: What are EFL teachers' attitudes towards the effectiveness of using visual materials in teaching vocabulary ?

4   Research Hypothesis

The previous research questions led us to hypothesize the following:

1. Primary school pupils difficulties when learning vocabulary are in terms of memorisation, short attention span and pronunciation.

5   The Significance of the Study

The present research work aims at addressing the difficulties which pupils face when learning English vocabulary. By doing so, this study can raise teachers and curriculum development awareness about the areas that need improvement in vocabulary instruction. In addition, it identifies the common difficulties faced by pupils so that teachers can readjust their instructional techniques to address these difficulties. Consequently, this research work aims to contribute to the improvement of language education and learning outcomes.

6   Methodology

The nature of the topic, that is investigating primary school pupils' difficulties in learning English vocabulary, obliges us to use qualitative method to collect data. According to Moser and Korstjens (2017), "qualitative research aims to provide in-depth insights and understanding of real-world problems". In other words, the qualitative method will enable us to gain a more complete description and understanding of the real life problems. Thus, we used three data collection methods; a classroom observation, a questionnaire and a structured interview in order to identify pupils' difficulties when acquiring vocabulary, the reasons behind these difficulties, as well as the effective methods that can be implemented to reduce those difficulties.

7   Data Collection Tools

For data collection tools, we relied on classroom observation, an interview and a questionnaire. The classroom observation was set during six sessions in order to obtain more accurate data and gain insights into current instructional practices and their effectiveness in supporting vocabulary acquisition. We relied on both structured and unstructured forms of observation to enrich our research findings using two instruments; a checklist, and an observation report. Meanwhile, the questionnaire and the interview were administered to teachers of third year primary school in order to collect information about their experience with vocabulary instruction, pupils' difficulties in learning vocabulary and the effective techniques used to overcome these difficulties. The aim of this study is to gather data from any relevant sources related to our field of interest.

8   Population and Sample

The population of this study comprises primary school pupils and teachers. The sample of pupils includes 70 pupils of third year group A and B at Temmami Lakhdar Primary School in Biskra city. Whereas, the sample of teachers consists of six EFL teachers from different primary schools in Biskra, all with varying levels of teaching experience. The sample was chosen on

purpose because learners at this specific level are studying English for the first time and their syllabus program focuses mostly on teaching vocabulary. Thus, by focusing on these categories of pupils, we can gain valuable insights into the difficulties faced by pupils during their initial stages of English vocabulary acquisition.

9 Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation is composed of two variables which are teaching and learning vocabulary and the difficulties facing primary pupils in learning vocabulary. The overall framework of the dissertation is divided into two sections: theoretical and practical parts. The present work is divided into three chapters in order to fulfill our objectives and to answer the research questions. Chapter one entitled The Status of English Language in the Algerian Education System. It is about the status of the English language in the Algerian educational system. It emphasizes on the policy of teaching English in Algeria, the implementation of the English language in the Algerian primary schools, the syllabus and the textbook structure of Third year primary school pupils. Chapter two entitled Teaching and Learning Vocabulary in Primary School. It starts with the definition of vocabulary and its aspects. Then, it examines various approaches to teaching vocabulary. In addition, it emphasizes the importance of vocabulary. Finally, this chapter highlights the difficulties of learning vocabulary and concludes with the effective techniques used to teach vocabulary. The third chapter is concerned with the practical part of the present research work. It starts with presenting the research methodology, population and sample as well as the data collection tools used. Then, it describes and analyses the data collection tools. Finally, it concludes with the discussing of the main findings of the obtained data and a short conclusion that summarizes the hole chapter.

Chapter One

The Status of English Language in the Algerian Educational System

Chapter one: The Status of English Language in the Algerian Educational System

Introduction

Teaching English as a foreign language has become an integral part of the systems of education worldwide. It has recently gained importance in Algeria due to political reasons, social changes, and cultural factors. As a result, Algeria has officially introduced English language instruction in primary schools, starting with the third year in the academic year of 2022/2023. This chapter analyzes the learning situation in Algeria, beginning with the worldwide status of English, particularly in Algeria, followed by the policy of teaching English in Algeria, focusing on primary schools and its potential challenges. It also discusses the language development of young learners, their characteristics, and how they learn. Finally, it provides an overview on the Algerian curriculum and textbook used in primary schools at the third-year level.

1.1 The Current Status of English Language in Algeria

Undoubtedly, English Language has emerged as a dominant language of the 21st century, with an increasing number of speakers worldwide, leading it to be referred to as the global language and the Lingua Franca of our modern times. Crystal (2003) argues that English is currently taught as a foreign language in over 100 countries. Moreover, (Burchfield, 1985, p.160) emphasizes that without knowledge of English, an educated person, regardless of their nationality, is missing out on an essential aspect of their education.

Although English is used in various sectors in Algeria, the educational system is the most significant way in which the language is spreading and developing in the country. According to of National Education (2006, p.03), Algeria, like numerous other countries worldwide, has accorded a crucial importance to the English language in its educational framework. The primary objective of its inclusion is to meet the demands of globalization, interact with individuals worldwide, and strengthen international political and economic connections.

In the Algerian educational system, English has become an essential part of the curriculum and is in high demand at all levels. English used to be taught only at middle

school, high school, and universities. However, starting from the academic year 2022-2023, English has been introduced to primary schools at the third year level. The English language program covers nine years of study, including three years at primary school level, four years at middle school and three years at secondary school for all academic streams. Additionally, it is taught as a mandatory subject in numerous fields of study at the university level. Furthermore, English is used throughout Algerian universities as a primary subject in English departments or as an additional module in other departments, where students are expected to follow English for Specific Purposes courses according to their field of study. In addition, there are Algerian universities and higher institutes that have started using English as the language of instruction, replacing French or Arabic (Mazzouzi, 2022).

Although French is still more widely used than English in Algeria, the latter plays a vital role in various fields. Zughoul (2003, p.19) highlighted that there has been a shift from French to English in Arab North Africa, and this trend cannot be ignored. To summarize, the status of English as a global language can influence language education policies, worldwide. Algeria, as many countries over the world, recognizes that the English language has a significant role in the world. Therefore, it has been adopted as a foreign language in the country's educational system.

1.2   The Policy of Teaching English in Algeria

Language policies are decisions typically made by governments and education ministries which involve recognizing, preserving , promoting or prohibiting a particular language. Kaplan and Baldauf (1997, p.11) states "a language policy is a body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve the planned language change in the societies, group or system".

According to (Mize 1978), English was first promoted in Algeria in 1969 when a General Inspectorate of English was created (as cited in Kouicem, 2019). Ever since English was introduced in schools, it has become a significant aspect of the curriculum, with high demand across all educational levels. In 1993, the government introduced a reform that gave primary school fourth graders the option to choose between French and English as a compulsory

foreign language (Kouicem, 2019). However, most parents chose French over English, so the initiative was postponed until later.

In 2000, the government introduced an educational reform that made English a subject taught from the first grade of middle school. This was due to the failure of the Arabization policy, which prioritized Arabic over foreign languages. According to (Maghribi, 2022), the Algerian Minister of Higher Education Tayeb Bouzid declared in 2019 that the use of French language does not lead to progress and instructed the universities and higher education institutions in the country to adopt English instead of French.

Furthermore, the government announced that English would be added to the primary school curriculum from the start of the new school year of 2022, compensating for the unsuccessful attempt to introduce Arabic as the main language of instruction in Algeria's schools (Boukhlef, 2022).

1.2.1 The Policy of Teaching English in Primary School

In an interview on public television in June 2022, the President Abdelmadjid Tebboune declared that English will be introduced as a subject in primary schools starting from the school year of 2022-2023, indicating a further step in the country's reform efforts and stating that "French is a spoil of war, but English is an international language". The President of the Republic, Abdelmadjid Tebboune, ordered the teaching of the English language from the primary level during a cabinet meeting he chaired on 20 June 2022 (Saada, 2022). The President's speech was well received, and within a few hours, the National Education Minister, Abdelhakim Belabed, declared that the president's decision would be put into action starting from September when the school year begins (Boukhlef, 2022).

The introduction of English as a subject in Algerian primary schools is widely thought to have beneficial impacts on pupils' language abilities and academic performance. However, The implementation of this new policy could face some obstacles, including a deficit of proficient EFL teachers, limited resources and materials, and opposition from certain educators and parents who may doubt the benefits of teaching English at an early age. According to Rouabah (2022), in 1993 a similar initiative was introduced to provide parents with the option of selecting

between French and English for their children during primary level. However, the majority of parents and teachers preferred to stick with French instruction which led to the abundance of the English language (p.28).

1.3   Language Development of Early Language Learners

Several researches proved that language learners undergo different stages of language acquisition. However, these stages differ depending on the learner's age. According to (Straková, 2015), the child must progress through specific periods or stages, which are Silent period, Reproductive period, Repro-productive period, Early production period and Productive period, to successfully acquire a particular language.

The Silent Period or the Preproduction Stage lasts from zero to six months during which children need more time to adapt to the foreign language environment. It is called "the silent period" because learners will not produce any English language during this phase (Hill & Flynn, 2006). In this stage, it is very important to allow children to understand what is expected of them and comprehend words in specific contexts. Teachers may try to engage children in activities where they are expected to respond, but it is essential not. Furthermore, teachers should prioritize activities that help build their ability to speak. Moreover, some children may initially hesitate to speak English not due to inferior ability, but because they need time to adapt to the language environment so it is very important not to pressure them too much (Straková, 2015).

The Reproduction period appears to be one of the lengthiest periods in school. During this period, children typically react to stimuli by repeating what their teacher or peers have said, whether through speaking or writing. However, this is not considered true production. During this period, children may repeat words and phrases yet they are not actively producing language but merely imitating. In order to accomplish tasks during this stage, children require a significant amount of examples, guidance, and hints (Straková, 2015).

The Repro-productive period is typically achieved in the later stages of primary education. Despite still requiring numerous examples and cues, children are capable of modifying them and expressing their genuine thoughts and beliefs about themselves and their

surroundings (Straková, 2015). éIn the Early Production Period, children can generate verbal and written pieces of communication after practicing specific language patterns sufficiently. Moreover, children can only produce a limited number of words and rely on familiar, possibly memorized phrases. In the early production stage, children will acquire around 1000 receptive and active vocabularies. Hill and Flynn (2006, p.14) stated "in early Production, students begin using single words or two-word phrases, yes/no responses, names, and repetitive language patterns (e.g., "How are you?")".

The productive period is the last stage in which the child has fully developed their ability to think abstractly, now they can express themselves through various means, such as describing a picture using specific language in written or spoken form, or engaging in a conversation in a familiar context (Straková, 2015).

1.4 Characteristics of Young Learners

It is known that young learners are different from adult learners and require special teaching approaches and treatment according to their critical age and features. Several experts provided descriptions about the characteristics of young learners. Cameron (2001) believes that young learners are individuals who are between the ages of five and twelve years old. Moreover, the definition of young learners generally relies on the duration of formal education spent in primary school before advancing to middle school. As a result, the age range of young learners may differ from country to another. In fact, it is very important for teachers to know their pupils' characteristics to adjust their teaching approaches accordingly. According to Siswanto (2017), young learners are typically enthusiastic and energetic learners, seeking approval from their teachers and requiring physical activity. However, they may struggle with maintaining motivation and have a slower learning pace, prone to forgetfulness.

Scott and Ytreberg (2006) consider children aged between eight and ten years old are mature enough and outlined the several general characteristics of young learners, such as having a formed basic concepts and being able to tell the difference between fact and fiction and asking questions all the time. In addition, they rely on both the spoken and the physical word to convey and understand the meaning. Besides, they are able to make some decisions about their own

learning, decide what they like and do not like doing and to work with others and learn from them. In addition, they have developed a sense of fairness about what happens in the classroom and begin to question the teacher' decisions (pp.8-9).

1.4.1 How do Young Learners Learn?

Since young learners have distinct characteristics from other age groups, they certainly have different methods and approaches that suit their learning styles, developmental needs and cognitive abilities. Pinter (2011, p.01) argues that teachers of young learners should investigate the similarities and the differences between young and adult learners then adopt specific teaching approaches to enhance their instructional practices in the classroom.

According to (Harmer, 2001), young learners, particularly those who are aged nine or ten years old, learn differently compared to older learners. They are responsive to the meaning even if they do not understand individual words. They learn indirectly by absorbing knowledge from various sources and their surroundings rather than focusing on the specific subject matter they are being taught. Their understanding comes not just from explanation, but also from what they see, hear and touch. Additionally, they find abstract concepts such as grammar rules difficult to comprehend. They display an enthusiasm for learning and a curiosity about the world around them. Young learners require individual attention and approval from the teacher and they enjoy talking about themselves and learning through using their own lives as a topic in the classroom. However, they have a limited attention span, unless activities are extremely motivating, causing them to get easily bored and lose interest after about ten minutes (p.38). To summarize, knowing how young learners learn can contribute to the success of language learning because it facilitates the process of choosing the appropriate methods that cater to their characteristics and preferences and guarantee the satisfaction of the majority of the pupils.

1.5 English Language Teaching in Primary School

The importance of the English language has grown significantly in many countries worldwide over the past decade. As a result, many countries have implemented programs to teach English to children from a young age (Jumanova & Yusupova, 2021). In other

words, teaching English in primary schools has become an important step in children'

education as it establishes the groundwork for their language abilities and facilitates their future

communication proficiency across various countries.

According to Arthur and Cemir (2010), teaching English in primary school has two

major purposes which are interaction and socialization. The interaction objectives aim to aid

children in acquiring information such as learning spelling, physical skills like handwriting

and cutting, and more complex skills like reading. Meanwhile, socialization objectives aim at

helping pupils recognize a broader society, interact and collaborate with their peers. To reach

this, class activities may involve working in pairs, playing games, singing songs, and similar

approaches (as cited in Cahyati & Madya, 2019).

In fact, the success or the failure of this implementation rely on several factors such

as the quality of the teachers since competent teachers seem to be the primary factor that a

school should focus on (Goldhaber, 2002). The curriculum framework is also important as it

offers pupils the best possible educational opportunities (IBE-UNESCO, 2017, p.6). Besides,

the quality of the textbook since it plays an essential role in the teaching and learning of the

English language (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). In addition, the classroom environment in

which it should be as comfortable as possible (Moon, 2005).

1.5.1   Teachers' Professional Development

Qualified teachers are certainly the most important factor in teaching English in

primary school successfully. It is determined by a combination of characteristics, attributes,

and practices that are collectively known as teacher quality. According to Darling-Hammond

(2010), considerable evidence indicates that, out of all the resources in schools, teachers who

are well-prepared, knowledgeable, and experienced are one of the main factors that influence

the learners' success. (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001) argue that there has been a shift in the definition of

teacher quality from the past, with current definitions placing more emphasis on teachers' ability

to engage students, creating a safe environment and acting as positive role models (pp.1-3).

Qualified teachers must meet specific criteria and have certain academic qualifications.

However, the requirements and training programs for English language teachers differ from

country to another. For instance, Mak (2016) states that in Hong Kong teacher training programs for English language instruction should focus on three key aspects: pedagogy, proficiency, and professionalism. Pedagogy relates to subject knowledge. Proficiency refers to the language ability of an individual. Professionalism involves high-level skills and encompasses knowledge on how lessons should be planned, executed, and evaluated to facilitate language teaching and learning in the classroom.

The following diagram was created by Novozhenina and Pinzón (2018) in which it summarizes the qualities of a qualified teacher according to Richard (2010) (see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: The "Qualified Teacher" Concept (Richards,2010, as cited in Novozhenina & Pinzón, 2018, p.116)

Richard (2010) aimed to bring together the various qualities that make up an effective teacher. He identified ten features that distinguish a qualified teacher and cover several aspects that are essential in language teaching. To summarize, the teacher is crucial in any educational program and responsible for providing knowledge to learners. Being a good teacher requires preparation and training to have the basic qualities of a qualified teacher such as having a good command of the language, a deep understanding of the content and the context they are teaching in, effective teaching skills that are developed and constantly updated based on their pupils' needs and their

experience with other teachers. Qualified teachers can make a positive impact on learners, while an unqualified teacher may not improve the outcomes of teaching, regardless of the curriculum used.

1.5.2   The Curriculum Framework

A curriculum framework refers to a set of guidelines and principles that define the fundamental elements and goals of an educational curriculum. According to IBE-UNESCO (2017), a framework establishes the guidelines, orientations, and standards for both the policy and practice of the curriculum. Creating a curriculum framework is a serious task that involves coordinating, monitoring, and regulating the curriculum content, including subjects, syllabuses, textbooks, and other educational resources. In addition, the framework must also cover a range of issues that can impact the curriculum design, such as aligning with the country's educational needs, choosing teaching methods, training teachers, conducting evaluations and assessments, and determining class sizes. The objective of curriculum development is to enhance the learning experience and establish effective procedures to improve teacher education (p.6). Moreover, developing a solid curriculum is a fundamental and a challenging task as it involves carefully considering the various components that must be included in the curriculum framework and determining the order in which they should be presented (Bessai, 2018). In other words, developing a curriculum framework involves a systematic approach that considers several aspects, such as pupils' needs, the educational goals, teaching strategies and assessment methods.

1.5.3   Textbook Quality and Criteria

The textbook is an essential component in the education of young learners and serves as the primary instructional tool. Thus, the quality of the textbook is of utmost importance since it plays a critical role in their educational experience. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) clearly stated "no teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook" (p.315). In other words, textbooks are crucial for achieving educational objectives, but selecting appropriate ones that align with the syllabus can be challenging. Harmer (2001)

argues that "good coursebooks are carefully prepared to offer a coherent syllabus, satisfactory language control, motivating texts, tapes and other accessories such as videotapes, CD-ROMs, extra resource material, and useful web links. They are often attractively presented " (p.304). Moulton (1997) as well as Kira and Bukagile (2013) propose three important elements that every textbook should have which are content, pedagogy and design. Firstly, content should cover all relevant topics, including accurate illustrations and avoiding factual errors and the promotion of negative social values. Secondly, pedagogy should include learning and teaching tasks that stimulate cognitive skills, encourage interactions, and boost confidence. Finally, a textbook should use clear language and possess an attractive design (as cited in Haulle & Kabelege, 2021, p.18). For instance primary school pupils require a textbook that is visually attractive, featuring bright and colorful illustrations, pictures and diagrams to maintain their focus and hold their interest throughout the lesson. Furthermore, according to Cahyati and Madya (2019), primary school teachers of English should deal with inappropriate textbooks by being creative in class to provide fun learning activities and flexible for asking, learning, trying a new thing, and improving their skills to help their pupils.

1.5.4 The Classroom Environment

Creating an effective classroom environment is crucial for motivating both teachers and pupils to give their best during the teaching-learning process. The classroom environment is categorized into two significant environments which are physical and psychological. On one hand, the physical environment in which pupils learn has a significant impact on their academic performance, motivation, and behavior. Mpya (2007) suggests that the physical environment should be organized to create a conducive learning environment, which includes making classrooms wheelchair-friendly (p.22). To create an appropriate physical environment in the classroom, factors such as proper lighting, ideal temperature, air quality, appropriate colors and good classroom design should be taken into consideration. On the other hand, the psychological environment influences the feelings, thoughts, and behavior of both teachers and pupils (Loveless, 2023).

Gifford (2007) defined the classroom environment as a place where both learners

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and teachers interact with physical elements in the classroom. In addition, Khumalo (2000, p.34) highlighted the significance of creating a safe and supportive classroom atmosphere that encourages participation without fear of ridicule. According to Harmer (2007), a classroom for young children should look bright and colorful, with windows and enough room for different activities to be taking place. In addition, it should allow working in groups in different parts of the classroom and changing activity every ten minutes or so. Besides, mixing playing and learning in an atmosphere of cheerful and supportive harmony (p.83).

According to Cornell (2002), the classroom should be a place where students want to be, rather than have to be. The classroom environment involves various features, such as teacher-pupil interactions, expectations for student motivation, effective teaching strategies, appropriate learning materials and proper classroom behavior. For primary school pupils, an ideal classroom environment is safe, playful, and provides sufficient space for exploration with materials that are suitable for their age and developmental level. Harmer (2007, p.83) states "a good primary classroom mixes play and learning in an atmosphere of cheerful and supportive harmony". Furthermore, Phillips (1993) highlights the significance of the physical arrangement of the classroom. An ideal classroom should involve movable desks and chairs, an area for interactive games and songs, a quit space for individual study or reading, and a spot to display pupils' work (p.10). To summarize, the classroom should also have appropriate seating, tables, and lighting, with sufficient space for group activities. Such an environment promotes creativity, exploration, and joy, leading to better engagement with learning materials and the development of imaginative skills.

1.6 The Syllabus of English Material of Third Year Classes at Primary School

Each educational syllabus aims to accomplish particular objectives at the conclusion of the teaching and learning process. These goals are subdivided into sub-objectives that are connected to all sections or units of the textbook. According to MNE (2022), the primary aim of introducing English as a foreign language in Algerian primary schools is to give pupils the chance to learn another language that can enhance their knowledge, organize their thinking, and improve their English language and communication abilities progressively. The syllabus aims at

emphasizing oral language acquisition and communication skills as a priority, while still giving attention to the written aspect, which will receive greater emphasis in subsequent levels. By taking into account pupils' age, requirements, and current surroundings, the learners will have the ability to perform certain tasks by the end of the year, which is known as the exit profile. Pupils will acquire the fundamental knowledge and competencies of four domains which are oral comprehension, oral production, written comprehension, written production (MNE, 2022).

1.6.1   The Domains of Focus

The table below is adopted from the MNE (2022) in which it summarizes the four domains of focus in the English language' syllabus of third year classes at primary school.

Domains	Target Competence	Components of the competence
Oral Comprehension	Comprehend oral messages and identify the meaning of words in familiar context using paralinguistic features.	**The learner can:** 1. recognise the meaning of words and expressions. 2. use the context and paralinguistic features to deduce the meaning of words and expressions. 3. be an attentive listener.
Oral production	Interact orally in communicative situations related to the learner's daily concern and interests using simple words and expressions.	**The learner can:** 1. identify simple words and expressions to interact orally. 2. use simple words and expressions to interact orally. 3. respect the interlocutor.
Written comprehension	Decode symbols, read simple messages of about 30 words and understand the meaning of words and structures using graphophonic knowledge and visuals.	**The learner can:** 1. identify reading basics and decoding strategies. 2. use reading basics and decoding strategies. 3. show respect to his peers' readings.
Written production (Most of the time, the domains are integrated)	Write letters, words and simple sentences using correct handwriting and punctuation.	**The learner can:** 1. recognize the features of writing letters (sizing, spacing and alignment). 2. use features of writing letters correctly. 3. respect the features of writing letters.

Table 1.1: The domains of Focus of English for Third Year Primary School (MNE, 2022)

There are four primary domains of focus, known as domains, which include oral

comprehension, oral production, written comprehension, and written production. In addition, there are four specific abilities that are targeted, which are based on overall competency. Each of these target competencies consists of three components, namely knowledge, skills, and attitudes. By the end of the school year pupils are supposed to have attended 42 hours of English sessions, (29h for oral comprehension and production, 8h for written comprehension and 5h for written production). The syllabus is beyond pupil's level without prior knowledge of English language sounds and letters. In addition, studying oral comprehension for 29h without using native speakers listening materials is inadequate.

1.7   The Structure of "3PS My book of English" Textbook

TOPICS	COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES
ME, MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS	- Greeting people/Leave taking - Introducing oneself, family and friends - Saying numbers - Ask about age and place of residence
MY SCHOOL	- Naming school objects - Naming colours - Asking about and locating school objects - Naming days of the week - Asking about school timetable
MY HOME	- Naming rooms - Asking about their locations - Locating people inside a house - Following instructions
MY PLAYTIME	- Naming and asking about favourite toys - Identifying toys - Asking about colours
MY PETS	- Naming pets - Describing pets: identifying their size and parts - Asking and giving information about pets
MY FANCY BIRTHDAY	- Naming objects and foods related to birthday celebration - Naming different face parts - Expressing offers and thanks - Responding to offers and thanks - Expressing wishes, feelings and emotions - Following instructions

Table 1.2: Topics and Communicative Objectives (MNE, 2022, p.08)

The textbook "My Book of English" is the latest official textbook of English Language designed in 2022 by the MNE for the Algerian primary school pupils of third year. The primary goal of the textbook is to facilitate the acquisition of spoken and written English for pupils. It is composed of 64 pages and consists of six topics that are entitled "Me, My Family and Friends", "My School", "My Home", "My Play Time", "My Pets", "My Fancy Birthday", each topic contains its communicative objectives. The content and themes of the textbook are good but they do not follow the criteria for textbook development.

The following figures are adopted from the official textbook of third year primary school (2022).

Figure 1.2: Example of pictures, stories and songs from primary school third year textbook pages 10 and 54 (2022)

The textbook "My Book of English" is structured around thematic and TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching) lexical approach content, meaning that all of the information is organized around specific themes or topics, and within each theme, there is a focus on engaging pupils in meaningful tasks. These tasks are mostly concerned with grammar, spelling,

capitalization and punctuation besides vocabulary which is integrated with other language components such as reading or grammar. The content seems enjoyable and interesting for pupils because it consists of dialogues, songs, pictures and stories (see figure 1.2). Furthermore, the coursebook includes a variety of information such as pictures and drawings that represent both foreign and Algerian cultures. However, the textbook is not visually appealing due to the low quality of images and design.

Conclusion

Algeria recognizes the importance of English and has integrated it into its educational system. As a result, English has become an essential part of the Algerian educational system since it has a dominant global position. The introduction of English in Algerian primary schools is a complex responsibility. It should rely on several factors to succeed such as recruiting qualified teachers, designing appropriate textbooks, creating effective classroom environments and developing a solid curriculum framework to benefit pupils' language skills. Primary pupils' characteristics differ from those of adults. As a result, the teaching process should be set appropriately according to their characteristics, their learning styles and needs. Being aware of the fact that children go through periods of language development is also of great importance and each period should be respected. The syllabus and the textbook designed for Algerian primary school does not seem to be in accordance with pupils' characteristics and how they learn because it is beyond pupil's level without prior knowledge of English language sounds and letters. In addition, the textbook is not visually attractive due to the low quality of pictures and designs.

Chapter Two

Teaching and Learning Vocabulary at Primary School

Chapter two: Teaching and Learning Vocabulary at Primary School

Introduction

Learning vocabulary is crucial in primary school because pupils are at their initial stages of language learning. Researches indicate that a lack of vocabulary can hinder all four language skills because understanding a sentence requires knowledge of the words used. Overall, it is essential to focus on mastering vocabulary in the teaching and learning process. This chapter aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of the essential concepts that are central to vocabulary teaching and learning at the primary school level. Firstly, it covers the definition of vocabulary, its types and aspects. Secondly, it discusses the process of teaching vocabulary in primary school and how many approaches tackled this issue. Moreover, it emphasizes the significance of vocabulary to pupils. Furthermore, the chapter identifies the major challenges that primary school pupils may encounter in the process of learning vocabulary. Finally, the chapter concludes by presenting effective techniques for vocabulary learning and teaching.

2.1   Definition of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is regarded as a crucial component in second language learning. It can be identified as the entirety of words and lexis that make up a language. Moreover, the acquisition of new words and their meanings is a gradual process that continues and develops throughout a person's lifetime. Webster (n.d) defines vocabulary as "a list or collection of words or of words and phrases usually alphabetically arranged and explained or defined, a sum or stock of words employed by a language, group, individual, or work or in a field of knowledge".

Vocabulary is a complex concept that has been studied extensively by a great deal of scholars and researchers from different perspectives. Hornby and Ruse (1995) defines vocabulary as "the total number of words in a language; vocabulary is a list of words with their meanings". Richards and Renandya (2002) states "vocabulary is the core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how learners speak, listen, read and write" (p.255). The term vocabulary can also be defined as the set of words that are necessary for effective communication (Neuman & Dwyer, 2009). Furthermore, Richards and Rodgers (2001, p.255) states "vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides

much of the basis for how learners speak, listen, read and write". Diamond and Gutlohn (2006) suggest that vocabulary refers to one's understanding of words and their meanings. Therefore, it is important for the learner not only to recognize words, but also understand their meanings. Hence, vocabulary is an important component of all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) so that without first developing a strong building of vocabulary, one's ability to comprehend and to use the language will be limited.

2.2   Kinds of Vocabulary

Vocabulary has several types which were made by experts. Harmer (1991) distinguishes between two types of vocabulary which are productive or active vocabularies and receptive or passive vocabularies. Furthermore, Betti and Aljuboury (2015) classified vocabulary in the classroom situation into four types among them are productive and receptive vocabularies. Palmer (1976) also made a distinction between the acquisition of receptive vocabulary which is obtained through listening and reading, and productive vocabulary which is obtained through speaking and writing in order to communicate with others. Overall, according to Gairns and Redman (1986) it is important to keep in mind the difference between productive vocabulary and receptive vocabulary, and to aim for selectivity based on the learner's learning environment and needs.

2.2.1   Productive Vocabulary

Productive vocabulary refers to the words that individuals can use effectively in their spoken or written communication. Nation (2001) refers to productive vocabulary as using spoken or written language to express a message to someone else in a different way. In other words, active vocabulary covers all the terms that a person can effectively use in their speech. In addition, to help pupils easily remember productive words, they should be taught by emphasizing their pronunciation, proper usage, relevant word combinations, and meanings (Betti & Aljuboury, 2015). Therefore, productive vocabulary consists of familiar words that an individual is capable of actively using while communicating through writing or speaking frequently to express their thoughts and ideas effectively such as happy, sad, hungry and phrases

like how are you?.

2.2.2   Receptive Vocabulary

Receptive vocabulary are words that individuals may understand when hearing or reading them without necessarily using them in their spoken or written communication. Gairns and Redman (1986) defined receptive vocabulary as "language items which can only be recognized and comprehended in the context of reading and listening materials". Nation (2001) states "receptive carries the idea that we receive language input from others through listening and try to comprehend it" (p.37). Milton (2009) argues "good receptive skills often require the reader or the listener to actively anticipate the words that will occur" (p.13). Moreover, it is argued that learners first recognize vocabulary words in a passive manner and then they are able to use them actively. Furthermore, Nation (2001, p.42) emphasized that learners may only need to understand a few distinct features of a word's form in receptive vocabulary. However, their knowledge of the word form needs to be more precise in productive vocabulary. This can be observed in young children who may have good receptive knowledge of a word but struggle to produce it accurately in spoken form.

2.3   Aspects of Vocabulary knowledge

When teaching and learning new vocabulary, it is essential to understand its meaning, form, and use which are the aspects of vocabulary knowledge. According to Webster (n.d.), form refers to the shape or structure of the word. Meaning refers to something meant or intended. Use refers to the way in which words are actually used. Researchers determined that learners must master multiple aspects of word knowledge to truly understand a word as Nation (2019, p.15) states "knowing a word involves knowledge of a variety of different aspects of knowledge". Moreover, Cameron (2001) argues that understanding a word requires familiarity with its structure (such as pronunciation, spelling, and possible grammatical modifications), its meaning (including its conceptual context and connections with other words and concepts), and its use (including its typical usage patterns with other words, especially in specific language contexts). For instance, primary school pupils are at the beginning of their language learning

journey, so understanding the word form, meaning and use is essential for building a rich vocabulary since all of them are related to each other.

2.3.1 Form

The form of a word refers to the way in which individual sounds or morphemes are combined to create a specific word structure. Nation (2001) categorizes the form of words into different components, including how they are pronounced when spoken, how they are spelled in their written form and any affixes or roots that contribute to their structure such as prefixes or suffixes.

2.3.2 Meaning

Ur (1996, p.61) states "The meaning of a word is primarily what it refers to in the real world, its denotation". According to Nation (2001), meaning is determined by the connection between the form of a word and its intended meaning. In other words, meaning encompasses the idea, objects, and connections that come to mind when considering a particular word o+r phrase. Furthermore, Harmer (2007) points out "the same collection of sounds and letters can have many different meanings". In other words, the context is very important in order to avoid confusion between words that share the same sounds or letters. He also suggests that the meaning of a word is more accurately and frequently determined by its associations with other words in a given context (p.35). For instance, when trying to explain the meaning of a word the teacher may use antonyms, synonyms and polysemy to reinforce the meaning. Antonyms such as 'Happy' and 'Sad'. Synonyms like 'Pretty' and 'Beautiful'. Polysemy such as 'bright' which have different meanings like shining and intelligent.

2.3.3 Use

Use refers to the way in which a particular word is connected in different ways with other words or elements in language. According to Nation (2001), the use of vocabulary includes the grammatical functions of a word or phrase, its typical collocations, and any limitations or restrictions on its usage. These limitations may include frequency of use, level of

formality, and other factors. In other words, understanding words involves being familiar with their particular grammatical features that determine how they are used. This includes knowing the various grammatical associations of words and the constraints that affect their usage.

2.4 Approaches to Teaching Vocabulary in Primary School

The primary goal of language learning is to communicate and to convey meaning which makes vocabulary acquisition very essential. Chall *et al.* (1990) insisted that vocabulary teaching is highly recommended at the earliest possible stage, such as in primary school because it plays a crucial role in their future reading comprehension abilities and academic achievements. According to Nyikos and Fan (2007), acquiring a strong vocabulary is a difficult task that poses a significant challenge for any language learner. Therefore, teachers must emphasize on vocabulary acquisition in their instruction. Teachers need to provide pupils the opportunity to develop their vocabulary knowledge by practicing using new vocabulary and interacting with authentic materials that use those words in context. By doing so, teachers can help their pupils develop a strong command of English vocabulary, which will enable them to communicate effectively in various settings and contexts. Takac and Singleton (2008) argue that the methods teachers use to teach vocabulary are influenced by various factors, such as the amount of time available and the significance of the content for learners. Other experts have also identified additional factors such as how often the words are used, the variety of words, the specific needs and interests of learners, how easily the words can be learned, and cultural differences (Gairns & Redman, 1986).

There are various approaches to teaching English that treat vocabulary differently and can be used to teach vocabulary in primary school such as : The Direct approach, the Total Physical Response approach, Suggestopedia and the Montessori method. However, teachers need to adjust their teaching methods according to their pupils' language learning abilities to ensure that learners are engaged, motivated, and learning effectively.

2.4.1 The Direct Approach

The Direct approach to language teaching involves the belief that the meaning of a new word can be directly explained in the target language without relying on the learners' native language. Sauveur states that "foreign language could be taught without translation or the use of the learners' native tongue if meaning was conveyed directly through demonstration and action" (as cited in Gairns & Redman, 1986, p.09). This method is characterized by several features. The teaching is only done in the target language. The instruction focuses only on teaching everyday words. Oral communication skills are developed systematically through involving teachers and pupils engaging in question-and-answer dialogues. Also, the teaching of grammar follows an inductive approach. New words are presented through oral instruction. The teaching of concrete vocabulary involves the use of visual materials, while abstract vocabulary is taught through the association of ideas. The instruction covers both speaking and listening comprehension skills and gives importance to accurate pronunciation and grammar (Gairns & Redman, 1986). As a result, the direct approach seems very suitable in teaching vocabulary to pupils because learners are exposed to the target language within context and encouraged to use it in everyday situations which helps in developing their language skills especially vocabulary rather than focusing on grammar rules and translation. The Direct Method can be helpful in teaching vocabulary in primary school. However, it needs to be adapted according to the pupils' needs and proficiency levels to result in better vocabulary learning outcomes.

2.4.2 Total Physical Response approach

The teaching approach known as TPR, developed by James Asher, involves incorporating physical movements into language learning in order to enhance understanding and retention of language skills such as vocabulary. Asher made the observation that parent-child interactions frequently involve verbal communication from the parent followed by a physical response from the child. He also noted that children typically require a prolonged period of exposure to language before they are capable of speaking, and that they can comprehend their parents' speech and respond with physical movements (Asher,2012, as cited in Qiu, 2016, p.09). In other words, he believes that second language education should imitate the naturalistic

approach of acquiring a first language. Setiyadi (2020) states "performing physically is believed to make language learners learn the target language more exciting and also believed to make the memory stronger and more likely to be recalled". Moreover, Engaging in physical activities make language learning more exciting for learners and enhance memory retention. Hence, the use of TPR as a teaching method for foreign language vocabulary appears to be a suitable and effective approach for primary school classrooms.

2.4.3 Suggestopedia

Suggestopedia is an approach, based on teaching a second language, that emphasizes creating a relaxed, engaged, and positive learning environment. The most noticeable features of Suggestopedia are the classroom's decorations, furniture, and layout, as well as the use of music, and the teacher's authoritative behaviours. Teaching vocabulary using Suggestopedia involves creating a relaxed and comfortable environment where pupils can absorb new vocabulary easily (Gairns & Redman, 1986). In addition, Stevick (1976) states "the precise ways of using voice quality, intonation, and timing are apparently both important and intricate" (as cited in Gairns & Redman, 1986). For instance, instead of the traditional classroom seating arrangements, pupils are encouraged to relax in comfortable armchairs or sit on the floor while the teacher reads to them in the target language (see Figure 2.1). The readings are accompanied by dimmed lights and soft background music, often classical or natural sounds, to promote a calm and peaceful atmosphere throughout the lesson. The teacher presents the text using dramatic voices and gestures to capture pupils' attention. Despite encountering unfamiliar vocabulary, pupils can still comprehend the new words through context clues. Lazanov (1978) states "memorization in learning by the suggestopedia method seems to be accelerated 25 times over that in learning by conventional methods" (as cited in Bakhromova & Ergashev, 2022). Thus, Suggestopedia can be an effective approach in teaching vocabulary in primary school because the combination of engaging texts, visual aids, soft background music, and interactive activities can help children acquire new words effortlessly and stay motivated.

Figure 2.1: Suggestopedia Method (Zainal, 2013, p.01)

2.4.4 Montessori Method

The Montessori Method is an approach developed by Maria Montessori (1870-1952) which is specifically designed for children. Montessori (2009) describes it as a technique of learning through playing (as cited in Handayani, 2012). In other words, this approach to education prioritizes both learning and playing as essential components of the teaching process. In addition, incorporating playing into the teaching and learning process in primary school can facilitate the acquisition and improvement of knowledge, particularly in the area of vocabulary. Furthermore, the Montessori method is a spontaneous approach that gives children the opportunity to improve themselves and feel free to practice movements and activities within a well-prepared setting (Jian, Pane, *et al.*, 2020). As stated by Brumfit (1955,p.42), children engage in learning through games. For them, games that incorporate various activities can serve as highly effective tools for learning English as a foreign language (as cited in Handayani, 2012). Moreover, Bavi (2018) states "through play, children learn independence, knowledge and application of new vocabulary". To summarize, the Montessori method is an effective language teaching approach that promotes pupil's vocabulary as it emphasizes self-directed learning and collaborative play. It helps pupils develop a deeper understanding of the words they learned since it allows children to link words with real-life objects which enhances their engagement and effectiveness in the learning process.

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2.5   The Importance of Vocabulary Development to Pupils

Vocabulary development is an important aspect in language learning. As it involves developing an understanding of the meanings and usage of new words and the ability to use them appropriately in different contexts. Schmitt (2000, p.55) states "vocabulary knowledge is central to communicative competence and to the acquisition of a second language". In addition, Wilkins (1972) argues that "there is not much value in being able to produce grammatical sentences if one has not got the vocabulary that is needed to convey what one wishes to say... While without grammar very little can be conveyed,without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (as cited in Alqahtani, 2015). In other words, developing a strong vocabulary can significantly enhance pupils' abilities to learn the language effectively. In contrast, having a limited vocabulary can pose a significant obstacle to pupils' progress and proficiency. Cameron (2001, p.258) states "words serve to label concepts and lead into the explanatory theories, scripts and schemata that make sense in the inner mental world of the child's experiences of the 'real' world". Moreover, Cameron (2001) suggests that young learners need to learn between one to two thousand words to effectively communicate in English through speaking and writing. Additionally, "vocabulary is one of the most important areas within comprehension and should not be neglected" (NICHED, 2000). Furthermore, Richards and Rodgers (2001) states "building up a useful vocabulary is central to learning of foreign language at primary level". In other words, teaching vocabulary is crucial to young learners so that they can be adequately prepared to learn ESL (Pinter, 2006). To summarize, it is important to understand that learning vocabulary is an ongoing process that involves encountering new words, beginning with learning their meanings. Then, encountering them again and again to better understand their usage. This continuous process creates a strong system of word knowledge that fosters the effective use of language (Cameron, 2001).

2.6   Primary School Pupils' Difficulties in Learning Vocabulary

Identifying the difficulties that primary school pupils may encounter in learning vocabulary is the first step in teaching vocabulary successfully. Several researchers have

examined the challenges that learners face when learning vocabulary. According to Thornbury (2002), there are several factors that contribute to the level of difficulty of certain words, including pronunciation, spelling, length and complexity, grammar meaning and memorization. First, research shows that words that are difficult to pronounce are more difficult to learn. Such words often contain sounds that are unfamiliar to some learners, making them more difficult to learn. Second, sound-spelling mismatches can cause errors in pronunciation or spelling, making words more difficult to read or write. Words with silent letters, such as foreign, listen, headache, bored, honest, cupboard, and muscle, can be especially troublesome. Third, long words seem to be no more difficult to learn than short ones. However, high frequency words tend to be short in English, therefore the learner is likely to meet them more often, a factor favoring their 'learn-ability'. This can enhance pupils' abilities to learn and retain them. Fourth, the grammar associated with the word is also problematic especially if this differs from that of its L1 equivalent. Remembering whether a verb like enjoy, have, or hope is followed by an infinitive (to swim) or an -ing form (swimming) can add to its difficulty. Fifth, when two words overlap in meaning, learners are likely to confuse them. For instance, 'make' and 'do' While 'make' is used for phrases such as 'make breakfast' and 'make an appointment', 'do' is used for tasks such as 'do the housework' and 'do the questionnaire'. Pupils may struggle to determine which word to use in specific contexts. Finally, words that can be used in a broad range of contexts tend to be easier for learners than synonyms that have a narrow range. For example, 'put' is a wide-ranging verb compared to 'impose', 'place', or 'position'. Similarly, 'thin' is a safer choice than 'skinny', 'slim', or 'slender'. Additionally, words with uncertain connotations can be problematic for learners. For example, 'propaganda' has negative connotations in English, while its equivalent in other languages may simply mean 'publicity'. In contrast, 'eccentric' does not have negative connotations in English, but its closest equivalent in other languages may connote 'deviant' (p.27).

Primary school pupils may encounter other additional difficulties that affect learning such as memorization, the appropriate use of words and learning two similar languages at once. Thornbury (2002) states that vocabulary acquisition requires both learning and remembering words, which can be difficult for young learners. According to Kroncke (2023), children may

struggle to remember information because of learning styles, learning disabilities and attention deficit. Learning styles refers to the pupils' favorite way of learning and it may impact memory retention. Additionally, learning disabilities refers to innate brain differences that can make it difficult for a child to understand and remember information in certain subjects. Attention deficit can make it difficult for children to learn and retain information, which may appear as a memory or learning problem. (Nikolov,1999, as cited Qashoa, 2006). Researchers believe that demotivating factors can impede pupils' motivation to learn and result in a lack of success in achieving proficiency in the English language (Hu, 2011). Moreover, the appropriate use of vocabulary can also pose difficulties. Certain words and expressions are limited to specific contexts (Gower *et al.*, 1995). In other words, mastering appropriate vocabulary use requires not only an understanding of words individually but also the ability to apply these words to different contexts. Finally, learning two similar languages in primary school may lead to interference or confusion between them. For instance, despite English and French belonging to different language families, they share features like the alphabet and some words or word roots (Diana, 2023). Therefore, learning both of them simultaneously may cause a difficulty to pupils because they may confuse between them and this can slow down their acquisition of new vocabulary. As a result, it is very important to consider all these factors and implement effective teaching strategies to help children overcome those difficulties.

2.7   Effective Techniques in Teaching Vocabulary

As many teachers face numerous difficulties in the process of teaching and learning vocabulary, they must adapt effective teaching strategies based on the age of their pupils in order to keep them interested, focused and engaged. Furthermore, to introduce a certain vocabulary item, teachers should use a combination of different techniques. Pinter (2006) recommends that teachers should use a wide range of planned vocabulary presentations to ensure variety and diversity in their teaching approach. According to Gairns and Redman (1986, pp.73-75), the techniques used in teaching vocabulary can be categorized into two primary types: visual techniques and verbal techniques.

2.7.1 Visual Techniques

Visual techniques involves the use of visual aids and strategies such as visuals (flashcards, realia and pictures) or mime and gestures to facilitate vocabulary acquisition. By incorporating visual techniques, teachers can create a rich learning environment that supports vocabulary acquisition and retention in primary school pupils. The use of visual techniques typically involves two methods that originate from the direct approach: visuals and non-verbal communication through mime and gestures. These methods are as follows:

2.7.1.1 Visuals

These include flashcards, photographs, blackboard drawing, wall charts and realia (i.e. real-life objects). Generally speaking, these techniques are used for conveying meaning but, in particular, they are useful for teaching touchable items of vocabulary such as food, furniture and other vocabulary categories like locations, occupations, and descriptions of people, actions and activities. These visual aids can serve for engaging pupils in the learning process. Moreover, studies indicate that 80% of learning happens through visual perception. Therefore, visuals can be a useful strategy in assisting pupils to acquire new vocabulary by providing context, enhancing memory retention, promoting comprehension, and stimulating interest and engagement. (Gairns & Redman, 1986)

2.7.1.2 Mime and Gesture

These techniques are employed to convey meaning in a way that is different from visuals. For instance, if a teacher wants to teach the term 'to swerve', they can create a scenario on the black board and use gestures to provide a clear understanding of the concept (Gairns & Redman, 1986). In other words, these techniques can provide illustrations of complex vocabulary words and serve as supplementary teaching materials. Using gestures helps children remember vocabulary more effectively in a second language because it involves physical engagement in the learning process (Tellier, 2008).

2.7.2   Verbal techniques

Verbal techniques involve the use of spoken language to convey meaning of words that cannot be effectively taught using pictures or gestures alone. For example the abstract vocabulary such as 'Honor' or 'Truth'. Hence, using translation, synonyms and antonyms and illustrative situations may be effective (Gairns & Redman, 1986).

2.7.2.1   Translation

Translation is a straightforward approach for obtaining an exact definition of a word using the pupils' mother tongue. "Translation may be appropriate for items with a distinct equivalent in the native language, but it should be avoided otherwise". Clearly, translation serves as a quick solution for difficulties in explaining complex words. However, overusing this technique may not facilitate the learners in achieving proficiency in the language, so it should be used cautiously. (Gairns & Redman, 1986)

2.7.2.2   Using synonyms and antonyms

The technique of synonymy is frequently employed when teaching pupils at lower levels to simplify their comprehension and ensure they obtain the correct meaning. For instance, teachers may directly inform students that 'miserable' is synonymous with 'very sad'. Additionally, antonyms can also assist pupils in grasping the meaning of an item. For example, when searching for the meaning of a particular term, it is easily illustrated by contrasting it. However, it is crucial to provide examples of the contexts in which these items are used. (Gairns & Redman, 1986)

2.7.2.3   Use of Illustrative Situations (Oral or Written)

This method is especially suitable for teaching and presenting abstract concepts. It involves using different situations and contexts to illustrate the meaning of words, which aids pupils in comprehension and retention. This technique is particularly effective for teaching abstract vocabulary, as these concepts can be difficult to understand without a clear context.

In addition, pupils can better learn new words and their use in different situations. (Gairns & Redman, 1986)

2.7.3   Use of Songs

Using educational songs to teach vocabulary is one of the best ways to teach vocabulary and to establish an environment that is engaging, funny and interesting especially for young learners. As indicated by Bourke (2006) "when we plan a syllabus for young learners we should make sure it is experientially appropriate. It should contain songs, chants, and rhymes" (p.281). According to Griffee (1988), songs play an effective role in teaching vocabulary since they help pupils in expanding their vocabulary knowledge. Moreover, Yuliana (2003) indicates that "the exposure and the repeated words from the songs make it easier for the children to remember the words as a result the children can produce or utter the words". Furthermore, Griffee (1995) insisted that songs are "especially good at introducing vocabulary because they provide a meaningful context for the vocabulary"(p.5).To summarize, educational songs serve as a beneficial tool for introducing and reinforcing pupils' vocabulary knowledge. Besides, it creates a less stressed environment, brings enjoyment and facilitates their memorization.

Conclusion

Teaching and learning vocabulary is a critical and challenging task, especially in primary school education. However, identifying the difficulties that pupils face when learning vocabulary is the main step in improving the quality of language acquisition. To overcome these challenges, teachers may use different approaches according to their pupils' needs and learning styles. In this chapter, we have discussed four approaches to teaching vocabulary. Each one is characterized by specific features that help learners acquire vocabulary effectively. As solutions, teachers may use visual and verbal techniques to present a new word or use them both in combination. The combination of verbal and non-verbal techniques may be valuable in increasing primary school pupils' memory retention since pupils have different learning styles and preferences. By using different techniques, teachers will ensure that all pupils are satisfied.

Chapter Three

Data Analysis and Results

Chapter three: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

The present research explores primary school pupils' difficulties in learning vocabulary. Therefore, this chapter is devoted to the analysis of the study. It focuses on the methodology that was followed, the research concept, data collection tools, and the population and sample targeted in study. It is also devoted to the analysis of the teacher's questionnaire, interview and classroom observation. The collected data and the results will enable us to identify the pupils' difficulties in learning vocabulary, causes of these difficulties and the effective methods to reduce them from teachers' perspectives. Ultimately, this chapter presents and describes the data that has been collected from Temmami Lakhdar primary school Biskra.

3.1   Research Design and Methodology

The researcher opted for a qualitative research design to answer the research questions. The main objective of the study is to investigate primary school pupils' difficulties in learning English vocabulary and how to minimize them. According to Meanwell (2017), "qualitative research is often designed to generate deep understanding of meanings, processes, and/or reasoning" (p.02). The qualitative data was gathered via a classroom observation, an interview with the teacher of the observed classroom and a questionnaire for primary school teachers.

3.2   Population and Sample

The population targeted in the present study consists of pupils of third year at The primary school of Temmami Lakhdar at Biskra city. The rationale for selecting this population is that pupils at this academic level are learning English for the first time and their syllabus program focuses mostly on teaching vocabulary. Furthermore, a random sampling was used in selecting pupils and teachers for this research study in order to ensure that the results are generalized to the population. From the intended population, a representative of 70 pupils of third year group A and B at Temmami Lakhdar Primary School was selected for this study.

3.3 Data Collection Tools

The data collection tools included are: First, a classroom observation to gain insight into the process of teaching and learning vocabulary and other factors that may be responsible for pupils' challenges in acquiring vocabulary in primary school. Second, an interview for the teacher of the observed classroom to gather additional information about the teaching-learning process that may not be observed. Third, a questionnaire was addressed to EFL primary school teachers to elicit their views regarding the difficulties that pupils face and how we can reduce them.

3.3.1 Classroom Observation

The classroom observation is selected for this research work as a method to identify pupils' difficulties in learning vocabulary and to identify and analyze the different factors that impact their performance. Therefore, to carry out the observation, we have implemented a checklist and a detailed report as tools to gather reliable data and credible findings. The checklist (see Appendix B) consists of two sections which are about pupils' difficulties in learning vocabulary and methods of teaching vocabulary. Each one of the sections contain items that should be observed. Besides, the classroom observation report (see Appendix C) which was used to provide an objective and detailed description of our observations during the attended sessions.

3.3.1.1 The Classroom Observation Procedure

In order to reinforce the data collected through questionnaires, the researcher attended six observational sessions which took place between April 17 and May 8 in Temmami Lakhdar Primary School Biskra. Each observational session lasted approximately 45 minutes. The focus was on observing the EFL process of teaching and learning vocabulary from the perspectives of teacher's methods and the learners' practices and reactions. The observation was done relying on a checklist and a detailed classroom observation report.

3.3.1.2   Description of the Checklist

The checklist (see Appendix B) consists of two sections.   Each one has certain characteristics to focus on during the observation.   The first section is about observing pupils difficulties in learning vocabulary focusing on certain challenges related to concentration, motivating learning environment, pronunciation, understanding new words meanings, confusing the meanings of similar words, using words inappropriately, misspelling, spelling retention, meaning memorization and the quantity of words to be learned.   The second section concerns the examination of vocabulary teaching methods emphasizing on the Total Physical Response (TPR) method, realia, visual aids, educational games, songs, giving examples, explaining in the mother language, using context clues, mime and gesture, using illustrative situations and relying solely on memorization.   The checklist was in the form of a table and the observer was required to tick the corresponding columns for each observed or not observed item. Besides, having additional columns for writing the observer comments.

3.3.1.3   Validity of the Checklist

After forwarding the checklist to the supervisor of the researcher and other experts to correct it and to get some feedback/suggestions concerning the items included, we have asked two teachers (Mr.Aounali and Dr.Bechar) in our university to validate it and to find out to what extent the items are well chosen and well elaborated.   Consequently, one of the teachers approved the work and the other one recommended us to add another document for writing a detailed report (see Appendix C) on the observations of the classroom setting, teacher talking time, teacher's feedback and the use of the textbook, to provide insights on the difficulties of the pupils in the classroom and vocabulary building.   In addition to, knowing the factors that caused these difficulties and how teachers are dealing with them in the classroom.

3.3.1.4   Analysis of the Classroom Observation Checklist and Report

1. The classroom observation report

Item 1: The classroom setting

It was observed that pupils were sitting on tables, these tables were organized in three lines. Each line contains six tables. They were sitting in pairs randomly. Instead of the U-shape which facilitates teaching English vocabulary as a foreign language for those pupils. In addition, the way of sitting was not appropriate for being more engaged with learning new English vocabulary. The U-shape it is a bridge for a successful and effective teaching-learning environment that is when the teacher brings the audio-visual materials, it is very easy to use them with the U-shape, i.e., everybody can see, can listen, can focus more instead of sitting one after the other. Furthermore, the classroom lighting was not appropriate which can present obstacles for pupils to read, see visuals, or view what is written on the board clearly.

Item 2: The interaction between pupils and the teacher

We have observed that the interaction between the pupils and the teacher is highly built. The teacher was always providing pupils with positive reinforcements. For example, she kisses and hugs them when they answer correctly. The interaction between them was engaging, positive and productive. However, we have noticed that the teacher does not make sufficient efforts to involve the pupils who were passive and not involved during the sessions, especially those who sit in the back. The reasons maybe related to the way pupils are sitting. Pupils who sit in the back hide behind their classmates in order to avoid direct contact with the teacher and the teacher does not pay attention to this problem.

Item 3: The teacher's talking time

The teacher's talking time was the dominant one in comparison with pupils' talking time, i.e., The teacher was talking most of the time to enrich pupils with new English vocabulary, to explain the meaning of new words and to make English language clear enough for this category of pupils. At the same time, the teacher encourages the pupils to speak even though

they are beginners. For example, she asks them to repeat after her collectively to minimize the amount of making errors or mistakes. However, the teacher is required to ask for individual repetition in order to listen to each pupil's pronunciation and to find out the mistakes because pupils may make different types of mistakes.

Item 4: The teacher's feedback

The teacher's feedback was supportive and positive during the observed sessions. The teacher encourages the pupils to participate by her positive feedback such as "Amazing", "Clap your hands for your classmate" and "Excellent". In addition, the teacher kisses and hugs them when they answer correctly. Whereas, if the answer is incorrect, she reacts with a sad facial expression and either corrects the mistakes or asks the others to provide the correct answer. However, it was observed that the teacher does not correct pupils' pronunciation errors but it was a self-correction or peer-correction.

Item 5: The use of the textbook

During the attended sessions, we have not observed the use of the textbook at all. Pupils use it only when the teacher wants to give them homework because it is a task based textbook. Instead, she uses flashcards and plays songs related to the content of the textbook. However, not using the textbook at all may reduce pupils' exposure to English vocabulary in context since it contains a wide range of vocabulary used in context and full of pictures that provide more comprehensive vocabulary instruction.

2. The Checklist

Section One: Pupils Difficulties in Learning Vocabulary

Pupils' difficulties in learning English vocabulary at primary school	Sessions					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of concentration	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓
Need for motivating learning environment	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓
Struggling to pronounce words correctly	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Poor understanding of new words meanings	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Confusing the meanings of similar words	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Difficulty in memorizing words appropriately within a sentence	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Misspelling of words frequently	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Difficulties in retaining the spelling of new words	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓
Inability to memorize the words meanings	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X
The quantity of words that pupils got to learn is extremely large	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X

Note: ✓ = Observed / X = Not observed

Table 3.1: Pupils' Difficulties in Learning English Vocabulary

It was observed that pupils are facing all the mentioned difficulties, in table 3.1, with different degrees of difficulty and frequency.

Item 1:Lack of concentration

We have observed that pupils lack concentration in most of the observed sessions because of several reasons. First, session timing was not appropriate because most of their English study sessions were in the afternoon. Pupils are more motivated, enthusiastic and energetic in the morning. Second, pupils easily lose interest get distracted, especially those who sit in the back. For instance, they just look around the room or talk with their classmates. This presented difficulties for pupils and the teacher since lack of concentration affects pupils

ability to fully engage with the teacher or participate actively in the classroom.

Item 2: Need for motivating learning environment

The learning environment was motivating for two reasons. Firstly, the teacher was really very motivated to do her best to teach the pupils English vocabulary using the available materials brought by herself. Secondly, pupils seem enthusiastic to learn the language of technology which is spread all over the world. However, there was a kind of lack of supply with materials provided by the administration for instance data show, podcasts, audio-visual materials and classroom decoration. The classroom decoration plays an important role in primary school because pupils need attractive things such as walls that are well painted with specific pictures stapled on the board. Those materials can make teaching English vocabulary more motivating, active, engaging and creative.

Item 3: Struggling to pronounce words correctly

It was noticed that pupils have difficulties with the pronunciation of certain English words for many reasons, First, words that contain silent letters for example: Knife, Know and Wednesday. Second, the influence of the French Language on the English Language especially alphabets for example they confuse between E and A in French and English respectively. Furthermore, an important and a dangerous factor was made by the teacher herself. That is the misuse of words such as Remind and Remember and the mispronunciation of certain words which can have a great impact on pupils' learning of vocabulary pronunciation since they are imitating her. As a result, the problematic factors that may be responsible for pupils' difficulties in pronunciation are; the difference between the spoken and the written form in English language, the similarity between French and English languages especially alphabets which are essential for pronouncing words accurately, and the teacher misuse and mispronunciation.

Item 4: Poor understanding of new words meanings

It was noticed that pupils have difficulties in understanding new words meaning in some sessions for many reasons. Firstly, the lack of using different methods of explaining words' meaning. Since pupils have different learning styles for example visual and auditory, the teacher should use different methods to fulfill pupils' needs. Secondly, Abstract words are difficult to explain without using the mother tongue. Hence, the limited use of authentic materials by the

teacher presented difficulties for the pupils. Furthermore, pupils who do not understand seem very hesitant to ask the teacher for clarification. This may suggest that pupils need support in developing their vocabulary comprehension skills.

Item 5: Confusing the meaning of similar words

It was observed that pupils are confusing the meaning of similar words frequently. For example, they confuse between copybook and book, song and sound, pen and pencil. In addition, we have observed that pupils show hesitation when they are asked to choose the correct word that accurately represents a given meaning during vocabulary exercises. This may be caused by their limited language exposure and proficiency or the failure of providing sufficient examples of the words meanings in context in the classroom.

Item 6: Difficulty in memorizing words appropriately within a sentence

We have noticed that pupils could not memorize the words within sentences. They were struggling to use vocabulary words accurately which led to sentences that were semantically incorrect or sentences that did not convey the intended meaning. Because, they still need more time and more exposure to the language. Another reason is that they had not learned the grammar rules yet and the lessons focus more on learning English vocabulary in isolation rather than learning them within a sentence.

Item 7: Misspelling of words frequently

It was observed that most of the pupils misspell words frequently when attempting to write or spell them for example: red and read. In addition, as English vocabulary has many words with silent letters and pupils were not able to read correctly, they spell the words as they pronounce them, for example: Daughter and Knife. It can be that misspelling of words frequently goes back to the syllabus which emphasizes speaking not reading, writing nor spelling as priority at this level.

Item 8: Difficulties in retaining the spelling of new words

It was observed that pupils have difficulty in retaining the spelling of new words for example when dealing with long words such as Wednesday. This issue is somehow related to the previous item which is misspelling of words already learned. In other words, pupils' difficulty in retaining the correct spelling of learned vocabulary words that leads to making

spelling errors overtime. Therefore, pupils need ongoing practice and more exposure to the written language to overcome these difficulties. The teacher is required to pay attention to these difficulties through targeted spelling instruction, sufficient exposure to the language and practice.

Item 9: Inability to memorize the words meanings

In some sessions, it was observed that pupils were not able to memorize certain words' meanings for many reasons. First, the huge number of words that pupils are required to memorize. Second, their capacity for memorization and understanding abstract words may be limited considering their young age. Third, the insufficient opportunities given to pupils to use the new vocabulary in meaningful ways. In contrast, we have observed in other sessions that pupils are able to memorize the words' meaning when the teacher uses visual aids such as flashcards or songs to clarify the meaning.

Item 10: The quantity of words that pupils have to learn is extremely large:

In certain sessions, we have noticed that the teacher does not introduce a small number of new English vocabulary to pupils, but she introduces more than ten English words at the same time. This probably goes back to the long curriculum and the shortage of time. In addition, probably the duration of the session, which is 45 minutes, was not sufficient for the teacher because pupils are still young and they need at least 20 minutes to be calm and focus with her. Therefore, the teacher over here is obliged to introduce more than ten words per session which is a huge number for this category of pupils since their ages are between eight and ten years.

Section Two: Methods of Teaching English Vocabulary

Methods of Teaching Vocabulary	Sessions					
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
The teacher incorporates physical movements in learning to clarify a new word	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The teacher uses realia to help pupils associate words with the corresponding objects	X	X	X	X	X	X
The teacher uses visual aids to clarify the meaning of words	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The teachers uses educational games to motivate pupils	X	X	X	X	X	X
The teacher uses educational songs to teach vocabulary	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
The teacher gives examples of the meaning of the target words	X	X	X	X	X	X
The teacher directly explain the meaning of words in the mother language which is Arabic	X	X	X	X	X	X
The teacher uses context cues to help understand new words	X	X	X	X	X	X
The teacher employ mime and gesture to convey meaning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The use of illustrative situations to teach abstract situations	X	X	X	✓	X	X
Relying solely on memorization	X	X	X	X	X	X

Note: ✓ = Observed / X = Not observed

Table 3.2: Methods of Teaching English Vocabulary

The table 3.2 shows that the teacher uses some methods and disregards others to explain English vocabulary. The following points clarify the observed and the disregarded methods.

Item 1: The teacher incorporates physical movements in learning to clarify a new word

We observed that the teacher incorporates physical movements to clarify a new word to help pupils associate the meaning with the new word. However, the principle of the TPR requires the pupils to repeat the teacher's movements and respond physically to the teacher's commands or instructions. Hence, the principle of the TPR method was missed by this sample. Setiyadi (2020) states "performing physically is believed to make language learners learn the target language more exciting and also believed to make the memory stronger and more likely to be recalled".

Item 2: The teacher uses realia to help pupils associate words with the corresponding objects

We have observed the absence of realia which means that the teacher does not rely on bringing real life objects to pupils. Even though the used strategies were effective, using real life objects could be more valuable in creating an engaging learning experience. The teacher can bring many things to teach pupils their names for example: fruits, vegetables, plants or flowers. Therefore, the absence of using realia in the classroom can limit pupils' opportunities to learn vocabulary in an authentic way.

Item 3: The teacher uses visual aids to clarify the meaning of words

We have observed that the teacher uses visual aids in the classroom for example flashcards and pictures to clarify the meaning of new words. Employing visual aids proved to be an effective method for many reasons. Firstly, it attracts pupils' attention since they are colourful. Secondly, it served as a simple and easy method for clarifying the meanings of new words. In addition, it significantly reinforced pupils' vocabulary acquisition. Lastly, the use of visual aids by the teacher raised pupils' level of engagement, participation and interest in learning vocabulary. As claimed by Gairns and Redman (1986), studies indicate that 80% of learning happens through visual perception.

Item 4: The teacher uses educational games to motivate pupils:

We did not observe any use of educational games during the observed sessions. The reasons may be related to the limited time and resources, the large number of pupils and the classroom environment, i.e, the way of sitting. Therefore, the principle of the Montessori method which incorporates playing into the teaching and learning process in primary school was missed by this sample. As indicated by Brumfit (1955), children engage in learning through games (As cited in Handayani, 2012).

Item 5: The teacher uses educational songs to teach vocabulary

It was observed that the teacher uses educational songs as a teaching strategy using a "song player" brought by herself. Pupils enjoy listening then singing with the teacher. There was a session were pupils seemed bored and tired, but when the teacher played a song about a lesson that is called "My Birthday Party" song, pupils became motivated and focused with

teacher. As insisted by Griffee (1995), songs are "especially good at introducing vocabulary because they provide a meaningful context for the vocabulary"(p.5).

Item 6: The teacher gives examples of the meaning of the target words

It was not observed that the teacher provides examples of the target word meaning. Thus, this can make it more difficult for pupils to connect the learnt words to real life situations or use them in context especially if the word has different meanings. To simplify matters, the teacher can use the example of "Lion" or "Superhero" to introduce the concept of bravery.

Item 7: The teacher directly explain the meaning of words in the mother language which is Arabic

In all the observed sessions, it was observed that the teacher rarely uses pupils' mother tongue (Arabic) to explain the new words. The teacher use this strategy for only two main reasons. Firstly, the teacher uses Arabic when the target word is particularly very complicated. Secondly, the teacher uses Arabic only after using other strategies that were not sufficient in facilitating understanding.

Item 8: The teacher uses context cues to help understand new words

The teacher use of context clues to help understand new words was not observed at all. This strategy is very effective in making vocabulary more memorable and developing critical thinking and problem solving skills. For example, instead of directly providing a word meaning, the teacher can guide pupils using context cues to analyze the surrounding context and guess the meaning of the new word.

Item 9: The teacher employs mime and gesture to convey meaning

It was observed that the teacher uses mime and gesture as technique to convey meaning. We noticed that when the teacher uses this strategy to explain new words. For instance, the teacher explains a new word's meaning by pronouncing and writing it on board, then she start miming it many times. After that, she just mimes without writing or saying it and asks the pupils to guess the meaning according to her facial expressions for example: smile, happy, sleepy and sad.

Item 10: The use of illustrative situations to teach abstract situations

The use of illustrative situations to teach abstract situations was observed in only one

session. The teacher was explaining vocabulary words related to a birthday party. One of the pupils said that was her birthday that day. The teacher used her as an example to engage the class by asking them to sing for her "Happy Birthday". All the pupils participated in singing the song that they had learnt during the previous session. As claimed by Gairns and Redman (1986), pupils can better learn new words and their use in different illustrative situations.

Item 11: Relying solely on memorization

During my classroom observation, we noticed that the teacher did not rely solely on memorization for vocabulary teaching. The teacher used other techniques such as songs and visual aids in addition to memorization as an effective strategy to easily learn and recall new words. This approach is highly effective as it encourages a deeper understanding and practice of vocabulary rather than relying on memorization only. By going beyond relying solely on memorization, the teacher is encouraging the pupils to become active users of language.

3.3.2   The Teacher's Interview

3.3.2.1   Description of the Teacher's Interview

A structured interview of six questions (see Appendix D) was employed to analyze the research problem from the teacher's perceptions. The interview targeted the teacher of the same classroom where we conducted the classroom observation at Temmami Lakhdar Primary School to get additional insights about our observations. Moreover, the interview took place on May 10th, 2023. The purpose of the interview was to get in-depth insights about the main difficulties that pupils face when learning English vocabulary, the strategies that the teacher uses to minimize these difficulties and how visual materials can improve pupils' English vocabulary acquisition.

3.3.2.2   Analysis of the Teacher's Interview

Question 01: Richards and Rodgers (2001) states "building up a useful vocabulary is central to learning of foreign language at primary level". Why do you think vocabulary is important?

Teacher: *"Vocabulary is important because it is the basis of all languages to express thoughts and ideas, share information and grow personal relationships"*

The target behind addressing this question is to know whether the teacher is aware of the basic importance of vocabulary in developing an effective language learning. As observed in her response, she is aware of this importance.

Question 02: How do you often introduce new vocabulary to your pupils?

Teacher: *"By using the technique of teaching through playing and having pupils listen and repeat the song that has a relationship with the topic"*

The aim of this question is to know how exactly she is teaching new English vocabulary. She mentioned that she incorporates playing and singing into teaching by having pupils listen and repeat songs that are related to the targeted vocabulary.

Question 03: What is your opinion of the incorporation of visual materials to improve pupils' vocabulary acquisition?

Teacher: *"I think that pupils love everything which is attractive such as flashcards with colours with listening to music using a song player"*

The response shows that the teacher agrees on using visual materials as a technique to improve pupil's vocabulary acquisition. She mentioned that pupils like visuals such as flashcards since they are colourful and attractive.

Question 04: What strategies do you use to make vocabulary learning more engaging and effective for your pupils? (Explain how)

Teacher: *" By following the Montessori method and using songs, games and play-role"*

The teacher claimed that she follows the Montessori approach and uses songs, involves pupils in educational games and incorporates play-role in her classroom.

Question 05: Based on your experience, what are the main difficulties that pupils face when learning vocabulary?

Teacher: *"The difference between the spoken and written English, the complexity of word knowledge, spelling errors and short term memory"*

The teacher reported that the most common difficulties faced by pupils are in terms of the difference between the spoken and written form in the English language, the complexity of understanding and using vocabulary, the spelling mistakes and memorization.

Question 06: Based on your experience , provide certain recommendations concerning teaching

vocabulary in primary school.

Teacher: *"Introduce each new word one at time, ask pupils to repeat the word, use quick and funny activities and play word games"*

The purpose of this question is to look for solutions that might minimize the impact of difficulties encountered by pupils on their performances. The teacher provided several recommendations, as mentioned above, that might help cope with English vocabulary acquisition difficulties faced by pupils.

To summarize, the teacher emphasized the importance of vocabulary as a means of expressing thoughts, sharing information, and building personal relationships. The teacher incorporates games and songs related to the topic and engages pupils' in listening and repeating. The teacher recognized that pupils enjoy learning with visual aids like colorful flashcards and cheerful pictures. According to the teacher, pupils' difficulties when learning English vocabulary are the difference between spoken and written English, word complexity, spelling errors, and short-term memory limitations. To address these challenges, the teacher suggested introducing new words one at a time, encouraging repetition, incorporating quick and entertaining activities, and incorporating word games into the learning process.

3.3.3 Teachers' Questionnaire

3.3.3.1 Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire (see Appendix E) was designed for primary school teachers of English at third year level in Biskra. We opted for a sample that contains six teachers. This questionnaire seeks to collect data about pupils' difficulties when learning vocabulary and what are the techniques used by teachers to minimize them. Teachers were asked to answer the questionnaire by ticking the appropriate answers and to provide explanations whenever necessary. The questionnaire consists of nine questions divided into two sections that contain open-ended and closed-ended questions.

Section one: Pupils' Difficulties in Learning Vocabulary

The first section of the questionnaire was devoted to ask teachers four (04) questions about why they think learning vocabulary is important in primary school and whether teaching

vocabulary in their classroom is a difficult or an easy task. In addition, how often pupils face difficulties in learning vocabulary and what are those difficulties.

Section two: Methods of Teaching Vocabulary

The second section contains five questions which are concerned with how teachers deal with pupils' difficulties in learning vocabulary. Also, their attitudes towards the integration of visual materials inside the classroom and how they are effective in teaching vocabulary in primary school. Furthermore, teachers were asked about the different techniques teachers use to explain abstract vocabulary and what learning approach they find most helpful in teaching vocabulary to young learners.

3.3.3.2 Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) was designed using Google forms. Then, it was administered online to the target sample via email on May 10th, 2023. Considering the circumstances of the limited number of primary school teachers and our limited time as well as our lack of knowledge regarding teachers' schedules, submitting the questionnaire online was our only available choice.

3.3.3.3 Analysis of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire contained nine (9) multiple-choice questions. In order to get more details, we asked teachers to provide a brief explanation for certain answers.

Section one: Pupils' Difficulties in Learning Vocabulary

Item 01: Learning vocabulary is important in developing pupils' language proficiency because?
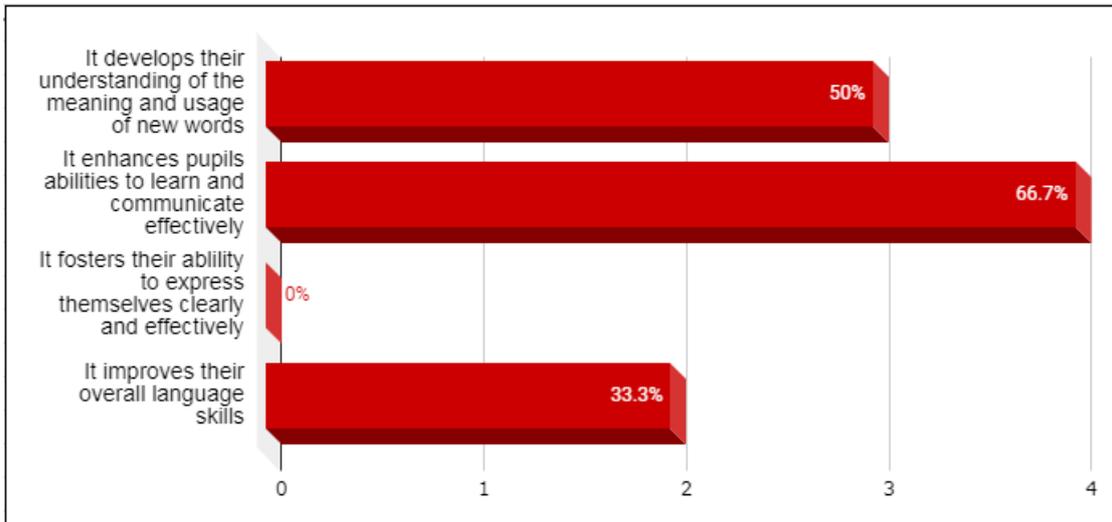
Figure 3.1: Reasons of Vocabulary Importance in Primary School

Figure 3.1 describes why primary school teachers consider vocabulary learning important to pupils. It is observed that teachers have multiple reasons. The data shows that the highest percentage of 66.7% of teachers chose "it enhances pupils abilities to learn and communicate effectively", followed by "it develops their understanding of the meaning and usage of new words" with 50%. In contrast, 33.3% chose "it improves their overall language skills" whereas none of them chose "it fosters their ability to express themselves clearly and effectively" which received a lower score of 0%. These findings suggest that teachers perceive the significance of English vocabulary in primary school especially in enhancing pupils' abilities to learn and communicate effectively.

Item 02: How do you find teaching vocabulary in your classroom?
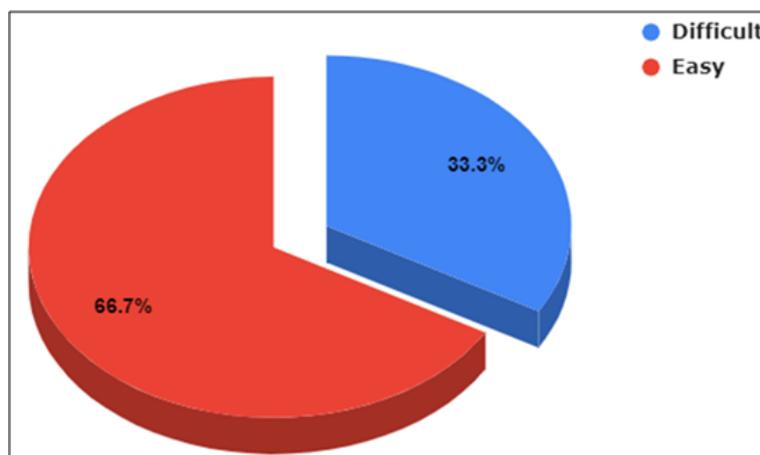
Figure 3.2: Teachers' Perceptions on Teaching Vocabulary in Primary School Classrooms

As observed in figure 3.2, 66.7% of the sample find teaching vocabulary in their classrooms easy. Meanwhile, 33.3% of them find it a difficult task to do. The results indicate that the majority of the sample find teaching English vocabulary easy which might be interpreted in two ways. One possibility is that it is easy because they are competent in implementing effective techniques of teaching vocabulary and have sufficient experience. The other possibility is that it is easy because teachers are not recognizing the complexity of teaching vocabulary especially to young learners and they are not investing much time and effort into implementing different strategies to meet the learners needs.

If it is difficult, please specify in which way?

The 33.3% of the sample who find vocabulary instruction difficult made two claims. Firstly, primary school pupils have different learner's styles and teachers must use different strategies at the same time to cover this. Secondly, vocabulary instruction is difficult because children are easily distracted, and have limited prior knowledge of the English language.

Item 03: How often do pupils face difficulties when learning vocabulary?
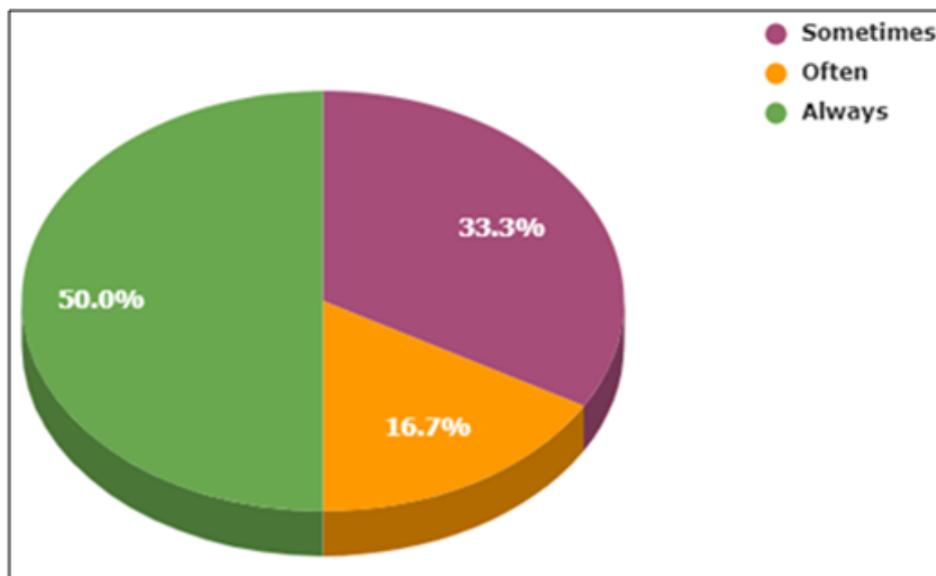
Figure 3.3: The Frequency of Pupils' Difficulties when Learning English Vocabulary

The frequency was measured using a five-point Likert scale. As observed in figure 3.3, 50% of the teachers have claimed that pupils always face difficulties when learning vocabulary, whereas 33.3% of them have indicated that pupils sometimes do so. In addition, only 16.7% pointed out that pupils often face difficulties when acquiring vocabulary. According to the

result, all the teachers agreed that pupils are facing difficulties in learning vocabulary however their difficulties vary in terms of frequency.

Item 04: These difficulties are in terms of:
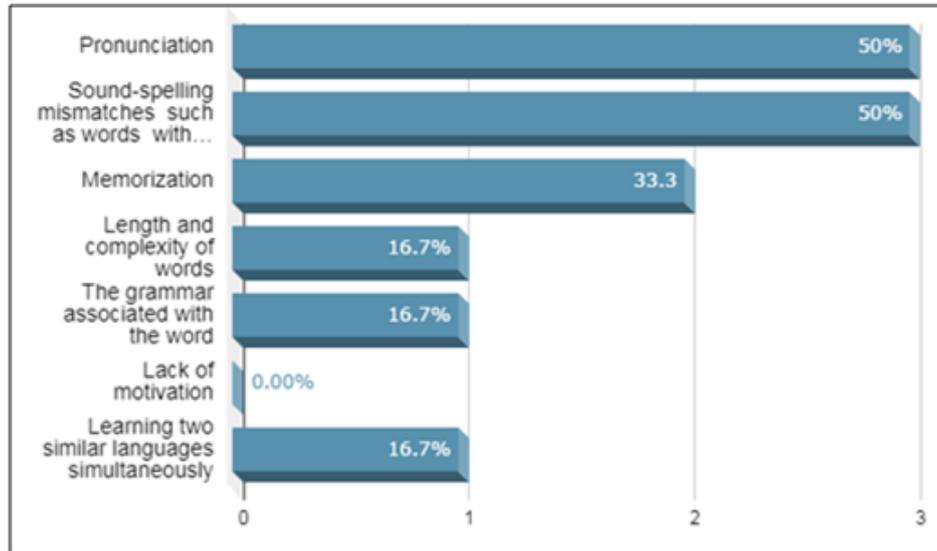
Figure 3.4: Pupils' Difficulties when Learning English Vocabulary

According to Figure 3.4, teachers selected the difficulties that pupil's face when learning vocabulary. Pronunciation and sound-spelling mismatches such as words with silent letters were the most chosen options with an equal rate of 50%. In addition, memorization was chosen by 33,3% of the teachers. In addition, 16.7% selected the length and complexity of words. Similarly, an equal percentage of 16.7% of teachers selected the grammar associated with the words and the learning of two similar languages simultaneously. However, none of them chose the option of lack of motivation which means that pupils are motivated to learn English in primary school. The reasons for indicating that pupils do not lack motivation when learning English vocabulary probably goes back to the strong enthusiasm of pupils to learn English language, or teachers are effectively engaging their pupils when learning vocabulary through creating a motivating learning environment.

Section two: Vocabulary Teaching Methods

Item 05: How do you deal with these difficulties?

Change the method of teaching	0	0%
Encourage active engagement in the classroom	2	33.3%
Use games and activities to motivate them	4	66.7%
Provide regular opportunities for pupils to practice by repeating words already learnt	3	50%
Incorporate role-play in your classroom	2	33.3%

Table 3.3: Strategies for Minimizing Pupils' Difficulties When Learning English Vocabulary

As observed in table 3.5, teachers are using more than one strategy to minimize pupils' difficulties in learning vocabulary. However, the most chosen option with 66.7% is "using games and activities to motivate them". closely followed, 50% of the respondents selected "provide regular opportunities for pupils to practice by repeating words already learnt". Furthermore, an equal percentage of 33.3% of teachers chose "encourage active engagement in the classroom" and "incorporate role-play in your classroom". While none of them selected "change the method of teaching". These findings provide valuable insights for understanding how teachers deal with pupils' difficulties in learning vocabulary. They indicate that using games stand out as the most employed strategy. In addition, the participants don't perceive changing their teaching strategies frequently as an effective solution for dealing with pupils' difficulties when learning English vocabulary. Although, frequent changes in teaching methods are effective in catering to different learning styles, developing teachers' own pedagogical skills and engaging pupils in active learning.

Item 06: Does the use of visual materials help in reducing vocabulary learning difficulties?
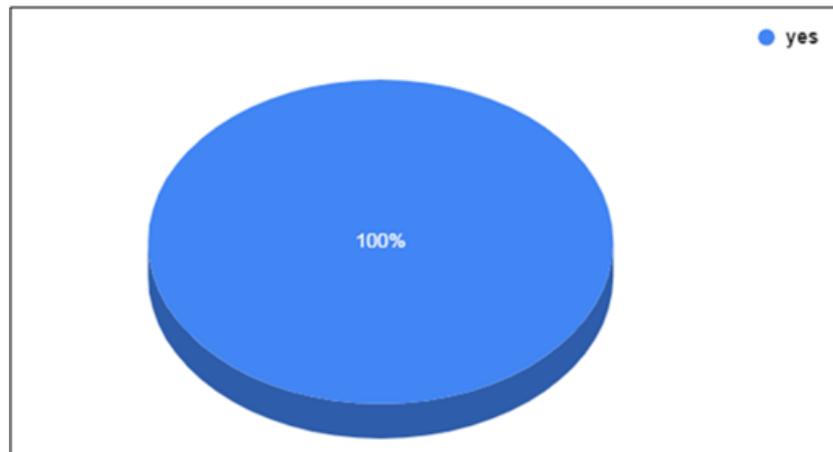
Figure 3.5: Teachers' Attitudes Towards the Use of Visual Materials

According to figure 3.6 which represents the rate of 100%, all the teachers confirmed that the use of visual materials minimize vocabulary learning difficulties. Due to its effectiveness in attracting pupils' attention, facilitating the retention of vocabulary, and increasing motivation and active participation. This finding suggests that the use of visual materials is perceived as an effective strategy for reducing vocabulary learning difficulties. Besides, it highlights the importance of developing the use of visual material in the classroom by using different types of visuals since it is effective.

Item 07: If yes, what are the visual techniques you usually use?
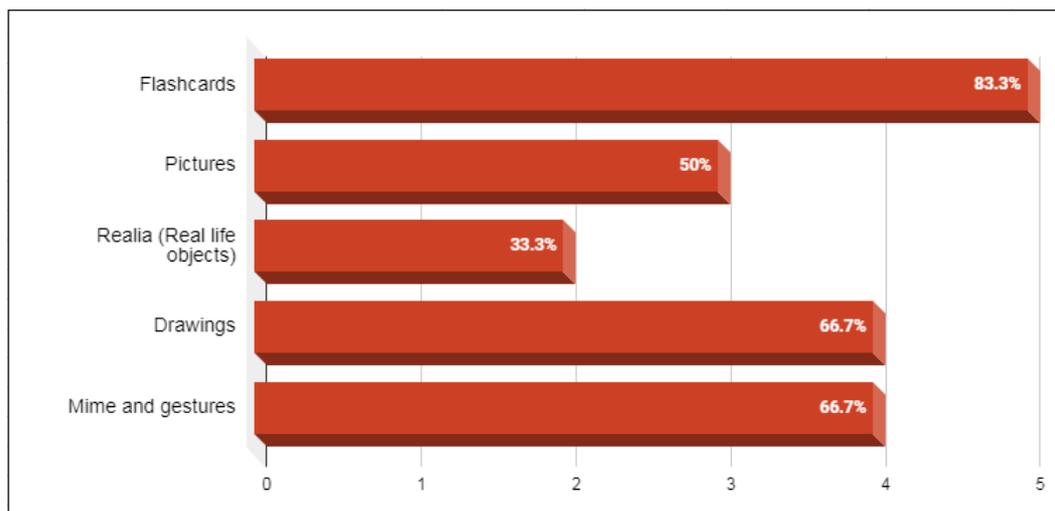
Figure 3.6: The Effective Visual Techniques That Teachers Usually Use

Figure 3.7 shows that most teachers employ multiple visual techniques when teaching vocabulary in primary school. The figure above indicates that the majority of teachers (83%) use flashcards. Moreover, approximately 66.7% selected drawing, and mime and gesture. In addition, 50% indicated that they prefer using pictures while 33.3% chose Realia. These findings highlight that using flashcards is the most used strategy to minimize vocabulary learning difficulties in primary school.

Item 08: To explain abstract words, teachers use:
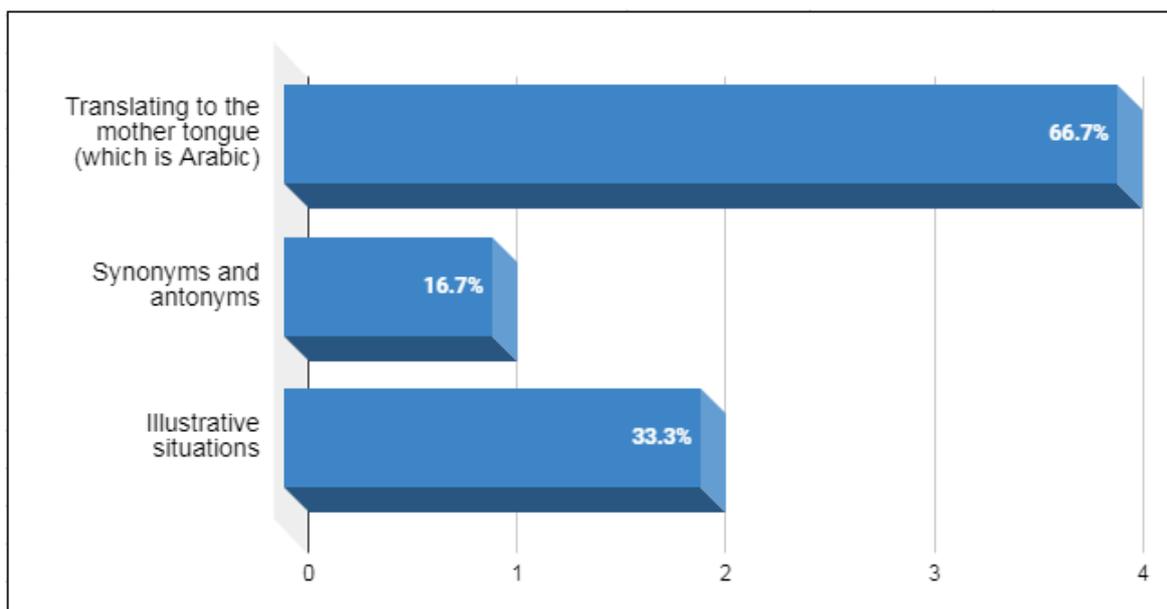
Figure 3.7: Techniques Used for Abstract Words Explanation

Figure 3.8 describes how teachers explain abstract words to primary school pupils. We can notice that most of the respondents (66.7%) selected translating to the mother tongue, followed by illustrative situations with 33.3% of the sample. Whereas using synonyms and antonyms came last with a lower rate of 16.7%. This finding indicates that most of the teachers directly provide explanations and clarifications of abstract words by relying on the pupils' mother tongue which is Arabic. However, Gairns and Redman (1986) insisted that "translation may be appropriate for items with a distinct equivalent in the native language, but it should be avoided otherwise". In other words, teachers should use the strategy of translating to their mother tongue cautiously despite its effectiveness.

Item 09: Based on your experience, what approach do you find most helpful in teaching vocabulary to primary school pupils?
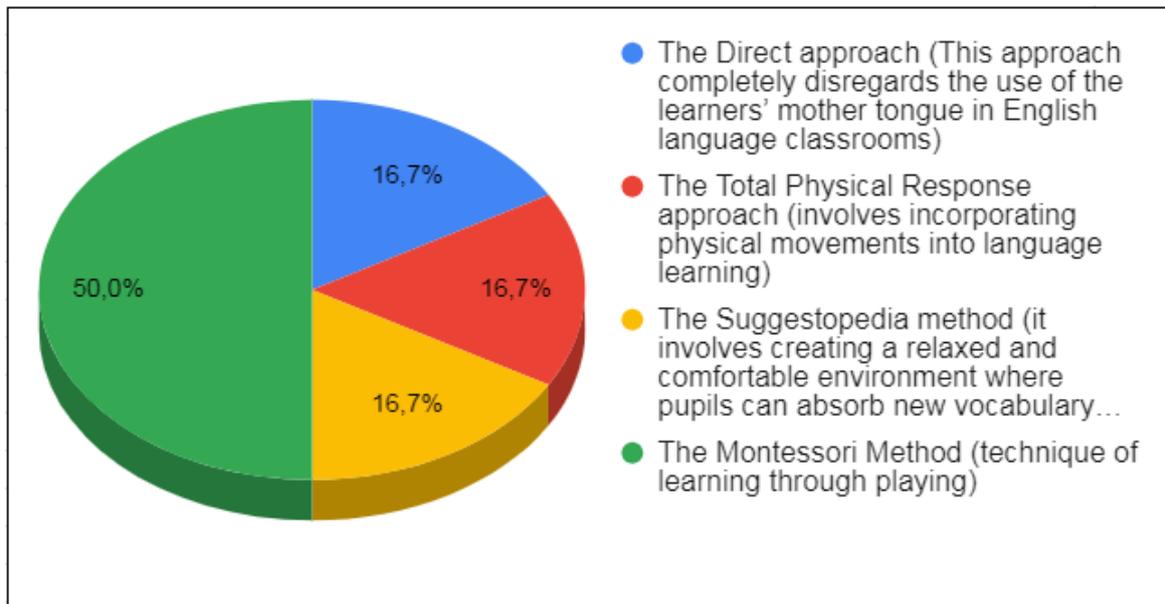
Figure 3.8: Teachers' Attitudes Towards Teaching Vocabulary at Primary School

As shown in this graph, fifty of participants (50%) selected the Montessori method as their preferred approach in teaching vocabulary. However, the other options, the direct approach and the TPR as well as Suggestopedia, were selected by a similar rate of 16.7% of the sample. The Montessori method emphasizes learning through playing and focuses on creating an engaging environment. As a result, teachers opting for the Montessori method indicates a positive perception of its effectiveness in the vocabulary teaching-learning process. Furthermore, we asked the participants to provide additional approaches, if there are; however, we didn't receive any answer.

3.4   Discussion of Results

The findings presented in this section of the study provide a summary of the main outcomes from the classroom observation, the teachers' questionnaire and the teacher's interview. Consequently, our hypothesis; primary school pupils' difficulties when acquiring English vocabulary are in terms of memorisation, short attention span and pronunciation, is confirmed.

3.4.1   The Classroom Observation

Based on the classroom observation made, it can be concluded that primary school pupils are very interested in learning English but they encountered numerous difficulties and obstacles when acquiring vocabulary. In general, primary school pupils encountered six main areas of difficulty when learning vocabulary: concentration, pronunciation, comprehension, syntax, spelling and retention. The analysis revealed a strong interconnection among these areas which means that a deficit in one of these areas eventually resulted in poor performance in the others. In addition, pupils were struggling with choosing the appropriate meanings of words and often confused when using similar words in different contexts. The major factors that caused those difficulties were the lack of resources and advanced materials, sound-spelling mismatches, the large quantity of words that pupils got to learn, the overcrowded classroom and the limited methods of teaching used by the teacher. As we know, the teaching methods can have a significant impact on learning outcomes. Thus, when teachers fail in using the appropriate methods for young learners, they can unintentionally create additional difficulties for pupils or vice versa. For instance, it was observed that pupils achieved better results when the teacher used visual aids such as flashcards. Furthermore, there are other factors that influence the learning process such as the classroom setting which involves the quality of lighting, the seating arrangement and the number of pupils. Based on what we have observed, the classroom setting was not appropriate for their young age. As a result, primary school pupils are facing several difficulties when learning vocabulary due to numerous factors. Hence, these challenges require serious attention, and the responsible individuals should make efforts to reduce them.

3.4.2   The Teacher's Interview

Based on the teacher's answers in the interview, it is evident that the teacher is aware that pupils encounter difficulties when learning vocabulary. Additionally, she stressed the importance of the learning vocabulary and its significant impact on pupils' language proficiency level. Moreover, the teacher agreed that pupils are visual learners since they love everything that is attractive and colourful. According to the teacher answer, the difficulties that pupils were facing are in terms of the difference between the spoken and written form

of English words, the complexity of word knowledge, spelling and short term memory. The reasons behind these difficulties can be caused by pupils' limited prior knowledge of the English language. Additionally, not having enough opportunities to practice in and outside the classroom may prevent pupils from learning the language appropriately. Finally, the teacher provided recommendations concerning teaching vocabulary in primary school. She stressed the importance of using quick and funny activities and incorporate educational games which can be done through using visuals aids.

3.4.3   The Teachers' Questionnaire

The results of the questionnaire have revealed some facts concerning teachers' attitudes towards the teaching-learning of vocabulary and pupils' difficulties when acquiring vocabulary. It provided information on the role of vocabulary, how new words are presented and what techniques are used to minimize pupils' difficulties as well as how they explain abstract words. Firstly, all of them agreed that vocabulary is important especially in enhancing pupil's communication, so they should make more efforts in teaching English vocabulary in order to obtain this objective. Secondly, pupils are facing difficulties in terms of pronunciation, sound-spelling mismatches, length and complexity of words and the influence of learning French on English wince they are similar but all the degree of difficulty is different from one to another. Moreover, all the participants agreed with the fact that primary school pupils are visual learners. However, since visual aids do not explain abstract words, most of the participants claimed that they explain them through translating to the mother tongue. However, using the mother tongue excessively in the classroom can impede vocabulary acquisition. Using illustrative situations is considered a more effective strategy in explaining abstract words. Finally, the participants emphasised that following the Montessori method, emphasizes a hands-on and child-centred learning process, is the most effective approach to teach vocabulary in primary schools. Therefore, teachers should not rely only on playing games orally, pupils needs to be involved physically and orally to develop their use of the Montessori method.

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the practical aspects of the study. Its main goal was to present, describe, analyse and discuss the data acquired from the data collection tools which are the classroom observation, the teacher's interview and the teacher's questionnaire. The target of the data collection tool was to highlight the challenges associated with learning vocabulary in primary school and how teachers are dealing with them in addition to knowing the factors that caused these difficulties. The obtained results of this chapter concluded that pupils are facing numerous difficulties when learning vocabulary and employing visual aids has contributed in reducing the amount of this difficulties.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Vocabulary is one of the fundamental aspects in the process of learning any language especially for primary school pupils. Researchers have indicated that mastering vocabulary can enhance the development of all language skills. Nevertheless, any difficulties experienced during vocabulary acquisition can affect the other skills. Hence, the present research work explores difficulties faced by third year primary school pupils when learning English vocabulary.

This study investigates primary school pupils' difficulties when learning vocabulary, the reasons behind these difficulties and the appropriate methods to reduce them. This study employed a mixed-method research design to collect data. First, a classroom observation was conducted at Temmami Lakhdar primary school in Biskra to obtain accurate information. Then, an interview was conducted with the teacher of the observed classroom to gather more details about teaching and learning vocabulary. In addition, a questionnaire was administered to primary school teachers to obtain their attitudes on teaching vocabulary. As a result, this study confirmed the research hypothesis; primary school pupils face difficulties in terms of memorization, short attention span, and pronunciation.

The present study reaches specific results, these results are based on the theories, the findings and the analysis of the data collection tools. Pupils suffer from different difficulties; pronouncing words, spelling them correctly, understanding and memorizing new words' meanings. In addition, they confuse similar words frequently. These difficulties were made because of the difference between the written and the spoken form in the English language words, the limited resources available in the classroom, the huge number of new English words that pupils acquire per session and overcrowded classrooms. Based on the research result, using visual aids like flashcards can improve pupils' interest, motivation and involvement in learning English vocabulary.

Recommendations

The present investigation tended to examine the different areas of difficulty which were encountered by third year primary pupils during the process of learning English vocabulary. Hence, the following recommendations are proposed as solutions to assist both teachers and pupils in addressing English vocabulary learning difficulties and to resolve them.

Recommendations for Teachers

- It is recommended that teachers consider implementing the Montessori method in primary school which is specifically designed for children. It is a language teaching method that prioritizes learning through playing in order to facilitate vocabulary acquisition.

- Teachers are requested to incorporate the Suggestopedia method into primary school classrooms to create a relaxed and comfortable environment that optimizes vocabulary acquisition through the combination of visual aids, soft background music, and imagination.

- It is highly recommended to incorporate Total Physical Response (TPR) into primary school classrooms as an approach to teach English vocabulary. The principle of this approach is to engage pupils in physical activities in order to make the language learning more exciting.

- Teachers are required to be eclectic which means choosing the positive aspects of any method and ignoring its negative aspects. Eclecticism allows teachers to personalize instruction and adjust their methods to suit diverse learners.

Recommendations to Responsible for Primary School Education

- Responsible for education at primary schools are requested to supply teachers with the most suitable visual aids for instance projectors, podcasts and slideshow presentations.

- Inspectors are required to revise the content of the seminars and workshops organized monthly and weekly in order to improve the quality of teachers and to stay updated about

new or effective vocabulary teaching methods through fruitful workshops.

Recommendations for Further Researches

- based on the findings of the present research work, an experimental study could be conducted to examine the issue further.

Limitations of the Study

We conclude our research work by stating or shedding light on the limitations we have encountered during the process of this study.

- The administration was not cooperative because they refused to provide us with any type of social media or email to contact the teachers because they were working in different primary schools, at least each teacher teaches in three primary schools.

- Due to unknown personal reasons, the teacher with whom we made the classroom observation, refused to be recorded so we were obliged to shift from a recorded interview to a written interview.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Primary School Syllabus of English

Domains	Target Competence	Components of the Competence	Resources	Cross-Curricular Resources	Timing
Oral comprehension	*Comprehend oral messages and identify the meaning of words in familiar context using paralinguistic features.*	**The learner can:** 1. recognise the meaning of words and expressions. 2. use the context and paralinguistic features to deduce the meaning of words and expressions. 3. be an attentive listener.	**Supports:** Videos, songs, cartoons, posters, pictures, short stories, etc. **Key Vocabulary** Words and chunks related to the learners' interests, immediate environment and needs. ▪ Salutations. ▪ Numbers (0-10) ▪ Days of the week ▪ Family members, friends, and mates. ▪ Languages. ▪ Colours. ▪ School things. ▪ School subjects. ▪ Home (flat/ house...). ▪ Toys.	*Intellectual* -Discover the relationship between the context, paralinguistic features and the meaning of words and expressions. *Methodological* -Make use of the context and paralinguistic features to identify the meaning of words and expressions. *Communicative* -React to verbal and non verbal messages to show understanding. *Personal and Social* -Respond to oral messages.	
Oral production	*Interact orally in communicative situations related to the learner's daily concern and interests using simple words and expressions.*	**The learner can:** 1. identify simple words and expressions to interact orally. 2. use simple words and expressions to interact orally. 3. respect the interlocutor.	▪ Pets. ▪ Adjectives ▪ Lexis related to parties **Grammar** Oral formulaic expressions and chunks related to the learners' interests, immediate environment and needs. ▪ The imperative (classroom commands) ▪ Contracted forms of to be and to have: ('m=am, 's=is/has, 're=are, 've=have) ▪ Present simple (To be / to have / to	*Intellectual* -Discover the importance of words and chunks used in oral interaction. *Methodological* -Exploit the linguistic repertoire and paralinguistic features to interact orally. *Communicative* -Select the appropriate words and chunks to interact orally. *Personal and Social* -Consider speech acts when interacting.	29h
			live / to love...) ▪ Statements ▪ Questions: *Wh-questions (how ,what, where, when) *yes/no questions ▪ Prepositions: *time: in, on *location: in, next to / opposite ▪ Articles (a, an) ▪ Pronouns		
Written comprehension	*Decode symbols, read simple messages of about 30 words and understand the meaning of words and structures using graphophonic knowledge and visuals.*	**The learner can:** 1. identify reading basics and decoding strategies. 2. use reading basics and decoding strategies. 3. show respect to his peers' readings.	**Supports:** Videos, songs, cartoons, posters, pictures, short stories, etc. -Words, expressions and short texts. **Phonics (Sound and Spelling)** - sounding letters of the alphabet - sounding numbers -vowel sound/i/ in 'live, in..' - consonant sound discrimination: -vowel sound /æ/-/ɒ/ /-/e/-ʌ **Capitalization / Punctuation** ❖ **Capital letters:** -Beginning of sentences, names of people, places and languages, days of the week personal pronoun subject 'I/ ❖ **Punctuation:** -Full stop, question mark, comma, apostrophe in contracted forms.	*Intellectual* -Demonstrate understanding of the strategies of decoding symbols. *Methodological* -Employ the strategies of decoding symbols as required. *Communicative* -Communicate the decoding strategies to peers. *Personal and Social* -Consider the strategies of decoding symbols to achieve others' understanding.	8 h

Written production *(Most of the time, the domains are integrated)*	*Write letters, words and simple sentences using correct handwriting and punctuation.*	The learner can: 1. recognize the features of writing letters (sizing, spacing and alignment). 2. use features of writing letters correctly. 3. respect the features of writing letters.	**Handwriting** • Fine motor skills through geometric lines and shapes. • Numbers as numerals. • Script/print style • Script lower case/Script upper case • Numbers • script handwriting practice at letter and short word/sentence/text levels **Punctuation** • English question mark (**?**) • English comma (**,**)	*Intellectual* -Demonstrate understanding of the features of writing. *Methodological* -Implement the features of writing letters appropriately. *Communicative* -Achieve readability through the appropriate use of the features of writing. *Personal and Social* -Value others' writings.	5 h
My Project : My Pictionary					

Appendix B: Classroom Observation Checklist

Mohamed Khider University - Biskra

Department of English

School: .... **Level:** .... **Time:** ....

Year: .... **Observer:** ....

Note: √ = Observed   /   X   = Not observed

Pupils' difficulties in learning English vocabulary at primary school	Sessions						Comments
Lack of concentration							
Need for motivating learning environment							
Struggling to pronounce words correctly							
Poor understanding of new words meanings							
Confusing the meanings of similar words							

							Comments
Difficulty in using words appropriately in sentences							
Misspelling of words frequently							
Difficulties in retaining the spelling of new words							
Inability to memorize the words meaning							
The quantity of words that pupils got to learn is extremely large							
Methods of Teaching English Vocabulary	**Sessions**						**Comments**
The teacher incorporates physical movements in learning to clarify a new word							
The teacher uses realia to help pupils associate words with the corresponding objects							
The teacher uses visual aids to clarify the meaning of words							

The teachers uses educational games to motivate pupils						
The teacher uses educational songs to teach vocabulary						
The teacher gives examples of the meaning of the target words						
Teacher directly explain the meaning of words in the mother language which is Arabic						
The teacher uses context clues to help understand new words						
The teacher employ mime and gesture to convey meaning						
The use of illustrative situations to teach abstract situation						
Relying solely on memorization						

Appendix C: Classroom Observation Report

1.The classroom setting

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2.The interaction between the pupils and the teacher

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3. Teacher talking time

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4.Teacher's feedback

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5.The use of the textbook

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Appendix D: The teacher's Interview

> Teacher's Attitudes towards The Primary school Pupil's Difficulties in learning Vocabulary

Questions

Q1. Richards and Rodgers (2001) states "Building up a useful vocabulary is central to learning of foreign language at primary level". Why do you think vocabulary is important?

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Q2. How do you often introduce new vocabulary to your pupils?

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Q3. What is your opinion of the incorporation of visual materials to improve pupils' vocabulary acquisition?

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Q4. What strategies do you use to make vocabulary learning more engaging and effective for your pupils? (Explain how)

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Q5. Based on your experience, what are the main difficulties that pupils face when learning vocabulary?

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Q6. Based on your experience , provide certain recommendations concerning teaching vocabulary in primary school.

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Thank you for your time and contribution.

Appendix E: Teachers' Questionnaire

Mohamed Khider University - Biskra

Department of English

Dear teachers,

You are kindly asked to answer the following questionnaire, which attempts to collect data for the accomplishment of a master dissertation under the title "Investigating Primary School Pupils' Difficulties in Learning Vocabulary". The findings of this research will be used to improve vocabulary instruction in primary school and contribute to the development of effective teaching-learning methods. The data gathered through this questionnaire is used for research purposes only.

 * Indicates required question

> **Section one:** Pupils difficulties in Learning Vocabulary

1. Learning vocabulary is important in developing pupils' language proficiency because: *

☐ It develops their understanding of the meaning and usage of new words

☐ It enhances pupil's abilities to learn and communicate effectively

☐ It fosters their ability to express themselves clearly and effectively

☐ It improves their overall language skills

☐ Other: _____

2. How do you find teaching vocabulary in your classroom? *

Easy ☐   Difficult ☐

3. In case it is difficult, please specify in what way?

_____

_____

4. Do pupils face difficulties when learning vocabulary? *

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

5. These difficulties are in terms of: *

☐ Pronunciation

☐ Sound-spelling mismatches such as words with silent letters. (to listen)

☐ Memorization

☐ Length and complexity of words

☐ The grammar associated with the word

☐ Lack of motivation

☐ Learning two similar languages simultaneously

☐ Other: _____

Section two: Vocabulary teaching methods

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6. How do you deal with the difficulties? *

☐ Change the method of teaching

☐ Encourage active engagement in the classroom

☐ Use games and activities to motivate them

☐ Provide regular opportunities for pupils to practice by repeating words already learned

☐ Incorporate role-play in your classroom

☐ Other: _____

7. Does the use of visual materials help in reducing vocabulary learning difficulties? *

Yes ☐   No ☐

8. If yes, what are the visual techniques you usually use? *

☐ Flashcards

☐ Pictures

☐ Realia (real life objects)

☐ Drawings

☐ Mime and gestures

☐ Other: _____

9. To explain abstract words, teachers use:

☐ Translating to the mother tongue (which is Arabic)

☐ Using synonyms and antonyms

☐ Using illustrative situations

☐ Other: _____

10. Based on your experience, what approach do you find most helpful in teaching vocabulary to primary school pupils?

☐ The Direct approach (This approach completely disregards the use of the learners' mother tongue in the classroom)

☐ The Total Physical Response approach (involves incorporating physical movements into language learning)

☐ The Suggestopedia method (it involves creating a relaxed and comfortable environment where pupils can absorb new vocabulary easily)

☐ The Montessori Method (technique of learning through playing)

- If there are others, please list them

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

8. If yes, what are the visual techniques you usually use? *

☐ Flashcards

☐ Pictures

☐ Realia (real life objects)

☐ Drawings

☐ Mime and gestures

☐ Other: _____

9. To explain abstract words, teachers use:

☐ Translating to the mother tongue (which is Arabic)

☐ Using synonyms and antonyms

☐ Using illustrative situations

☐ Other: _____

10. Based on your experience, what approach do you find most helpful in teaching vocabulary to primary school pupils?

☐ The Direct approach (This approach completely disregards the use of the learners' mother tongue in the classroom)

☐ The Total Physical Response approach (involves incorporating physical movements into language learning)

☐ The Suggestopedia method (it involves creating a relaxed and comfortable environment where pupils can absorb new vocabulary easily)

☐ The Montessori Method (technique of learning through playing)

- If there are others, please list them

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

الملخص

تعليم المفردات في المدرسة الابتدائية أمر حاسم لتطوير مستوى اللغة الإنجليزية للتلاميذ، ومع ذلك فإنه يشكل بالتأكيد عدة صعوبات تعوق اكتساب اللغة بنجاح. تهدف هذه الأطروحة إلى الإجابة على الأسئلة التالية: ما هي الصعوبات التي يواجهها التلاميذ في المدرسة الابتدائية في تعلم مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية؟ وما هي مواقف معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تجاه فعالية استخدام المواد البصرية في تعليم مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية؟ أدت الأسئلة البحثية إلى توقع النتائج التالية: (1) يواجه التلاميذ صعوبات في تعلم مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية فيما يتعلق بالحفظ و قصر فترة الانتباه والنطق. لجمع البيانات، استخدمنا نهجًا بحثيًا وصفيًا نوعيًا يعتمد على ثلاثة أدوات مختلفة لجمع البيانات؛ ملاحظة ستة حصص دراسية لقسمان مختلفان، مقابلة منظمة لمعلم الأقسام التي تمت مراقبتها، واستبيان لستة معلمين لغة انجليزية في المدرسة الابتدائية. أظهرت الدراسة أن التلاميذ يواجهون صعوبات في النطق والإملاء والفهم والتمييز بين الكلمات المماثلة تنشأ هذه الصعوبات من التباينات بين اللغة الإنجليزية المكتوبة والمنطوقة، ومحدودية موارد الفصل الدراسي، والعدد الكبير جدًا من الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة التي يكتسبها التلاميذ في كل جلسة، وازدحام الفصول الدراسية. تقترح الدراسة بأن استخدام الوسائل المرئية مثل الصور و بطاقات تعليمية يعزز مشاركة التلاميذ وتحفيزهم واكتسابهم لمفردات اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية، الصعوبات، تلاميذ المدارس الابتدائية.