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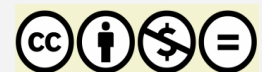
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Employing the Frontload Vocabulary Strategies in Enhancing Iraqi EFL Students' Vocabulary Retrieval Abilities

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Abstract

Vocabularies are the main elements of any language, thus, if there was not sufficient control in using them then the result would be a difficulty in vocabulary retrieval when needed. The frontload (pre teach) vocabulary strategies are used as a supportive pre learning strategies that help students to become acknowledged with the new materials that will be presented in the classroom. Applying these strategies can enable students remembering the vocabulary faster than traditional methods. The current study aims at investigating the effectiveness of using Frontload Vocabulary strategies in facilitating the Iraqi students' vocabulary retrieval. In order to fulfill the aims of the study, the researcher adopted a questionnaire. The questionnaire contains 12 items with the five point scale (always, usually, sometimes, rarely, never). The participants of the study are Third-year students at the Department of English/ College of Education. The distribution of the questionnaire is done online, 35 students received the questionnaire and answered it. For the pilot study, fifteen students were selected in a random way; the result was that 30 minutes were required to finish the questionnaire items. The items of the questionnaire were worded in a clear and simple way. Therefore, the students did not face any difficulty in responding to the questionnaire items. The items of the questionnaire were divided into two parts even and odd to measure their reliability. The researcher employed the Pearson correlation formula to measure the questionnaire reliability; it has been found that the reliability is 0.754. Then the Spearman Brown formula is applied and the result was that the questionnaire reliability is 0.859 which reveals that the questionnaire is reliable and acceptable. Based on the outcome of the study, this strategy facilitate students to comprehend the text or passage because many students lack the motivation to continue reading a text or passage when they encounter a lot of unfamiliar vocabulary. Furthermore, it also has been found that this strategy helps the students to get prepared before the process of reading starts which makes their learning process much more effective.

Keywords: Vocabulary Retrieval, frontload strategies, ability, employment, text and context.

1.1. Problem of the Study

The students have always faced difficulties in remembering and retrieving vocabularies whenever necessary. Therefore, the current study aims at finding out the effectiveness of using the frontload vocabulary strategies in enhancing the students' vocabulary Retrieval abilities and to show the whether or not using these, strategies can help the students improving their vocabulary Retrieval

1.2. Aim of the Study

The present study aims at investigating the effectiveness of frontload strategies in facilitating the process of vocabulary retrieval for the students.

1.3. Limits of the Study

The study limits third year college students - English department- college of education- Misan university in the academic year 2020 -2021.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Introduction:

In order to communicate with others we need a language and to do that we need to have a sufficient amount of vocabularies. Furthermore, just have a large amount of vocabularies is not sufficient; we need to be able to remember them whenever we need them. The students need to learn how to retrieve vocabularies in order to communicate and talk with other students. Using language for the purpose of communication with others makes an opportunity for making some kind of controlling over the learning context of the students. Bader (2017:5) states that teaching English around the world is done for various and different goals like to have a job, passing an exam, for developing their educational skills, etc. On the other hand, in Iraq and such countries, English is taught in schools and universities as part of educational curriculum. The educational progress of the students are assessed by measuring their ability in participating and expressing in various situations it can be clearly noticed that the more students participate the more they learn.

Frontloading is an effective strategy for teaching new concepts and vocabulary to all students, especially ELLs. Frontloading involves learning about something, talking about it, wondering about it then reading/writing about it. This helps students see/hear/use vocabulary in context and in multiple ways and helps students make connections (Ashtolson, 2016)

According to Weaver and Qi (2005: 322) when students participate in the class, then they need a set of vocabularies to use and employ. In addition, they need to remember this vocabulary whenever needed and use them in the right context and situations. Linse (2005:121) states that vocabulary is "the collection and types of words the students have". These words are required to be used in communication. On the other hand, Bader (2017: 7) defines vocabulary as "words which are presented by the students in language context". According to her, if students have a sufficient number of vocabularies then they will be able to express their thoughts and ideas more effectively.

Richards and Willy (2002: 255) claim that the vocabulary importance appear through using language, because in order to use language effectively you will need to be familiar with its vocabulary since it represents the main element in any language. Furthermore, it is necessary for improving the students' ability for learning skills listening, speaking, writing and reading. For Arista (2010:7), the vocabulary represents a central part of communication, and it is necessary for students to learn and know as much vocabulary as possible to create and present a meaningful

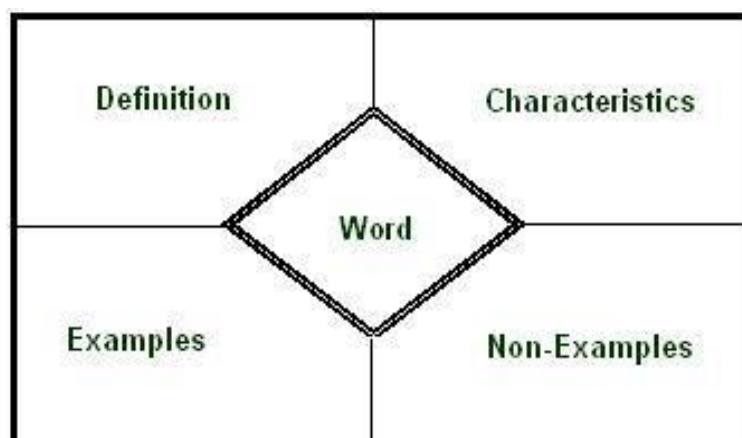
sentence. If students get control over their vocabulary then they will be able to learn English much more easily. If students lack the ability to retrieve the vocabulary, then their ability to communicate will decrease too.

2.2. Frontload Strategies

The Front Loading Vocabulary according to Downs (2016) is pre-teaching vocabulary that it is employed as a mean or instructional strategy to enhance the students' comprehension of a text. That's to say when the front loading is used, the students will be motivated to ask questions that has relation to the vocabulary. Furthermore, Marzano in Rockel (2010:13) mentions that the use of an effective strategy for the vocabulary teaching should have a certain characteristic and as follows:

1. The concertation should be on the other aspect of vocabulary rather than on the definition itself.
2. There should be representations for both the linguistics and non-linguistics aspects of vocabulary.
3. Students gain the opportunity to get exposure to vocabulary in different and varied ways.
4. Understanding the definition of a vocabulary must be derivation and word parts that are involved.
5. The students are the recipient of the special instruction concerning the vocabulary content.

Additionally, Martinez (2009: 1) says that the exposures to the educational content and materials before the process of teaching begin will create a very successful learning process. The same case for the Frontloading Vocabulary. Learning about the vocabulary before the process of learning began will enable students to comprehend and read the new materials that contain these vocabularies in way that is more effective. When a teacher provides the students with instruction to explore vocabulary, the result would be a better understanding for the meaning of new words and the students' ability to understand the meaning of a text would get better. To sum up, the frontloading vocabulary is "a strategy that provides the learner with the vocabulary which is related to the lesson". Casually, this strategy is employed to create a better comprehension and understanding for the concepts and contents on the part of the students. The main goal of this strategy is to prepare the learner before going to comprehend the texts or passages.



2.3. Teaching Vocabulary Using Frontloading Strategy

According to Borgese (2011) in order to apply the frontloading strategies in teaching vocabulary, the following procedures should be followed:

1. In the prewriting stage, the teacher can frontloading by instructing the students to do a rehearse,

plan, and converse with each other. When these strategies are applied, the results will streamline their writing as well as their revision process.

2. Organising writing workshops for students to asset them in collecting more ideas and participate in the revisions.
3. Employing technology as a tools to provide students with various means to participate and reading whether in the class or outside the classroom.
4. Readjusting efficient revision strategies for students.

Preszler. et.al (2006: 8) proposed the following steps to be followed in frontloading strategies:

1. Make an introduction for students to illustrate to them the contents of the subjects. Teacher can make something like a quick survey and asks the students to think about their own experiences that are related to the content of the lesson. Furthermore, asking them to make a list of words and linked it to the content of the lesson. For instance, if you are beginning a unit of study on the Vietnam Era, ask students to list words they associate with that time.
2. Making a words list concerning the content of the lesson using the ideas of students.
3. Making and revising the list of content words as you study the material.

3. Methodology

3.1 Population

For the current study, the sample and population is taken from third-year students/ English Department/ University of Misan/ Education college during the academic year (2020-2021). The number of the participants is 35, twenty of them are females and fifteen are males.

3.2 The Data Collection Instrument

To fulfill the goals of the present study, the researcher adopted a questionnaire since it is considered to be the most suitable mean to accomplish the purpose of the study. Henderson (1978: 60) confirms that the educators are strongly recommended the questionnaire as a efficient mean for data collection.

3.3 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of fifteen items which involves a questions that can be answered with the five point scale (always, usually, sometimes, rarely, never) to check their attitudes toward the use of frontload vocabulary strategies in facilitating the retrieval of vocabulary. Furthermore, to test whether or not they use such strategy in their learning process and to what extent it helped them. Each item in the questionnaire was given a ceramic point, one point for the least level which is 'never', two points for 'rarely', three points for 'sometimes', four for 'usually', and five for the highest level 'always'.

3.4 Pilot Administration

For the pilot survey, fifteen students were selected in random way. The pilot study has showed that to finish the questionnaire items the students needed thirty minutes. Furthermore, the items of the questionnaire have been found to be worded clearly and simply and the students faced no difficulty in understanding them.

3.5 The Reliability of the Questionnaire

To test the reliability of the questionnaire is tested by using the Pearson correlation formula. The researcher has divided the items of the questionnaire into two categories (odd and even).

Consequently, it has been found that the reliability of the questionnaire is 0.754, which is valid evidence that proves the reliability of the questionnaire items.

3.6 Statistical Analysis

The mean score's average weighted for each item in the questionnaire is two. By applying the Fisher's formula to set the questionnaire's items mean score, the item with more than two mean score is seen as a powerful item while the item with less than this is seen as weaker one.

3.7 Statistical Tools

The main statistical tools of the present study are:

1. Pearson's Formula

$$R_{xy} = \frac{n(\varepsilon xy) - (\varepsilon x)(\varepsilon y)}{\sqrt{(n(\varepsilon x^2) - (\varepsilon x)^2)(n(\varepsilon y^2) - (\varepsilon y)^2)}}$$

Where: εxy = sum of the xy ,

εx = the sum of the students answers on the odd items,

εy = the sum of the students answers on the even items, N= number of students,

X= students answers at the odd items, Y= students answers at the even items

(Mousavi, 2012:174).

2. Spearman Brown's Formula

$$R = \frac{2 \times R_{xy}}{1 + R_{xy}}$$

(Ibid, 680).

3. Fisher's Formula

Weighted mean score of an item

$$= \frac{F_1 \times 5 + F_2 \times 4 + F_3 \times 3 + F_2 \times 2 + F_1 \times 1}{\text{Total Frequency}}$$

Where F_1 = frequency of the first level (always)

F_2 = frequency of the second level (often)

Etc...

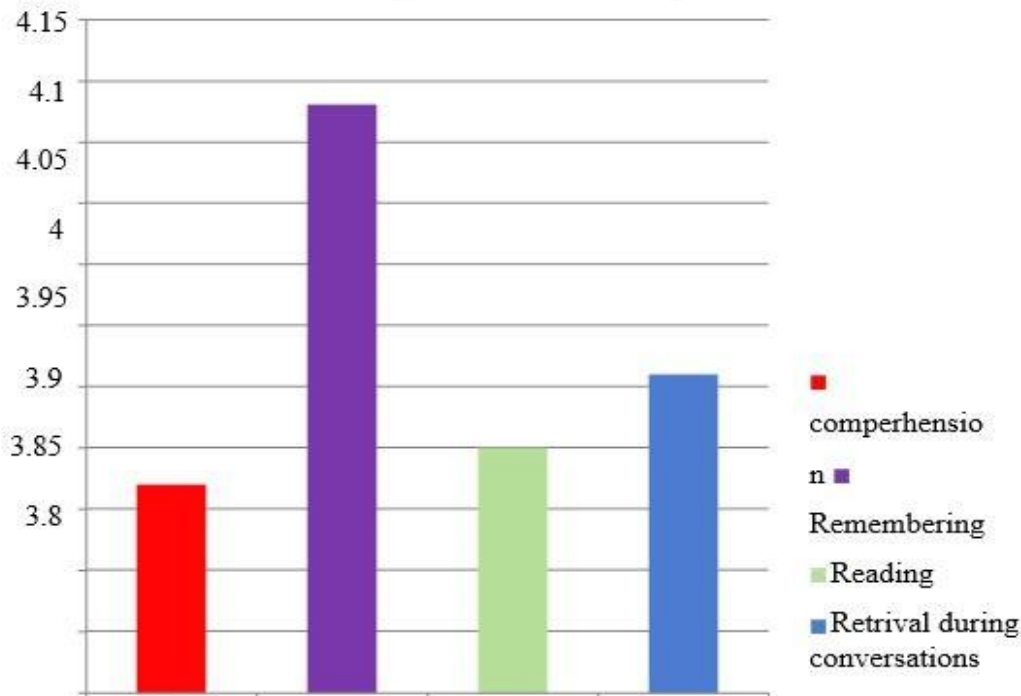
(Fisher, 1956:327).

Table (1) the items of the questionnaire

Items	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Weighted mean scores
I struggle to remember the new vocabularies that I encounter in a text.	21	5	4	3	2	4.14
I feel like the word is at the tip of my tongue but still I can not retrieve it.	20	6	4	2	3	4.08
I always get the feeling that I know the meaning of a word but I cannot remember it.	19	6	4	3	3	4
I do a pre reading for the text before the class starts.	10	4	12	6	3	3.34
I go through dictionaries and definitions that illustrate the new vocabularies before the beginning of class.	19	1	6	5	4	4.09
Do a pre writing test enable me to memorize the vocabulary better.	15	3	8	4	5	3.45
The comprehension of a text becomes much more easier when the teacher provides	14	9	5	4	3	3.77

us with a pre reading vocabulary list.						
The teacher pre presentation of the new vocabularies makesiteasier for me to remember them later.	18	10	2	2	3	4.08
When the teacher gives a pre instruction about the new vocabularies, this helps me memorize them in much better way.	12	8	7	3	5	3.45
I read the new text fluently when the teacher gives us definitions and information about the new vocabularies before the beginning of class.	16	8	4	2	5	3.8
If I get pre instruction about the new vocabularies then their retrieval during the conversation becomes much easier.	17	3	6	5	4	3.68
I retrieve the vocabularies more effectively when the teacher informs me previously about the meaning and definitions of them.	17	3	8	2	5	3.71

Figure (1) The weighted mean scores of the vocabulary's retrieval strategies that Frontloading can enhance



Results:

According to the data shown in Table 1, the students that participate in the study used frontload vocabulary strategies but with different weighted mean scores. The results revealed that these strategies could be efficient on different levels of vocabulary retrieval. That is to say, some of the students say that these strategies helped them most with the comprehension of the new text. Other participants agreed that these strategies helped them to become more fluent, in this aspect the weighted mean score was (3.8). On the other hand, some participants say that this strategy helped them with memorizing and retrieve the long and difficult words; the weighted mean score for this was (3.45). Furthermore, when the students were asked about whether or not the teacher pre informing about the meaning and definition of the new vocabulary would help them retrieve the vocabulary better and the weighted mean score for this item was 3.71, which considered to be high result.

Conclusions:

After analysing the results, the researcher has come to conclusion that using frontload vocabulary strategy can indeed be effective in developing and improving students' vocabulary retrieval. That is to say, frontload vocabulary strategy is considered better than the traditional methods in developing the students' vocabulary retrieval. Furthermore, this strategy gives students an opportunity to predict the meaning of a given vocabulary. It also can enhance teachers' ability to solve problems related to students' ability to remember the new vocabulary. The results of the study revealed that this strategy facilitate students to comprehend the text or passage because many students lack the motivation to

continue reading a text or passage when they encounter alotof unfamiliar vocabulary. Therefore, the students should have a previous feedback about these vocabularies, which helps them to get motivated to finish reading the text. That's what the Front loading vocabulary do, it works to motivate the previous knowledge about certain subjects then create a connection with the present subject. When students do that, it will become much easier to them to understand the text or the passage given to them. Furthermore, it also has been found that this strategy helps the students to get prepared before the process of reading starts which makes their learning process much more effective.

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