

A Study on Vocabulary Teaching Techniques in Semi-Urban Schools

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Dedication

The dissertation is dedicated to my beloved parents whose support and encouragement always motivate me to achieve the goal of my life.

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is a result of my own work. The contributions of other sources and information have been acknowledged wherever they have been used. It has not been previously included in a dissertation or report submitted to this university or to any other institution for a degree or other qualification.

Signature:

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Abstract

This research is based on a small scale study that focuses on the current practice of teaching vocabulary in the ESL class at high schools outside Dhaka. Two Bengali medium and Two English medium schools were selected where around 150 students and 4 teachers took part in the survey. A mixed method of analysis was used to analyze the collected data. The result suggested that some approaches taken by teachers such as providing definitional and contextual information, ample scope for reading, using high frequency words, Incidental teaching can be considered effective. The study also found some limitation in the teaching process such as teachers using only the traditional method for teaching vocabulary and their tendency to make students memorize the words. Therefore, some recommendations are presented at the end of the research. This Research will be helpful for the English teachers of schools of semi-urban and rural areas.

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Chapter one

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Vocabulary can be considered the most important feature to learn a language. Therefore, Smith (1969) said that a structure without vocabulary is not a language (p.531). A learner grows up with his/her vocabulary and become familiar with the words from his/her surroundings. With the passage of time concepts of vocabulary gets more widen as well as complex when an individual acquires new and more precise words to express their thoughts and feelings (Scroll,1971 p.378). Although it happens in case of mother tongue but in order to learn a target language the students need to learn it's vocabulary consciously. However, in Bangladesh, English is considered a second language and the students get the opportunity to learn English vocabulary only in EFL classroom. In most of the cases, the approaches of teaching vocabulary adopted by Bengali and English medium schools are not fruitful. Therefore, vocabulary must be taught in an effective way so that students can learn and understand words properly and use those in real context. This research attempts to show the current practice of teaching vocabulary in semi-urban schools of Bangladesh.

Chapter 2

Literature review

2. 1 Definition of Vocabulary.

Penny Ur (1996) defines vocabulary as words that are taught in a foreign language classroom. According to him sometimes it can be single word and sometimes it can be more than a single word that represents a single idea. In order to clarify it he gave example such as “post office” or “mother-in-law”. He stated that these words are the combination of two or three words that expresses single idea. Not only words but some multi-word idioms can be considered as vocabulary in which the meaning of the phrase cannot be identified from the component word such as “call it a day” (p.60). Again, Khoii and Shariffar (2013) stated vocabulary as a core element of language proficiency that provides much of the basis for how well learners communicate with each other (p.199).

2.2 Effective reading for learning vocabulary

Effective reading always increases vocabulary learning. To support this point, Nagy et al. stated that usually students learn approximately three thousand words per year. In order to make significant gains in the word knowledge students need encounter numerous words. Whereas students will encounter almost ten thousand words in every year if they get habituated with modest amount of reading though such reading have to be combined with multiple learning opportunities such as conversation, television, radio etc. He further pointed out that approximate 25 to 50 percent of annual vocabulary growth can be attributed only by the context while reading (as cited in Allen, 1999, p.9)

Moreover, Donahue et al. stated that according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress in Reading of United State, students who reported frequent reading both in and outside of class had higher test scores than the students who are infrequent in reading activities.(as cited in Wood et al, 2004,p.57). Hence it is proved that in order to increase the knowledge of vocabulary students must have to engage themselves in independent reading. Again, Nagy mentioned that this concept that wide reading helps student to enhance their knowledge of vocabulary became well established in professional literature (as cited in Wood et al,2004, p.57).However, students are not always interested to engage themselves in reading. In this regard, Allington pointed out that students who find reading difficult are reluctant to engage themselves in reading activity outside the classroom. As a result, their knowledge is limited for fewer words and they always find the concept load which is very challenging and frustrating for them. (as cited in Wood et al,2004, p.57). According to Wood et al, (2004), unlike professional readers these learners lack recreational reading as a source for expanding their knowledge of words. Therefore, they suggested that these learners need numerous opportunities to read the material so that they can increase their vocabulary incidentally through recreational reading (p.57).

Anderson and Nagy also mentioned reading as the single most important factor in increased word knowledge. Again, Allen and Robbins and Ehri pointed out vocabulary growth is the result of the extensive amount of reading that requires balanced reading program along with independent reading experiences (as cited in Bintz,2011,p.46).Though reading is important for the growth of vocabulary most of the students are not willing to read. In this regard, Broaddus & Ivey stated that, it is quite challenging as many mediocre students are struggling readers with poor reading skill and most of them are not that much willing to read. Though they can read but

they do not read regularly. As a result, they face problem to understand the meaning of the text. Therefore, this unwillingness of reading make them reluctant or resistant readers or, at worst, non-readers. Gradually, these students have very limited range of vocabulary that disrupts in their fluency in reading as well as comprehension. Connecting this point Pressley mentioned that these word meanings help to make up as much as 70-80% of comprehension. In addition , Harmon added that if these students are engaged in more reading activity that will certainly help them learn new words as well as new concepts, (as cited in Bintz, 2011, p.47)

On the other hand, according to Chandler (2008) reading is important only when it is not gist reading because it may overlook many words. He further added that if learners tend to read only for gist they might skip many important word items and guess blindly (p.247).Therefore, they should avoid gist reading.

In 2011, Heverly also mentioned the importance of reading because it gives learners opportunity to learn words from context. He mentioned an experiment by a group of University of Illinois researchers, led by William E. Nagy that measured the vocabulary growth of a group of fifth graders. In the experiment, they didn't rely on multiple-choice or fill in-the-blank. Therefore, in order to measure student word growth tests they interviewed every student. However, the researchers were able to quantify the difference clearly between direct and incidental vocabulary growth. According to researchers one can easily figure out the difference if he/she divides the increase in number of known words by the total instruction time. Nevertheless, Nagy et al. mentioned that around .02 words are learnt per minute by direct instruction whereas .25 words were learnt just by reading at the same time (as cited in Heverly, p.99). He concluded that readers learn words at more than twelve times just by reading rather than relying on direct

instruction He further added that along with reading the learners also need to focus on some other things such as,

- a. Genuine need to know, an interest in what they are reading;
- b. Contextual clues, e.g., pictures on the page, titles, the font and layout, the table of contents, and lots of other, subtle helpers and
- c. Prior knowledge of the subject—which often means using film or the Internet or other ways to give students enough contexts to enjoy their reading (p.100).

2.3 Strategy of teaching vocabulary: A four part vocabulary program.

Graves, August and Martinez (2013) talked about some strategies that teachers can adopt increase vocabulary of the students. This includes four parts of vocabulary teaching program (p.3) .The first one they mentioned is providing rich and varied language experience. According to Beck et al, students should be introduced in a rich array of language of language experiences so that they learn new words through four skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking. They stated that in the early stages of learning such as for primary and kindergarten students listening and speaking both are effective for the growth of vocabulary whereas for intermediate grades discussion is important. In connection to this, Applebee et al. stated that the students of all ages needs to engage them in authentic discussion to develop their knowledge of vocabulary through the opportunity of practicing thoughtfully discussed topic. Therefore, Cunningham and Stanovich said that when the students become proficient enough in acquiring good number of English words, they can enhance their knowledge by reading. In addition, Anderson et al. added that if teachers can increase the reading of their students, they can substantially increase the amount of vocabulary they learn (as cited in Graves, August and Martinez, 2013, p.4).

The second strategy is teaching words individually. In this regard, Beck et al. mentioned that if teachers cannot teach all of the words that students need to learn that does not mean they should not try to teach some of them. Research had revealed many effective and ineffective approaches for teaching individual words (as cited in Graves, August and Martinez, 2013 p.4). In this regard, Graves et al. (2013) mentioned that vocabulary approaches can be effective only when the learners have both definitional and contextual information and they actively process the meaning and experience multiple encounters with the vocabulary. In addition, there is a need for rich, deep and extended vocabulary instruction that affects on the comprehension of the students (p.4). The third one is word-learning strategies. According to Baunn et al. using word parts helps to unlock the meaning of unknown words (as cited in Graves, August and Martinez, 2013, p.5). They further added that if students are able to use their knowledge of prefixes, suffixes and roots properly they will need to know less individual words. For example, from the word "indicate" they can know and understand the meaning of "indicates", "indication", "indicator" etc. However, the last strategy the authors mentioned is fostering consciousness. Basically, this strategy motivates students to learn words and provide a deeper interest towards words. In addition, it makes them interested to learn new words and make the usage more precise as well as skillful (p.5).

Nevertheless, Wessels (2011) talked about a research-based vocabulary strategy which is vocabulary quilt. He stated that it offers students the opportunity to activate their background knowledge and use it for the target vocabulary (p.47). He mentioned that in vocabulary quilt students can learn new words by three techniques. Those are before reading phase, during reading phase and after reading phase. Firstly, in before reading phase, students get prepared for what they encounter in the text and thus enhance their knowledge. This preparation activates

their background knowledge incorporating new vocabulary and introduces them with the target vocabulary (p.48). Secondly, in during reading phase, students read and link their background knowledge to the target vocabulary. They use those in real context. The purpose of this phase is to provide the opportunity for engaging the students with meaningful vocabulary use as well as multiple exposures (p.48). Finally, the after reading phase deepens the student`s vocabulary knowledge in which they can think more critically. Moreover, they can strengthen their understanding on higher level knowledge. Thus students were able to build vocabulary knowledge that did not previously exist (p,49).

Nevertheless, Sonbul and Suchmitt (2010) stated another strategy of teaching vocabulary. Regarding this strategy, they mentioned two main approaches of learning vocabulary .The first one is explicit learning‘, which is focusing on the only words that are required to learn and the other one is incidental learning‘ which means learning vocabulary with an activity such as reading. He mentioned that in incidental learning students learn words as a by-product of that activity (p.253). Nagy claimed that incidental learning of vocabulary has dominant contribution for the acquisition of L1.Agin, Waring and Takaki stated that incidental learning also help L2 acquisition if there is ample and continuous exposure (as cited in Sonbul and Schmitt,2010, p.253). On the other hand, Nation noted that many L2 learners cannot experience the condition that is required for this sort of learning. Hence explicit learning” and the activities focusing on the only word is more effective as well as successful for L2 vocabulary learning. (as cited in Sonbul and Schmitt,2010, p.253)

However, Mondria found that it would be more effective if both are used in combined way instead of applying pure explicit approach. For example, in Saudi Arabia, reading passages incorporate new vocabulary items. This practice helps the students to enrich their comprehension

along with developing knowledge of vocabulary items they are required to learn. Again, Paribakht and Wesche claimed that Research has proved that in Canada, reading plus various types of vocabulary exercise is effective and helps to deepen vocabulary knowledge. In another study in California Zimmerman found that a group of learners who completed interactive vocabulary exercises after reading improved a lot than the group who has done with only reading (as cited in Sonbul and Schmitt,2010, p.254). After considering those studies, it might be concluded that explicit vocabulary instruction is a useful follow-up to incidental learning.

They again talked about form –meaning link which they applied for testing vocabulary knowledge of the students. In the study they tested three levels of vocabulary knowledge such as form recall, meaning recall, and meaning recognition incorporating three procedures (completion, L1 translation, and multiple choices) (p.254). The result of the study showed that In the Read-Only condition, the students gained very little form recall or meaning recall knowledge. Whereas the students in the Read-Plus condition produced higher scores at all three levels of mastery (p.257)

2.4 Background of teaching vocabulary.

For providing a balanced range of learning opportunity in teaching vocabulary a teacher needs to ensure four strands to the learner which is presented as bellow (Nunan, 2003, p.133).

a. Learning form meaning focused input

This strand focuses on learning form listening and speaking. So this strand useful for the receptive skill of the in which learners need to learn at least 98 percent words and only one unknown one should be in fifty running words. Students will learn these unknown words by contextual guessing which will not create any hindrance in the comprehension of the text. Nunan (2003) suggested that this strand should occur in the early stages of learning so that it can help learners to have access on simple written and spoken text (p.133).

b. Deliberate learning

Sometimes this strand also called form-focused instruction, language-focused learning or language study. Most important technique in deliberate learning is learning new vocabulary by memorizing by first language translation. It constantly pays attention on language feature such as sounds, spelling, vocabulary, grammar or discourse etc.

c. Learning from meaning-focused output

This strand involves learning vocabulary focusing on productive skill such as speaking and writing. This productive learning of using vocabulary enhances learning and push the learners to focus on the aspect of vocabulary by choosing the right word.

d. Fluency Development

The purpose of this strand is to help the learners to choose the best form their knowledge and make it available for the use. It is essential for all the four skill such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. This strand should only focus on the language feature by emphasizing communication and make the learner bound to perform faster than before (Nunan, p.134)

2.5 Principle of teaching vocabulary

Teachers always face difficulties in planning vocabulary component for a subject. Nunan (2003) suggested a set of guided principles that they should apply in order to teach vocabulary.

(p.135).Those are presented bellow.

a. Focus on the most useful vocabulary first.

According to Nunan (2003), there are some words in English that are used frequently in a wide range of contexts. Some are used in a limited range. Teachers should first focus on these words and make sure that learners can use those in the real context. He stated that “teaching useful vocabulary before less useful vocabulary gives learners the best return for their learning for their learning effort”. He stated that every English language learner needs to know first the

most frequent 1000 word families of English for listening, speaking, reading, and writing and for the use of formal or informal circumstances (p.135). These words are very effective for the learners because they cover 75 percent words from academic texts and newspapers, 80 percent from novels and 85 percent from conversation. He mentioned that it is very possible to speak and write a lot in English by only using the first 1000 words (p.136).

b. Focus on the vocabulary in the most appropriate way

According to Nunan (2003) this principle is about what words to teach and learn and how those should be taught and learned. He claimed that teachers should be able to clearly differentiate between the way to treat high frequency words and low frequency words. He suggested applying some vocabulary learning strategies like using word parts, guessing words from the context, Using word cards and dictionaries. In order to teach low frequency words teacher can use word part knowledge (using suffixes, prefixes and stems). Moreover, using word parts help learners to remember words. For learning low frequency words he suggested to increase reading and said that if learners improve their skill in reading and guessing from the context it will be helpful for them. However, except using word part and guessing from the context he talked about using word cards and dictionaries to deal with low frequency words. For learning vocabulary in a more interesting way he talked about a technique which may seem a bit unfashionable but researchers found it very helpful. Student can use word card writing English from one side and first language translation from the other and look up those whenever they get free time. First language translation is important because it makes the word more comprehensible (p.138).

- c. Give attention to the high frequency words across the four strands of a course.

Teachers should prioritize high frequency word in four strands of a course and make the learners use those in all skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Learners can use those words spontaneously through productive and receptive way (Nunan, p.139).

- d. Encourage learners to reflect on and take responsibilities for learning.

Teachers can just guide the learners and encourage them but learner should take their own responsibilities. Unfortunately learners are often reluctant to take responsibilities mostly because of what they have learnt in their past (Nunan, p.140).In order to overcome the situation teachers can help them in following way.

- (I) Inform the learners about different types of vocabulary.
- (II) Train them to make familiar with a range of learning option
- (III) Provide opportunities for choosing what or how to learn.
- (IV) Provide encouragement and opportunity to reflect on their learning and evaluate it.(Nunan, p.141)

However, Stahl (1986) in his article discussed about three principles of effective vocabulary instruction for improving methods of teaching vocabulary (p.663). Those are described below.

- a. Give both context and definitions

According to Stahl (1986) two types information are needed for vocabulary learning definitional and contextual. Definitional information is knowledge of logical relation a word with other known words whereas contextual information is about knowledge of the core concept and

how it changes in different context. In order to emphasis on his point he said, he exemplified that smoke something different based on the context though it`s definition is same. He added that definitional information is provided not only through definition but also suffixes, prefixes etc. On the other hand, contextual information can be provided from the exposure of a context, sentence even from a picture. He emphasized that teachers should maintain a balance between both of the information for better comprehension. Materials which provide a definition along with multiple examples correctly used in context helps students to improve comprehension. Otherwise using them individually cannot be significant for the learners (p.663).

b. Encourage ~~deep~~ "processing

Stahl (1986) talked about the ~~depth~~ "depth of processing" framework and according to this when students learn information more deeply it is easier for them to remember that. This process helps them to make connection, relating those with their background information and spending more effort on learning. He pointed out methods which make learners to think more deeply are considered more fruitful. He mentioned three different levels of processing vocabulary instruction which creates a strong effect on their learning. The first one is association processing which associates between a word with its synonym, or with a single context if they find no extra information about the word. Next he talked about comprehension processing in which students associate the words they have learnt to show their understanding through the activities such as finding an antonym, fitting the word into a sentence blank or classifying it with other words, etc .The third one is generation processing in which students create a novel product of their comprehended association by restating and comparing the definition to understand the word meaning clearly. He argued that methods of association processing does not create strong effect

on student's comprehension like methods of comprehension and generation processing do (p.664).

c. Give multiple exposures

According to Stahl (1986), this principle emphasized on the time that students were exposed to and also what type of information given in each time. It helps to improve their comprehension on providing multiple repetitions and the exposure of the word meaning in different context. However, he argued that providing only one or two exposures are not that much fruitful for learners' comprehension. Again he added that another important factor is the time that is allocated for vocabulary instruction. While teaching vocabulary the teacher should be careful of spending more time. According to researchers, at least 10 seconds should be allocated for each word and 20 minutes for instruction. Thought it is not always possible for teachers but doing this may bring greater gain (p.665).

2.6 How words should not teach

Stahl (1986) pointed out there is a pattern for both successful and unsuccessful instruction. He mentioned methods that include definitional information or provide only one or two exposure of the word are not able to enrich student's comprehension (p.665). After reviewing the textbook of school and college, Brozo and Stahl claimed that most of the methods teachers follow to teach words are not effective. Maximum exercises provide a list of words, paired with a definition or a synonym or with instructions to look them up in the glossary (as cited in Stahl ,1986 p.665). Those exercises hardly provide students some examples of the word used in context and reach their comprehension level. He argued although there might be some exceptions but most of the methods are not that much fruitful for the students. He also pointed out that no matter it is commercial textbook or teacher directed, the principle just evaluates the

instruction. Finally, he also provided a solution. If materials seem difficult and make learners bound to swallow those, teachers can modify those and design new instruction (p.666).

2.7 The instruction and materials for teaching

In 2010, Kelly et al. has researched about vocabulary instruction incorporating standard practice of the high school students in United States. They designed an effective vocabulary instruction in which they suggested to start with short text which will grab student's attention. They stated that short texts are easier to re-read and re-visit, helpful to reduce the overwhelming feeling especially for struggling readers rather than long piece of text (p.8). They have selected particular text for fourth to six grade students based on the criteria such as their potentiality, readability and capability to engage on the text. When they designed vocabulary instruction, they were very concerned about level, length and vocabulary of the text. Teachers as well as the students clearly mentioned in the evaluation about the texts that can be related to the student's lives such as internet bullying, children's television viewing rates, single-gender classroom were more acceptable and effective to engage them. Half of the students were benefited after the discussion and found that they were more likely engaging and responding with the text especially when they felt personally connected to the text's subject (p.9).

However, in 2008, Smith also did an experiment in order to teach vocabulary to high school students in a varying, playful context and established a word-rich environment for them. At first he tried to teach them vocabulary in a traditional way such as he gave quizzes and assigned lists of words which he wanted the students to look up the definitions in online and traditional dictionary. Though the quiz scores were adequate but he felt that students were not learning anything rather than a couple of quick memorizing tricks. Students could not remember those after the quiz. However he tried to teach them in different way. He introduced the words to students and focused on expanding students' understandings of words in deeper and richer ways

rather than just to plop the list of words. He emphasized more about applying the meanings of words in real context instead of just filling in the blanks or matching the word to the definition (p.19).

2.8 Nagy's Elements of Essential Vocabulary Instruction

William E. Nagy talked about an essential instruction for teaching vocabulary .He did an extensive study and research regarding teaching vocabulary and identified three effective elements for vocabulary instruction such as integration, meaningful use, and repetition. In nutshell, integration means lessons of vocabulary not only have to integrate with teaching but also tie in to reading and writing. Then, there should be opportunities to use the words in meaningful ways so if teacher wants to teach the word –absolution”, they should use the word by themselves as well as make students to use that in real context. He exemplified that teachers might ask students to write a sentence using their vocabulary. The concept also supports spontaneous uses word in and out of class. Finally, teachers should be ready to teach words multiple times because very few students learn anything in their first attempt when they encounter it. Teachers should repeat words over and over again until students capture those (as cited in Smith, 2008, p.21).

Smith (2008) however, indentified new strategies that identifies three maxims such as creating word- rich environments, teaching words that he use to talk about texts; and spending less time, more often (p.21).

a. Creating word-rich environment

The first maxim that smith talked about is creating rich environment. Allen suggested that Teachers should present more advanced level language to the students (as cited in Smith , 2008 p.22). The reason behind it is, when teachers use more precise and diverse vocabulary in the class , they create an environment that encourages students to do the same (p.22).It is unfortunate

that when conversing with the students teachers use almost no words beyond their level .He exemplified that they use words like good, nice, and say abound. Smith however, suggested exchanging those words for more advanced one like spectacular, benevolent, or with the synonymous words that mean the same thing. According to him, teachers cannot expect students to use a variety of words until they use words beyond their level in classrooms. He argued that teachers tend to use low –level words whereas the well written books that they asked to read contained rich, descriptive words. Though these words can be defined but they are not for regular usage. Now question may arise that many students come from such environments where these words are not used. How these students will be able to understand and use these words appropriately? Smith answered this question by himself that students will learn words like this way because they will hear them and have opportunities to use them .As a result, minor word changes like these can increase the word learning over time (p.21).

Moreover, he suggested using puns and jokes along with playing word games such as crossword puzzles and other word games that helps to increase not only the students' knowledge of particular words but also their understanding of how those words function in the real world. As a result, this knowledge provides them a framework and thus they become independent word learners. Finally, he concluded that when classrooms become laboratories where students can experiment and use words, they begin to seek out and adopt new words naturally into their lives (p.22).

b.Choose words helpful when talking about what you are reading

Smith (2008) noticed that many students struggle to talk meaningfully about what they read in class just for the lack of vocabulary. He mentioned that teachers need to focus on words that helps them to discuss on the topic of reading materials (p.22).The students will have numerous

scope to use those word meaningfully in everyday situations. On the contrary, there are words that students required to learn for enhancing the flow of their reading texts in class. However he argued that teachers need to be careful about how much weight they give for those words because words that only appears once or twice and can be easily dealt with the students through contextual guessing. Perhaps, sometimes not knowing the word will not create hindrance for students' understanding. So teachers should be careful of making decision about which word to choose for teaching (p.23)

d. Spend Less Time, More Often

According to educational psychology, ~~the~~ principle of distributed practice tells us that people learn best from multiple shorter periods of study than from relatively few, longer periods of study". Smith also referred that .meaningful instruction on vocabulary did not take a large chunks of time. Again, he added, students who have opportunities to work with their assigned vocabulary within a short period of time learn more effectively. As a result, teachers did not dedicate whole days to vocabulary instruction. Hence, their vocabulary instruction takes a few minutes in a day and provides a base of the lessons.

2.9 Traditional instruction of teaching vocabulary

Basurto (2004) asserted that teachers usually follow traditional instruction for teaching vocabulary which involves having students to look words up in the dictionary along with write definition, and use words to make sentences. Moreover, wordlists, teacher explanation, discussion, memorization, vocabulary books and quizzes that are used as an effort to teach new word items to the students. He claimed although these are traditional instruction but research and theory does not support them (as cited in Bromley, 2007 p.528).

On the other hand Chandler (2008) supported using dictionary because he said words that are marked and studied in the dictionary have better chances for being learned. Therefore, students require practicing bilingual dictionary (p.247).

2.10 Memorization versus creative method of teaching

One of the common methods of teaching vocabulary is to make students memorizing the words. Perry (1969) strongly discouraged students to learn new words through memorization. He said the he found many students with list of words one side of a paper and the other side with definitions. They were looking at the list, turning away and back to the list again to memorize those words. He claimed that teaching vocabulary can be more creative and stimulating rather than just to memorizing word items particularly for those learners who find little connection between the word with its` dictionary meaning. He suggested that teachers, on the other hand, can relate the word with the context, discuss the word, write students` suggestion on the board and also point out context clue (p.164). Instead of memorizing words he tried to teach vocabulary with some creative approaches in which students were required to write short paragraphs and later translate it into picture creating a montage form many pictures. The students wrote the paragraph twice the first one was with the key words and the second one eliminating the key words. Next, with the help of these pictures their assignment was to find out a picture that illustrated the meaning a word that they already have studied in their class and write a brief explanation beneath the word. Finally, a vocabulary test was given to the students and the result was satisfactory and remarkable. Though he used these approaches for high school students but with little adaptation teachers could use those for grade nine to twelve for less gifted English students (p.165).

However, Khoii and Sharififar also considered memorization is an outdated, shallow, and counterproductive educational practice .According to them, there was a strong opposition to use memorization as a language learning strategy during the past 30 years.

Again, Sinhaneti and Kyaw (2012) mentioned memorization and repetition that relate with RL (rote learning) had been used widely as a strategy of language learning. He further stated many researches indicate that most Asian countries are still utilizing the traditional learning style in which RL strategy has been used especially in vocabulary learning for Asian EFL learners (p.988).

In this regard, Nelson (2008) also discouraged memorization (RL).He said that rote memorization of words and definitions will no longer work. So, students must be able to move beyond the knowledge level of understanding vocabulary and become adept at using context clues to understand unfamiliar words (p.33).

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Objective of the study

The purpose of the study is to find out the current practices of teaching vocabulary in semi-urban Bengali and English medium schools and suggest ways for improving the techniques in future.

3.2 Research questions

- a. What are the current techniques of teaching vocabulary adopted by the teachers of semi-urban Bengali and English medium schools?
- b. Do teachers of those schools apply the theoretical approach of teaching vocabulary?
- c. Is there any similarity or differences between the process of teaching in semi-urban Bengali and English medium schools?

3.3 Significance of the study

The current study will be helpful for the semi-urban English language teachers as well as the learners to find out the scenario of vocabulary teaching techniques. In addition to this, the findings followed by effective solutions will make them enable to perform better and also improve their techniques of teaching vocabulary in future.

3.4 Participants

The researcher surveyed four different schools among those two of them were Bengali medium schools and two of them are English medium schools. Those schools are located in Sirajganj, Bangladesh. As the researcher's objective was to survey the students of high school, she surveyed the students of class eight from all those schools. The researcher conducted a survey among 150 students of whom 90 students were from Bengali medium schools and 60 were from English medium schools.

Table1. Class profile of the participants

Name of schools	Medium	Class	Number of participants
a) Collectorate School and College	English	VIII	28
a) Jewel's Oxford International School and College	English	VIII	32
c) Shahid Model Schools	Bengali	VIII	43
b) Shaheen Shikkha Paribar	Bengali	VIII	47

In addition, the researcher conducted a survey among four English teachers. Two of them were from Bengali medium schools and the other two were from English medium schools.

3.5 Research Instruments

In order to collect data the researcher developed two questionnaires (see Appendix A and Appendix B) for the purpose of the study.

(I) Questionnaire for students

The questionnaire consisted of 18 close-ended questions.

(II) Questionnaire for teachers

This questionnaire consisted of 18 close-ended questions.

3.6 Procedure

The researchers contacted with two Bengali medium and two English medium schools in order to get primary information through a survey. The permission of the authority was obtained before the data collection procedure. The researcher had to explain the research and its objective to the principals in order to get permission for the survey. The survey was taken before or after the class according to the schedule of the authority. The researcher explained every question in detail especially to the participants of Bengali medium schools so that they can answer the questions properly.

3.7 Method of analysis

The researcher used a mixed method of analysis consisting both quantitative and qualitative methods for analyzing data. The researcher calculated the result on Microsoft 2007 Excel sheet and converted the result into percentage by using Microsoft word 2010.

3.8 Limitation of the study

The researcher conducted a survey only among four schools situated in Sirajganj, a town outside Dhaka. Therefore; the result of this study cannot be generalized for all the schools of the country. Furthermore, the participants were less in comparison to regular school days because of rain.

Chapter 4

Data analysis

This chapter is shaped to analyze the responses collected from the students and teachers from both Bengali and English medium schools.

4.1 Findings from students` questionnaire

Table 1

Emphasis on learning unknown words

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	88	97.78
	No	2	2.22
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	60	100
	No	0	0

The table is showing that 88 students from Bengali medium school admitted that teachers emphasize them on learning vocabulary and the percentage of these students are 97.78. Only 2 of them said "no" which percentage is 2.22. On the other hand, 60 (100%) students of English medium school marked "yes" and accepted the statement. No one was found to disagree with the statement.

Table 2

Providing definition of every unknown word

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	Yes	81	90
	No	9	10
English Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	Yes	56	93.33
	No	4	6.67

Table 2 shows that, 81 students from Bengali medium schools which are 90% of the total number of students stated that teachers provide them definition of unknown words though 9 students (10%) said “no”. Again for the same question, 56 (93.33%) students from English medium school marked “yes” and 4 (6.67%) of them said “no”.

Table 3

Providing relevant information based on the text while students notice a new word

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	Yes	81	90%
	No	9	10%
English Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	Yes	56	90.33%
	No	4	6.67%

In table 3, 81(90%) students from Bengali medium schools said that teachers provide them relevant information when they notice new words and 9 (10%) of them said “no”. In case of English medium schools, 56 students that are 90.33% of the total number said “yes” but 4 of them (6.67%) said “no”.

Table 4

Enough scope of reading in the class

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	83	92.22%
	No	7	7.78%
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	59	98.33%
	No	1	1.67%

Table 4.4 shows that 83 (92.22%) students from Bengali medium schools agree that teachers provide them enough scope for reading in the class though 7(7.78%) of them disagreed with that. Furthermore, 59 students from English medium school marked “yes” and the percentage is 98.33%. Only 1 (1.67%) student said “no”.

Table 5

Focusing on the summary or the whole text

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	Summary	87	96.67%
	Whole text	3	3.33%
English Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	Summary	0	0%
	Whole text	60	100%

Table 4.5 shows that 87 (96.67%) students from Bengali medium schools admitted that teachers focus on the summary while 3(3.33%) of them disagreed. In contrast, all the students from English medium schools said teachers focus on the whole text. No responses were found for summary reading from the English medium students.

Table 6

Teaching by word parts such as suffixes, prefixes and roots for enhancing the knowledge of unknown words.

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	Yes	0	0%
	No	90	100%
English Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	Yes	54	90%
	No	6	10%

In table 6 , no students from Bengali medium schools were agreed to the point that teachers teach them by suffixes, prefixes and roots so all the student marked ~~no~~” while 54 (90%) students from English medium schools said ~~yes~~”. However, 6 (10%) students denied that.

Table 7

Motivating and creating interest of learning new words

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	6	6.67%
	No	84	93.33%
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	8	13.33%
	No	52	86.67%

For table 4.7, 93.33% students` response were ~~no~~” from Bengali medium schools which means teachers do not motivate them and create interest to learn new words but some students (6.67%) said ~~yes~~”. In terms of English medium schools, 52 students said ~~no~~” which were 86.67% of total number and among them 13.33% said ~~yes~~”.

Table 8

Motivating to see dictionary for unknown word meaning

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	3	3.33%
	No	87	96.67%
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	46	76.67%
	No	14	23.33%

87 (96.67%) students from Bengali medium schools said that teachers do not motivate them to see dictionary (table 8) while 3 students (3.33%) marked –yes”. Further, 46 students from English medium schools said –no” while some of them (23.33%) said –yes”.

Table 9

Teachers give activity such as filling the blanks or multiple choices after reading a text.

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	82	91.11%
	No	8	8.89%
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	55	91.67%
	No	5	8.33%

In table 9, most of the affirmative responses were found from both Bengali (91.11%) and English medium schools' students' (91, 67%). Whereas, few negative responses were also found that indicates (8.89%) for Bengali medium schools and (8.33%) from English medium schools.

Table 10

Teachers follow textbook and tasks such as finding synonyms or antonyms

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	85	94.44%
	No	5	5.56%
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	54	90%
	No	6	10%

Table 10 indicates that 85 (94.44%) students from Bengali medium schools marked –yes” while 5(5.56%) of them marked –no”. In case of English medium Schools, 54 students (90%) said –yes” and 6 of them said –no” which is 10% of the total number of students.

Table 11

Teachers play word game such as cross word puzzle or others during the class

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	1	1.11%
	No	89	98.89%
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	27	45%
	No	33	55%

Table 11 represents that 89 students from Bengali medium schools disagreed and said teachers do not play word game or puzzle and only 1 student marked –yes”. Nevertheless, from English medium schools, 27 (45%) students said –yes” while other 33 students (55%) said –no”.

Table 12

Teachers make students memorize words

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	88	97.78%
	No	2	2.22%
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	53	88.33%
	No	7	11.67%

Table 4.12 shows 88 students from Bengali medium schools stated that teachers make them memorize words while 2 of them disagreed with the statement. Again, 53 (83.33%) students from English medium schools marked –yes” while 7 (11.67%) of them denied that.

Table 13

Which way is the best to memorize new words.

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	(I)	21	23.33%
	(II)	14	15.56%
	(III)	52	57.78%
	(IV)	3	3.33%
English Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	(I)	2	3.33%
	(II)	7	11.67%
	(III)	2	3.33%
	(IV)	49	81.67%

Table13 indicates that from Bengali medium schools 23.33% students chose option (I) which means memorizing a list of words .Again, 15.56% marked option (II) which is memorizing words while using in a sentence. However, 57.78% marked option (III) with the statement memorizing words from long passages and only 3.33% said learning vocabulary by suffixes and prefixes (IV). Whereas, from English medium schools 3.33% chose option (I), 11.67% option (II), 3.33% option (III) and 81.67% option (IV) respectively.

Table 14

Way of teaching vocabulary

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	(I)	12	13.33
	(II)	78	86.67
English Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	(I)	7	11.67
	(II)	53	88.33

In table 14, 13.33 % students from Bengali medium marked option (I) which is explicit learning and 86.67% students marked option (II) or incidental learning. Whereas 88.33% students from English medium schools said incidental learning (II) and the rest 11.67% said explicit learning (I).

Table 15

Teachers allocate separate time for vocabulary or teach you with an activity such as reading

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	(I)	4	4.44%
	(II)	86	95.56%
English Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	(I)	3	5%
	(II)	57	95%

Table 15 represents, 95.56% students from Bengali medium schools chose option (II) which is activity based vocabulary learning and only 4.44% chose option (I) that is teachers allocate separate time. However, 95% of English medium students marked (II) and only 5% of them marked (I).

Table 16

Teachers emphasize on the most frequent words

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	71	78.89%
	No	19	21.11%
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
	Yes	51	85%
	No	9	15%

78.89% students from Bengali medium schools answered “yes” (table 16) which means teachers focus on the most frequent words while the rest 21.11% answered “no”. Again, 85% students from English medium schools said “yes” but the rest 15% said “no”.

Table 17

Teachers modify exercises provided in the textbook that seems difficult to you

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	Yes	16	17.78%
	No	74	82.22%
English Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	Yes	48	80%
	No	12	20%

From the responses of table17, it was found that 82.22% students of Bengali medium schools said “no” that means teachers do not modify exercise from the book and rest 17.18% said “yes”. In contrast, 80% students from English medium schools answered affirmative which means teachers modify exercises that seems difficult to them but rest 20% said “no”.

Table 18

Teachers use more advanced words in the class

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	Yes	6	6.67%
	No	84	93.33%
English Medium	Responses	Number of students	Percentage
Schools	Yes	6	10%
	No	54	90%

This table shows, 93.33% students of Bengali medium schools answered negative while only 6.67% of them answered affirmative. In case of English medium schools, 90% students said “no” which means teachers usually do not use advanced words in the class though 10% of them denied that.

4.2 Findings from teachers` questionnaire

Table 1

Emphasis on learning unknown words

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	

Table 1 shows , among the 4 teachers from both Bengali and English medium schools all are agreed that they emphasize on vocabulary in the class.

Table.2

Providing definition of every unknown word

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	

By the responses of the teachers, it was found, all the teachers from both Bengali and English medium schools admitted that they provide the definition of unknown words to the students.

Table 3

Providing relevant information based on the text while students notice a new word

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of students
Schools	Yes	2
	No	
English Medium	Responses	Number of students
Schools	Yes	2
	No	

From table 3, all the teachers from both Bengali and English medium schools accepted that they provide students relevant information while they notice a new word. Therefore all the teachers marked “yes” and no one marked “no”

Table 4

Enough scope of reading in the class

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of teachers
	Yes	2
	No	
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of teachers
	Yes	2
	No	

There were four teachers from Bengali and English medium schools and all are agreed with statement that they provide students enough scope of reading.

Table 5

Focusing on the summary or the whole text

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of teachers
	(I)	2
	(II)	
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of teachers
	(I)	
	(II)	2

Table 5 shows, it was found that both of the teachers from Bengali medium schools ticked option (I) which means they focus on the summary. On the other hand, both of the teachers from English medium schools ticked option (II) which means they focus on the whole text.

Table 6

Teaching by word parts such as suffixes, prefixes and roots for enhancing the knowledge of unknown words.

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	
	No	2
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	

From table 6, both of the teachers from Bengali medium schools said “no” whereas both of the teachers from English medium schools said “yes”.

Table 7

Motivating and creating interest of learning new words

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	

For table 7, all the teachers from Bengali medium schools answered affirmative. Similarly, teachers from English medium schools also answered which means they motivate their students.

Table 8

Motivating to see dictionary for unknown word meaning

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	

This table shows teachers from both Bengali and English medium schools said –yes” and agreed to the point that they motivate students to see dictionary.

Table 9

Teachers give activity such as filling the blanks or multiple choices after a reading text.

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	

From table 9, all the teachers including Bengali and English medium schools marked –yes”.

Table 10

Teachers follow textbook and tasks such as finding synonyms or antonyms

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	

Table 10 indicates that all teachers from Bengali and English medium schools marked “yes” and agreed with the statement.

Table 11

Teachers play word game such as cross word puzzle or others during the class

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	
	No	2
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	

The responses of the table (11) shows teachers from English medium schools said “yes” whereas teachers from Bengali medium schools disagreed that.

Table 12

Teachers make students memorize the word

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	1
	No	1

Both of the teachers from Bengali medium school admitted that they make students memorize the words (table 12) .In terms of English medium, though one teacher agreed but the other one disagreed the statement.

Table 13

Which way is best to memorize new words.

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	(I)	
	(II)	
	(III)	2
	(IV)	
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	(I)	
	(II)	
	(III)	

	(IV)	1
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This table indicates that two of the teachers from Bengali medium schools chose schools option (III) which means teaching vocabulary from long passages. On the other hand a 1 teacher from English medium schools chose option (IV) with the statement teaching vocabulary by suffixes and prefixes but the other one skipped the question.

Table 14

Way of teaching vocabulary

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of teachers
	(I)	
	(II)	2
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of teachers
	(I)	
	(II)	2

From table 14, 2 teachers from Bengali medium schools said that they follow incidental learning (II). Similarly teachers from English medium schools also chose option (II). No teacher said that they follow explicit learning.

Table 15

Teachers allocate separate time for vocabulary or teach you with an activity such as reading

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	(I)	
	(II)	2
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	(I)	
	(II)	2

From the responses of the teachers it was found that all of them including Bengali and English medium schools chose option (II) which is activity based vocabulary learning whereas no one chose option (I) or allocating separate time for teaching vocabulary.

Table 16

Teachers emphasize on the most frequent (high frequency) words

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
Schools	Yes	2
	No	

Table 16 shows teachers from Bengali as well as English medium schools admitted that they emphasize on the most frequent words.

Table 17

Teachers modify exercises provided in the textbook that seems difficult to students

Bengali Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
	Yes	
	No	2
English Medium	Responses	Number of teachers
	Yes	2
	No	

From table 17, both of the teachers from Bengali medium schools answered “no” that means they do not modify exercises from the text. On the contrary, teachers from English medium said “yes” which means they modify exercises if students feel difficulty.

Table 4.2.18

Teachers use more advanced words in the class.

Bengali Medium Schools	Responses	Number of teachers
	Yes	
	No	2
English Medium Schools	Responses	Number of teachers
	Yes	
	No	2

This table indicates that both of the teachers from Bengali medium schools said “no”. Similarly, teachers from English medium schools also denied regarding this issue.

Chapter 5

Discussion

While doing the survey the researcher found that the students of Bengali medium schools had trouble to understand the questions. They were not able to answer questions (except a few) until the researcher explained them every question in Bengali. Whereas students from English medium schools understood most of them without asking any help. Therefore, it can be said that the students of Bengali medium schools lack vocabulary in compare to the students of English medium schools. This is because Bengali medium students are not that much exposed to English from their primary and high school level. Their curriculum conducted in Bengali and even in English class they are taught with the help of their mother tongue. As a result, they lack English vocabulary that ultimately creates hindrance to their comprehension.

The purpose of question no.1 is to find out if there is any emphasize on vocabulary or not. All the students form Bengali and English medium schools along with the teachers marked on the “yes” option admitting the fact.

In response to question no 2 and 3 , the students from both medium of schools said that teachers provide them definition of unknown words but in comment section a few of them mentioned that “they do not always provide them meaning” . On the other hand, teachers said that they provide them both definition and relevant information about new words but they also commented that sometimes it is not possible because of the shortage of time. In connection with the above situation, Graves, August and Martinez (2013) mentioned that vocabulary approaches can be considered effective only when the teachers provide the learners both definitional and

contextual information during they actively process the meaning with the multiple encounters of vocabulary (p.5).

Furthermore, Stahl (1986) emphasized that teachers should maintain a balance between both of the information for better comprehension. Materials which provide a definition along with multiple examples correctly used in context helps students to improve comprehension. Otherwise using them individually cannot be significant for the learners (p.663).

In order to enhance the learner's vocabulary stock successfully both is important. Moreover, providing only definition cannot be considered effective because they learners might forget those within a minute. Again providing them contextual information will make them aware of a word's different use based on the context. In addition, learners may guess the meaning of unknown words through the context. Therefore, teacher's attempt to provide definition and contextual information for unknown words can be considered fruitful.

In response to question no. 4, most of the students from both medium schools stated that they are provided enough scope of reading whereas teachers also agreed to this point. In supporting effective reading, Nagy et al. (1999) stated that usually students learn approximately three thousand words per year but students may encounter almost ten thousand words in every year if they just get habituated with modest amount of reading. He further pointed out that approximate 25 to 50 percent of annual vocabulary growth can be attributed only by the context while reading (as cited in Allen, 1999, p.11)

Moreover, Wood et al (2004) stated that students who reported frequent reading both in and outside of class had higher test scores than the students who are infrequent in reading activities.

Heverly (2011) also mentioned that reading is important because students can gradually figure out the meanings of unknown words when those repeatedly came across them in their everyday reading. Therefore, researchers are able to quantify the difference clearly between direct and incidental vocabulary growth. Nevertheless, Nagy et al. mentioned that around .02 words are learnt per minute by direct instruction whereas .25 words are learnt just by reading at the same time (as cited in Heverly, p.99)

Though teachers and students from those Bengali and English medium schools admitted that they are provided enough scope for reading but in Bangladesh most of the time teachers only follow the text-book assigned for the class. In addition, they have tendency to make question from the limited range of syllabus that is fixed for the examination. As a result, students tend to swallow the lesson so that they pass the examination. In most of the cases, students are not encouraged for extensive reading. Even many students are reluctant to read because of their limited range of vocabulary.

Although reading is effective but question may arise that in which sort of reading helps students to enhance vocabulary. In response to question no 5, the researcher found that all the students of English medium schools admitted that teachers focus on the whole text rather than just summarizing the text. English medium school teachers also agreed that they prefer to focus on the whole text. On the contrary, students and teachers of Bengali medium schools pointed out focusing on the summary of the text. Bengali medium school teachers also confessed this and

blamed the “shortage of time” issue. One of them commented that “since we got only 40 minutes for the class, we could not focus on the entire text”.

In connection to the point, “time” is noticeable problem for the Bengali medium schools. Moreover, the number of students in Bengali medium schools is higher than English medium schools. Hence it is very difficult for the teachers to complete the entire text at the same time maintaining the large class. As a result, by the act of this summary reading limits student’s knowledge of words. So, they miss many unknown words as well as language feature like grammar, spelling while they go through the summary.

However, in order to discourage focusing on only summary of the text, Chandler (2008) stated that reading is important if it is not gist reading because it may overlook many words. Moreover, if learners tend to read only for gist they might skip many important word items and make a habit to guess blindly (p.247). Hence, the tendency of gist reading of Bengali medium students might be proved as an obstacle to develop their knowledge of vocabulary.

In response to question no 6, some of the students of English medium schools said that teachers teach them words through the suffixes and prefixes while teachers from those schools also agreed. One of the teachers from English medium commented that “we prefer to teach vocabulary in our school through suffixes and prefixes and if they understand well they can produce many words by themselves”. On the contrary, none of the students as well as teachers from Bengali medium schools accepted this point.

Perhaps the process of teaching vocabulary with suffixes and prefixes by English medium teachers is effective because in this way students can remember the word easily as well as they can increase their knowledge of grammar such as identifying noun, adjective etc.

Nevertheless, in this regard, Baunn et al. asserted that researchers supported using word parts to unlock unknown word meaning (as cited in Graves, August and Martinez, 2013, p.5).

Again, they claimed that if students could use their knowledge of prefixes, suffixes and roots to recognize words it would reduce the amount of words they are required to know to enhance their knowledge of vocabulary (p.5).

In response to question on 7, most of the student form both medium schools said that teachers do not motivate and create interest to learn new vocabulary though a few response found which indicates teachers motivate them. This ratio was very poor. Whereas all the teachers stated that they motivate their students for learning new words. So, there is a discrepancy found between the statements of students and teacher. Two of the teachers blamed that most of the students are not willing to read. Even they are not interested to learn new words. As a result, these students have very limited range of vocabulary. Nevertheless few students confessed that they are not that much interested to learn new words. A comment is found from a participant in which, he/she stated that –learning new words is more of a work than having an interest .So we do not literally find any interest in it”.

Basically in Bangladesh, vocabulary is taught as the by product with an activity such as reading and this is not included separately in the syllabus of their examination. Therefore, teachers usually do not motivate students to learn vocabulary.

In question no 8 ,most of the students and teachers from English medium schools said that teachers told them to see the dictionary but some comments found that indicate a similar point –it depends on the situation and only when the teachers is unable to provide them the meaning. Teachers from Bengali medium schools stated that they motivate students to see the meaning of unknown words but most of the students said that teachers do not motivate them. So there is a mismatch found between the opinions of teachers with his students.

Most of the time teachers are not that much concerned about unknown word items so they do not motivate the students to see dictionary. Perhaps, the teachers wanted to represent themselves as ideal teachers therefore they commented that they motivate students .In contrast, most of the students denied that. The reality is in Bangladesh very few teachers motivate students to see the unknown meaning of words especially in high schools.

In contrast, Weir (1991) gave a different opinion that just reading is enough to increase word knowledge rather than memorizing word lists, or using a dictionary or glossary for unknown words. Again, Nist and Olejnik stated that usage of dictionary for vocabulary growth is not helpful to students because they did not use them very productively. (as cited in Bintz ,2011,p.46).

Perhaps this is not fruitful for the context of Bangladesh because students are reluctant to read more books. They just read based on the syllabus assigned for their examination. So, they need to find out the meaning of unknown words that they encounter most or at least get familiar with those.

By analyzing the responses to question no. 9 of students as well as teachers from both English and Bengali medium schools it was found that teachers give students activities such as

fill in the blanks or multiple choices after reading every text. One of the teachers of English medium schools commented that they give the activity in order to check students' understanding. On the contrary, teachers from Bengali medium schools also mentioned about the activity but commented that ~~these~~ activities were not taken frequently". Perhaps, these were taken in a month or in a week. However, Research has proved that activity after reading is very effective for the students. Regarding this, Paribakht and Wesche affirmed that in Canada, reading plus various types of vocabulary exercise is effective and helps to deepen vocabulary knowledge. Again, in another study in California Zimmerman found that a group of learners who completed interactive vocabulary exercises after reading improved a lot than the group who has done with only reading (p.254). Furthermore, study revealed that the students in the ~~Read-Plus~~" condition produced higher scores than that of ~~Read- only~~" condition. Therefore, exercises are always considered fruitful for the students just after reading (as cited in Sonbul and Schmitt, p.254). Thus it can be said that post-reading tasks focusing on target words led to better vocabulary learning .

In question no 10, the students are asked whether teachers follow textbook and give exercises such as finding synonym or antonym .Most of the students from English and Bengali medium schools marked the option ~~yes~~". Again all the teachers from those schools also appreciated that they give this sort of tasks to their students. If it is so then this method of teaching can be considered fruitful because Stahl (1986) talked about ~~depth of processing~~" frame work which makes students learn words more easily and remember those. This frame work includes three different levels of processing vocabulary instruction. The first one is association processing in which students need to associate between a word with its synonym and the second one is comprehension processing in which students associate words through the

activities such as finding an antonym or fill in the blanks etc. The third one is generation processing in which students create a novel product of their comprehended association by comparing the definition that makes them to understand the meaning of those word more clearly. This whole process helps students to make connection, relating those with their background information (p.664).

Therefore, it can be said that task like finding synonyms antonyms is effective for the students.

For question no 11 (teachers play any word game such as cross word puzzle or others), although teachers of English medium schools marked “yes” but in the comment section one of them said that “it depends on the time”. The other one said “not always, whenever we got time to do that”. In case of Bengali medium students as well as teachers put tick marked on the “no option”. Therefore, it is proved that teachers usually follow traditional methods for teaching vocabulary. They do not try any creative approach for teaching the students new words.

A common problem among the teachers of Bangladesh is that they never try to teach students by innovative and creative approaches. They are still using the traditional methods. They never attempt to do something out of the box. As a result students do not get interest to learn vocabulary.

Nevertheless, Smith (2008) suggested that using puns and jokes along with playing word games such as crossword puzzles and other word games helps to increase students' knowledge of about some specific words and also their understanding of how those function in the real world. Hence, it helps them to become independent word learners. According to him classrooms should be just like laboratories where students can experiment and use new words as well as seeking out and adopting those naturally (p.22).

In response to question no 12, most of the students from English medium schools stated that teachers make them memorize words. A comment was like “memorization is the motto of our teachers”. Again, all the students of Bengali medium schools admitted this. Furthermore, a teacher from English medium schools accepted the point though the other one denied that and also commented that “we do not support memorization”. So, here the researcher found discrepancy between the opinions of that teacher with his students. In case of Bengali medium schools both of the teachers said that they make students memorize words.

However, Khoii and Sharififar also considered memorization is an outdated, shallow, and counterproductive educational practice.

Again, Sinhaneti and Kyaw (2012) mentioned that memorization and repetition that relate with RL (rote learning) as a strategy of language learning. He further stated many researches indicate that most Asian countries are still utilizing the traditional learning style in which RL strategy has been used especially in vocabulary learning for Asian EFL learners (p.988).

In this regard, Nelson (2008) said that Rote memorization of words and definitions will no longer work. So, students must be able to move beyond the knowledge level of understanding vocabulary and become adept at using context clues to understand unfamiliar words (p.33).

It is very unfortunate that in Bangladesh, teachers still use memorization (RL) as a strategy of education. This approach is running from the decade and still common between the teachers of Bengali and English medium schools. Moreover, students also got used to this rote learning strategy from the beginning of their school to college but ultimately they suffer after getting admitted in university.

Nevertheless, Perry (1969) strongly discouraged students to learn new words through memorization. He said he found many students trying to memorize with list of words one side of a paper and the other side with definitions. He argued that teaching vocabulary can be more creative and stimulating rather than just to memorizing word items particularly for those learners who have little understanding about the connection between the word with its` dictionary meaning. He suggested that teachers, on the other hand, can relate the word with the context, discuss the word, write students` suggestion on the board and also point out context clue and many more instead of making students memorizing the word (p.164).

Question no 13 is linked with the previous one which states if teachers make the students memorize the words which way they think is best to memorize. Most of the students from English medium schools selected the option that indicates memorizing words with suffixes and prefixes though a few of them chose other options. In terms of Bengali medium schools, most of the students chose memorizing words in long passages. On the other hand, a teachers from English medium also chose option (IV) but the other one skipped the question as he said that he do not support memorization. However, both teachers from Bengali medium schools chose option (III) with the statement “memorizing words in a long passage”.

In favor of using suffixes and prefixes, Baunn et al. stated that researchers suggested using word parts to unlock the meaning of unknown words .If students are able to use their knowledge of prefixes, suffixes and roots in order to recognize words, the amount of individual words that the students required to know is reduced. For example, from the word “indicate” they can know and understand the meaning of “indicates”, “indication”, indicator etc. (as cited in Graves, August and Martinez,2013, p.5).

From the responses of English medium students and also a teacher it was found that they teach students with the help of suffixes and prefixes which is undoubtedly effective. On the other hand, students from Bengali medium are encouraged to learn words from the long passage. Basically, students from Bengali medium schools are provided exercises based on the comprehension in their class. Probably this is the reason that most of the students of Bengali medium schools chose the option with the statement “memorizing words from long passage”.

From the responses of teachers' and students' questionnaire it was found that teachers follow “incidental learning” in the class which means they teach the students vocabulary with an activity such as reading (question no. 14). This is a common approach adopted by the teachers from both Bengali and English medium schools .

However there is a debate between the effectiveness of “explicit” and “incidental learning”. According to some researcher “incidental learning” is best for the learners whereas others argued that it is effective for them only when they have spontaneous exposure. On the other hand, some researcher found “explicit learning” is more effective for the beginner. However, teachers from both medium schools use “incidental learning” in Bangladeshi classroom in which students learn vocabulary as by product.

In this regard, Shujing and Hui (2007) stated that vocabulary is learnt most effectively by incidental learning and his theory got a great attention. Therefore, his theory claims that in order to learn vocabulary by incidental teaching students can guess meaning of the unknown words from context through the act of reading. However, this theory is supported by researchers like Saragi, Nation, and Meister who conducted a research on incidental vocabulary learning and draw a conclusion that incidental learning is very effective for vocabulary growth among school-

age children (as cited in Hulstijn and Schmitt, p.115).He added that if vocabulary items are learnt by incidental teaching then the student will be able to learn those as by product (p.115)

In contrast, Waring and Takaki claimed that Incidental learning helps in the acquisition of L2 but there has to be ample and continuous exposure. Therefore, Mondria suggested that it will be more effective if both of them are used in combined way (as cited in Sonbul and Schmitt,p.254).For a good reason, language teachers from many foreign context combine the both approach together as research found that this combination is effective. Even some countries such as Saudi Arabia incorporate new vocabulary with reading passages because this sort of practice helps the students to develop their comprehension as well as enrich their knowledge of vocabulary. In another study in California Zimmerman found that a group of learners who completed interactive vocabulary exercises after reading improved a lot than the group who has done with only reading (as cited in Sonbul and Schmitt,2010, p.254)

In Bengali and English medium schools teachers try to teach vocabulary to the students incidentally (reading) but it can be more effective if they give a short exercise focusing the words in the given text. Then after solving those exercise vocabulary will be stabled in their mind and this way they can remember those words.

For question no 15(teachers allocate separate time or teach vocabulary base on activity such as reading), most of the students form both Bengali and English medium schools answered ~~option~~ option (II). Again, among four teachers all of them chose option (II) as well that indicates ~~activity based vocabulary learning~~ activity based vocabulary learning". No one among the participants chose option (I) which states that teachers do not allocate separate time for teaching vocabulary .Moreover, one of them commented that ~~we could not teach words separately as class time was short~~ we could not teach words separately as class time was short". Another one commented that ~~we always had pressure to cover up the syllabus for examination so it was very~~ we always had pressure to cover up the syllabus for examination so it was very

difficult for us to teach vocabulary separately” In contrast Stahl (1968), mentioned another factor that teachers should be careful of spending more time to teach. He again added that According to researchers, at least 10 seconds should be allocated for each word and 20 minutes for instruction.

Thought it is not always possible for teachers because of the time shortage but doing this may bring greater gain (p.665).

Nevertheless, In Bangladesh teachers (Bengali and English medium schools) prefer to teach vocabulary through activity. Perhaps, the reason is shortage of time. So the teachers always have the pressure to complete the syllabus. Therefore, it is not possible for them to allocate separate time for teaching vocabulary.

In response to question no 16, Most of the students from both Bengali and English medium schools marked in the “yes” option. In addition, all the teachers from both medium also admitted that they use most frequent words in the class because students encounter them multiple in their text as well as they got familiar with these words more. These high frequency words are very important. Nation (2001) mentioned that 2000 most frequent words in English that are very effective for learners` academic knowledge (p.15)

In this regard, Nunan (2003) pointed out that teachers should first focus on the words that learners encounter frequently. He stated that “teaching useful vocabulary before less useful vocabulary gives learners the best return for their learning effort” He mentioned that it is very possible to speak and write a lot in English only using the first 1000 words (p.136). Therefore teachers should focus on those frequently used words so that the students gradually get proficient in English with good knowledge of vocabulary.

From question 17, the researcher found that maximum students from English medium schools said that teachers modify exercises from the textbook when they fail to understand those.

A few comments found which indicate same problems .Among those a comment is like –sometimes teachers provide us tasks outside our textbooks”. The other comment is like –some teachers avoid textbook and teach us form higher classes books which is more difficult”. .Furthermore, a few students from English medium schools denied it by choosing the option –no”. Teachers from English medium schools also agreed with the point. One of them commented that –we modify exercises only when students feel difficulty to understand from their textbook”.

On the contrary, students from Bengali medium schools said that teachers never follow tasks outside books and teachers also admitted that .One of them commented that –we usually follow textbook and try to solve the problems given in the book but curriculum should be changed”. The other one commented that –we do not modify exercises but we try to solve those by providing correct answers if students fail to do it by themselves”.

However, Brozo and Stahl pointed out that most of the methods teachers follow to teach words are not effective because maximum exercises contain a list of words, paired with a definition or instructions to look them up in the glossary (as cited in Stahl ,1986 , p.665). Those exercises hardly provide students some examples of the word used in context and reach their comprehension level. He further added that no matter it is commercial textbook or teacher directed, the principle just evaluates the instruction. If exercises seems difficult to the students, teachers can modify those to design new instruction (p.666).

Nevertheless, in Bangladesh exercises contain in the text book are presented in very traditional way. Most of them are confined to fill in the blanks (with clue or without clue), multiple choices, and matching words or just to find out the word meaning. There is no creativity found presenting the vocabulary exercises. Moreover, teachers wants student to copy the exercise

blindly and reproduce on the examination. It is very common notion of teachers from Bengali medium schools that they never teach anything outside text book. Even some teachers want students to reproduce the answers in the examination like the way given in the answer sheet.

They never modify exercises from the text-book even if the students fail to understand those. On the other hand, some English medium teacher's tendency to teach from the book of higher classes cannot be appreciated.

In question no. 18, (using more advanced words) most of the students of English medium schools denied that teachers use more advanced words that seems very difficult to them. One of the students commented that ~~most~~ "most of the time it is easy enough for us, but sometimes we feel like we are being a little underestimated". Another comment was ~~sometimes~~ "sometimes teachers use words beyond our understanding, but they make us understand the meaning". Nevertheless, teachers from those schools also agreed that they usually do not use advanced words compared to their level. Similar type comments are also found on teachers' questionnaire. One of them commented that ~~although~~ "although sometimes students find many words difficult but we make sure that they understand the meaning first". Furthermore, most of the students from Bengali medium also said that teachers do not use such words. Supporting this point, teachers also admitted that. A teacher from Bengali medium commented that ~~we~~ "we usually do not use words beyond their level and if they find anything difficult, we provide definition in Bengali".

Therefore, it can be said that teachers from Bengali and English medium schools do not teach advanced words because they think students might not understand those so they try to use words that is sound familiar to them.

In contrast, Allen suggested creating word rich environment in the class. He said that teachers should present more advanced level words such as instead of good, nice they should use

rich words like spectacular, benevolent or something that is synonymous .Moreover, well written books that they asked to read contained rich, descriptive words. Therefore, teachers cannot expect students to use a variety of words until they use words beyond their level in classrooms. Even though students are not familiar with such words, they will learn by hearing and having opportunity to use those (as cited in Smith, p.22)

Chapter 6

Conclusion and recommendation

6.1 Conclusion

Though some approaches taken by teachers such as providing definitional and contextual information, ample scope for reading, using high frequency words in the class, and teaching vocabulary through suffixes and prefixes are effective but not well enough to teach vocabulary. This is very unfortunate that in Bangladesh teachers still tend to make students memorize words. By doing so students might pass the examination but they will never be able to use those in real context. Moreover, teachers do not motivate students to learn new words. Perhaps these are some reason that can be responsible for student's poor knowledge of vocabulary. This is a common scenario running form the decades which needs to be changed. Therefore, teachers should present the vocabulary in way so that students no longer find that a tiresome job. It is high time to empower the learners with sufficient word stock of vocabulary so that they do not suffer on the long run.

6.2 Recommendation

The study found some limitation lies in the teaching process of vocabulary in Bangladesh. Therefore, the overall findings and discussions would recommend some suggestions may make the practice of teaching vocabulary more effective and successful.

- Teachers should stop making students blindly memorize the unknown words. They might do it using suffixes, prefixes and roots.

- Teachers should provide the students ample scope of reading. They might encourage students to read lots of books outside of their textbook rather just emphasizing to cover up the syllabus for the examination.
- Rather than always presenting tasks and exercises in traditional way teachers might do it in more creative way. They might play word game or cross word puzzle with the students in order to enrich their vocabulary.
- Teachers can use flash card and play board games with the students.
- Using advanced and synonymous word in the class is very helpful. Thus teachers can create a word rich environment in the class but at first they should make the students understand the meaning.
- Using high frequency words during the class is always effective.
- Teachers may keep sometimes after every reading assignment and giving short activity to check out the vocabulary.
- They should always provide learners contextual meaning which will help to clarify a word's different uses.
- Teachers should always motivate students to learn new words .They might do it by positive reinforcement.

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Appendix

Appendix A

Questionnaire for students

School name.....

Subject.....

Date.....

For students

Methods of teaching vocabulary	Comments
<p>1. Do teachers emphasize on learning unknown words in the class?</p> <p>I) Yes II) No</p> <p>2. Do teachers provide definition of every unknown word?</p> <p>I) Yes I)No</p> <p>3. Do your teachers provide relevant information based on the text while you notice a new word?</p> <p>I)Yes II) No</p> <p>4. Do teachers provide enough scope of reading in the class?</p> <p>I) Yes II) No</p> <p>5. Do teachers only focus on the summary or</p>	

<p>the whole text?</p> <p>I) Summary II) Whole text</p> <p>6. Do teachers teach you word parts such as suffixes, prefixes and roots for enhancing the knowledge of unknown words?</p> <p>I)Yes II) No</p> <p>7. Do teachers motivate and create interest of learning new words?</p> <p>I) Yes II)No</p> <p>8. Do teachers motivate you to see dictionary for unknown word meaning?</p> <p>I)Yes II) No</p> <p>9. Do teachers give you activity such as fill in the blanks or multiple choices after text</p> <p>I)Yes II) No</p> <p>I)Yes II) No</p> <p>10. Do teachers follow textbook and tasks such as finding synonyms or antonyms?</p> <p>I) Yes II)No</p> <p>11. Do teachers play any word game such as cross word puzzle or others during the class?</p> <p>I)Yes II)No</p> <p>12. Do teachers make you memorize the</p>	
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<p>words?</p> <p>I)Yes II)No</p> <p>13. If the answer to question No.13 is Yes, then which way is best to memorize new words?</p> <p>I)Memorizing a list of words</p> <p>II) Memorizing words while using in a sentence</p> <p>III)Memorizing words from long passages</p> <p>IV)Learning vocabulary by knowing suffixes and prefixes</p> <p>14. In which way they teach you vocabulary?</p> <p>I) Explicit learning (Just focus on the word)</p> <p>II) Incidental learning (Vocabulary with an activity such as reading ,writing etc)</p> <p>15. Do teachers allocate separate time for vocabulary or teach you with an activity such as reading?</p> <p>I) Allocate separate time</p> <p>II) Activity based vocabulary learning</p> <p>16. Do teachers emphasize on the most frequent words?</p> <p>I) Yes II)No</p>	
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<p>17. Do teachers modify exercises provided in the textbook that seems difficult to you?</p> <p>I)Yes II) No</p> <p>18. Do teachers use more advanced words often?</p> <p>I)Yes II)No</p>	
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Appendix B

Teaching Vocabulary

Questionnaire for teacher

School name.....

Subject.....

Date.....

For teachers

Methods of teaching vocabulary	Comments
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1. Do you emphasize on teaching unknown words in the class?

I) Yes II) No

2. Do you provide definition of every unknown word?

I) Yes II) No

3. Do you provide relevant information based on the text while students notice a new word?

I) Yes II) No

4. Do you provide enough scope of reading in the class?

I) Yes II) No

5. Do you only focus on the summary or the whole text?

I) Summary II) Whole text

6. Do you teach students word parts such as suffixes, prefixes and roots for enhancing the knowledge of unknown words?

I) Yes II) No

7. Do you motivate and create interest of learning new words?

I) Yes II) No

<p>8. Do you motivate students to see dictionary for unknown word meaning?</p> <p>I)Yes II) No</p> <p>9. Do you give students activity such as fill in the blanks or multiple choices after reading text?</p> <p>I)Yes II) No</p> <p>10. Do you follow textbook and tasks such as finding synonyms or antonyms?</p> <p>I) Yes II)No</p> <p>11. Do you play any word game such as cross word puzzle or others during the class?</p> <p>I)Yes II)No</p> <p>12. Do you make students memorize the words?</p> <p>I)Yes II)No</p> <p>13.If the answer to question No.14 is Yes, then which way is best to memorize new words?</p> <p>I)Memorizing a list of words</p> <p>II) Memorizing words while using in a sentence</p> <p>III)Memorizing words from long passages</p> <p>IV)Learning vocabulary by knowing suffixes</p>	
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<p>and prefixes</p> <p>14. In which way you teach students vocabulary?</p> <p>I) Explicit learning (Just focus on the word)</p> <p>II) Incidental learning (Vocabulary with an activity such as reading ,writing etc)</p> <p>15. Do you allocate separate time for vocabulary or teach students with an activity (reading)?</p> <p>I) Allocate separate time</p> <p>II) Activity based vocabulary learning</p> <p>16. Do you emphasize on the most frequent words?</p> <p>I) Yes II)No</p> <p>17. Do you modify a task that seems difficult to students?</p> <p>I)Yes II) No</p> <p>18. Do you use more advanced words often?</p> <p>I)Yes II)No</p>	
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