RESEARCH ARTICLE

GRADE 9 ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' PRACTICE OF TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH COMMUNICATIVE APPRAOCH: JIMMA TOWN AND ITS SURROUNDING IN FOCUS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the practice of teaching vocabulary through communicative approach among Grade 9 English language teachers of nine secondary schools in Jimma Town and its surroundings. It also aimed at investigating teachers' perception of CLT principles, instructional techniques and classroom activities. The major obstacles that affected the implementation of CLT during vocabulary instruction were also studied. To this effect, 617(10%) sample students and 51 English language teachers were chosen to fill out questionnaire. Two teachers from two high schools were also observed while teaching. Frequencies and percentages were used in analyzing quantitative data, while qualitative method was used to analyze qualitatively collected data. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the teachers positively perceive the worth of most of the CLT principles to teach vocabulary communicatively. However, in relation to the actual vocabulary instruction, they appeared to spend much of their time in presenting the meanings and forms of words in isolation. It was also found out that teachers overused the lecture method in teaching vocabulary instead of teaching new words communicatively. They also unduly emphasized the dictionary definitions of words. Based on the findings, it is recommended that English language teachers teach vocabulary communicatively in adherence to CLT principles and through appropriate techniques that incorporate meaningful activities.

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

The literature shows that the method of EFL teaching changed from time to time. This has led to a shift from a focus on accuracy to a focus on communication and fluency. Yu-Ling (2005), for example, states that although vocabulary teaching and learning has suffered neglect for a long time, there has been an emphasis on the role of vocabulary in language pedagogy. Thus, over the past two decades, a substantial range of research concerning vocabulary acquisition has provided us with valuable insights and suggestions to vocabulary instruction in the language classroom. Moreover, lexical competence is being considered as a core component of communicative competence by many teachers (Coady and Huckin, 1987). Communicative competence is the theoretical yolk of communicative language teaching. That is, competence in grammatical knowledge cannot guarantee communication ability. This implies that learners must develop skills and strategies for using language to communicate meanings in

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concrete situations. Three aspects of vocabulary need to be known to carry out a true communication via words. These are form, meaning and use. Nation (2001) provides a framework for describing aspects of word knowledge associated with vocabulary learning covering form, meaning and use. Therefore, English language teachers should make efforts to enhance the knowledge of their students by through suitable vocabulary instruction. That is, the teaching of vocabulary communicatively should focus on encouraging students to use the language both inside and outside the classroom. In connection with this, McCarty (1983, p.12) states: "The teachers of English as a foreign language would be forgiven for holding the view that not much vocabulary teaching goes on at all". From this, one can understand that the problem is observable from the angle of teaching vocabulary. It follows that the practice of teaching vocabulary through communicative approach should be considered an important research issue.

Statement of the problem

Having sufficient vocabulary is vital to be able to communicate successfully. Regarding this assertion, Pikulshi and Templeton (2004, p.1) state: "…the greatest tools we can

give students for succeeding, not only in their education but more generally in life, is a large, rich vocabulary and the skills for using those words". To develop vocabulary knowledge, using words in actual situation is essential. McCarthy (1990, p.81) writes: "The single, biggest component of any language course is vocabulary. No matter how well the students learn grammar, no matter how well they master the sounds of the language; without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in L2 cannot happen in any meaningful way". Thus, vocabulary needs to be taught communicatively. In this regard, Brumfit and Johnson (1979) note that teaching vocabulary CLT is an absolute shift from teaching words in isolation to lexical items in meaningful contexts.

However, Gashaw (2008) claims that students' ability to use English communicatively in class and outside is low. He further explains that teachers, unlike students, believe that vocabulary is not such a prominent component of language learning compared to other language skills. In addition, as Badima (2008) notes, a study on teachers' practice of CLT revealed that teachers failed to teach the four language skills and grammar. His study, however, did not give appropriate attention to the practice of teaching vocabulary communicatively. This was because of teachers' dependence on traditional teaching method rather than on CLT methods. This implies that the teaching of vocabulary through communicative approach needs considerable focus in ELT research. In the Ethiopian context, Birhanu (1999), Beliyew (2001), Melaku (2007), Yemane (2007) and Beyene (2008) carried out studies on the teaching of vocabulary. Still, there have not been sufficient studies conducted to examine the practice of using communicative approach in teaching vocabulary. Therefore, in-depth study of English language teachers' use of CLT approach is essential in the Ethiopian context. With this rationale, this study tried to examine Grade 9 English language teachers' practice of teaching vocabulary communicatively with particular focus on secondary schools in Jimma Town and its surroundings.

Objectives of the study

Main objective

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the practice of vocabulary teaching through communicative approach among Grade 9 English language teachers in Jimma Town and its surrounding.

Specific objectives

The study specifically tried to:

- Identify teachers' beliefs about teaching vocabulary through the communicative approach;
- Examine whether teachers' instructions focus on forms, meanings and uses of vocabulary in meaningful context;
- Find out whether teachers give opportunities to students to practise newly introduced words communicatively;
- Identify the major factors that hinder teachers from using communicative approach to teach vocabulary.

Literature Review

Communicative language teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is the name which was given to a set of beliefs which included not only a re-examination of what aspects of language to teach, but also a shift in emphasis in how to teach (Harmer, 2006). The 'what' to teach aspect of communicative approach stresses the significance of language functions rather than focusing solely on grammar and vocabulary. The 'how' to teach aspect of the approach is closely related to the view that language learning will take care of itself. Training learners to use the new language in a variety of contexts and with a range of purposes is a key the development of their communicative competence. Richards (2006) defines CLT as a set of generally agreed upon set of principles that can be applied in different ways, depending on the teaching context, the learners' age, level, learning goals and so on. The Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics also defines CLT as "an approach to foreign or second language which emphasizes that the goal of language learning is communicative competence" (p.91). Similarly, Sauvignon (1991) stresses that the basic point to be considered in language teaching with CLT is "communicative competence"- an important term discussions of language use in second or foreign language learning. However, it is not to mean that CLT does not consider grammar or structure. It can be said that communication cannot take place in the absence of structure or grammar because there should be set of shared assumptions about how language works along with a willingness of participants to cooperate in the negotiation of meaning.

As Richards (2006) explains, communicative competence includes knowing how to use language for different purposes and functions, knowing how to vary language use according to the setting and the participants (e.g. when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication), knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g. narratives, reports, interviews, conversations), knowing how to maintain communication despite limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g. by using different kinds of communication strategies). The literature states that communicative competence includes four components: grammatical competence, socio-linguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. Linguistic competence refers to one's competence in how to use the grammar, syntax, and vocabulary of a language. It is related to competence regarding what words to use and how to put words together into phrases or sentences. Socio-linguistic competence means knowing how to use and respond to language appropriately keeping in view specific settings, topics and relationships among the people communicating. Sociolinguistic competence concerns which words and phrases fit particular communicative situations. Discourse competence refers to knowledge of how to interpret the larger context and how to construct longer stretches of speech or writing into a coherent whole. Discourse competence thus considers how words, phrases and sentences are put together to create communication. On the other hand , strategic competence is

knowledge of how to recognize and repair communication breakdowns, how to work around gaps in one's knowledge of the language and how to learn more about the language.

According to Breen and Cand lin (1980), English language teachers in CLT classes have four main roles. They function as:1) organizers of resources and resource themselves, 2) guidance providers in classroom activities, 3) researchers and learners, 4) independent participants within the learning teaching groups and 5) facilitator. Harmer (1987) also summarizes CLT teachers' roles as controllers (controls not only what the students do, but when they speak and what language they use), managers (organize the activities), assessors (give feedback, advice, correction and grades), participants (co-communicators), prompters (encourage students to participate or make suggestions about how to proceed in an activity), sources of language or knowledge and instructors (teach the new language points and train students in language skills). These roles show that the teachers' effort as facilitators includes teaching vocabulary together with other language skills so as to develop the ability of learners to use vocabulary words in different contexts.

Application of CLT in vocabulary teaching

The method of language teaching had been changing repeatedly until the advent of what is called post-methods era. However, it was during the communicative approach that researchers in the field started to recognize well the crucial role of vocabulary knowledge plays in second or foreign language learning. Communicative Approach of Language Teaching emphasizes meaningful interactive activities over form (Hatch and Brown, 1995). This is because knowledge of vocabulary is basic for successful understand ing of written or spoken messages. Vocabulary teaching through CLT focuses on meaning rather than form as it aims at achieving effective communication. Teachers are therefore expected to create suitable language environment so as learners use the language for meaningful communication. This motivates learners to pick up new words and use them in communication in appropriate contexts aligned with their communicative purposes. According to Al-Jarif (2006), by learning new words, students can increase their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. He also points out that practising vocabulary in context, integrating vocabulary with reading and writing activities, and providing the students with different lexical information about the words under study enhance students' vocabulary acquisition.

The purpose of teaching vocabulary is thus to develop learners' vocabulary knowledge and use. Nation (2001) singles out the different things learners need to know about a word. These include the meaning(s) of the word, its spoken and written forms, its parts (e.g., any prefix, suffix, and "root" form), its grammatical behavior (e.g., its word class, typical grammatical patterns it occurs in), its collocations, its register, its associations (e.g., words that are similar or opposite in meaning), what connotations it has and its frequency. In this study, emphasis is paid to the teaching of aspects of vocabulary like form, function and use of words in meaningful

communicative contexts through integration with other skills in the language.

Principles of CLT regarding vocabulary teaching

CLT gives learners chances to practise the language to develop communicative competence. To do this, there are principles that need to be taken into account. Accordingly, different researchers identify various CLT principles. For example, according to Widdowson (1979), the first principle is advance specification of communicative needs of the learner. The second is taking semantic features and functions of language to form as a central part of language teaching and learning. The third one is giving priority to 'use' over linguistic 'usage' and to communicative value utterances over signification of linguistic items. The fourth is taking errors made by the learner as integral components of language learning. Brumifit (1988) on his part categorizes the principles of communicative language teaching, including communicative vocabulary teaching, into the following points:

- Learners learn both consciously and unconsciously.
- Teaching can be accuracy or fluency focused.
- Error to be a normal part of language learning much correction is wasteful of time, and unproductive to boot.
- Language processing proceeds from top-down, not from bottom-up (meanings are first apprehended as 'whole' and only later analyzed into parts necessary).
- Tasks should better be chosen for their communicational relevance in the framework of the whole activity.
- Communicative tasks are superior to linguistic exercises in prompting learning.
- To mirror real communication, we would need to integrate the major language skills.
- The greater responsibility given to learners, the more effective their learning would be.
- Both analytical and creative thinking should be given scope in the activities and task.
- Language used in the classroom should be immediately relevant and inherent in the task, rather than learnt for some eventual and hypothetical later use.

Teachers' duties in CLT-based vocabulary instruction

Students learn a language best by negotiating meaning in real contexts (Richards, 2006). Therefore, the teacher's role in teaching vocabulary is facilitating classroom activities and take-engaging learners in carrying out communication. As Belchamber (2007) puts it, one of the CLT teacher's responsibilities is identifying and responding to the needs of students. In other words, it is important for teachers to pay attention, when selecting and sequencing materials, to the specific communicative needs of the learners. As such, regardless of how distant or unspecific the communicative needs of the learners, every program with a goal of communicative competence should provide opportunities for meaningful language use focusing on the meaning and form of the new language (Savignon, 2002). This requires teachers to arouse the students' communicative consciousness and activate their communicative desire (Yiwei WU, 2009).

CLT involves equipping students with usable vocabulary, structures, functions learning strategies (Pororellana, 2011). Teachers in communicative classrooms must talk less, listen more becoming and facilitate students' learning (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). This helps learners to get exposure to the new language. For example, to know the meanings of new words and use them for communication, learners should read or listen to a text and use them in speaking or writing.

According to Texas Reading Initiative (2002), teachers should help students to be effective in word learning by encouraging wide reading, exposing students to oral language incorporates more of the new vocabulary, promoting word consciousness and providing explicit instruction of specific words. Explicit vocabulary teaching can be done through definition, contextual information, using synonyms and antonyms, providing example sentences, discuss the difference between the new word and related words, having students create sentences that contain the new, using more than one new word in a sentence, discuss the meaning of the same word in different sentences, creating a scenario (e.g. Inviting students to make up a story in which a new word features prominently), involving students actively in word learning (relating new information to known information, transforming it in their own words, generating examples, producing antonyms and synonyms, etc) and using discussion to teach the meanings of new words, training students in independent word-learning strategies.

Vocabulary learning activities in CLT

Communicative activities involve students in meaningful use of language (Harmer, 1994). Yiwei WU (2009) believes that presentation of vocabulary activities begins with giving suitable topics and is followed by an explanation of the word's meaning in a situation, and finally giving communicative tasks which include games, music, discussions, stimulating pictures, dramatic stories, amusing anecdotes, etc. This author proposes that giving learners materials like newspaper articles, brochures, train tickets, letters and advertisements, recording of news and airport announcements creates an opportunity to develop strategies for understand ing language as used by native speakers. Richards (2006) categorizes activities that reflect the principles of communicative methodology as mechanical, meaningful and communicative. Mechanical practice refers to a controlled practice activity which students can successfully carry out without necessarily understand ing the language item in focus. Examples of this kind of activity include repetition drills and substitution drills designed to practise particular grammatical or other items. Meaningful practice refers to an activity where language control is still provided but students are required to make meaningful choices when doing practice activities. For instance, in order to practise the use of prepositions to describe locations of places, students might be given a street map with various buildings identified in different locations. On the other hand , communicative practice focuses on using language in a real communicative context via real information exchange in which the language used is unpredictable. For instance, students might have to draw a map of their neighborhood and answer questions about the location of different places in their neighborhood, such as the nearest bus stop, the nearest café,

etc. Among these three types of activities, communicative practice is closely related to this study. Richards (2006) classified communicative activities as:

1. Information-gap activities: An important aspect of communication in CLT is the notion of information gap. This refers to the fact that in real communication, people normally communicate in order to get information they do not possess. More authentic communications are likely to occur in the classroom if students go beyond practice of language forms for their own sake and use their linguistic and communicative resources in order to obtain information. In so doing, they will draw available vocabulary to complete a task.

2. Jig-saw activities: These are also based on the information gap principle. Typically, the class is divided into groups and each group has part of the information needed to complete an activity. The class must fit the pieces together to complete the whole. Thus, they must use their language resources (including newly learned vocabulary) to communicate meaningfully.

3. Other activity types in CLT: Many other activity types have been used in CLT. These include task-completion activities (puzzles, games, map-reading and other kinds of classroom tasks in which the focus is on using one's language resource to complete a task), information-gathering activities (student conduct surveys, interviews and searches which require them to use their linguistic resources to collect information), opinion-sharing activities (activities where students compare values, opinions, beliefs, such as a ranking task in which they list six qualities in order of importance which they might consider in choosing a date or spouse), information-transfer activities (these require learners to take information that is presented in one form, and represent it in a different form; for example, they may read instruction on how to get from A to B and then draw a map showing the sequence, or they may read information about a subject and then represent it as a graph), reasoning gap activities (these involve deriving some new information from given information through the process of inference, practical reasoning etc. For example, working out a teacher's timetable on the basis of given timetables) and role-plays (activities in which students are assigned roles and improvise a scene or exchange based on given information or clues). The above activities are crucial to make students learn new words communicatively. Teachers' follow-up is essential to check whether the goal of the lesson in vocabulary learning is achieved and to supplement the lesson with meaningful activities. To do this, they should teach vocabulary using communicative approach. Therefore, teachers' failure to use communicative approach in teaching vocabulary can result in students' inability to learn vocabulary successfully.

Research Methodology

Research design

Descriptive survey, which includes quantitative and qualitative methods, was used to investigate Grade 9 English language teachers' practice of using CLT in teaching vocabulary. Descriptive survey was used because it is appropriate to describe the actual situation of CLT in

vocabulary teaching with regard to principles, instructional focus and activities. Louis (2000, p.169) writes: "Typically, surveys gather data at particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions, or identifying stand ards against which existing conditions can be compared, or determining the relationships that exist between specific events". In the study, quantitative method was used to find out teachers' perception and implementation of CLT in vocabulary instruction. On the other hand , qualitative method was used to generate data to support the quantitative findings.

Population and sampling

Grade 9 English language teachers of 9 high schools in Jimma Town and its surroundings (within 45 kilometers radius) were the sample population of this study. Availability sampling technique was used to choose these schools. This sampling technique is a technique in which elements are selected because of their accessibility to the researcher (Dattalo, 2008). Availability helps researchers to collect useful data that would not have been possible using probability sampling techniques which require more formal access to lists of populations. The relative cost and time required to carry out an availability sampling are small in comparison to probability sampling techniques. These enable researchers to achieve the sample size they want in a relatively fast and inexpensive way. Through this method, all the public secondary schools found in Jimma Town and those located within 45 kilometers radius from Jimma Town were included in the study. According to Jimma Town Education Bureau, there were three governmental secondary schools in the town during the study period. These included Aba Buna, Seto and Jiren, while those around Jimma Town were Serbo, Seka, Dedo, Yebu, Gembe and Agaro.

The study included all Grade 9 English language teachers (N=51) in the selected schools. On the other hand, Aba Buna High School and Seto Semero High School were purposively chosen for classroom observation. Preferring teachers of Grade 9 rather than other grade level was done for two reasons. In the context of this study, students start to learn most subjects in English in Grade 9. This shows that at this grade level, students are expected to develop a wide range of vocabulary which they will use for academic and communicative purposes in later years. The second population of this study was Grade 9 students taken in the selected schools. Since the number of Grade 9 students in the nine schools was large, taking representative samples was necessary. Accordingly, the population 10% (n = 617) were taken as samples from a population of 6170. As Neuman (2003) indicates, 10%-20% of the population is an adequate sample.

Data collection instruments

This study used two instruments to gather data. These were questionnaires and classroom observation checklist. The questionnaire was adapted from Richards (2006), Seyyed Aytollah, Razmjoo and Riazi (2006) and Texas Reading Initiative (2002).

Questionnaire

According to Selinger (1989), a questionnaire is widely used in second language acquisition research to solicit information about certain conditions and practices, in particular, to collect data on phenomena such as attitudes and self-concepts. Therefore, questionnaire was considered as an appropriate tool to collect data on English teachers' practice of teaching vocabulary through Communicative Approach. For this purpose, a questionnaire consisting of 29 items (both close-ended and open-ended) was prepared, piloted and administered to teachers. The first part of the questionnaire contains items regarding teachers' beliefs about vocabulary teaching. The second part includes items focusing on the use of CLT in teaching vocabulary. The third part consists of items about teachers' choice of activities in teaching vocabulary. The closed-ended items were a five-point Likert scale type. A similar, questionnaire was also administered to the students.

Classroom observation checklist

Classroom observation checklist was also used in the study. Observation was used because observational data help researchers to collect data directly from the actual situations (Cohen, 2000). The observation checklist consists of 6 leading qualitative points. The major points included in the checklist are the classroom conditions, lesson objectives mentioned by the teacher, teacher and student activities and the major tasks accomplished in the lesson. In this study, two teachers selected from two secondary schools (Aba Buna and Seto Semero) were observed. The teacher from Aba Buna was observed three times, for 45 minutes each, while the one from Seto Semero was observed four times, for 45 minutes each. The observations mainly focused on how the teachers apply the theoretical knowledge of CLT in vocabulary instruction to make learners use words communicatively.

Data analysis

The data that were collected on the principles, classroom instructions and activities through questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively into frequencies and percentages using SPSS version 16.0. On the other hand, the data collected through the open-ended items of the questionnaires and classroom observation checklist was analyzed qualitatively (only the results are included in this study along with the quantitative findings).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The study identified English language teachers' beliefs about Communicative Vocabulary Teaching (CVT) principles. In Table 1 above, seven principles relating to teachers' perceptions are presented. The responses to Item 1 show that 21(41.2%) of the teachers strongly agreed, 20(39.2%) agreed and 3(5.9%) disagreed to the need for learners to be engaged in meaningful interaction. On the other hand, 4(7.8%) of the teachers took neutral position. This shows that most of the teachers believe that students should engage in meaningful interaction in language learning. Regarding the role of classroom activities in Item 2, 19(37.3%) of the teachers strongly agreed, 21(41.2%) agreed and 5(9.8%) disagreed to the importance of classroom activities for maximizing communication opportunities.

Table 1. Teachers' Beliefs on CLT Principles viz-a-viz Vocabulary Learning

No	Belief about communicative vocabulary teaching	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Learners should engage in meaningful interaction in vocabulary teaching.	3	5.9	3	5.9	4	7.8	20	39.2	21	41.2
2	Classroom activities that maximize communication opportunities are vitally important in vocabulary instruction.	1	2	5	9.8	5	9.8	21	41.2	19	37.3
3	Activities in vocabulary lesson should be based on the students' communicative needs.	2	3.9	_	_	4	7.8	21	41.2	24	47.1
4	Since language is a vehicle for communication, vocabulary should be taught communicatively.	1	2	1	2	2	3.9	20	39.2	27	52.9
5	Small group work can benefit students better than individual work in vocabulary learning.	2	3.9	1	2	2	3.9	17	33.3	29	59.6
6	Successful language learning involves the use of new words in meaningful contexts.	2	3.9	1	2	3	5.9	17	33.3	28	54.9
7	The role of the teacher in vocabulary instruction should be that of a facilitator.	-	-	3	5.9	3	5.9	25	49	20	39.2

Table 2. Techniques Teachers Use in Teaching Vocabulary

No	How often do you use the following techniques in your vocabulary instruction?	Never		Rarely		Some-times		Usually		Always	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
8.1	Synonyms	_	_	3	5.8	15	29.4	15	29.4	18	35.2
8.2	Antonyms	_	_	10	19.6	10	19.6	16	31.3	15	29.4
8.3	Definitions-Asking students to restate a dictionary definition in their own words.	2	4.1	15	29.4	12	23.5	9	17.6	13	25.4
8.4	Discussing the difference between the new words and related words-e.g., A discussion of the word t*ravel,* defined as "journey," "trip," or "voyage" might include a discussion of the differences between *travel* and *journey, trip* and *voyage.*	13	25.4	11	21.5	12	23.5	8	15.6	7	13.7
8.5	Having students create sentences that contain the new word in several different and varied sentences-e.g. "I like chaos" can be clearly stated like this, "The scene was complete chaos-desks were turned over, paint was splashed on the floor, and the trashcan was upside down."	13	25.4	12	23.5	12	23.5	7	13.7	7	13.7
8.6	Creating scenario-Inviting students to make up a story in which a new word features prominently	12	23.5	5	9.8	14	27.4	7	13.7	13	25.4
8.7	Involving students actively in word learning-e.g. Students call out similarities and differences between two texts, and the teacher draws circles and lines to make associations between concepts.	_	_	4	7.8	8	15.6	16	31.3	23	45
8.8	Using discussion to teach the meanings of new words-e.g. Students work together in fours. One person should think of a place, building, or room and tells the others three things that would be found there. The others should then try and guess the place.	5	9.8	6	11.7	7	13.7	11	21.5	22	43.1
8.9	The use of word parts-(prefixes, suffixes, roots, compounds) to unlock a word's meaning: e.g. uncomfortable [not suitable], modernize [make modern], impressed [full of admiration],absent-minded [forgetful]	1	1.9	8	15.6	11	21.5	19	37.2	12	23.5
8.10	The use of context clues-Teaching students so as to help them figure out the meanings of unknown words on their own	_	_	2	3.9	9	17.6	12	23.5	28	54.9

Table 3. Techniques Teachers Give Priority in Teaching Vocabulary

No	When you teach vocabulary, to which one of the following techniques do you give priority? Rank each option by putting 1 for the most important to 6 for the least important.	No	%
9.1	Defining meaning	15	30
9.2	Form of the word	13	25
9.3	Use of word in context	5	10
9.4	Collocation	2	5
9.5	Synonym	8	15
9.6	Antonym	8	15

The others, 5(10%), could not decide. Here also, one can understand that most of the teachers believe in the use of classroom activities for maximizing communication opportunities. This belief, in one way or another, influences their teaching of vocabulary. In connection with activities in vocabulary lesson (Item 3), 24(47.1%) of the teachers strongly agreed, 21(42.2%) agreed and 2(3.9%) of them strongly disagreed that vocabulary activities should be based on the students' needs. This means that most teachers believe that teaching vocabulary activities based on students' needs results in a better achievement on vocabulary learning. In response to Item 4, 27(52.9%) and 20(39.2%) of the teachers strongly agreed and agreed respectively that vocabulary should be taught communicatively. This proves that teachers' were clear about the principle that vocabulary teaching should be based on the belief since language is a vehicle for real communication. In other words 47(92.1%), the majority of the teachers, seemed to believe that English language teachers should be informed by the view of language as a vehicle for communication.

Regarding Item 5, 29(59.6%) of the teachers strongly agreed and 17 (33.3%) of them agreed that small group work could benefit students more than individual work in learning vocabulary communicatively. This belief can enable teachers to encourage students to learn vocabulary cooperatively. The response to Item 6 depict that the need for using new words for successful language learning was well understood by teachers as 28(54.9 %) of teachers strongly agreed and 17(33.3%) agreed that successful language learning should involve using new words in meaningful contexts. This understand ing can enable teachers to provide opportunities for students to use language, including newly learned vocabulary, in meaningful contexts. In Item 7, regarding the role of the teacher in vocabulary instruction, 20(39.2%) of the teachers strongly agreed and 25(49%) of them agreed that the role of the teacher in the language classroom should be that of a facilitator. If teachers put this belief into practice, they are likely to encourage students to take responsibility for their vocabulary learning. This is in line with the percepts of CLT which emphasize that much of the language learning should be done by the student while the teacher facilitates interaction and learning.

To conclude, most of the teachers positively perceived the principles of teaching of vocabulary communicatively. This benefits students' vocabulary learning. These findings coincide, at least partly, with findings from the classroom observation. In Seto Semero, the observed teacher was using contextual meaning dominantly for most of the new words in the reading passage along with using dictionary to teach the meaning of new words. In Aba Buna, the teacher was observed using synonyms, dictionary meaning and context. The responses of many teachers to Item 8.1 show that teachers use synonyms to teach vocabulary. Eighteen (35.2 %) of the teachers said that they use this technique it always, 15(29.4%) of them indicated that they use it usually and those who use it sometimes are 15(29.4%). On the other hand , in Item 8.2, the results indicate that 15(29.4%) of the teachers use antonyms always, 16(31.3%) use it usually, 10(19.6%) employ it sometimes, while 10(19.6%) use it rarely to teach vocabulary. From these results, we can deduce that most of the teachers apply synonyms and antonyms in teaching vocabulary. This finding is partly in agreement with findings from the classroom observation. In both schools, teachers were observed using dictionary to look for the synonyms of new words. On the other hand , in Item 8.3, it is seen that only 13(25.4%) of the teachers claimed that they always ask students to restate the dictionary definition of words in their own words; 9(17.6 %) of them pointed out that they usually apply this method, while 12(23.5%) and 15(29.4%) of them, respectively, reported using it sometimes and rarely. It can thus be that several teachers do not ask their students to restate the dictionary definitions of words.

Regarding Item 8.4, discussing the difference between the new word and related words, 13(25.4%) of the teachers use it always, 7(13.7%) of them apply it usually, 12(23.5%) of them use it sometimes and 11(21.5%) employ it rarely. However, only 13(25.4%) of them never use this technique. This implies that 75% of them practice this technique at different scales in teaching vocabulary so that students are beneficiaries in learning vocabularies communicatively. Concerning Item 8.5, having students create sentences that contain new words in several different and varied sentences, 7 (13.7%) of the teachers practice it always, 7 (13.7%) also used it usually, 12 (23%) sometimes and the others 12 (23.5%) rarely practice it to teach their students.

The above result shows that teachers' role in having students to create sentences that contain new words in several and varied sentences does not seem sufficient. Considering Item 8.6, creating a scenario, 13(25.4%) of the teachers replied always, 7(13.7%) chose usually, 14(27.4%) rated sometimes. These results show that some teachers do not invite students to make up a story in which a word features prominently. In this case, students may not get the opportunities of learning vocabulary communicatively. Item 8.7 focuses on involving students actively in word learning. Many of the teachers, 23(45%), reported that they always involve their students actively in word learning, while 16(31.3%) of them usually do so. The results thus show that teachers involve their students actively in word learning to reasonable extent. This is in line with active learning of vocabulary, which bears relationship with the teaching of vocabulary through the communicative approach. This was not seen during the classroom observation because in both EFL classes, there was less student participation.

In response to Item 8.8, 22 (43.1%) of the teachers revealed that they always use discussion to teach the meanings of new words. However, 11(21.5%), 7(13.7%), 6(11.7%) the teacher, respectively, indicated that they usually, sometimes and rarely use discussion in vocabulary instruction. These findings suggest that many teachers engage their students in discussion in learning new words. In Item 8.9, the teachers were asked to indicate if they use word parts like prefixes, suffixes, roots and compounds to unlock word meanings of new words. Specifically, 12(23.5%), 19(37.2%) and 11(21.5%) of them, respectively, use this technique always, usually and sometimes. Only 1 teacher (2%) never uses this instructional technique. The results show that there is little teaching of vocabulary through the technique of analyzing word parts. Using context is another technique of teaching vocabulary. Item 8.10 is about vocabulary instruction by using context clues. In response, many of the teachers, 28(54.9%), reported that they always explain the meanings of unknown words by using contextual clues. In a similar manner, 12(23.5%) of them usually use this method. From these results, one can understand that many teachers give opportunities to students to guess the meanings of new words from their contexts.

The main item in Table 3 focuses on the techniques which teachers give priority to in vocabulary teaching. In response, 15(30%) and 13(25%) of them, respectively, indicated that they give first priority for meaning and form. On the other hand, 5(10%), 2(5%), 8(15%), and 8(15%) of the respondents, respectively, indicated that they primarily focus on the use of words in context, collocation, synonym, and antonyms. From these results, we can conclude that teachers are highly focused on teaching forms and meanings of new words. The classroom observation also revealed that the teachers focus on these aspects of vocabulary.

Table 4. Activities Used by Teachers in Vocabulary Instruction

No.	How often do you use the following activities in teaching vocabulary?	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Usually		Always	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
10.1	A) Games: Crossword puzzles focusing on meaning and context	21	41.1	18	35.2	7	13.7	3	5.8	2	3.9
	B) Role–play: playing roles of patient and doctor to exchange information	15	29.4	10	19.6	11	21.5	8	15.6	7	13.7
	C) Group work: discussing on the main idea of a reading passage in more than 2 students in a group	13	25.4	10	19.6	6	11.7	12	23.5	10	19.6
	D) Pair work: using new words in dialogues	6	11.7	4	7.8	10	19.6	17	33.3	14	27.4
10.2	A) Task completion activities: map reading to complete a task using words	4	7.8	8	15.6	17	33.3	17	33.3	5	9.8
	B) Information-gathering activities: conducting an interview to collect information	10	19.6	7	13.7	11	21.5	19	37.2	4	7.8
	C) Opinion-sharing activities: exchanging beliefs / ideas on climate change	7	13.7	6	11.7	8	15.6	20	39.2	10	19.6
	D) Information-transfer activities: reading information about a subject and then representing it as a graph	4	7.8	15	29.4	10	19.6	14	27.4	8	15.6
	E) Reasoning gap activities: working out a teacher's timetable based on given class timetables	5	9.8	12	23.5	13	25.4	15	29.4	6	11.7
	F) Jig-Saw activities: the class is divided into groups and each group has part of the information needed to complete an activity. The class must fit the pieces together to complete the whole	26	50.9	21	41.1	4	7.8	_	0	_	0
10.3	Materials: newspapers, airline tickets, bus tickets, world map, etc.	23	45	21	41.1	4	7.8	3	5.8	_	0

Table 5. Implementation of CLT in Vocabulary Instruction as Viewed by Students

No	How often does your English teacher use the following techniques in his/her vocabulary instruction?	Never		Rarely		Some times		Usually		Always	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1.1	Synonyms	_	_	62	10	154	24.9	173	28	228	36.9
1.2	Antonyms	_	_	52	8.4	136	22	225	36.4	204	33
1.3	Definitions-Asking students to restate a dictionary definition in their own words	25	4	49	8	111	18	161	26	272	44
1.4	Discussing the difference between the new word and related words-A discussion of the word *travel*, defined as "journey," "trip," or voyage "" might include a discussion of the differences between *travel* and *journey, trip,* and *voyage.*	253	41	136	22	123	20	86	14	19	3
1.5	Having students create sentences that contain the new word in several different and varied sentences-e.g. "I like chaos," can be clearly stated like this, "The scene was complete chaos-desks were turned over, paint was splashed on the floor, and the trashcan was upside down."	234	38	148	24	99	16	80	13	55	9
1.6	Creating a scenario-Inviting students to make up a story in which a new word features prominently	315	51	136	22	49	8	55	9	62	10
1.7	Involving students actively in word learning - e.g. Students call out similarities and differences between two texts, and the teacher draws circles and lines to make associations between concepts.	358	58	148	24	43	7	68	11	_	_
1.8	Using discussion to teach the meanings of new words -e.g. Students work together in fours. One person should think of a place, building, or room and tell the others three things that would be found there. The others should then try and guess the place.		_	62	10	68	11	234	37.9	253	41
1.9	The use of word parts-(prefixes, suffixes, roots, compounds) to unlock a word's meaning; e.g. uncomfortable [not suitable], modernize [make modern], impressed [full of admiration],absent-minded [forgetful]	_	_	34	5.5	74	11.9	126	20.4	383	62
1.10	The use of context clues-Teaches to students so as to help them figure out the meanings of unknown words on their own.	19	3	31	5	68	11	148	23.9	351	56.8

Table 4, Item 10.1, shows that 21(41.1%), 15(29.4%), 13(25.4%), and 6(11.7 %) of the teachers said that they never use activities like games, role-plays, group and pair works, while 18(35.2%), 10(19.6%), 10(19.6%) and 4(7.8%) of them use them rarely. Only 2(3.9%), 7(13.7%), 10(19.6%), and 14(27.4%) of the teachers apply these activities always. Thus, it is possible to say that teachers hardly use these activities in teaching vocabulary.

From classroom observation, it was found out that games and role plays were not used by teacher in vocabulary instruction. In Item 10.2, 17(33.3 %), 19(37.2%), 20(39.2%), 14(27.4%) and 15(29.4%) of the teachers indicated that they usually use information gap activities such as task completion, information gathering and opinion sharing. However, 4(7.8%), 10(19.6%), 7(13.7%), 4(7.8%), and 5(9.8%) of them never and 8(15.6%), 7(13.7%), 6(11.7%), 15(29.4%), and 12(23.5%) of them rarely

use these activities. However, no teacher reported using jigsaw activity on a regular (always, usually) basis. In a related manner, in relation to the use of materials such as newspapers, airline tickets, bus tickets, world map in the classroom, the results in Item 10.3 show that no teachers practically implement them regularly. The results show that 23(45%) and 21(41.1%) of the teachers never and rarely teach vocabulary words with the help of these materials respectively. This implies that most teachers prefer textbook-based vocabulary teaching. The classroom observation also confirms this argument.

In an open-ended question, teachers were asked to write the major factors that hinder them from using communicative approach in teaching vocabulary. In response, most of them stated the following main points:

- Students' ability and motivation to learn the language, especially in communicative approach are very low;
- There is lack of resources;
- Teachers present a dictionary definition of many new words for the sake of saving time to complete the textbook within the schedule set at national level;
- The time given for a lesson is very limited-it is too difficult for a teacher to prepare a good communicative lesson;
- The students have low interest in learning vocabulary; teachers use lecture method in presenting new words even though they knew that word knowledge could be complex and needs usage of word in meaningful contexts.

The students were asked to indicate how often their English teachers use synonyms in their vocabulary learning. In responses, 228(36.9 %), 173(28%) and 15(24.9%) of them revealed that use this technique always, usually and sometimes respectively. Only 62(10%) of the students' indicated that teachers rarely apply this technique. This result shows that synonym is used by teachers with reasonably good frequency in teaching vocabulary. This was also proved during the classroom observation. Teachers were seen using dictionaries for showing synonyms and antonyms of new words to students.

In Item 1.2, which asks about the use of antonyms, almost the same figures as in the case of synonyms were obtained. Specifically, 204 (33%), 225(36.4%), 136(22%) and 52(8.4%) of the students, respectively, pointed out that their English teachers use this technique always, usually, sometimes and rarely. In other words, no one said that teachers never use this technique. Thus, the application of this technique seems satisfactory. On the other hand , in reply to Item 1.3, 272(44%) of the students indicated that they are always asked by their teacher to restate the dictionary definition of words in their own words. While 161(26%) of them said that they are usually made to practise such an activity, 111(18%) of them expressed that they are sometimes encouraged to do so. Only 25(4%) of the students reported that they are never exposed to this vocabulary learning activity. This suggests that most of the students were taught vocabulary through the technique of restating the dictionary meanings of new words in their own words.

In Items1.4, 1.5 and 1.6, students were asked if their teachers make them discuss the difference between a new word and related words, create different sentences using the new words, create a scenario that invites learners and make up a story in which a new word features prominently. In response, 253(41 %), 234(38%) and 315(51%) of the students, respectively, reported that teachers never make them do these activities. The others, 136(22%), 148(24%) and 136(22%), respectively, responded that they rarely learn the new words through these techniques. These results suggest that teachers do not adequately encourage their students to engage in productive activities such as the ones indicated above. By a similar token, regarding Item 1.7, 358(58%) of the students replied that their teachers never involve them actively in word learning. The rest, 148(24%), 43(7%) and 68(11%), respectively, indicated that their teachers involve them actively in word learning rarely, sometimes and usually are. This implies that teachers' practice of letting their students participate actively in word learning is inadequate. Concerning Item1.8, 253(41%) of the students replied that they always learn through discussion to identify the meaning of new words.

Table 6. Vocabulary Activities in CLT

No	How often does your English teacher use the following activities in teaching vocabulary?	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Usually		Always	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
2.1	A) Games: (e.g. Crossword puzzles focusing on meaning and context)	327	52.9	228	36.9	31	5	12	1.9	19	3
	B) Role-play: (e.g. playing roles of patient and doctor to exchange information)	315	51	210	34	46	7.4	25	4	21	3.4
	C) Group work: (e.g. discussing on the main idea of a reading passage in more than 2 students in a group)	136	22	194	31.4	71	11.5	123	19.9	93	15
	D) Pair work: using new words in dialogues	123	19.9	99	16	191	30.9	62	10	142	23
2.2	A) Task completion activities: (e.g. map reading to complete a task using words)	185	29.9	132	21.3	130	21	130	21	40	6.4
	B) Information-gathering activities: (e.g. conducting an interview to collect information)	234	37.9	143	23.1	114	18.4	92	14.9	34	5.5
	C) Opinion-sharing activities: (e.g. exchanging beliefs / ideas on climate change).	229	37.1	111	17.9	25	4	160	25.9	92	14.9
	D) Information-transfer activities: (e.g. reading information about a subject and then represents it as a graph).	253	41	142	23	68	11	105	17	49	7.9
	E) Reasoning-gap activities: (e.g. working out a teacher's timetable based on given class timetables).	265	42.9	210	34	59	9.5	68	11	15	2.4
	F) Jigsaw activities: (e.g. the class is divided into groups and each group has part of the information needed to complete an activity. The class must fit the pieces together to complete the whole).	373	60.4	142	23	65	10.5	12	1.9	25	4
2.3	Material such as newspapers, airline tickets, bus tickets, world map, etc.	395	64	123	19.9	99	16	_	0	_	0

On the other hand, 234(37.9%) 68(11%) and 62 (10%) of them, respectively, said that they are given this opportunity usually, sometimes and rarely. We can infer, from these results, that teachers' use of discussion in teaching vocabulary is high. On the other hand, in Item 1.9, the students were asked if their teachers teach them vocabulary through word parts like prefixes, suffixes, roots and compounds to unlock the word meaning. Their reply reveals that 383(62%), 126(20.4%) and 74(11.3%) of them, respectively, indicated that their teachers teach vocabulary using this method always, usually and sometimes. These findings suggest that most teachers apply this technique. Finally, in response to Item 1.10, 351(56.8%) of the students revealed that teachers always make them practise guessing the meaning of unknown words by using context clues. While 148(23.9%) of respondents said that they are usually encouraged to use this word attach technique, 68(11%) of them expressed that they are sometimes given this chance. From these results, we can understand that many teachers employ, in their vocabulary teaching, the use of context clues to find the meaning of new words.

Item 2.1 focuses on whether students are made to practice vocabulary learning activities like games, role plays, group activities and pair works or not. In response, 327(52.9%) and 315(51%) of the students, respectively, indicated that they never practise games and role-plays. On the other hand , 228(36.9%) and 210(34%) students, respectively, reported that they rarely practise using games and role-plays. Only 19(3%) and 21 (3.4%) of the students, in that order, are made to use these activities always. On the other hand, 136(22%) and 123(20%) of the respondents responded that they never practise group work and pair work, while 194(31.4%) and 99(16%) of them rarely practise the activities. Only 93(15%) and 142 (23%) of the students always exercise this activity and 123(20%) and 62 (10%) them usually practise group and pair work. This indicates that teachers do not seem to teach these activities in the classroom regularly.

With regard to Item 2.2, 185(30%), 234(38%), 229(37%), 353(41%), 265(42.9%) and 373(60.4%) of the respondents, respectively, indicated that their teachers never make them practise task completion, information gathering, opinion sharing, information transfer, reasoning gap and jigsaw activities. However, 40(6.4%), 34(5.5%), 92(15%), 49(7.9%), 15(2.4%) and 25(4%) of the students, in the stated order, said that they are always encouraged to practise these activities. Meanwhile, 130(21%), 92(15%), 160(25.9), 105(17%), 68(11%) and 12(2%) of them said indicated that their teachers usually give them exposure to such activities. These results suggest that teachers do not use these activities adequately to teach vocabulary communicatively.

The last item in the above table (Item 2.3) pertains to the use of materials such as newspapers, airline tickets, bus tickets, world maps, etc in teaching vocabulary. Three hundred and ninety-five (64%) of the students said that teachers never use these materials to teach vocabulary. The rest, 123(20%) and 199(16%), respectively, revealed that their teachers use the materials rarely and sometimes. This implies that most of the teachers do not use these materials to enable students to learn vocabulary communicatively. It was also observed that teachers rely on the prescribed textbook and did not use these materials in their vocabulary lessons.

DISCUSSION

Both the quantitative and the qualitative findings of the study revealed that the majority of the teachers believe that the principles of communicative should be adhered to. However, they do not appear to put this belief adequately into practice in the actual teaching. As it has been found out from students' responses and classroom observation, they sometimes use contextual clues to teach vocabulary communicatively. However, learners' involvement in meaningful interaction with authentic texts to work out meanings of new words was very limited. For example, during classroom observation, it was rarely that the teachers tried to connect vocabulary instruction to communicative in-class and out-of class activities to encourage practice in using the target vocabulary in meaningful contexts. As Richards (2006) states, in CLT, the students should learn to communicate by negotiating meaning in real contexts. The study showed that most of the teachers use discussion in teaching the meanings of new words. This helps students to develop a good idea of the meanings of new words by associating them with bits of partial knowledge contributed by their classmates (Texas Reading Initiative, 2002). On the other hand, while involving students actively in word learning is one technique of teaching vocabulary communicatively, the findings indicated that teachers' application of this technique appears inadequate. The data from students and classroom observation revealed that teachers do not involve students in active word learning sufficiently.

Instructional activities that provide students with definitional information include teaching synonyms and antonyms (Texas Reading Initiative, 2002). In this regard, the findings revealed that most teachers applied these techniques in teaching vocabulary. Making students create sentences that contain the new words in varied contexts is another technique used to teach vocabulary communicatively. The data obtained from both students, teachers and classroom observation showed that the teachers' use of this technique is low. Similarly, as the findings from students' responses and classroom observation demonstrated, the majority of teachers do not seem to invite their students to make up stories in which new words feature prominently (creating a scenario). However, Texas Reading Initiative (2002) attaches high importance to this technique. Nation (2001) suggests the different things learners need to know about a word before we can say that they have learned it. The one important thing is what "word parts" it has (e.g., prefix, suffix and root form). In this regard, although most of the teachers claimed that most of the teachers use this technique, the students' responses and the classroom observation indicated that teachers apply it to a lesser extent. On the other hand, asking students to restate a dictionary definition in their own words can be more effective than requiring them to remember the exact definition of a word (Texas Reading Initiative, 2002). The data from teachers and the students, pertaining to this issue, suggest that there teachers use this technique to some extent. However, the classroom observations highlighted that teachers dominantly use dictionary definition to teach the meanings of new words.

To prevent students from limiting word meaning to one particular context, it is advisable to have them use a new word in several different and varied sentences (Texas Reading Initiative, 2002). However, although most teachers claimed that they use this technique, the data obtained from findings and classroom observation showed that there is little or no such a practice from the teachers. Similarly, although vocabulary learning tasks like games, role plays and information-gap activities (jigsaw and reasoning gap) are useful to teach vocabulary communicatively, teachers do not seem to give attention to them. The data from teachers, students and classroom observation revealed that they use practise these activities and that they teach vocabulary at word level. What is more, vocabulary should better be taught by using authentic materials and activities that support learners in building their vocabulary knowledge. However, the findings revealed that teachers, due to undue dependence on the textbook, do not use these materials to teach vocabulary communicatively.

Overall, teachers' use of communicative approach to teach vocabulary seems adequate. Firstly, the findings suggested that there is a mismatch between teachers' beliefs and their vocabulary teaching. The teachers claimed that they are in favour of the principles, the instructional methods and activities used in teaching vocabulary through communicative approach. However, the classroom observation showed that the beliefs do not manifest adequately in the actual vocabulary instruction. Secondly, it has been found out that teachers appear to neglect the use of classroom instructions that could encourage learners to use English vocabulary for meaningful communication. Thirdly, although materials such as newspapers, bus tickets, airline tickets etc are effective ways of teaching vocabulary, the study revealed that teachers, due undue dependence on the textbook, do not use them sufficiently. Teachers' reliance on the textbook and their insistence to complete textbook contents hampers the use of communicative approach in teaching vocabulary. It is thus recommended that English language teachers teach vocabulary communicatively in adherence to CLT principles and through appropriate techniques that incorporate meaningful activities.

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