

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

A Comparative Study of Televised and Non-televised Vocabulary Teaching: the Case of Grade Ten in Focus.

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1. Abstract

The main objective of this study was to examine the Educational Satellite Television (EDSTV) vocabulary teaching as compared to the NONEDSTV one. In order to conduct the study, two sample high schools (Jiren and Setto Secondary Schools that are found in Jimma town) were selected which fit the purpose of the research. Thus, two groups were involved – a Study Group (that employs the EDSTV programme) and a Comparison Group (that attends the NONEDSTV programme).

The main instruments used to collect data for the study were classroom observation, questionnaire and a vocabulary retention test. After completing the observation, a total of 245 students from both groups were randomly selected and they were given a vocabulary test. The test, which comprises 50 items, was a vocabulary retention test and all the target words were taken from Units 2 and 3 (English for Ethiopia, student text for grade ten). The test aimed at investigating whether or not the introduction of the EDSTV instruction brought about a significant difference in the vocabulary retention of the students more than did the non-televised programme.

The responses of the teachers and the results of the observation were analyzed side by side simultaneously in tables using figures and percentages. Besides, the mean and standard deviation of the test scores were computed and analyzed. In addition to this, an independent samples test was administered to see if there was a significant difference between the two groups.

The outcomes of the analysis revealed that the vocabulary teaching techniques the EDSTV programme employed were by far more effective as compared to those employed by the NONEDSTV one. Especially, the visual aid supplement, the fluency in giving brief definitions of the target words and the revision procedures were effective. Nevertheless, the way vocabulary items are designed, practiced and recycled was unsatisfactory in both programmes.

On the other hand, even if it was below average, the study indicated that the EDSTV students scored a significantly better result than the NONEDSTV students in the vocabulary retention test administered to both groups.

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2. INTRODUCTION

The need for learning the English language is growing so increasingly from time to time that it has almost become a necessity. In the Ethiopian context, people learn English mainly for academic as well as for communicative purposes. It is the medium of instruction at high schools, colleges and universities across the country. Thus, the effectiveness of the teaching/learning materials in achieving the learning outcomes, the feasibility of the teaching methodologies and the learning strategies employed in helping students build the essential skills need to undergo a rigorous scrutiny so as to make the duty more and more effective and productive. To this end, therefore, English language teaching needs to be not only based on current developments in learning theories, language teaching approaches and methods, but also to be updated in line with these developments.

The process of language teaching and learning has been making changes as a result of the developments with regard to learning theories, linguistic theories and language pedagogy since the 1960s. As a result, apart from exploring and experimenting new teaching methods, modern instructional technologies have come into the scene with an objective of supporting language teaching/learning practices which could result in better achievements (Newton, 2001).

Taking these pedagogical developments into account, the Ministry of Education (MoE) has launched a new Educational Satellite Television (EDSTV) Programme in the country so as to foster the teaching/learning process. English is one of the subjects that is taught using this mode of presentation. By using the technological advances (employing sound, image, action, animation, etc), adapting a variety of

educational sources from the globe, and by making use of expertise in the field, the programme is likely to produce sound communicative tasks that blend a variety of interactive activities. It would be imperative, therefore, to assess the effectiveness of the programme in achieving its objectives. Thus, this study attempted to investigate the effectiveness of the vocabulary teaching techniques employed by EDSTV programme as compared to the techniques conventional classroom teachers make use of.

A number of research studies indicate that lexical problems frequently interfere with communication; and communication breaks down when people do not use the right words (Allen, 1983). Thus, for proper communication to take place, knowledge of vocabulary is almost a prerequisite, without which conveying verbal or written information would be almost at stake. Kitajima (2001) also argues that without words that label objects, actions, and concepts, a speaker cannot express the intended meanings. Therefore, vocabulary teaching/learning is a critical area that deserves paying special consideration and the investment of an immense effort in making the session more meaningful, interactive and integrated as well.

As one component of language knowledge, vocabulary facilitates language use; language use in turn enables one to increase vocabulary knowledge (Nation and Waring, 1997; in Schmitt and McCarthy, 1997). In addition to emphasizing the central role vocabulary plays in learning a second language, the way vocabulary tasks are designed; the amount of time devoted in practicing the tasks; and the extent to which vocabulary items are recycled are also important issues that need consideration.

The document issued by MoE entitled '*Educational Satellite Television Programmes – Condensed Teacher's Guide*' declares that English language occupies a very low status in Ethiopian schools at all levels. It further asserts that "*the mode of presentation is often traditional and obsolete, and thus calls for a change in the methodologies of teaching*" (1996 E.C.:1). Furthermore, the document claims that the TV medium is to bring the creations of the world into the classroom; as a result,

these programmes will tremendously help the teacher in clarifying abstract ideas by showing different visuals on the screen. To make the lessons more attractive, drama, story and context based programmes are produced. A conducive atmosphere is now created for the students to practice freely. Luckily all the English language presenters are native speakers of the language. They are models of excellence" (1996 E.C.: 2 – 3).

The point is then, does this innovative programme practically resolve the complaints that were attributed possibly to the method of teaching English teachers used to employ; i.e. is it any different from the non-televised mode of vocabulary teaching? Does it pay due emphasis to vocabulary teaching compared to the non-televised mode of presentation? Does it help amend the deficiencies that were prevalent in the way language teaching/learning materials in general and vocabulary tasks in particular were designed, integrated and synthesized?

In line with this, an attempt has been made to investigate whether the televised vocabulary teaching is better than the non-

televised one in presenting tasks that are rich in context; effective in promoting interaction among students; integrate different macro skills and facilitate meaningful practice.

Few researches were undertaken on televised English teaching/learning. But the researches tried to examine whether or not classroom teachers were successful in implementing the techniques as suggested in the plasma teacher's guide. This comparative study, however, investigated the methods of teaching and the effectiveness of the teaching/learning tasks in the light of the principles of course design. Besides, it tried to compare and contrast both televised and non-televised English lessons. Thus,

- it assessed the effectiveness of the grade ten televised vocabulary teaching as compared to the non-televised mode of presentation by comparing the televised vocabulary teaching techniques against the non-televised ones,
- it examined how the vocabulary lessons are designed and recycled in both the televised and non-televised programmes, and
- at last, the study examined whether or not televised vocabulary teaching facilitated/developed better vocabulary knowledge/retention than did the non-televised mode of presentation.

This research attempted to examine and answer the following questions:

1. Are televised vocabulary lessons more effective than the non-televised ones in employing a variety of vocabulary teaching techniques?
2. In both programmes, do the techniques employed and the tasks used in teaching/learning vocabulary call for extended activities that demand interaction among students, how much are they intensively addressed and

recycled to promote meaningful practice and retention?

3. Does televised vocabulary teaching help students to better retain target words (vocabulary) in memory than does the non-televised mode of instruction?

To achieve the objective of the study, the following null and alternative hypotheses have been formulated. The key hypothesis of this study is:

H₁ : There is significant difference in vocabulary retention between students who attend televised English lessons and those students who do not attend televised English classes. This will be tested against the alternative:

H₀: There is no significant difference in vocabulary retention between students who attend televised English lessons and those students who do not attend televised English classes.

3. METHODOLOGY

In order to conduct the study, two sample high schools were selected which fit the purpose of the research – to compare differing modes of vocabulary instruction. The schools are Jiren Secondary School and Setto Secondary School that are found in Jimma. The two schools were selected for the very reason that both schools use different modes of instruction. Jiren Secondary School makes use of the EDSTV programme whereas Setto Secondary School didn't, because the EDSTV programme was not established at the school yet. Thus, the traditional mode of presentation was still in effect in Setto.

This situation enabled the researcher to carry out the study in a natural setting. If this were not the case, it would hardly be possible to randomly assign students and establish two groups: one that receives the EDSTV programme and the other that is

denied the programme in the same school. In other words, it would be challenging on ethical grounds to form two groups and isolate them as control and experimental groups, for we have to deny the programme to some students who equally deserve it (Trochim, 2002).

Therefore, the presence of the two high schools, which use different modes of teaching, helped the researcher to study the two groups in their own natural habitat. Hence, students of Jiren Secondary School were taken as a **Programme Group** as they receive the EDSTV programme, and students of Setto Secondary School were taken as a **Comparison Group** since they don't attend the programme. This was taken as a design which is "tailored" to the situation at hand. The formation of the two groups in this way is essential to compare and know whether the EDSTV programme is better than the conventional/traditional mode of instruction in vocabulary teaching. Thus, the researcher thought that involving two groups in the study - the Programme Group and the Comparison Group would help rule out the single-group threats to internal validity.

The study was conducted on grade ten by incorporating all grade ten teachers of the two schools and 245 students as subjects of the study. The teachers were given questionnaires to fill in. Besides, the students for both groups were randomly sampled from their respective population by taking every tenth student from each section of Jiren and Setto using their name list. This was meant to avoid selection bias and draw participants that better represent the large group.

Altogether, 245 students were drawn as the sample of the study. The students were given a vocabulary test that incorporated items which were formerly covered in their

respective classes. The tests as well as the questionnaires were analyzed.

The researcher has asserted that both groups

- attend the same number of English classes per week (five periods each).
- use the same textbook – English for Ethiopia (EfE for Grade Ten).
- have library facilities which have more or less similar resources.

In addition to this, the test paper of those students who attend tutorial classes in their spare time is also discarded, lest they might obtain additional input. At last the result of 210 students (108 from Jiren, and 102 from Setto) was analyzed. The only difference between these groups is believed to be the mode of instruction. Thus, in all other respects the groups were treated the same way. Irrespective of the mode of presentation, therefore, the same vocabulary test and instrumentation issues were used for both groups.

Taking these variables into account, the researcher tried to create two groups that are “probabilistically equivalent” (Trochim, 2002) to each other: they belong to the same grade level; they attend the same number of periods per week; both groups have library facilities, and there are English clubs in both schools. Thus, if differences are observed in the test outcomes between the two groups, then the differences are likely to be due to the differences in the mode of instruction – that one got the EDSTV programme and the other didn’t. The researcher tried to control or minimize other variables which could be responsible for changes in the outcome measures.

In this study, therefore, three types of instruments were used to collect data: Observation, Questionnaires and a Vocabulary Test. Direct classroom

observations were conducted six times in each school to gather first hand information with the help of a checklist. To accomplish this, the same instrument was used for observing and collecting data at both schools.

The other instrument used in the study is questionnaire. Questionnaire was designed and administered to English teachers of both schools. The purpose of administering the questionnaire was to investigate the long-term practice that the EDSTV programme and the classroom teachers make use of in teaching vocabulary lessons. All the grade ten English teachers of both schools were approached by the researcher. The results of the questionnaire were tabulated and analyzed.

At last the researcher developed a vocabulary retention test that comprises 50 questions. All the target words were taken from Units 2 and 3 (EfE student text for grade ten). The test was meant for testing the hypothesis that the researcher formulated; i.e. whether or not the introduction of the EDSTV instruction brought about or resulted in a significant difference in the vocabulary retention of the students more than did the non-televised programme.

The data analysis was carried out based on the following procedures:

- During the classroom observation, the actual vocabulary teaching techniques employed and the activities practiced by EDSTV as well as by the Non-EDSTV classroom teachers were tabulated on the checklist. Finally, the results of the observations were tabulated and summarized in figures and percentages for interpretation.
- The responses gathered from the teachers using the questionnaire were

also tabulated and analyzed descriptively, i.e. using frequency and percentages.

- The mean and standard deviation of the test scores were computed and analyzed. Besides, a T-test was administered to see if there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups.
- Finally, based on the data obtained, conclusions were drawn and recommendations were made.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Three major results were found from the study:

1. Concerning the vocabulary teaching techniques, the EDSTV was by far better compared to those employed by the NONEDSTV. Especially, the visual aid supplement, the fluency in giving brief definitions of the target

words and the revision procedures the EDSTV made use of were worth appreciation. The NONEDSTV had serious shortcomings in this regard.

2. The way vocabulary activities are designed, practiced and recycled in both programmes seems to be unsatisfactory. The EDSTV programme would have been more successful if it provided more integrated vocabulary activities avoiding over dependence on the vocabulary exercises alone that appear in the student textbook

3. The study indicated that the EDSTV students scored a significantly better result than the NONEDSTV students in the vocabulary retention test administered to both groups.

The vocabulary teaching techniques used by both programmes

Table 1: How frequently the teachers use visual aids to teach vocabulary items

Results	EDSTV PROGRAMME								NONEDSTV PROGRAMME							
	always		usually		sometimes		never		always		usually		sometimes		never	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1*	4	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	100
2**	-	-	3	75	1	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	75	1	25

1* results of the observations

2** results of the questionnaire

1* results of the observations

2** results of the questionnaire

The table shows how often the teachers use visual aids when teaching vocabulary items. 75% of the EDSTV teachers confirmed that using visual aids in vocabulary teaching is a usual practice. Similarly, as can be seen from the results of the observation, the EDSTV vocabulary presentation uses real situations, pictures and other relevant visual experiences in most instances. When teaching words like ‘dilute’, ‘containing’, and ‘trickle’ (EfE

Grade 10 Unit 3) for example, the EDSTV teacher discussed their meanings by showing scientific equipment in a laboratory setting.

On the other hand, any of the NONEDSTV teachers were hardly observed using any kind of visual aids to teach new words. At least words like, ‘dilute’, ‘surface’, ‘trickle’, ‘contain’ etc. (cf. EfE, Grade 10, Unit 3) could easily be taught using visual

Guessing the meaning of a word from its context was the most frequently used method of vocabulary teaching. As confirmed by 75% of the teachers of both programmes, the technique is usually and/or always used when teaching vocabulary items. Besides, in all my observations both at the EDSTV and NONEDSTV programmes, students were required to guess the meaning of the target words (which are usually printed in bold in the student’s textbook) from the context they are used and using their knowledge of word formation. The teachers in both programs as well as the vocabulary exercises by themselves attach greater

emphasis to this technique of vocabulary teaching/learning.

Guessing the meaning of a word from its context is indeed a valuable skill in vocabulary learning (Oxford, 1990; McCarthy, 1990; Jordan, 1997). Nevertheless, unless it is followed by a variety of meaningful activities, it is unlikely to help much in the learning process. It is vital to help students comprehend the meaning of words, and yet that comprehension needs to be enriched using persistent practice activities in order to help students gain a better language command be it in speaking or writing.

Table 5: How frequently teachers revise vocabulary items

Results	EDSTV PROGRAMME								NONEDSTV PROGRAMME							
	always		usually		sometimes		never		always		usually		sometimes		never	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1*	-	-	3	75	-	-	1	25	-	-	-	-	1	25	3	75
2**			1	25	3	75	-	-	-	-	2	50	2	50	-	-

1* results of the observations

2** results of the questionnaire

The EDSTV mode of instruction was successful in revising the vocabulary items presented in each unit. As indicated in the table, 75 % of the results of the observations as well as 25% of the teachers’ responses revealed that the programme usually revised the vocabulary items discussed. Of course 75% of the EDSTV teachers responded that the instructional television sometimes revises the target words under discussion. As the results of the observation indicate, revising the newly learnt vocabulary items was treated well in the EDSTV Programme. The researcher was able to witness that students had a chance of encountering a new word several times – during the reading comprehension session, in Part I vocabulary exercise itself and at the end of

Part I matching exercise by way of winding up the session.

Though 100% of the NONEDSTV teachers responded that they sometimes and/or usually revise the new words they taught, there were very few incidents in which teachers revised the new words that appear in a unit. In most of the sessions (75%) teachers used to move on to the next topic/exercise without revising the words they discussed. This is a great disadvantage on the part of the students for they are unlikely to remember the vocabulary items they learnt during a few encounters alone. Therefore, it would be essential to help students frequently encounter the words and practice them insistently by regularly revising the new words at different occasions and in a variety of activities.

From the large number of words students encounter regularly, we should not take it for granted that they can remember the new vocabulary items merely by using or hearing them once. “*Various studies create a range of 5-16 encounters of a word in order for a student to truly acquire it*” (Nation, 1990:43).

In sum, the effectiveness of the EDSTV vocabulary teaching techniques was by far better compared to that employed by the NONEDSTV. Especially, the visual aid supplement, the fluency in giving brief definitions of the target words and the revision procedures were worth appreciation. However, successful presentation at this initial stage cannot be sufficient by itself. In other words, vocabulary teaching shouldn't get stuck at this preliminary stage. The presentation stage, which enables students to infer the meaning of a word, should be enriched by Here are the results.

subsequent vocabulary exercises and activities so as to help students recall and practically use the new words they learnt.

The Focus Areas of the Vocabulary Activities/Exercises

The next items were meant to explore information regarding the primary focus of the vocabulary activities in both programmes:

The Vocabulary activities/exercises the English teacher provides mainly focus on

- A. *listening and reading exercises.*
- B. *speaking and writing activities.*
- C. *integrated activities which incorporate listening, speaking, reading and writing.*

Table 6: The areas the vocabulary activities most frequently focus on

Results	EDSTV PROGRAMME						NONEDSTV PROGRAMME						
	A		B		C		A		B		C		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
1*	2	50	1	25	1	25	3	75	1	25			
2**					4	100	2	50			2	50	
1*	results of the observations					2**	results of the questionnaire						

The results of the observation indicated that the vocabulary activities largely focus on receptive skills – listening and reading. Students were largely involved in listening and reading activities. Especially with the NONEDSTV programme, teachers used to teach the vocabulary items by making the students scan for the target word. Thus, in 75% of the session, students were listening to teacher’s explanation and searching for the words by scanning. In the other 25% of the session, students used to answer questions (speaking – supplying the target word), and copy down the right answers (writing).

100% of the EDSTV and 50% of the NONEDSTV teachers responded in a contradictory way to the results of the observation. They thought that the exercises usually focus on integrated activities. Nevertheless, they are negating their own response which they gave for the items in table 4 where they conformed that the vocabulary activities **usually** demand students to write the meaning of vocabulary items by guessing from the context. Such matching exercises, which are entirely based on guessing, are usually composed of discrete clauses and phrases which are unrelated to one another. Thus, they are unlikely to form a coherent text that promotes the use of different macro skills in an integrated manner.

In addition to this, the reality also proved the opposite. No incidents were observed during the NONEDSTV vocabulary sessions when students were actively engaged in integrated vocabulary activities using the words they learnt in speaking, reading, listening or writing activities other than listening to the teacher and uttering words or phrases in response to the exercises.

The observations made revealed the same result with the EDSTV programme as well.

The programme highly depended on the student textbook in that it follows the textbook page by page. It was only in one incident (25%) that a supplementary vocabulary exercise (which didn’t appear in the text book) was presented by the EDSTV. An example was displayed on the screen showing students conversing with one another about their experience using the vocabulary items discussed earlier. The vocabulary activity was a more integrated one by nature – demanding students to speak and/or to listen to one another, to supplement and/or inquire for further information, etc. When their conversation was over, the EDSTV teacher reminded the students to know how the words discussed earlier could be used for communicative purposes. Then she asked the students to produce a similar dialogue using the words they learnt and using the model conversation screened as an example.

To accomplish this task, students were required to compose a text (writing), read and edit it (reading), tell it to one another (speaking and listening). Such tasks are more pedagogically sound ones in that they actively engage students in generating more communicative activities and practicing new words more intensively. This in turn helps students to retain better and build their vocabulary stock. Engaging learners in communicative tasks, therefore, will enable them to consolidate their learning in a greater depth. “More meaningful tasks require learners to analyze and process language more deeply, which helps them to commit the information to long term memory” (Gairns & Redman, 1986:90).

Furthermore, the following item was included in both instruments to examine how frequently the vocabulary items taught were recycled:

Vocabulary items need to be given a wider coverage in language classes as they are the pillars of a language (Lewis, 1993). Thus, every endeavour needs to be made to teach new words through interaction by providing well designed exercises, by producing more extended vocabulary activities that systematically engage students in some kind of discourse, problem solving tasks, dialogues, report writing etc. Looking for all possible ways and means whereby we knit the skills together within the practice contexts

provided, new words can be used in a natural, meaningful and purposeful way (Byrne, in Johnson and Morrow, 1981).

Vocabulary Retention Test

On the completion of the observation, a vocabulary test was administered to both groups (Programme and Comparison Groups) ensuring that Units 2 and 3 were covered. The objective of administering the test was to investigate which of the groups performed better in the vocabulary retention test.

Table 8: The mean scores of the two groups

No	Programme	N	Mean	Range		Std. D	Coefficient of Variation
				Min	Max.		
1	EDSTV	75	36.91	14	86	14.48	SD/ x = 0.39
2	NONEDSTV	75	32.51	14	88	12.23	" = 0.38

As indicated in the table, the standard deviation, which is the measure of variance, is large in both cases. This shows that the scores of the students vary within each condition; this means the participants in each programme differ among themselves. The test scores of the EDSTV students lie between 14 and 86, where as the scores of the NONEDSTV students range between 14 -88. Nevertheless, the case is similar in both groups. In other words, the distribution of the mark secured by both groups is almost similarly distributed because the coefficient of variation is nearly equal ((0.39 and 0.38) for EDSTV and NONEDSTV students respectively. This shows that the parent population has more or less equal variance as well.

Two conclusions can be drawn from the table. The first is, the mean scores of both groups, i.e. the EDSTV as well as the NONEDSTV are generally poor. The EDSTV students' mean score is 36.91%

whereas the NONEDSTV students' is 32.51%. Both of the mean scores are below 50%. Even if it might be arguable to generalize a case in a single test, some inferences can be made. Thus, considering the results of the observation along with this result, this poor achievement could be attributed to the way vocabulary activities are designed, practiced and recycled, as discussed above in 4.3. In the previous section of the discussion pertaining to the design feature of the vocabulary exercises (section 4.3), the results of the observation revealed that the vocabulary exercises are deficient, i.e.

- In most instances, they are composed of discrete sentences and/or phrases and clauses that do not relate to one another
- Other than capitalizing on inferring word meanings by guessing, they don't let students practice the language (vocabulary items) in any extended and meaningful activity, i.e. engaging students in activities that require those

English words for the exchange of information or the expression of personal feelings, etc.

- They largely focus on receptive skills that involve students in listening and reading activities.
- They are not recycled in the subsequent sections of grammar, speaking or writing or in any other coherent text.

Therefore, no wonder that students of both groups achieved low grades in the test. The way vocabulary activities are designed, as discussed in 4.3, doesn't create favourable ground for students to practice and use the new words they learnt in more extended interactive tasks. "The most effective language teaching will mean that the students are set realistic tasks where they use language for a purpose rather than manipulate it for its own sake" (Lewis & Hill, 1985:29).

Incorporating vocabulary items in a variety of tasks would offer students ample exposure in using the language; and this in turn would promote their retention. Acknowledging the importance of engaging students in extended communicative tasks, empirical research points out that "***words that were used in productive tasks, were remembered better than words practised in non productive tasks***" (Ellis & He 1999; Hulstijn & Trompetter, 1998; Joe, 1995, 1998; cited in

Hulstijn and Laufer, 2001: 542)(emphasis added). In other words, the more students are involved in a series of vocabulary tasks that integrate different skills, the better the retention/the better they learn (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001).

Therefore, the lack of provision of appropriate vocabulary exercises and the overdependence of the EDSTV English session on the student textbook, which is defective in its vocabulary design and presentation, could be one possible reason for the poor achievement of the students in their test scores. Thus, based on the results of the students, one can argue that the introduction of the EDSTV programme by itself is unlikely to produce a remarkable change unless the tasks are redesigned in a pedagogically sound manner.

The bulk of vocabulary growth is the cumulative result of employing a variety of techniques (where the EDSTV is successful), strategies, plus a thorough practice in appropriate and integrated language tasks. Furthermore, recycling vocabulary items in subsequent sections gives students a chance to encounter and practice the target words several times. "Only sustained exposure to comprehensible input can lead to a high rate of vocabulary growth necessary for successful language learning (Nation & Waring, in Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997:83).

The Result of the Independent Samples Test

Table 9: Independent Samples Test for equality of means

Independent Samples Test									
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
None	4.258	.041	2.011	148	.046	4.40	2.19	7.55E-02	8.72
Equal variances assumed									
Equal variances Not assumed			2.011	143.993	0.46	4.40	2.19	7.55E-02	8.73

The other conclusion that can be drawn from the test scores is that the mean score of the EDSTV students is better than that of the NONEDSTV ones. Even if their achievement is below average, the test indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the test scores of those students who attended the EDSTV programme and those who did not. Students in the EDSTV programme achieved better ($X = 36.91, SD = 14.48$) than those in the NON EDSTV programme ($X = 32.51, SD = 12.23$). The mean difference between the two groups is 4.40.

An independent samples test was computed and it revealed that, if the null hypothesis were true, such a result would be highly unlikely to have arisen by chance or sampling error ($t = 2.011, df = 148, p < 0.05$). *“Researchers use the convention that a probability of 5% is small enough to be a useful cut of point for us to reject the null hypothesis. Given such a low probability we can conclude with a reasonable confidence that a real relationship exists in the population under investigation”* (Dancey & Reidy, 2002:134). As indicated in the table, the p-value or alpha is .046. This means the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis by mere chance would be

less than 46 in 1000. Based on such a low probability, we can say that there exists a real relationship between the mode of instruction and the test scores of the students under investigation.

In addition to this, the 95% confidence interval for the estimated mean difference is between 0.076 and 8.72; assuming the two populations have equal variances. This result shows that the null hypothesis (H^0) is rejected because 0 is not found in the 95% confidence interval. Should this not be the case, i.e. if the confidence interval included zero, it would imply that if we replicated the study with a different sample, the NONEDSTV students might score higher than the EDSTV students (as in this case the mean difference is 4.40); or there might be absolutely no difference at all (zero) (Christine & John, 2002).

Furthermore, the calculated value of the test statistics ($t = 2.011$) is greater than the theoretical distribution (1.97) with the given value degrees of freedom and confidence level. The higher the t-value, the more likely it is that the difference between groups is not the result of sampling error (Christine & John, in Trochim 2002). It is therefore concluded

that the EDSTV programme has helped students better retain vocabulary items than did the NONEDSTV programme.

The other point worth examination is whether or not there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the different sexes as compared to their counterparts in the other group. When comparing their means in sex, the male EDSTV students have obtained a better mean score (39.366) than the male NONEDSTV students (34.278)

On the other hand, the mean score of the female students of both groups is lower as compared to the male students. Nevertheless, the mean score of the EDSTV female students is still better (33.941) than that of the NONEDSTV female students, which is 30.872 (Table: 14). Their mean difference is also 3.069. Though the female students seem to be low achievers in this test, we can conclude that the introduction of the EDSTV programme has helped students better retain vocabulary items in general.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this comparative study an attempt has been made to find out whether or not the EDSTV programme has better addressed vocabulary teaching/learning than did the NONEDSTV programme in presenting tasks that are rich in context and that are effective in promoting interaction among students.

To carry out this study, two groups were involved – a study group (that employs the EDSTV programme) and a comparison group (that attends the NONEDSTV programme). The main instruments used to collect data for the study were classroom observation, questionnaire and a vocabulary retention test.

Intensive classroom observations were conducted for over four weeks at both schools to study the vocabulary teaching techniques employed and to examine the way vocabulary activities students practiced are designed and recycled. An observation checklist was prepared to carry out the observation.

Over the completion of the observation, questionnaire was dispatched to English teachers of both schools to have a general idea about the long established vocabulary teaching/learning practices. In addition to these two instruments a vocabulary test was administered to both groups. The test comprises vocabulary items that were selected from units two and three (EfE, grade 10).

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions and recommendations are made.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The EDSTV vocabulary presentation was far more interesting compared to the NONEDSTV one in using visual aids.

It was impressive indeed in presenting vocabulary items accompanied by sight-capturing motion pictures. In the case of the NONEDSTV mode of instruction, however, hardly a teacher attempted to either produce or provide any visual aid to supplement the vocabulary teaching. The teachers, thus, used to stick to tortuous verbal explanations to make clear the meaning of the words they teach

2. Guessing the meaning of a word from its context was the most frequently used method of vocabulary teaching. The teachers in both programs as well as the vocabulary exercises by themselves attached greater emphasis to this technique of vocabulary teaching/learning. The technique is indeed a valuable skill in vocabulary teaching/learning.

Nevertheless, it was not supplemented by a variety of meaningful activities that could help students consolidate their learning.

3. The EDSTV mode of instruction was successful in revising the vocabulary items presented in each session. Thus, students had a chance of encountering a new word several times. However, this was not the case in the NONEDSTV programme. There were very few incidents in which the NONEDSTV teachers revise the new words that appear in a unit. This is a great disadvantage on the part of the students for they are unlikely to remember the vocabulary items they learnt during very few encounters alone.

In sum, the **vocabulary teaching techniques** the EDSTV programme employed were by far more effective as compared to those employed by the NONEDSTV one. Especially, the visual aid supplement, the fluency in giving brief definitions of the target words and the revision procedures were effective. Nevertheless, as to the way vocabulary activities are designed, practiced and recycled the following drawbacks were identified in both programmes.

4. Appropriate vocabulary exercises are very essential in helping students practice language items. The exercises were usually matching exercises, which were composed of fragments of phrases and clauses. In both programmes, therefore, the organization of the exercises was defective in that it did not provide fertile ground for students to use vocabulary items in more extended communicative activities. That is, it did not engage students in activities that require those English words to exchange information or the expression of personal feelings, opinions, etc.

5. The results of the observation indicated that the vocabulary activities largely focus on receptive skills – listening and reading. Students were largely involved in listening and reading activities (scanning for the target word).

6. The vocabulary items discussed in the vocabulary sections were not used or recycled in the other activities or sections. By examining the student's textbook, one can also see that the vocabulary items discussed in a unit do not appear in the subsequent grammar, listening, speaking or writing sections. This trend might inhibit the students from reinforcing their vocabulary learning for the very reason that it would be unlikely for them to thoroughly understand the vocabulary items they learnt in an exercise or two.

To sum up, the way vocabulary items are designed, practiced and recycled was unsatisfactory in both programmes.

7. On the other hand, even though it is below average in general, the study indicated that the EDSTV students scored a significantly better result than the NONEDSTV students in the vocabulary retention test administered to both groups .

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Using visual aids is a pedagogically advantageous technique that could be employed in vocabulary teaching. It is likely to help students grasp the material without much difficulty. Thus, NONEDSTV teachers need to exert every effort to make use of this essential technique.
2. Guessing is a valuable vocabulary teaching/learning technique.

Nevertheless, it cannot be sufficient by itself unless supplemented by more extended activities. The technique, which enables students to infer the meaning of a word, should be further enriched by subsequent vocabulary exercises and activities so as to help students recall and practically use the new words they learnt.

3. To alleviate the problems that prevail in the EfE vocabulary exercises, language teachers need to create appropriate activities on vocabulary lessons that can promote communication where students could manipulate the words in varied and rich ways. The Ministry of Education is also expected to revise the way vocabulary tasks are designed in the English text book.
4. Similarly the EDSTV programme could further enrich the vocabulary sessions by providing supplementary exercises that help students use the language in a more meaningful and natural way.
5. It would be essential to help students encounter the vocabulary items frequently and practice them insistently by regularly revising the new words at different occasions and in a variety of activities.
6. The grammar exercises can be designed in such a way that they incorporate the vocabulary items discussed in the unit. This will help students reinforce their retention.

In sum, vocabulary lessons should occupy a more significant position in EfE than what has previously been the case.

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