Investigating the Role of Vocabulary Instruction in Enhancing EFL learners' Reading Comprehension: The Case Study of First Year LMD Students in the Department of English at Blida 2 University

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Abstract:

   Vocabulary teaching has gone through many changes to cope with the demands of teaching/ learning environments. There is ample literature on the strategies for teaching vocabulary. However, more research is needed on the specificity of the Algerian tertiary level context. The paper focuses on investigating the role of effective vocabulary instruction strategies in enhancing first-year LMD students' reading comprehension in the Department of English at Blida 2 University, in Algeria. Therefore, the main research question is: Does vocabulary instruction help first year LMD students in the Department of English at Blida University to better understand the reading texts? To answer this research question, two research instruments were utilized. Two questionnaires were administered to ten Algerian EFL teachers from the Department of English at Blida 2 University and thirty first-year LMD students from the same department. The students' sample was then divided into two groups of equal size (control and experimental). The aim was to design a reading comprehension course that bases instruction on incorporating three vocabulary teaching strategies. These were pre-teaching vocabulary, guessing meaning from context, and using the dictionary. The efficacy of these strategies in improving first-year LMD students' reading comprehension and vocabulary development was tested after administering the treatment (i.e., having students attend the designed course for five weeks). The present investigation findings have shown that vocabulary teaching strategies foster first-year LMD students reading comprehension. The outcomes of the research may encourage teachers and researchers to test the impact of vocabulary instruction on students' reading comprehension achievements.

Keywords: Vocabulary Instruction; EFL Reading Comprehension; Pre-teaching Vocabulary; Guessing Meaning from Context; Dictionary Use; Algeria.

1- Introduction

        In the process of learning the English language, vocabulary is of crucial importance because it is challenging to learn a language without its vocabulary. It is essential to communicate, express ideas, and learn about new concepts. Researchers have pointed to the importance of vocabulary acquisition for EFL

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learners (Nation, 1990, 2001; Richards, 1980). Vocabulary knowledge is fundamental to reading comprehension. The National Reading Panel's report (2000) concluded that the relevance of vocabulary knowledge to reading skills development has long been recognized, specifically in reading comprehension. Moreover, Bromely (2004) concludes that vocabulary knowledge promotes reading fluency, enhances reading comprehension, and improves academic success. Besides, Schoonen et al. (1998) found that vocabulary is a decisive factor in EFL successful reading comprehension.

Despite this importance, vocabulary teaching was neglected in the past. However, during the 1990s, a great deal of attention was given to vocabulary as it was widely recognized as an essential component of language teaching (Schmitt, 2000). Therefore, the increased interest in vocabulary led to an increasing amount of studies in vocabulary instruction. These studies have resulted in identifying different strategies and techniques for teaching vocabulary. Because of the importance of vocabulary knowledge in EFL reading comprehension, the present study investigates the role of effective vocabulary instruction in enhancing first-year LMD students' reading comprehension. In other words, does vocabulary instruction help first-year LMD student in the Department of English at Blida 2 University better understand the reading texts? The primary objective of this research is to investigate the role of vocabulary instruction in enhancing first-year LMD students' reading comprehension in the Department of English at Blida 2 University. The hypothesis here is that if vocabulary is handled with care through effective vocabulary instruction, the lack of comprehension is likely to be reduced.

1.1- Vocabulary as the Center of the Reading Comprehension Process

Vocabulary is the sum of the meaningful units a person knows in a language and which develops continuously. As stated by Grauberg (1997): "[...] vocabulary, is open, containing a large number of words for productive use, another large number for receptive use and a further number which varies with the interests and occupation of individual speakers" (p. 2). This highlights the significant amount of vocabulary in a language and, thus, justifies being concerned with it. On their part, Richards and Schmidt (2002) refer to vocabulary as a set of lexemes, including single words, compound words, and idioms that someone knows, learns, or uses. Likewise, Thomas et al., (2006) describe vocabulary as the knowledge of words and their meanings. Thus, vocabulary is the knowledge of words and their meanings that a person knows, understands, and uses.

Many researchers have stressed the importance of vocabulary knowledge in EFL reading achievement. For instance, Thomas et al. (2006) argue that "word

learning can improve the capacity to learn" and "a rich vocabulary increases comprehension and, therefore, most all learning" (p. 61). In this respect, Laufer (2003) suggests that, for reading comprehension, a learner must know around 95% of the lexical items in a text to guess the rest of the words successfully. Nation (2001) also maintains that the same 95% of the words enable most participants to achieve good comprehension of listening passages. The great size of the above-suggested figures illustrates the significance of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension.

From the above-stated views, it could be argued that vocabulary and comprehension are closely connected. Put differently, vocabulary knowledge and text comprehension are complementary in that better vocabulary knowledge promotes reading comprehension. In turn, a lack of vocabulary knowledge results in readers not understanding textual information, which could be crucial for understanding the whole text.

1.2- The Relevance of Vocabulary Instruction

According to Celce-Murcia (2001), knowledge can be represented and either explicitly or implicitly. However, both methods contribute to language learning. With regard to vocabulary, from the perspective of pedagogy, questions have evolved around what and how to teach vocabulary; much interest has been paid to securing the best pedagogical practices in advancing students' lexical knowledge, this was reflected in many discussions in SLA research, which were specifically directed towards the nature and function of explicit and implicit learning processes (Doughty, 2003; Ellis, 1994).

The former would be implemented through activities such as the study of de-contextualized lexis, the use of dictionaries, or inferring meanings from contexts (Hunt and Beglar, 2005). Ellis (1994) suggests that "An explicit vocabulary learning hypothesis holds that there is an advantage to vocabulary acquisition from the learner noticing new words, hence, selectively attending to it, and eventually using a variety of strategies to infer its meaning from the context of appearance" (p. 219). Therefore, this hypothesis would support the relevance of explicit attention to new words through several conscious and planned strategies.

On the other hand, the latter, that is, implicit instruction, would involve engaging students in language-use activities, particularly reading and listening. In this regard, Ellis (1994) points out: "An implicit vocabulary learning hypothesis would hold that the meaning of a particular vocabulary item is acquired unconsciously as a result of abstraction from repeated exposures in a range of activated contexts" (p. 219). Thus, implicit vocabulary learning would be related to behaviorist approaches (Carter, 2012) and suggest that new vocabulary is

acquired unconsciously, especially when reading or speaking (i.e. any type of interaction with the target language).

Even though the two hypotheses presented above embody opposing views of vocabulary learning, most current EFL researchers may agree that, as far as vocabulary teaching is concerned, the consensus seems to be a compromise between explicit and implicit vocabulary instruction. For the purpose of the present study, what follows intends to explore existing vocabulary teaching strategies.

1.3- Vocabulary Instruction Strategies

In an age when the importance of vocabulary in FL research and pedagogy is highly advocated, it is natural to expect updated classroom practices which are more theory-informed. An overview of the existing vocabulary teaching strategies shows that there are three categories of teaching strategies: (a) de-contextualized (e.g. pre-teaching vocabulary: before reading/ listening, word lists, flashcards, and dictionary use), (b) semi-contextualized (e.g. semantic mapping, aural imaginary, keywords, word grouping, associations, visual imagery, physical sensation, and physical response), and (c) fully contextualizing (e.g. vocabulary introduced in reading and listening).

It can be reasonably argued that contextual, semi-contextual, and de-contextual teaching vocabulary strategies are all needed to help learners learn new words. Since vocabulary knowledge is critical to reading comprehension, teachers must help learners develop comprehensible vocabulary knowledge and equip them with practical vocabulary learning strategies. There are, indeed, various effective explicit (planned) and implicit (unplanned) instruction strategies that teachers can employ to develop their learners' vocabulary. For the purpose of the present paper, the following is an attempt to discuss three strategies. These are vocabulary pre-teaching, guessing meaning from context, and Using Dictionaries.

1.3.1-Vocabulary Pre-Teaching

Jahangard (2011) emphasizes the role of vocabulary instruction in reading pedagogy. He argues that vocabulary pre-teaching triggers schema activation and facilitates comprehension. Within the same scope, Carrell (1984) maintains that an essential aspect of teaching reading is teaching the vocabulary related to the reading selection. This can remove at least some of the barriers to understanding, which students are likely to encounter. One useful technique, as suggested by Harmer (2007), is to use some (possibly unknown) words from a reading text as part of the teacher procedure to create interest and activate the students' schemata. The students can first research the meanings of words and phrases and then predict what a text containing such words is likely to be speaking about.

1.3.2- Guessing Meaning from Context

Guessing vocabulary meaning from context is one of the strategies used for discovering the meaning of unknown words. Hollander (1996) contends that contextual vocabulary learning is a process used by readers to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word as it occurs in a particular reading passage or text. Moreover, in their discussion of guessing meaning from the context, Nation and Coady (1988) note that words are better recognized when taken in context. Likewise, Dycus (1997) defines this process as making 'informed guesses' about the meaning of new words based on the contextual clues available. These include the sentences' grammar and the meanings of words, a paragraph, a whole story, or other text.

Similarly, Alqahtani (2015) suggests that in order for a learner to guess the meaning of an unknown word, four elements should be available: the reader, the text, unknown words, and some textual clues, which include some knowledge that facilitates facilitate the process of guessing. He further suggests that lacking knowledge about guessing may affect learners' ability to guess. Therefore, teachers need to explain to students that a word's meaning is governed by different socio-cultural aspects that tend to come into play in some cases, especially in unfamiliar contexts (i.e. different from the students' background knowledge, being culture-specific). In this regard, Nation and Coady (1988, p. 29 as cited in Alqahtani, 2015) maintain that there are two types of contexts. "The first type of context is the one within the text. It includes specific information within the text itself such as: semantic, morphological, and syntactic information. The second type, however, is a more general (non- textual). It incorporates the readers' background knowledge about the subject of the text.

The above discussion calls for the need to train students to guess the meaning from context and to raise their awareness about the relevance of this strategy and guide them through the process of guessing meaning from context through highlighting the available contextual information which is likely to influence the meaning of a particular word in its context of appearance.

1.3.3- Using Dictionaries

The past 26 years have seen rapid lexicography developments directed at improving dictionaries' image within the language teaching profession. According to Nuttall (1982), dictionaries are the best ways to learn the meaning of new words. Learners tend to consult dictionaries to check spelling, look up unfamiliar words, and confirm unknown words' meaning. Thus, dictionaries are invaluable tools for learners to learn new words independently. However, they need to need to be trained in the use of dictionaries.

Exploring dictionary entries is effective for understanding words. The usage notes commonly explain even subtle differences among words, such as the importance of highlighting the appropriateness of one word over another in a particular context. However, this is not always sufficient since a word can have several meanings depending on its appearance in different contexts. Therefore, learners should be exposed to different contexts in which a word may be used to ensure proper usage. As such, a task presupposes an initiated user of the dictionary. Learners should be guided by their teachers to move from the virtual meaning potential found in dictionaries to the complexity of meanings in real contexts. In other words, learners need to be trained to optimize their use of the dictionary by capitalizing on the ready-made potential to determine the meanings encountered in the reading process.

Moreover, the difficulty of handling meanings in dictionaries may turn out to be a major inhibitor discouraging demotivated learners from using dictionaries in the first place (Thompson, 1987). Algerian EFL teachers need to foster their students' good habits on the best practices in dictionary use.

2- Method and Tools

Since this the present study aims to test if vocabulary instruction has an effect on increasing reading comprehension, the researcher opted for an experimental design that consists of thirty first-year LMD students in the Department of English at Blida 2 University. Participants were randomly assigned into two matching groups; one group was designed as the control group, whereas the other group (experimental group) received further vocabulary instruction from the instructor.

At the beginning, students were asked to fill in a questionnaire about the reading difficulties they encounter while reading EFL texts. Then, a questionnaire was administered to ten teachers from the Department of English at Blida 2 University. It aims at collecting data about the methodology they use or have used in teaching reading comprehension and whether vocabulary instruction was considered. After that, both groups sat a test to identify the students' level and prove their homogeneity. Finally, they took a post-test to measure vocabulary instruction's effect on enhancing the students' reading comprehension.

2.1- Population and Sampling

The target population was selected from the Department of English at Blida 2 University in Algeria. First-year LMD students were selected to be investigated in this study for several methodological reasons. The most significant reason is that at this level, students' vocabulary knowledge needs to be handled with care in their first-year, mainly because they are now learning English majors. Thus, thirty first-year LMD students were chosen to be the sample in the study. The

subjects were randomly assigned into two equal-in-number groups; experimental group and control group. Participants also included ten teachers who teach or have been teaching reading comprehension in the English Department at Blida 2 University.

2.2- Instrumentation

It was hypothesized in the present study that if vocabulary is handled with care through effective vocabulary instruction, the problems of lack of comprehension will be reduced. Two research instruments were used to serve the needs of this hypothesis and inform the research questions. These are the questionnaires and the pre and post-tests.

The students' questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was designed to collect data about the difficulties students encounter when reading. It consists of five close-ended questions. As for the teachers' questionnaire (see Appendix 2), it was designed to address all the teachers who teach or have been teaching reading comprehension in the English Department at Blida 2 University. It consists of seven close-ended questions that require yes/no answers or selected items. Closed questions were used because, as Bailey (1998) stated, they are easy to handle, simple to answer, and quick and relatively easy to analyze. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section aims at gathering information about the teachers' teaching experience. In the next section, participants are expected to give insights on their methodology of teaching reading comprehension. The aim of the final section was documenting data on vocabulary instruction.

Moreover, the pre-test was designed to identify the students' level and see whether there was a significant difference between the groups. It is a TOEFL reading comprehension test extracted from the Barron's TOEFL test and consists of 20 questions. The post-test was designed to measure the subjects' reading comprehension ability in both groups. This test is adapted from the Barron's TOFEL test and consists of 20 questions.

2.3- The Treatment

The present study investigates the role of vocabulary instruction in enhancing first-year LMD students reading comprehension in the Department of English at Blida 2 University. It was hypothesized that if vocabulary is handled with care through effective teaching strategies, students' reading comprehension will be enhanced. Therefore, the sample of the study consisted of thirty first-year LMD students. They were assigned into two groups; a control group and an experimental group. The former received no treatment, whereas the latter received further vocabulary instruction. The treatment included incorporating three vocabulary teaching strategies (see table 1). These were pre-teaching vocabulary, guessing meaning from context, and the use of the dictionary.

A review of the relevant literature concerning these strategies suggests that they are of great importance in enhancing EFL learners' reading comprehension. On the one hand, Prince (1996) reiterates that the primary advantage of vocabulary pre-teaching is that it actively involves students in reading, enhancing both comprehension and appreciation of what is being read. Bogaards (1998), on the other hand, suggests that dictionary use may lead to improved comprehension and efficient vocabulary development. Moreover, Nation (1990) maintains that guessing meaning from context is crucial for dealing with low-frequency vocabulary in reading EFL texts. Therefore, considering what is stated above, incorporating these strategies will contribute to more successful reading experience for the experimental group.

Furthermore, while teaching the experimental group, the researchers adapted a lesson plan suggested by Marinka et al. (1997) in which the previous vocabulary teaching strategies were incorporated. According to them, a reading comprehension class should be divided into three stages; pre-reading, while reading and post-reading (Table: 1).

2.4- Data Analysis Procedures

Two types of analysis were used in the present research: qualitative analysis and quantitative analysis. The quantitative analysis uses mainly statistical methods to analyze students' and teachers' questionnaires. As for the qualitative analysis, it is used mainly to discuss some of the teachers' responses in the questionnaires.

Besides, since the present investigation is based on two sets of scores obtained from two different groups, a statistical analysis is particularly valuable to know how subjects did on the post-test in comparison to the pre-test and to know how the experimental group did on both tests in comparison to the control one. Therefore, the first step in the analysis was to calculate the scores on a 0-20 scale and to calculate the mean, i.e. the total average of the scores of each test. Then, the researcher counted the standard deviation, which refers to the summary of "...the average amount of difference from the mean in a given data set" (Bailey, 1998, p. 99).

3- Results and Discussion

It is important to note that throughout this research paper, the researcher wanted to investigate the impact that the use of vocabulary instruction can have on students' understanding of EFL texts. The results obtained from the analysis of the students' questionnaire confirmed what has been hypothesized to conduct this research. The questionnaire evidenced that most first-year LMD students in the English Department at Blida 2 University are interested in reading EFL texts. This finding reveals that they are aware of the importance of such skill in EFL

learning. However, the results show that the overwhelming majority of them have difficulties in achieving reading comprehension. Moreover, when asked about the reasons behind this lack of reading comprehension, most of the respondents replied that it is because of their limited vocabulary knowledge (see figure: 1). At this level, it is safe to argue that vocabulary is crucial in reading comprehension.

Indeed, according to researchers and scholars in the ELT field, (e.g. Bensoussan and Laufer, 1984; Carston, 1987; Fan, 2003; Huckin, 1995; Nation, 1999, 2001; Schmitt, 1999, among others), unknown words are often an obstacle to reading comprehension. Besides, aspects relating to challenging vocabulary items have formed much of the crux of the literature on comprehension breakdowns (Nation, 2001 and Schmitt, 2010, among others). For instance, Schmitt (2010) maintains that "many foreign language learners fail to accomplish even modest vocabulary learning objectives simply from exposure to the target language in the educational setting" (p. 8). Thus, learners need to be engaged in activities that pay careful attention to lexis and involve pre-teaching the words learners need to know and developing fluency with known words.

Moreover, students' responses also draw the researcher's attention to the fact that most reading comprehension teachers appear not to teach vocabulary during the course, which is alarming (see figure: 2). This finding corresponds with the teachers' questionnaire findings as the majority of participants do not believe that direct vocabulary instruction is not necessary (see figure: 3). This is a signal that teachers might not be aware of the importance of vocabulary in reading comprehension at the tertiary level. However, according to most students (see figure: 4), vocabulary instruction is essential and necessary. It is perceived as a crucial factor in achieving reading comprehension. In this regard, Hunt and Beglar (2005) suggest that "the heart of language comprehension and use is the lexicon" (p. 2). In other words, this underlines the importance of vocabulary in classroom teaching, as, without sufficient training to use flexible vocabulary learning strategies to guess the meaning of words from context or use the dictionary to look up unknown words, their comprehension may still be low due to insufficient training and instruction.

The results obtained from the teachers' questionnaire show that most teachers try to help their students overcome their reading comprehension difficulties. As concerns the teachers' strategies to help students achieve reading comprehension, the findings reveal that the majority use strategies such as skimming, guessing meaning from context, and depending on the students' background knowledge. Furthermore, teachers' responses to the fourth question show that the students' limited vocabulary hinders their reading comprehension (see figure: 5).

These findings confirm that the lack of vocabulary knowledge may hinder the students' reading comprehension. As for vocabulary, most of the teachers discount its teaching. For those who claimed to teach vocabulary, most of them teach it incidentally. In this regard, Nation (2005, p. 585) says that "every course should involve some deliberate attention to vocabulary as well as opportunities to meet the words in meaning-focused use." However, although incidental learning may be especially beneficial for learning specific aspects of word knowledge like collocation (Schmitt, 2008), it is not always possible for a learner to grasp the meaning of a new vocabulary item from the context in which it first appears. Besides, for learning to occur through sufficient exposure to comprehensible context, learners should have already reached a vocabulary threshold (i.e. at least 3,000 words as stated in Nation, 1990). This suggests that learners have to acquire the needed threshold explicitly before they can start learning vocabulary indirectly.

It appears, thus, that vocabulary instruction is neglected from the part of the teachers. In light of the teachers' answers concerning vocabulary presentation in every session, most of them always present new vocabulary. However, presenting new vocabulary in each session is definite. What is worth commenting on is that presenting new vocabulary is different from considering its teaching. Therefore, teachers need to assist their learners and even look for shortcuts that may help accelerate the learning process.

However, when asked whether vocabulary instruction will enhance the students' reading comprehension, the overwhelming majority of teachers affirmed its utility. This finding shows that teachers are aware of their students' demands. Nevertheless, the teachers find it too troublesome to put their ideas into practice and appear resistant to change in their teaching practices. Thus, the results obtained from the teachers' questionnaire's analysis confirmed most of the key points and claims hypothesized to conduct this research.

As the results of the study reveal, the subjects in both groups performed differently on the post-test. In other words, a difference was found among the performance of the experimental group that received vocabulary instruction and the control group that received no treatment. Accordingly, the hypothesis of the present study i.e. if vocabulary is handled with care through effective teaching strategies, students' reading comprehension will be enhanced is proved. The ultimate results revealed a significant difference between the performances of both groups in terms of reading comprehension (see figures: 6 and 7).

In fact, the descriptive statistics also reveal that the mean of the pre-test of the experimental group equals: 11.30 and the standard deviation is: 2.20. As for the control group the mean of the pre-test is: 11.20 and the standard deviation

equals: 1.79. As for the post- test the experimental group's mean is 13 with a 2.90 standard deviation. Whereas, the mean of the post control group is 11.33 with a 1.94 standard deviation. That is, the maximum scores of the experimental group in the post-test are higher than those of the control group. Therefore, it can be said that vocabulary instruction had a facilitative effect on first-year LMD students' reading comprehension.

In short, taken together, these findings can be interpreted to suggest that the outcomes of the present investigation may be said to provide evidence that vocabulary instruction has had some beneficial effects on enhancing first-year LMD students' reading comprehension in the Department of English at Blida University.

4- Conclusion

At the beginning of this research, the researcher underlined the theoretical grounds for believing that vocabulary instruction enhances reading comprehension. The present study's findings have shown that vocabulary teaching strategies enabled first-year LMD students in the Department of English at Blida 2 University to achieve better reading comprehension. The most compelling pedagogical implication emerging from the present study is incorporating vocabulary instruction as a pedagogical practice to teaching reading comprehension in the Department of English at Blida 2 University. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to employ different vocabulary instruction strategies such as pre-teaching keywords, guessing meaning from context, and checking the meaning of the word in a dictionary.

However, it should be noted that findings from such small-scale research cannot be assumed to generalize to other contexts. This is due mainly to the limited sample of the subjects involved in this study and the limited period during which the teaching procedure took place. Involving a larger number of students could be more likely to encourage the practitioners to make decisions based on findings from this investigation. In addition to the limited number of subjects, the period during which the teaching procedure took place was also limited. Therefore, findings from this research show the effect of vocabulary instruction on enhancing reading comprehension only in the short run. Little can be said about the impact that it might have had in the long run.

Despite these limitations, this research's outcomes may encourage teachers and researchers to test the impact of vocabulary instruction on learners' reading comprehension achievements. It could be safely argued that although successful implementation of such strategies appears to be demanding and requires much

more effort on the part of the teachers, the outcomes of the present evaluation are worth the effort.

Appendix of Tables and Figures

Table (1): Lesson Plan

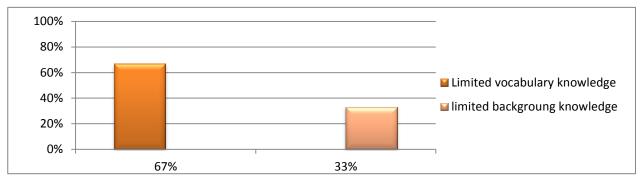| Stages	The lesson evolvement	The aim
Pre–reading(30 min)	- Brainstorming a lexical set that is important in the text. - Doing an activity on matching words from the text with their definitions.	The aim behind this stage is to activate the students' background knowledge and to pre-teaching some vocabulary in the text to facilitate comprehension.
While–reading (45 min)	Students are given the following activities: - Multiple word choice activity - True or false activity - Answering questions related to the text - The main idea of the text	- The aim behind these activities is to assess the students' reading comprehension and increase their vocabulary stock. - To encourage guessing meaning from context and dictionary use along with guidance on how to use both strategies properly in decoding unfamiliar vocabulary with relation to their context of appearance.
Post–reading (15 min)	Students are asked to synthesize what has been read in their own words using the new obtained vocabulary.	The aim behind this activity is to make learners use the new obtained vocabulary.

Source: Marinka *et al*. (1997)

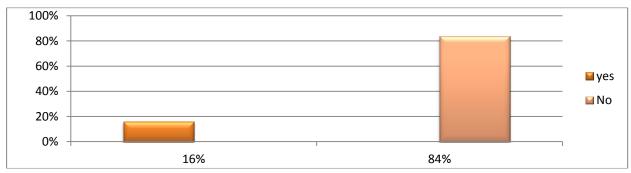**Figure (1): Students' Difficulties in Understanding EFL Texts**

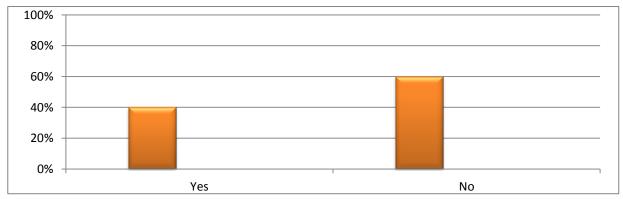**Figure (2): Does your teacher of reading comprehension teach you vocabulary?**

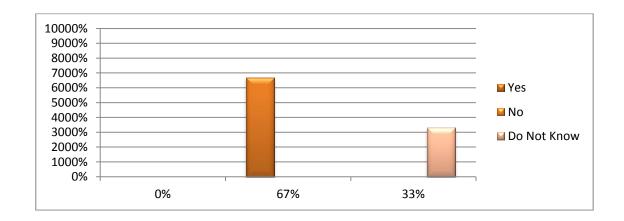**Figure (3): Teachers' Response to Vocabulary Teaching in class**

Figure (4): Students' Attitudes towards Vocabulary Instruction in Enhancing Reading Comprehension
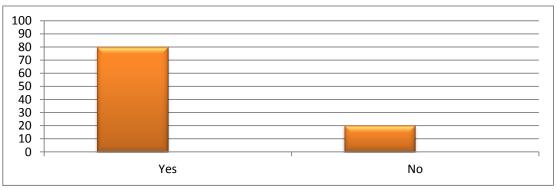
Figure (5): Teachers' Attitudes towards Vocabulary Knowledge Limitation as an Obstacle in Reading Comprehension
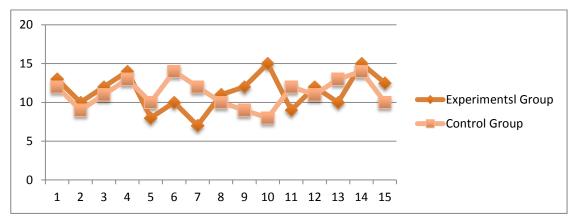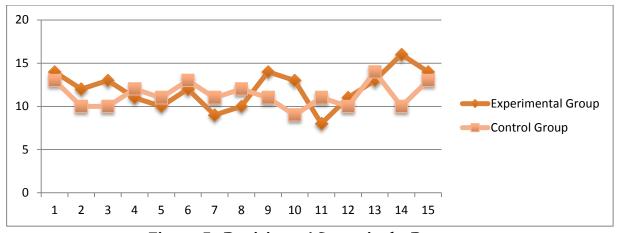

Figure (6): Participants' Scores in the Pre–Test

Figure (7): Participants' Scores in the Post–test

Appendix 1: **The Students' Questionnaire**

Dear student,

This questionnaire is an attempt for gathering information needed for the accomplishment of a master thesis. We seek to shed light on the role of vocabulary instruction in enhancing first year LMD students reading comprehension. We would be very grateful if you help us filling in the questionnaire. Would you, please, tick the appropriate box.

1– Are you interested in reading EFL texts?

Yes ☐

No ☐

2– Is it difficult for you to understand an EFL text?

Yes ☐

No ☐

–If yes, why?

- Limited background knowledge about the t... ☐
- Limited vocabulary knowledge ☐

3– Does your teacher of reading comprehension teach you vocabulary?

Yes ☐

No ☐

4– Do you have difficulties in understanding new vocabulary?

Yes ☐

No ☐

5– Do you think that vocabulary instruction can help you enhance your reading comprehension?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Appendix 2: **The Teachers' Questionnaire**

Dear educator,

This questionnaire is an attempt for gathering information needed for the accomplishment of a master thesis. We seek to shed light on the role of vocabulary

instruction in enhancing first year LMD students reading comprehension. We would be very grateful if you could help us filling in the questionnaire.

1– How long have you been teaching reading comprehension?

  Number of years: ……..

2– Do you believe that first year LMD students have difficulties in comprehending English texts?

  Yes

  No

3– Do you use strategies to help your students achieve reading comprehension?

  Yes

  No

If yes, mention them.

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………

4– Do you think that the students' limited vocabulary knowledge hinders their reading comprehension?

  Yes

  No

5– Do you teach vocabulary in reading comprehension sessions?

  Yes

  No

If yes, how do you teach it?

  Incidentally

  Planned

6– Do you present new vocabulary in every lesson?

 Always

 Sometimes

 Never

7– When you explain new vocabulary, do you use:

Options	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	If Necessary	Never
Translation					
Definition					
Synonyms/ Antonyms					

8– Do you think that vocabulary instruction will help students' enhance their reading comprehension?

Yes

No

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