

Investigating the Role of Using Riddles Games in Learning English Language Vocabulary at Iraqi EFL Primary School Learners

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Abstract

There are many ways to learn new vocabularies, vocabularies play vital role in learning English language process as it affects the four skills of the English language, namely (reading, writing, speaking and listening). The use of riddles is one of the common strategies used by English language teachers. Therefore, the current study aimed at investigating the effect of using riddles in teaching English language vocabularies. This study was conducted in one of the primary schools in Iraq in the academic year 2019/2020. The sample of the study are 50 primary school pupils. The study has employed survey questionnaire to collect the data from the subject. Based on the gathered data, the findings showed that the use of riddles game has a positive effect on the students in learning new English language vocabularies.

Key words: Vocabulary, Educational Games, Riddle Game

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem of the Study

Vocabulary is one of complex elements of a language. Vocabulary also plays an important role in helping the learners to master their language they had to learn. (Shepherd, 1973:76) states that vocabulary is one of the most significant aspects of language development. It means that vocabulary is the one that must be taken into consideration in language development. Learning vocabulary is very important. Without a proportional amount of vocabulary, anyone will get trouble in speaking, reading, listening and writing. Vocabulary is one of English components that must be taught to the learners because vocabulary has the primary role for all languages (Burridge, Shirley, 1981:43) When students start to study English in their elementary school, the first kind of materials they have to learn is vocabulary. Vocabulary is the basic competence that might be reached by students in order to fulfil the qualifications of basic competencies in English like listening, speaking, reading and writing (Coxhead & Averil 2006:23).

Riddle games are an example of teaching method that encourages students to learn vocabulary. As per Evan (1957) riddle is the thing that allude to something confounding or befuddling which must be understood. Farther more, the puzzle could be separated into two fundamental segments in particular mysteries and problems. The riddles were a sort of an inquiry that was

displayed in an allegorical language. These could be broken or tackled simply after cautious perception of the issue proclamation.

Riddle game is a system that can improve the understudies' vocabulary accomplishment. This announcement is demonstrated by Zunita's discovering result (2010), she discovers that crossword baffle gives the beneficial outcome in improving understudy's vocabulary and understudy's inspiration in learning vocabulary. Siska (2011) led a different investigation that yielded different results.

She discovers in this study that riddles can inspire and motivate understudies to acquire English, particularly vocabulary.

At present majority of English language teachers follow the traditional methods of instruction in schools. When teachers carry out instructional process in the classroom, learner tends to be more passive listeners. No lesson can be effective unless there is effective pupil participation in it. In order to enable the learners to participate in the instructional process, there is an imperative need to adopt some kind of learner- centred new approaches in the classroom (Sudhir Kumar. 2000:94). The teacher should always try to keep the interest of pupil in mind. Correlating the subject matter with the problem of life can awaken interest. Teaching should be pupil centred, and this can be applied by using educational games which riddle is one of them.

1.2 Research Objects

The current study aims to:

1. investigate the effectiveness of using riddles in learning English language vocabulary

1.3 Research Question

The current study assumed to answer the following research question 1.To what Extent the use of riddles is effective in learning English language vocabulary.

1.4 Delimitation

1.The study will focus only on the effectiveness of using riddles in learning English language vocabulary at primary school learners.

1.5 Value

The present study is intended to be valuable to the researchers and experts in ELT since it is an attempt to headlight on the effectiveness of using riddle in learning vocabularies of English language.

1.6 Procedures

To achieve the aims of the study, the following procedures are adopted:

1. Selecting a representative sample of primary school pupils,
2. Designing a questionnaire to be administered on the sample of the study,
3. Exposing the questionnaire to a jury of experts in ELT to ensure its validity and reliability ,
4. Conducting a pilot study to find out the suitability of the questionnaire items and the time required for responding to these items,
5. Using suitable statistical tools to analyze the data ,and
6. Presenting and discussing the results, drawing conclusions and setting recommendations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Vocabulary

Vocabulary is all the words that a person knows or uses. Vocabulary is the set of words in the language. A word is one of the most important parts or components of language. It is the simplest thing or element of a language that conveys meaning. Vocabulary is a focal piece of the language. The more words understudies know well and can utilize, all the more significance they can impart in a wide assortment of conditions (H. Hiebert, Elfrieda, 2005). Vocabulary is the study of word meanings and how different word meanings should be understood in relation to different terms in sentences and passages of writings. Vocabulary can be characterized as a ground-breaking bearer of importance. Also, Diamond recommends that vocabulary is the learning of words and their implications(J. Schmitt& Conrad 1998:87).

2.2 The Importance of Vocabulary

The importance of vocabulary are:

- a. Vocabulary is a basic part of reading comprehension. Simply put, if students don't know enough words, they are going to have trouble understanding when reading. If there are too many words the students don't know, comprehension will suffer. The content of textbooks is often challenging enough.

b. Vocabulary is a major part of almost every standardized test, including reading achievement tests, college entrance exams, and armed forces and vocational placement tests. Test developers know that vocabulary is a key measure of both one's learning and one's ability to learn (Fortes, 2007:34).

2.3 Teaching Vocabulary

Teaching is helping other people learn. It is one of the most important ways that people relate to one another. Teaching helps people acquire the knowledge they need to become responsible citizens, to earn a living, and to lead useful rewarding lives. Teaching also transfers knowledge from one generation to the next.

Vocabulary have in common is the fact that vocabulary knowledge requires not only word meanings knowledge, but it requires the usage of the words in the appropriate context and in a natural way and also includes the relationship between new words acquired and the ones already acquired. Therefore, teachers should use strategies that teach the meaning of words in context and help students associate the new vocabulary learned and what they already knew and help students memorize the words and their meanings (Kunandar,2008:76). The student should be able to recognize words and know their meanings as well. Thus, when a student is effectively able to recognize and use a word in different contexts, speak, write, pronounce the word well, she or he has the knowledge and meaning of that word. Sixteen Pupils were encouraged to enter the new vocabulary learnt both inside and outside the classroom into their word banks or vocabulary. Pupils were invited to share with the class the words they had got from time to time. Positive feedback was given to pupils who added new entries on their own initiative. During the learning process, pupils were also encouraged to refer to their word banks to help them complete the learning tasks. Vocabulary is too often focused on unusual words encountered in novels, short stories or other materials that are taught in class. In story doesn't mean that most people need to know them. Certainly, a teacher should point out the meanings in the context of the story, but having students memorize definitions of words.

The knowledge of word meanings and the ability to access that knowledge efficiently is recognized as important factors in reading and listening.

2.4 Riddle Definitions

According to Evan (1957:47), the riddle is the nouns all refer to something baffling or confusing which is to be solved. According to Brassell (2008:35), a riddle is a statement or question or phrase having a double or veiled meaning, put forth as a puzzle to be solved. According to Mardan (2009:98), a riddle is generally a question devised so as to require clever or unexpected thinking for its answer. A riddle sometimes called a "brain tester," was usually a question that required clever or unexpected thinking for its answer. In general conversation, someone typically presented a question to another person who accepted the challenge of

guessing the correct response. The guesser might get one or multiple guesses and sometimes the asker gave clues, but this was not required. Riddles usually only had one correct answer, which was usually given at the conclusion, even if the guesser had not considered it

(L. Nist, Sherrie and Carole Mohr. 2002:96).

2.5 Types of Riddle

By and large, riddle could be separated into two principal areas specifically enigmas and problems. The riddle was a kind of an inquiry that was exhibited in figurative language. These could be broken or illuminated simply after cautious perception of the issue articulation. A large portion of the antiquated English ballads had these sorts of riddles installed inside them. Problems were like riddles however for the way that the appropriate response lies covered up in the inquiry itself and use of the idea of punning could draw out the genuine answer covered up inside the inquiry. The usage of different meanings with a common spelling too could extract the hidden truth (Rashid, 1951:48). Riddles games were divided into types as follows:

- 1) Riddles with Double Meaning,
- 2). Riddles that Create False concepts.
- 3). Riddles with Clues
- 4). Riddles in Popular Culture.

2.6 Teaching Riddles

There are many ways of teaching new words and teachers need to learn a variety of techniques because some methods will work better with a certain type of words than others. A whole lesson may be spent on developing vocabulary. On the other hand, vocabulary teaching may take place in response to a particular question or need.

Riddles are one of the viable procedures in teaching language, including the educating of English. Riddles can help the two sides the educator and the students in making an increasingly intuitive study hall air in which they will produce dynamic reactions. By teaching the riddles, the students are anything but difficult to recollect and can envision the portrayal of the article. Further, the riddles fascinating, yet the educator must choose it which is proper for introducing the material. Managing teaching vocabulary, it is legitimate that the instructor chooses the enigma for exhibiting new vocabulary, there are a few criteria in choosing great conundrums in the homeroom exercises as readers:

- a. Riddle must be suitable for the teaching purpose.
- b. Riddle must be simple.

Riddles do not only give an opportunity to the learners to learn the language but also to play with it. In other words, the students can play with the language to make them active in the teaching-learning process. The description of the riddle seems to be repeated in the learners' ears when the teacher reads the description twice or more. Sometimes, the teacher also translates the meaning of the difficult words to help the students to get the meaning of the description. It can make the students easy to comprehend and familiar with the new words (McNeill, Arthur 2009:123).

2.7 Conceptual Framework

As previously stated, students should have a strong command of the English language. One of the most important aspects of learning English is developing vocabulary. If children are unable to learn vocabulary, they will not be able to acquire the four English abilities of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The teacher must employ an excellent vocabulary teaching strategy in order to gain the four language abilities. It is also essential for students to learn English, but they often face difficulties in learning it. It is because the teaching-learning process is monotonous. Therefore, it is not surprising that the students face difficulties in mastering vocabulary. Students know that vocabulary development is essential for them to learn English, but they often do not have a clear understanding of how to go about really learning vocabulary (Schmitt, Norbert 2000:67). Because words are fluid, it is difficult for students to recall new words. Teachers must be innovative and current in order to educate in today's environment.

Riddle is considered as an effective, enjoyable and interesting way to teach vocabulary because it can give the students enjoyment or challenge in studying vocabulary. Riddle must have hard thinking to answer the questions of the riddle. From the discussion above, the writer proposed that riddle technique in teaching vocabulary in the English language can improve students' vocabulary mastery. So, the more teachers use riddles technique the more vocabulary students will have (Sudijono, Anas. 2014:95).

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Population and Sample

The sample of this study includes (50) Students of the fifth class/Al-Nassaim primary School/Baghdad. The total number of the students' population is (82) male and female.

3.2 Instruments

In order to gain information about the EFL students' opinions about the effect of using Riddles on students' performance in vocabulary, a questionnaire has been constructed to be the main instrument used.

3.3 Pilot Administration

After ensuring the validity of the questionnaire, a pilot version is administered to a sample of (20) female students who are taken from Assma school for girls. Regarding the time allotted for answering the items, it has been found that students need (35) minutes to respond to the questionnaire items.

3.4 Reliability

Reliability refers to how consistent evaluation results are from one measurement to another (Grolund, 1976:102).

3.5 Validity

Validity basically means "measure what is intended to be measure"(field,2005).in other words face validity refers to researchers' subjective assessments of the presentation and relevance of the measuring instruments as to whether the items in the instruments appear to be relevant. Face validity is determined by expert's judgment then by using the percentage of agreement among the experts' themselves. Accordingly, an initial form of the questionnaire has been exposed to the experts in the fields of Linguistics and ELT to decide its face validity. The final version of the questionnaire consists of (20) items built on five- points scale (always, often, sometimes , never , rarely).

3.6 Scoring Scheme

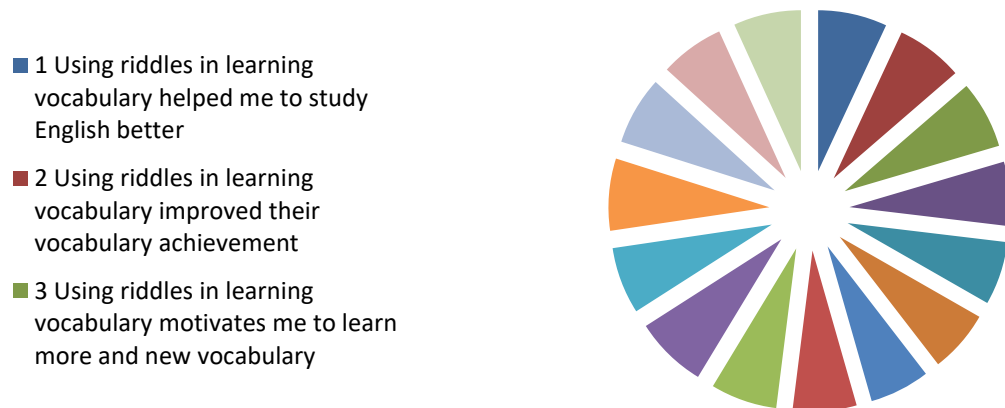
Accurate scoring procedures should be adopted in order to get proper results to ensure objectivity and reliability (Harrocks & Schannover, 1968:76). In order to achieve the aim of the study, the questionnaire is intended to be answered according to five points scale (Agree, Strongly Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Neutral) . See table (1) below:

Table (1) The role of using Riddles on students' performance in vocabulary

	Components and Items	Weighted Average	Weight Percentage
1	Using riddles in learning vocabulary helped me to study English better	3.7	80%
2	Using riddles in learning vocabulary improved my vocabulary achievement	3.58	74%
3	The use of riddles has positive effect on learning vocabularies	3.62	76%
4	Using riddles in learning vocabulary motivates me to use English language	3.44	64%
5	I can easily remember the vocabulary that has been taught in class using riddles	3.4	62%
6	I am happy in learning new vocabularies using riddles	3.34	60%

7	I enjoy learning new vocabularies by using riddle	3.22	50%
8	The use of riddle technique can increase my ability at memorizing vocabulary	3.42	64%
9	I feel active and enthusiastic during learning new vocabularies using riddles	3.56	70%
10	I like learning new vocabularies using riddles	3.88	90%
11	Teachers can teach new vocabularies better by using riddles	3.58	76%
12	Using riddles in learning vocabulary motivates me to learn more and new vocabulary	3.86	88%
13	Learning new vocabularies through riddles is new experience.	3.66	80%
14	The use of riddles makes me pay more attention inside the classroom	3.44	68%
15	I can speak English through using riddles	3.62	80%

Graphic (1) pupils Iraqi primary School about using Riddles on students' performance in vocabulary Weighted Average



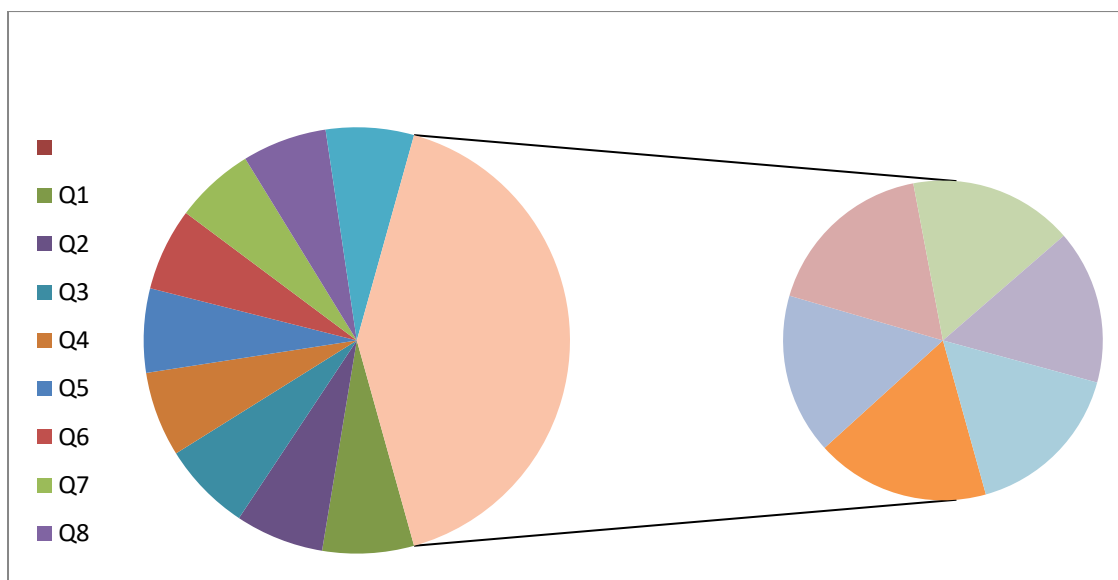
Chapter Four: Results, Conclusions, Recommendations

4.1 Results Related to the Aim

In order to identify and classify effectiveness of using Riddles on students' performance in vocabulary. The descriptive statistics of participants' performance were shown in table (2)

Table (2) participants' performance

	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance
Q1	3.7	4	0.67	0.45
Q2	3.58	4	0.75	0.57
Q3	3.62	4	0.75	0.56
Q4	3.44	4	0.86	0.74
Q5	3.4	4	0.90	0.81
Q6	3.34	3.5	0.93	0.88
Q7	3.22	4	0.97	0.95
Q8	3.42	4	0.90	0.82
Q9	3.56	4	0.78	0.61
Q10	3.88	4	0.38	0.14
Q11	3.58	4	0.83	0.69
Q12	3.86	4	0.40	0.16
Q13	3.66	4	0.74	0.55
Q14	3.44	4	0.97	0.94
Q15	3.62	4	0.83	0.68



Graphic (2) participants' performance

As Table (2) shown, the overall mean score for students is (53.32), Median is (59.5), Std. Deviation is (11.66), and Variance is (9.55) .The descriptive statistics show that using riddle game has outperformed for the students.

4.2 Conclusion

Based on the result of this research, it can be concluded that:

1. Items 7, 6, 5 and 4 which refer to(I enjoy learning new vocabularies by using riddle, , I am happy in learning new vocabularies using riddles I can easily remember the vocabulary that has been taught in class using riddles and Using riddles in learning vocabulary motivates me to use English language, gain the low effectiveness. They got a weighted mean (50%), (62), (64) and (68%).

2. Items 10 and 12 which refer to (I like learning new vocabularies using riddles, and Using riddles in learning vocabulary motivates me to learn more and new vocabulary) gain the high effectiveness. They got a weighted mean (90%) and (88%).

The students show interest towards using riddles in learning English vocabularies and to reduce the teachers' control and gives them a chance to discuss each other, which is an interesting job for them.

4.3 Recommendations

1. New methods of teaching English vocabularies as riddles have to be applied in our primary schools.
2. Teachers in English classes should be trained on using new techniques for teaching learning English vocabularies.

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