Chapter Five

Conclusion: Findings and Implications

5.1 Introduction

In this section of the thesis, the researcher briefly presents an outline of the present study by freshly recapitulating the research problem(s) and adjectives of the study. To make connections with objectives and outcomes of the study, the researcher reports result of the intervention study. Subsequently, the researcher highlights the implications of the present study for rural ESL learners in other places across the country. In addition, we suggest more changes to be made about in describing with the vocabulary component of English language instruction; also provide innovative ideas and activities for enhancing vocabulary skills and overall proficiency in rural ESL learners. The chapter also takes an account of the impact of the current study in the form of innovative practices being followed in the school after the intervention study. Then, it indicates the limitations of the present study and also directs future research in the area of vocabulary learning. The chapter comes to an end with a final note on feasibility and effectiveness of the present study.

5.2 Overview of the Study

The present study entitled Enhancing Vocabulary Learning through Strategies: A Case Study of Rural ESL Learners has twin purposes. One is to enable High School level learners to use Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs) and the other to enhance their vocabulary proficiency/knowledge by using VLSs consistently so that they not only improve their vocabulary knowledge, but also gain confidence in using acquired vocabulary in productive language use. The primary source of motivation to take up
this research study is the researcher’s vocabulary problems faced in schooling days. In addition to this, the prevailing scenario of ELT rural schools: improper teaching trends/methods, inadequate language resources, etc. In spite of in-service teacher training programmes such as refresher courses, remedial courses, and short term training camps, state high schools seem to have failed in developing require English proficiency. English teachers in rural context seem to have failed to create an adequate awareness among the rural ESL learners about the importance of English in this cut throat and rat race competitive world. If it persists, the current education system may be able to enable the rural learners to cope with academic and career requirements. As we are in the era of globalization and IT revolution, we must be able to empower the rural learners with required communication and soft skills using English language confidently.

As a high school learner in rural area, the researcher recalls his own experience of how the absence of motivation towards the English language learning, lack of sufficient exposure, lack of vocabulary learning strategies such as keeping vocabulary development notebooks and diaries, using English dictionary independently, creating word maps, framing example sentences, etc. hampered his own language learning progress.

In order to understand the present practices of English language education in rural areas, the researcher at the outset conducted quite a few face-to-face interactions with the rural ESL learners in several rural schools. It was observed that the learners expressed their willingness to improve their vocabulary knowledge. Further, it was also realized that the learners’ lacuna in English vocabulary knowledge and use could be due
to absence of awareness on Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs) and strategy-based instruction. Through interaction, learners’ responses to questionnaires and preliminary tests, it was understood that teachers had not paid enough attention towards vocabulary development of the learners, even though the medium of instruction was English. They seemed to have undermined the use of vocabulary for both receptive and productive purposes. Their focus had been only on making the learners score high marks/grades in examinations through rote memorization. Developing the learners’ English language proficiency was never prioritized in rural ESL context”.

After the preliminary inquiry, “the researcher understood that the learners’ inability to use English in real-life situations would create hurdles for them in future for their future educational, career avenues”. The researcher presumed that if an attempt was made to develop vocabulary learning through strategies, the learners would gain ‘can–do attitude’ to proceed further in their academic ladder/career. Keeping this in mind, the researcher carried out a study among the rural High School level ESL learners. The rational of the study was that there was a need to improve rural learners’ overall proficiency in English and in order to achieve that, it was necessary to improve their vocabulary knowledge among other things. The study was based on the hypothesis that explicit instruction in active Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs) through meaningful inputs, supervision, and guidance would enhance learners’ vocabulary knowledge on the one hand and also simultaneously make them autonomous learners to take charge of and continue their own vocabulary learning. This in turn would also enhance their confidence to use the newly acquired vocabulary for both receptive and productive purposes. If the findings of the study would be positive, the hypothesis
would be proved and validated. Such an approach for teaching vocabulary would then be recommended for application in classroom teaching of vocabulary, thereby to fulfill the basic linguistic needs of rural ESL learners. With this premise, the researcher had undertaken the study in the form of an intervention programme.

5.3 Outcomes-Findings of the Study

The following sections and subsections of the thesis highlight the findings of the study. These outcomes evolved from various sources such as field trips and observations, discussions with the various stakeholders of the education process, implication of learners responses of the tools (questionnaire) used, an inside view of the classroom observation, results of learners’ scores in both the pretest and post-tests and post-survey questionnaires. The findings have been organized under four categories as given below.

Findings related to:

1. The reasons for poor performance in L2;

2. Vocabulary awareness;

3. Awareness of VLSs and their use and

4. Vocabulary comprehension and use.

Attempts have been made to highlight the process of gradual development that the learners recorded in terms of their awareness, comprehension and use of vocabulary before and after the study.”
5.3.1 Reasons for Learners’ Poor Performance in L2

1. The rural ESL learners found it difficult to use English due to lack of sufficient exposure to it.

2. They are very hesitant, inhibited and reluctant to use English owing to their lack of basic knowledge of vocabulary items, diffidence, shyness and fear committing errors while using English.

3. Learners used mother tongue (Telugu) all the time. Their L1 oral proficiency was satisfactory. Telugu (L1) was used for communicative purposes. A few learners’ home language is Kanada as the school is located near the bordering state of Karnataka.

4. Teachers talk time in English is very minimal in classroom transactions. So no language input in terms of giving instructions and explanations.

5. They were not provide any exposure to target language nor offered any opportunities to create some interest among the learners. They hardly got any chance to speak in English either in the classroom or at school or home in daily situations. It was surprising to record that only a few of them had happened to visit district headquarters till date.

6. Teachers did not make the learners use active vocabulary that appeared in the prescribed English textbooks for communicative purposes. To them, the objective of teaching or reading a lesson is to dictate meaning of difficult words in L1 to just know central idea of theme of the lessons or reading texts.

7. The chief objective of ELT at school level was considered to be test-examination driven.
After the researcher’s intervention with vocabulary teaching programme for a period of fifty days (50 teaching and learning sessions), it was found that the learners tried to get rid of shyness, unwillingness and reluctance, and started using English with the help of newly learnt vocabulary (see appendix 6 A and 6 B). They gained noticeable confidence to speak in English with small simple sentences, with inputs and encouragement from the researcher. Also, they formed positive opinions and attitude towards English language learning. Subsequently, they have realized that vocabulary learning through strategies is comparatively easy than through memorization. They kept trying to contextualize learnt vocabulary in simple communicative situations such as greetings, seeking permission, asking for information, giving information, making requests etc. Moreover, they started using English on their own in speaking and writing form sentence level to discourse level (see appendix 6 B). Hence, the hypothesis of the study is proved.

5.3.2 Learning Environment

The study at the entry level produced the following outcomes/findings “

1. The class was not learner and learning friendly.
2. Learners’ learning styles and strategies were not given due importance.
3. Learners were segregated on the basis of gender. Group/collaborative discussion and interactions never took place. The teachers’ primary concern was to complete the syllabus in the stipulated time.
4. Collaborative activities such as group work, pair work, role plays, skits, etc. were never conducted in classrooms. Interactive and task based teaching were alien concepts for both the teachers and the learners.
5. Teachers did not create conducive learning atmosphere in the classrooms. Learners appeared to have some kind of lack of interest in the English classroom”.

5.3.3 Family Background

1. Parents’ with a little education did not have seriousness in their children’s educational matters.
2. Learners’ with disadvantaged backgrounds affected the success rate in educational opportunities.
3. The learners were compelled to house-chores regularly.
4. Parents never visited the school except admission time. Though the school called for Parent-Teacher meetings (PTMs) from time to time. The PTMs are now rechristened as School Management Committees (SMCs) involving parents and Sarpanch of the village or Mandal.
5. Neither students nor parents were aware of the importance of English in today’s world as a means of future employment in majority of public and private sectors”.

5.3.4 Teachers’ Attitude

1. ELT was done with a view to enable the learners to pass the learners in the examinations and get good grades rather than developing general proficiency of the English language. They were, it seemed, not aware of the importance of vocabulary knowledge and its role in fine-tuning overall proficiency of the learners in English language.
2. As speaking skills and listening skills are not tested in any formal examinations, teachers seemed to have given no importance to them.
3. They strictly kept themselves confined to completing the syllabus. They used to quickly finish the syllabus and then give writing practices to students for better scores in tests and examinations. They did not spare time for enabling learners to learn vocabulary and other linguistic aspects of English, particularly through any useful strategies to use English inside and outside the classroom.

4. English classes are teacher-dominated and examination-oriented. This implies that, Teacher’s Talk Time (TTT) was always greater than learners’ talk time (LTT). No authentic communication and contribution from the learners’ side took place in the classroom discussions and the learning process.

5. Teachers seemed to be unaware of the importance of promoting learners’ autonomy in the classroom. Learners were not encouraged to make them get involved in their own learning and discover the pleasure of learning. Teachers gave little attention to make them learn vocabulary items and other essential linguistic aspects for speaking and writing independently.

6. Teachers were not aware of the role of ICT in teaching English language.

7. Teachers themselves sometimes underestimated creative abilities of rural students and hence, disregarded their innate abilities towards the L2 learning irrespective of other intervening factors.

5.3.5 Findings Related to Vocabulary Awareness

The current study investigated problems that the rural ESL learners faced due to lack of awareness about the most frequently occurring vocabulary items, word formation and words and their collations. They didn’t seem to have known or practiced yet the most essential vocabulary items (e.g. Michael General Service List, Oxford 3000
words list) in their previous and existing academic contexts. This lack of knowledge about importance of vocabulary items, it is posited, resulted in their low proficiency in English language. As a result, their higher education possibilities in future appeared to be bleak. The reason for learners’ inability to comprehend simple academic/non-academic texts was due to the fact that it was difficult for them to process the text with all unknown vocabulary items, and they were not aware of any specific strategies to deal with them. Therefore, the present study argues that some of the problems mentioned above could be addressed if the learners’ awareness about the frequently occurring vocabulary items was taught to them at the earlier stages of their education. So, the study tried to focus on enhancing vocabulary knowledge of rural ESL learners.

1. The learners could not guess and complete the spellings of a few frequently used words. (See appendix 3 of the sample answer script). Further, the learners could not distinguish between single lexical items, phrasal verbs and idioms due to lack of awareness and knowledge about different aspects of vocabulary knowledge. But after the intervention, learners were able to see the difference among single lexical items, compound words, phrasal verbs, idioms, and multi-word units (see appendix 8).

2. Teachers did not pay enough attention to vocabulary items and glossary of the text in their regular classroom transaction. Therefore, the learners were ignorant of potential use of those words for communicative purposes. After the training, learners were able to recognize words, collocations, phrasal verbs and other lexical chunks in their prescribed textbooks, and other storybooks and news
papers (see appendix 5 and 6A). The learners could inculcate the habit of vocabulary learning and using with a growing interest and curiosity.

3. Learners were not aware of word categories which determine the meaning and grammar aspect of any sentence. After the training, the learners could easily distinguish the word categories with help of affixation of prefixes and suffixes and other derivative techniques (see appendix 6A).

5.3.6 Findings Related to Awareness and Using of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Before the study, it was noticed that the learners lacked awareness of vocabulary learning strategies/techniques except using small bilingual dictionaries. Whatever may be the content they knew was through rote learning. This had resulted in inadequate comprehension skills of English texts. Consequently, this hampered learners’ academic progress though they had studied English for over four years. But, after the intervention programme, the learners did perceive that the taught/trained vocabulary learning strategies helped them in performing better in terms of learning vocabulary items and using them for both receptive and productive purposes (See appendix 6B). Learners increased level of awareness with regard to vocabulary and their use has been recorded below.

1. The rural ESL learners mostly relied on teachers’ translation (Telugu equivalents) of all vocabulary items present in any piece of prescribed text. Only a very few of them could possess tiny bilingual dictionaries which provided only solitary meanings of words. So, we could say that prior to the study, teachers did not impart any strategy based instruction for learning and enhancing L2 vocabulary of the learners. During the intervention period the learners were
exposed to some specific Vocabulary Learning Strategies such as *keeping a vocabulary notebook*, *using a monolingual dictionary*, *guessing a word’s meaning from its context*, *using word maps and framing example sentences*. These were considered to be suitable and effective for the rural ESL learners to enhance their vocabulary proficiency.

2. During the intervention phase, the learners had shown a lot of interest while getting acquainted with the aforementioned strategies. It was evident that (see appendix 6 A) the learners got used to keeping vocabulary notebooks in everyday class. They noted down all unknown vocabulary items used in the class. Later, they would show an immense amount of curiosity for finding out from dictionaries provided to them for discovering the meanings of unknown vocabulary items during any tasks and activities given by the researcher.

3. Prior to the study, the learners were not aware of potential benefit of the strategies in developing the target language. They did not show any sort of interest to guess meanings of words from available contextual clues. They solely relied on teacher’s version of word meanings. It prevented them from becoming autonomous readers/learners. Guessing meanings of unknown words is an important strategy to enhance faster reading comprehension ability. After the intervention, the learners tried to keep pondering over unfamiliar vocabulary items that they had encountered earlier while reading a text (see appendix 6A). The learners were familiarized with this strategy with the help of simple authentic reading texts. Main outcome of this strategy was that the learners could find out the meanings of unknown vocabulary items by understanding
contextual clues and familiar words. This process helped them to comprehend the text independently.

4. Before the study, the learners were not aware of concept maps, word maps, and graphic organizers. They simply used to copy glossary of all English units into their notebooks. They either used to get dictation from the teachers or used guide books to know the L1 equivalents. They were not aware of grouping words pertaining to similar topics/themes. After the intervention programme, the learners did try to learn the skill of preparing word maps (see appendix 6 A) related to their English lessons. This strategy proved to be more helpful for facing their unit tests/periodical assessments conducted as a part of evaluate on procedures. Earlier, the learners used to memorize all answers for their tests. Now, they just began to gather vital information from the textbooks and guides and create word maps/concept maps for quick learning. The learners told the researcher that it had fetched them good marks in their unit tests.

5. It was evident from classroom observations and interviews with the teachers that the learners were not learning and using vocabulary for any productive (speaking and writing) purposes before the study. They were not made aware of framing example sentences using the learnt vocabulary items. During the intervention, the learners were sufficiently trained on how to construct/frame example sentences using minimal grammar knowledge. After the intervention, slowly and steadily, the learners gained confidence and started employing the strategy to construct simple sentences, simple conversations, tiny descriptions, writing letters (see appendix 6B) and so on.
5.3.7 Findings Related to Vocabulary Comprehension and Use

To gain a considerable amount of proficiency in English, it is a prerequisite for an ESL learner to comprehend and use the active and passive vocabulary items. In the context of the study, the rural ESL learners lacked required vocabulary knowledge to perform better in their academic context. The learners had little exposure to acquisition of vocabulary items in classroom practices. They earlier used to consider that learning the target vocabulary was a tedious job and not a joyful activity, and hence they largely ignored them both in speech and in writing. The researcher’s intervention brought about changes in the ways they learnt new vocabulary items, their comprehension and use in their academic and non-academic situations. Given below are the changes that were recorded during and after the intention.

1. Initially, it was observed that learners lacked prior knowledge of the context/background of the prescribed texts they read and the tasks which were presented to them as part of instruction. Through intervention, they became well-informed about how to activate their prior knowledge about the given themes or topics. They started using the ‘technique of ‘brainstorming’ to gather ideas in terms of words they had already learnt or were familiar with. The learners were made to set the context and understand the background of the texts and tasks. This knowledge enabled them to comprehend the setting of the tasks which in turn helped them to process them better (see appendix 7).

2. The learners took a stock of their learnt vocabulary items gradually. They began to read various materials such as news papers, storybooks, supplied magazines, printed cartoon texts, advertisements (other than their textbook) and tried to
contextualize and apply all the strategies (see appendix 6A) they had learnt through the intervention programme. They tried to become more curious towards acquiring the target language at their own pace. They also tried to sustain to keep vocabulary notebooks, infer/guess the meanings of unfamiliar words using available context clues, use English dictionaries whenever necessary, draw concept maps/words maps and frame example sentences on their own (see appendix 6A).

This is how the learners tried to comprehend and use the vocabulary in their regular academic lives by applying the aforementioned Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs) consistently. This in turn made the rural ESL learners build confidence and practice English use inside and outside the classroom. This suggests that success in awareness, comprehension and use of English must depend on use of Language Learning Strategies (LLSs) in general and Vocabulary Learning Strategies in particular. The analysis of the above findings showed that explicit instruction of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs) paved ways to use vocabulary for successful attempts in comprehension of reading texts and building vocabulary knowledge. These finding made an attempt to answer the main research questions formulated for the current study.

Drawing from the aforementioned findings, the next section attempts to present some implications of the findings for all the stakeholders involved in the given educational set up as well as in similar set ups elsewhere.
5.4 Implications of the Study:

The Present research has shown that the rural ESL learners have great difficulties in comprehending unknown/unfamiliar vocabulary items present in the learners’ course books and other unfamiliar reading texts. Also, the learners had no opportunity for doing classroom vocabulary tasks and activities as neither the textbooks had nor the teachers created any scope for engaging students in vocabulary learning. The findings presented above strongly suggest for inclusion of explicit strategy training activities in classroom teaching for vocabulary development, as a component in English language teaching curriculum. The study hence has implications for teachers, learners, administrators, textbook developers and other stakeholders. The following sections present the implications for all of them.

5.4.1 Implications for Teachers

The present study has emphasized on the need for raising awareness among the rural ESL learners about the importance and usefulness of both language learning Strategies and vocabulary learning Strategies. The implications of the study for teachers have been suggested in relation to promoting awareness of VLSs, vocabulary comprehension and vocabulary use. It included the following.

1. Teachers could devote one or two special classes per week to help learners understand the process of applying various VLSs in any given task. This will help learners show interest in the language and make attempts in learning the language and its vocabulary in use gradually.

2. Preference may be given to the teaching of the most suitable vocabulary learning strategies (see appendix 11-Taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning
Strategies) pertaining to the linguistic needs of the rural ESL learners. Additional strategies may be taught for higher ability learners. Authentic materials such as newspaper clippings, advertisements, posters, notices, short stories and tales can be used as teaching/learning tools/aids to enable them to internalize the process of using the strategies.

3. Teachers may help learners identify or recognize various types of vocabulary items such as single words, compound words, collocations, phrasal verbs, idiomatic expressions and other lexical chunks by employing different strategies and techniques. The strategies such as highlighting the above mentioned vocabulary items in a passage, explaining or defining the meaning, paraphrasing, etc. Learners may be given the choice of choosing the strategies from the available taxonomy of strategies.

4. The teachers should give space for the learners to explore all the creative possibilities of practicing learnt vocabulary items. This in turn would develop the linguistic creativity of rural learners both at word level and sentence level. Later they can be encouraged to undertake all kinds of discourses suggested in their textbooks.

5. Teachers may keep in mind that organising different types of vocabulary items with selective and valid criteria, that is, gradation of vocabulary items from simple to complex and more frequently used to less frequently ones will aid successful learning and retention of them.

6. While designing the teaching/learning materials, the teachers need to keep the learners learning styles in mind. They play a vital role in achieving
success rate in learning of the target language. After finding out the learning styles, the teacher may conduct pair and group work activities matching their linguistic needs.

7. Teachers may bear in mind that the mastery of the English language is a challenge for many rural ESL learners. They must impart them that developing adequate academic skills is often a long-term commitment through a continuous use of the learnt strategies.

8. As a part of teacher preparation, CDs containing videos of vocabulary teaching may be supplied to teachers. Teacher also should be given on-site support of conducting classroom demonstrations pertaining to new ways of teaching/learning vocabularies.

9. Teachers need to always enthuse and encourage students for use of all types of dictionaries: *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, dictionary of collocations, dictionary of phrasal verbs, dictionary of English idioms etc. available in the library for improving vocabulary knowledge of the rural ESL learners for both receptive and productive purposes. Teachers should ensure that the learners cultivate the habit of consulting or referring to available resources for gathering knowledge (teachers, Wikipedia and other useful educational websites) so as to achieve learner autonomy gradually.

**Other general implications:**

- Teachers need to possess positive attitude and must always enthuse the learners to discover their full potentials in the classrooms by providing many opportunities.
• Equal emphasis should be given on LSRW skills and they may be integrated while teaching English.

• Need to meticulously exploit vocabulary items learnt and practiced for various communicative purposes.

• Should not prioritize enabling learners to pass examinations and score high marks in for the sake of administrative purposes.

• Teacher’s use of English was the only available source for the rural learners; they need to maximize their English exchange in the classroom. Need to encourage the learners to use English in the classroom interaction.

• Teacher must create leaner-friendly and learning friendly ambience in the classroom.

• Teacher should be aware of the students ‘preferred ways and means of learning and meet their needs.

• May exploit a wide variety language materials outsourced from print and social media.

• Personalized attention may be offered.

• Teacher need to subscribe to ICT materials and CPD (Continual Professional Development) programmes and activities both offline (by attending seminars and conferences) and online (by participating in webinars and blogging activities.

To conclude, Wilga Rivers (1983) “advises that the teachers must take learners to outside classroom: field trips, educational tours and other real-world contexts for exposing them to authentic situations. Rivers (1983:110) sates that “language teachers
must break up the old and conventional practices and incorporate novel and innovative methods and techniques of English Language Teaching.

The aforementioned mentioned principles in the implications section, if implemented, the rural learners will be immensely benefitted in terms of attaining desired proficiency in English Language. This makes learners grab plentiful opportunities in their future career.

5.4.2 Implications for the Learners

The findings of the study have implications for learners as well. They have been organized in relation to awareness and use of VLSs, vocabulary comprehension and vocabulary use. They are presented below.

1. The learners should be aware of the fact that words are the basic building blocks of learning/acquiring a language. Learning vocabulary is a life-long daunting task. One should learn the vocabulary of the language incrementally. To do so, learners should be trained and made aware of the various types of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs).

2. The learners need to know that they have to apply/use strategies to learn vocabulary items productively. While reading a text/passage in L2, learners should give attention to words and their forms in use in a conscious manner in order to understand the text/passage. Then, they can choose appropriate strategies from the available list of strategies and work with it to learn more.
3. The learners need to internalize the strategies taught by practicing them regularly. It gradually helps them achieve autonomy in using of the strategies and enhancing vocabulary size.

4. The learners need to exploit their innate capacities, grammar knowledge, self-reflection, logical thinking etc which aid successful comprehension of various vocabulary items.

5. They need to create opportunities to use vocabulary through various methods such as group discussions, pair work, participating in conversations (small talks) with peers, playing ‘spelling bee’ guessing games and solving crosswords, riddles and puzzles.

6. The learners should read news papers, stories, and tales and listen to lectures, dialogues, watch English programmes on TV and talk to peers in order to improve their vocabulary and language skills. They should try to understand new vocabulary items in communicative contexts with friends and peers. They may seek the help of peers while checking and revising their guesses regarding the meanings of new vocabulary items.

7. Learners need to understand how words operate in context. One word may have more than one meaning. They further need to understand the various aspects of word knowledge such as register, connotations, collocations, phrasal verbs, compound words, idioms and other lexical chunks.

8. The learners need to make use of all the available linguistic resources in their libraries”

**Other General Implications for Learners**
• Learners need to know and understand that communication skills in English are essential skills to achieve both academic and professional goals. In other words, speaking skills in English are inevitable to live in this fast changing global scenario. Hence, the foundation for improving communication skills in English should be laid down at school level itself with strong vocabulary base.

• Need to that vocabulary learning is prerequisite for both oral and written communication.

• Should consider that all four LSRW skills are to be prioritized with an equal emphasis.

• Have to always bear in mind that that education is crucial for better professional and personal life style.

• Make efforts to initiate speaking in English both inside and outside the classroom

• Need to work in groups/collaborative manner to interact and discuss various topics or language concepts”.

5.4.3 Implication for Textbook Developers

The findings of the study have some implications for textbook developers. The implications have been suggested in relation to VLSs, vocabulary comprehension and vocabulary use.

1. It is necessary to introduce students to general language learning strategies and specific vocabulary learning strategies as part of work exercises in the text books. While doing so, the textbook developers may bear in mind that the strategies should be feasible for the rural ESL learners. The strategies
used in this study are simple and effective to enhance vocabulary learning skills of the learners.

2. Tasks and activities should be incorporated into textbook exercises with a note for the teachers to get students work on the same so as to internalize the vocabulary learning strategies highlighted at the high school level. Tasks should be learner and learning-friendly in order to explore them independently.

3. General and everyday experiences could be used to design vocabulary materials, tasks and activities. This would motivate and involve the learners in learning the language curiously and actively.

4. It is necessary to include a section on developing learners’ vocabulary knowledge. As a part of this knowledge, tasks and activities should help learners distinguish between the aspects of single lexical items and multi-word units (phrasal verbs and idioms).

5. Textbook developers can provide a list of strategies as an appendix so that the teachers can have an easy access to adopt and adapt the strategies viable for their learners.

6. The textbook must first introduce simple and less difficult vocabulary items and gradually increase the level of difficulty.

7. Apart from textual glossary, the textbook may contain some short answer type questions as stimuli: triggering questions, wh-questions, simple illustrations, helpful cues and clues, etc. for aiming at the targeted
vocabulary that is expected to be learnt in that lesson for speaking and writing purposes.

8. Each task in the textbook may be preceded by an activity which would awaken and arouse the interest of the learners to learning vocabulary and work as an initial exposure to the activity. The tasks should also awaken the background/prior knowledge to understand those new vocabulary items.

9. The textbook should prioritize to include some topics in the textbooks based on learners’ culture and highlight specific vocabulary items to be learnt and used in their immediate academic context.

10. Keeping in view the vocabulary level of the rural learners, the textbook developers must provide a set of easily understandable instructions while designing the tasks and activities.

11. Reading materials are major sources of developing vocabulary knowledge of the language. Therefore, textbook developers should meticulously choose and design age-appropriate, culturally relevant topics. They should ensure that the lessons in the textbooks should not be heavily dense with all difficult and unfamiliar vocabulary items.

From the above implications, we understand the effects of the context of learning by examining the relationship between learners’ approaches and their perceptions of the learning tasks at various levels. We could say that learners’ success on these tasks depends on their interest in the task and their previous knowledge and experience and use of strategies in any area of specialization. Hence, language teachers may provide learners with a choice over content and method of learning. Apart from the
implications outlined above, it is essential that the rural ESL learners need to have good amount of L2 exposure to enhance vocabulary skills of the target language”.

5.4.4 Implications for Parents

- Learners’ parents need to know the importance of English skills in this present global scenario. They should encourage their children at home to learn and practice English along with L1 from their childhood onwards.
- May find people who received good education to support assist wards in academics.
- Should not force their children do field-based labor till they complete their schooling.
- Need to attend parent-teachers meetings conducted by the school to be aware their children progress rate in academic standards”.

5.4.5 Implications for the Rural Educational Institutions

- Rural schools may minimize examination-oriented teaching and should focus on holistic way learning emphasizing application of facts, concepts and knowledge in their immediate life situations.
- All the learners in the school must be given equal and individual attention. It ensures that every leaner participates in learning activities and makes progress further. Children with low-level performance must be offered remedial teaching.
- Need to provide library resources comprising newspapers and other reading material for development of students reading abilities.
- Should ensure to install at least one computer with internet facility, in the school. Internet connectivity has now spread to every nook and corner of our country. This
will enable teacher to download relevant materials from educational websites and use as teaching tools for teaching English. Such exposures will work as a trigger/stimulus and motivate learners to work and learn more.

- May offer occasional incentives to the winners by organizing quizzes and other competition activities to create some interest in enriching English language skills.
- May conduct English festivals and classroom theater wherein students get opportunities to showcase their innate talents, artistic abilities and creative skills.
- Should encourage English teachers to participate in CPD (Continuing Professional Development) activities: attending seminars/conferences and workshops. Teachers may be sent for diploma course/certificate course offered by various institutions (EFLU, RIE, etc.) for further professional development.

5.5 Insightful Inputs for Pedagogical Measures

The researcher gathered a few insights from the field observations, classroom observations and data sources. Given below are a few of them.

5.5.1 Measures related to Pedagogical Aspects

These measures must be related promoting vocabulary/language learning autonomy among the learners in a step-by-process. Measures must be enabling factors such as motivation, active participation rather than mechanical learning in classroom, more of learner talk rather than teacher talk in the context of learning, and learning in the form of teams/groups. The learners need to feel that learning in schools must be joyful and hands-on experience. In other words, learning by doing methods may be adopted and adapted as per the needs of the learners.
Teachers must get rid of examination-oriented teaching and must focus on development of English skills for future educational and professional benefits.

Need-specific and context-specific materials should be exploited. These materials can be gathered from web sources. But the teachers must be in a position to adapt them in accordance with competency levels of the learners.

Pre-teaching and post-teaching of vocabulary items may be more appropriate for rural ESL learners. This method would certainly enable the learners get good command over vocabulary knowledge.

Should conduct Periodical assessment of the learners pertaining to vocabulary progress and bridge the gaps if any.

Teachers have to maximize the chances of communicating/transacting information in the classrooms. This classroom English will be immediate L2 input to the leaners. They may also choose some non-verbal cues: facial expressions, gestures, etc.

Meaningful tasks and activities in connection with real-life situations may be carried out in the classroom. This would help learners use English naturally and retain the language related information (long-term memory).

Teachers may provide positive insights and offer developmental feedback to the learners when the evaluation is done. This further motivated them to do better in coming examinations and tests.

Teachers should go through the English modules supplied by the education department and implement the suggested teaching steps and procedures for the benefit of the students.
5.5.2 Motivational Measures

It is said that you may take the horse to water, but cannot make it drink. It is vital that one needs to have good amount of interest and inclination towards learning the target language. Learners may be shown some inspirational videos on importance English language in the current global scenario. The benefits of possessing L2 a powerful weapon for successful career can be explained. To do so, teachers may connect outside world or authentic/real-life examples to the English classroom discussions.

- Generally, teachers are considered role models in the school. The learners tend follow or imitate teachers’ ways/styles of speaking English. Therefore, teacher need to use good English and enthuse and encourage their learners in picking up the target language.
- Learners must be encouraged to employ various useful language learning/vocabulary learning strategies. They may instruct to infer or guess meanings of new/unfamiliar words from the available contextual clues. Sufficient time should be given in dealing with strategies for learning the language.
- Learners may be encouraged to rely/refer to monolingual and even bilingual dictionaries if they find it difficult to infer meanings of unfamiliar vocabulary items.
- Teachers need to create ‘need’ for learning vocabulary items and language by providing/giving them roles to play in terms of conversations/skits/dramas and thus explore the efficacy of classroom theatre in enriching communication skills.
Teachers may adopt pair work/group work techniques in composing/writing English conversations, letters, notices, posters, banners, and pamphlets and mini-projects for awareness in language use in various ways.

Teacher need to encourage the learners to undertake projects and maintain portfolios of their creative work in the languages they know. They may also instruct the learners to interact and interview with different people in the village/manual and record their gathered opinions/views in both mother tongue and English.

5.5.3 Remedial Teaching Steps

Remedial teaching is to be taken up in order to address the specific language gaps of low-proficiency students. These learners may supplied with “bridging-gap activities” and other supported language material so as to enable them to gain reasonable English proficiency. Let us now take a look at some of the remedial measures.

- Teachers may use graded stories with comprehension questions.
- They may ask focused questions on specific details in a given passage/text, on specific vocabulary items and inferencing skills.
- Keep in mind the learners’ age and ability levels while deciding the length and difficulty level of language involved in tasks.
- Initially pitch the materials slightly below the current level of performance, gradually increasing the bar.
- All the learners must be given equal opportunities to share his/her views in the classrooms. They must be encouraged to ask questions/clarify queries if any during classroom discussions. This will make the class more democratic, learner and learning friendly.
5.6 Impact of the Study: Innovative Practices in the Classroom

After the intervention programme with the rural ESL learners, the researcher made frequent visits to the class and observed the innovative practices being adapted and practiced in the school by the participants of the intervention programme. It was obviously a satisfying experience for the researcher for witnessing the impact of the intervention programme in the school. The teachers put a lot of academic endeavours subsequently for enhancing both their motivational and linguistic aspects.

5.6.1 Innovations in Classroom Practices

Due to the researcher’s intervention programme, the teachers working at the school gained a lot of insights into the whole business of language teaching and learning processes. They had got renewed perspectives and some attitudinal change (doing away with Traditional Teaching Trends (TTT) towards learners’ learning strategies by being aware of the better ways for promoting learner autonomy among rural ESL learners. The following are some of the activities and techniques that the teachers in the school tried to adopt and apply in their day to day teaching in the school.

✓ ‘Word of the day’ activity (WOTDA): ‘word of the day’ is a way of exposing all the learners of the school to new English vocabulary items. This is practiced (during the prayer time. Learners are given freedom to choose words but the activity is done in the presence of an English teacher. Further, teachers ensure that the word of the day is put up on the school board first and then the learners are asked to copy that into their vocabulary notebooks. This is found to be useful in developing word knowledge of the learners. To check their retention, the
teachers conduct surprise tests/quizzes on these words after each month and offer the winners some incentives.

- **Preparation of Learners’ glossaries:** The teachers ask the learners to select meaningful/theme-based paragraphs from the prescribed lessons/units and give them home work for coming up with their own glossaries. The teachers go through the glossaries prepared and consolidate the selected vocabulary items with help of dictionaries.

- **Maintaining learners’ diaries:** diaries are indeed very helpful in tracking the learners’ progress in their language use. The teachers instruct the learners to keep and update learners’ diaries every day. The learners choose words from the lessons completed and try to construct or frame their own example sentences. Diaries also include creative works such as word maps/concept maps of the lessons which they have studied.

- **Conducting JAM sessions:** In order to engage the learners in gaining confidence, the teachers conduct *Just A Minute* (JAM) sessions regularly in the beginning of the period. Only two or three learners are allowed to grab the opportunity on each day. The learners can speak about any chosen topic in a few sentences. Prior to the presentation of their thoughts, the learners consult the teachers to refine their ideas using appropriate vocabularies.

- **Organising a ‘Week End KITES Club’:** to the researcher’s surprise, the teachers initiated English club activities with the name of **Kanukur Interactive Training for English Skills club** (KITES club). They also gave a suitable caption which reads: ‘for achieving heights in English’ (see appendix 11). They conduct
the club activities during the week (Friday and Saturday) end leisure hours. The objective of the club is to help the learners improve in the following areas:

1. Spelling skills
2. Handwriting skills
3. Vocabulary skills by conducting quizzes/games/tests.
4. Basic communication skills in English
5. Creative abilities by organizing role plays/skits/dramas, and choreography

5.6.2 Innovations in Use of Technological (Mobile) Resources

It was found that the teachers were not aware of using technology/mobile phone as a powerful pedagogical device. Though they possess smart phones, they do not know how to exploit the device for their effective and efficient teaching purposes. The researcher, during the training programme, discussed the importance of using ICT (Information and Communication Technology) materials in language teaching and learning process with the teachers. They gained a lot of knowledge about the role of ICT in language pedagogy. They showed a lot of interest in using them for their learners. So, the researcher shared some of technological resources with the teachers. The researcher demonstrated the use of the resources as good supplements for teaching materials. All the resources/applications shared were purchased and downloaded from the websites, the Google play store as Android applications. Teachers started exploiting quite a few of them in their regular English classes and club activities. Some of the most useful offline (stored data versions) applications include:

1. **OALD application**: The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (OALD) is an immensely useful resource for the rural ESL teachers as it is handy to refer to

2. **English to Telugu and Telugu to English application**: These apps are quite useful to refer to Telugu and English equivalents of unfamiliar vocabularies. By using these, the teachers help the low-proficient learners in bilingual methods.

3. **Word web application**: This is an English dictionary and thesaurus with synonyms, related words and a great quick reference available for free.

4. **Oxford A-Z of grammar and Punctuation**: This gives examples of real usage; this software provides the basic information about grammar and punctuation that people need on a day-to-day basis. It is found that some of the teachers now use it frequently. Other related applications include ‘*Cambridge English Grammar in Use*, *English Grammar Book*, *English Tenses simplified*, etc.

5. **ePathshala (learning on the go)**: This is an initiative by Government of India in order to provide educational material through digital medium. This is an excellent resource for all the teachers of English to refer to useful pedagogical information, model classroom demonstrations in the form of videos and readily available lessons/materials to use in the classroom.

6. **Collocation application**: In order to be fluent in writing or speaking one needs to know which words go well with which other words (word partners). This is one the most required and recommended applications for the rural ESL teachers.
They can frequently rely on this application for their own use while planning their English lessons and preparing for English tests for learners.

7. **In short and news in levels applications**: Both these are news-based applications. The former one presents news items very briefly and the latter publishes news in three levels from simple to difficult highlighting some difficult words. These let the teacher read out/dictate the text in 60 words/200 words. Language/vocabulary used in these apps is so simple yet captivating for the learners. Teachers find these apps very useful for promoting unique news reading experience that lets the readers do it all, without reading it all.

8. **Head way-phrase a day by Oxford**: This is an application to use one phrase a day in the classroom.

9. **Cambridge phrasal verbs machine**: This is an excellent application for practicing phrasal verbs (100 frequently used) as they are shown in the form of animations conveying the meanings effectively.

10. **Englishleap**: This is the most effective English Learning App for Indian learners even available in all local languages. The application has 5 sections: Courses, Play, Daily Quizzes, Vocabulary and Learning Videos. Its benefits include the following:

    ➢ The ‘Courses section’ focuses on teaching English using your mother tongue. There are a variety of grammar & vocabulary questions and a range of reading, writing, listening & speaking exercises.
➢ The ‘Play section’ concentrates on improving your skills through various quizzes. You can quiz against your friends or against strangers. You can earn points and can measure your progress over time.

➢ The ‘Daily Quizzes section’ has a new quiz every day which tests you on different vocabulary aspects of the English language.

➢ The ‘Vocabulary’ section has a dictionary for your reference. You can also take unlimited quizzes to test your vocabulary.

➢ The ‘Learning Videos’ section features a range of videos related to different English language topics.

11. **Hello English** (by culture alley): It is considered to be India’s number 1 ranking free Educational App, and the best free App to learn English speaking. Its features include 300 Interactive Lessons and learning-cum-practice of English speaking & grammar with useful conversations and games.

We all know that, we are now in the phase/era of ‘blended learning’. It is proven to be very appealing and effective to meet the needs of the learners especially in English language teaching and learning process. With the above rich repertoire of English language applications and the innovative trends/ideas, the ESL teachers in the rural areas will surely do a better job in making the learners reach the desired linguistic competence and performance in the due course of time and achieve their goals.

**5.7 How to Become a Good Language Learner: Some Key tips**

We suggest some of the following tips to facilitate learners overcome the very common problems which they face while learning English.
5.7.1 Good Confidence Lead to Good Use of the Target Language

Confidence is a very important element in using English language in everyday communicative situations. The learners are so conscious about the errors they commit or mistake they make. This factor makes the fell diffident about putting further effort in conversing or using English. Therefore, the teachers need to promote fluency of thoughts or ideas in the language, not the accuracy of the language. Teachers also need to ensure that they should be given ample opportunities to simulate various language functions/expressions. Most importantly, ESL learners have to have self belief, feel self-confidence and non-conscious mind (for natural way acquiring the language ability).

5.7.2 Fluency of Thoughts or Accuracy of the Language

Every learner may have some in-built curiosity or inner to express thoughts and feelings freely and fearlessly and communicate the same in English when situation arises. But, various rules the language becomes barriers to do so. Fluency is defined as free flow of ideas or communicating the main theme or message to recipient without any loss of information. For instance, when the learners are to give speech on independence day/teachers’ day, he/she may just focus fluency of thoughts and conveying the appropriate message on that occasion(s). However; as the learners grow in the academic ladder, an element of accuracy may be introduced as to meet the set benchmark/linguistic standards.
5.7.2.1 Activity for Introducing and Balancing Fluency and Accuracy

Teachers may initially encourage fluency of the language. Gradually, the learners may be made familiar with accurate structure of the sentences used by them. Teacher need to strike a balance between fluency and accuracy while assessing the learners’ performance in both oral and written discourses. To illustrate this concept of fluency and accuracy, let us consider the following task to develop them.

**Task:**

- Ask the learners to choose any situation/topic for discussion.
- Provide sometime to brainstorm/form ideas in their minds.
- Choose good recording gadgets/voice recorder applications available in smart phones.
- Instruct them to share/present the topic and record the learners’ presentations.
- Invite suggestions/tips for further refinement of the presentations.
- Provide appropriate and constructive feedback on the elements of ‘fluency’ and ‘accuracy’

5.7.3 Vocabulary Learning For Productive Purposes

What do learners need to initiate communicating in English? It is a well-known fact that the learners need to have good vocabulary base for both speaking and writing purposes. Moreover, using suitable words in accordance with the given context makes much difference to the effectiveness of communication aspects. Now appears the next question: how can we learn and practice vocabulary for productive purposes? The
learners must be made aware of various essential Vocabularies Learning Strategies (VLSs) in order gain desired vocabulary stock and knowledge for various productive purposes. Let us now look at the some of the ways of developing required vocabulary as provided below.

- Learners may be encouraged to read newspapers, stories/tales, cartoon pictures and any other interesting materials.
- Let the above extensive reading becomes ‘habit’ in the learners’ daily routine.
- Encourage the learners to hear announcements made at different places. They may be in their mother tongue. But, help the learners get them in English Language.
- Instruct the students to maintain vocabulary diaries/notebooks and record new/unfamiliar words in context they heard/read.
- Encourage the learners to infer the meanings of those unknown words from any available contextual clues.
- Advise the learners to frequently consult mono-lingual dictionaries to check/verify their guesses with the actual meanings provided in the dictionaries.
- Always tell the students to be curious to read posters/wall papers, circulars, pamphlets, notices they come across in their real-life situations.
- Suggest the learners to feel movie-watching experiences with help of English subtitles.
- Instruct the learners to solve word puzzles given in newspapers and magazines.
5.7.4 Lexical Chunks for Speaking

If we read/listen to any piece of general or literary work, we encounter with plenty of vocabulary items such as compound words, noun phrases, phrasal verbs, collocations/collocate, formulaic expressions, idiomatic expressions and other multi-word units. Teachers need to choose these various lexical items based on the utility value and frequency of using those lexical items in students’ academic and social world. For instance, ‘Today’s headlines, call off strike, call upon, bank peak hours, ny and large, as far as I am concerned, raining cats and dogs, can be selected to create some awareness about various aspects of vocabulary knowledge.

5.8 Innovative Insights for the Rural English Teachers

It is a well known fact that vocabulary is a prerequisite element and central to development of English language proficiency. Teachers need give its due attention by making informed choices by incorporating vocabulary component in to their English Language Teaching (ELT). The choices could be:

1. Pre-teaching of vocabulary items: teachers may highlight a few key vocabulary/active words before dealing with English skills. This may be encouraged only at an Elementary level.

2. Integrating Vocabulary Learning while teaching LSRW: teachers can actually deal with unfamiliar vocabulary items in given context. The learners need to work in pairs/groups to guess/infer contextual meanings or can consult dictionary for further verification. In this method, teachers just acts as
facilitators. So, the leaners need to THINK-PAIR-SHARE (TPS technique) with collaborative spirit.

3. Post-teaching of vocabulary items: textual glossary and any other vocabulary items deemed to be difficult can be consolidated by the teacher upon completion of the lesson/reading/listening text.

To add further:

- Teachers may also verify the key vocabulary items and concepts to be leaner and can prepare flashcards and vocabulary charts.
- Teachers Organize vocabulary items into diagram showing/depicting relationship of the words to each other as the learners understand in context of what is being taught/learnt.
- Teachers can communicate complex ideas in the form key ideas presented in headings/bulleted points
- Teachers can assess the learners vocabulary knowledge with unannounced slip tests or though informal testing methods.

In olden days, it was an uphill task to choose which vocabulary items are to be taught for enabling desired English language proficiency. The trends of vocabulary teaching (for example, GRE vocabulary) is quite exciting with advent of internet, and other web resources and technological innovations in the field English language domain. Huge amount of corpus (both written and spoken corpora) are accessible at one click of the mouse. Hence, the task before the teachers is to exploit both traditional and
technological resources and implement in the classrooms for an effective blended teaching of English skills.

5.9 Suggestions for Further Research

Research on vocabulary learning is assuming and gaining greater importance within the field of psycholinguistics, socio-linguistics and pragmatics. We looked at only VLSs and their contribution in enhancing learners’ vocabulary learning ability. Listed below are a few anticipatory and viable areas deemed to be researchable further in vocabulary domain of Second Language Acquisition (SLA).

- A study may be undertaken to develop speaking skills of learners belonging to rural areas especially KGBV (Kasturibha Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas) girl students and tribal students through good vocabulary learning strategies.
- A similar study may be carried out to promote vocabulary proficiency assess vocabulary size and depth of Rural learners at tertiary and undergraduate levels.
- A study may be undertaken to compare and contrast vocabulary proficiency levels of government and private schools.
- To explore the avenues of employability quotient thorough English skills among rural background students, action research can be suggested.

5.10 Limitations of the Study

Listed below are some of the limitations of the study.

- “This study limited to only one group of learners in a single school. So the generalization of findings is not valid.
The intervention programmes are so useful for rural ESL learners. But the present study could not devote more time in helping the participants achieve greater goals in terms of language proficiency and ‘learner autonomy’.

The study has attempted to make learners be aware of some specific Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSs) and apply them to enhance their vocabulary proficiency/knowledge in the target language. The learners were restricted to specific set of strategies, situations and reading texts to learn and use the vocabulary.

Meanings of words and use of vocabulary were prioritised in communicative situations.

It has not considered all the criteria/elements of language such as grammar aspects and pronunciation aspects while evaluating performance of the learners.

The study limited to only one school and could not gather sufficient and/or huge data due to time constraints and hence could not validate all the assumptions formulated.

Though it is case study, it has adopted only one simple procedure (thick description) to analyze and interpret the data collected and is mostly done qualitatively. Findings of the study may not be generalized to other contexts”.

5.11 Conclusion

The present study aimed at enhancing vocabulary learning skills and knowledge through strategies among rural ESL learners. It was carried out in order to create awareness, facilitate vocabulary acquisition, comprehension and use. It has proved the hypothesis that vocabulary learning through VLSs enhances the vocabulary skills of the
rural ESL learners. It has also proved that the strategies can improve their LSRW skills further in their academic and non-academic lives if practiced consistently.

The present study was a successful intervention in terms of planning and executing the strategy training programme for vocabulary teaching, building good confidence levels among the rural ESL learners, applying vocabulary learning strategies to enhance their vocabulary size and knowledge thereby developing their English proficiency to an extent. If such programmes, in which training, teaching, learning and application are effectively blended, are organized for longer periods coupled with digital literacy by employing technological tools advanced applications, their achievement levels will be enriched in an effective and efficient manner.