CHAPTER-3
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

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3.0 INTRODUCTION:

The review was a valuable guide to the investigator in defining the problem, recognizing its significance, suggesting appropriate study design and preparing basis for the present study.

This part focuses on some major works in the field of ELT in general and vocabulary teaching in particular. A lot of literature in form of reviews of articles, research studies and books was downloaded from internet. This could provide the investigator a view of the research in this area across the globe.

3.1 REVIEW OF RESEARCHES:


(http://www.geocities.com/gamach72/reflections.html).

One issue that many teachers of English raised during the investigator experiments was because of the limited time available in L2 teaching, it is not enough to just expose students to authentic L2 materials and expect them to acquire a large vocabulary incidentally. The issue was genuine and that is why turning towards Groot,
Computer Assisted Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition and technology (pp. 60-81) was obvious. Groot writes "...a learner can only pick up new words from authentic contexts if she/he already has a large vocabulary" (p.64). This statement seems very true to the investigator. As an L2 learner herself, she often had to deal with texts that were full of new words, and the meanings of which she was unable to infer during college days, because the whole texts were completely written by the English writers. Even when she used to refer to the dictionary which in fact made her consume a lot of time, would end up lastly in confusion and time in the class-room was wasted in such fruitless labour.

Further Groot focuses, "Retrieval of a word from the mental lexicon for productive use requires a higher degree of accessibility or, in other words, a more solid integration in various networks than is needed for receptive use."

For this reason, it would be preferable that teachers make students practice more often producing the newly learned word themselves than just recognizing it from a passage or a talk. The more students will practise using a new word themselves, the more they will consolidate their knowledge of that word.
Many researchers have started recognizing that explicit reference to a word meaning is a viable way of gaining only partial knowledge of a word. This teaching approach can certainly handle many words, but those words may be inessential or too specialized in meaning and use. The more familiar students become with word stems, prefixes and affixes, the better they will recognize the meaning of many words; one root or affix can provide students with a clue to the meaning of a certain number of words.

Stoller, F.L., and Grabe, W. (1995) Implications for L2 Vocabulary acquisition and instruction from L1 vocabulary research in Thomas Thicken, Margot Haynes, and James Coady (Eds.) 'Second Language Reading and Vocabulary Learning' write in the light of the above argument, students' efficiency in using a dictionary, and knowing when not to use it, should be developed.” (p.32)

But many researches in linguistic believe that the use of dictionary should be the very last resort of learners. Learners should then be trained to be independent of dictionaries. They should be taught
strategies for guessing the meaning of words in the contexts in which they appear by looking at the relationships that exist among the words of one sentence for example. Because of the multiplicity of meanings that a word can have based on the context it appears in the dictionary can give students meanings that do not fit in the particular context in which the word they have trouble with appears.

Further he points out, “It is unrealistic to expect L2 students to comprehend the intricacies of a given lexical item and be able to use the word appropriately after one single exposure” (p.33).

Vocabulary need to be presented to students more than often “reviewed and recycled in meaningful contexts” in order to widen students’ knowledge of the word, and at the same time consolidate that knowledge. It is only then that they will feel comfortable using those words accurately in meaningful contexts.

3.1.3 Rashkovsky, Avigail, Hevition: Foreign Language Glossed Reader:


Another remarkable work in the field of vocabulary that guided the investigator was of Rash Kovsky, Avigail Hevition (1999) about the Foreign Language Glossed Reader: Authentic Literary Text as Comprehensible Input.
The subject of this investigation is the use of vocabulary glosses (i.e., short definitions or explanations of the meaning of a written word) which are commonly used in foreign language readers and text books. Their acceptability however is determined by the prevailing views on foreign language teaching. While glossing does not contradict the traditional grammar translation approach, it appears controversial in the framework of scheme theory, which suggests that background knowledge and top down processing are the major factors in native and foreign language reading comprehension.

The results of the reading experiment showed statistically significant gains on all measures while the survey data demonstrated the subjects' strong preference for glossed reading materials in Russian.

Widely perceived in the theoretical field of second language acquisition "inevitable evil and "glossing, nevertheless, enhances reading comprehension, increases vocabulary knowledge and enjoys the strong preference of students, thus, motivating them to read. Consequently, there is an obvious need for developing foreign language glossed readers and other instructional materials, including software, where the use of glosses can0 be effectively employed.

Dr. S. Mohanraj (1988), analyzed the present course book to develop suitable material to develop learner’s communicative competence. In his study he tried to develop such a course of communicative competence and from its try-out it is found that the materials produced for the project are helpful in developing considerable amount of interaction among the learners. To use the new materials effectively both teachers and learners need to be given orientation.

3.1.5 Janis Marie : Constructing Word Meaning : Independent Strategies And Learning Opportunities Of Middle School Stududents In A Literature Based Reading Programme. Ohio State University Press, Ohio. 1996.

In vocabulary learning, some class-room instruction is better than no instruction at all, even though it does not account for all the words that students need to learn. In an effort to construct independent strategies for vocabulary learning Harmon, Janis Marie (1996) in their Ph.D. thesis from the Ohio State University in ‘Constructing Word Meanings : Independent Strategies and Learning Opportunities of Middle School Students in a Literature Based Reading Programme’
made a study to explore the ways middle school children construct word meanings as they engage in self-sponsored reading events within a literature-based environment. Another focus included an investigation of teacher and student actions within different class settings involving vocabulary teaching and learning. One literature-based reading teacher and two seventh grade classes were the participants as an ethnographic investigation. Qualitative methodological procedures were used to collect and analyze data over a six-month period.

The configuration of this literature-based program supported vocabulary teaching and learning. It encompassed a variety of important events where the teacher offered clarification about words and learners practised their repertoires of independent word learning strategies. Learners took their cues from the teacher when they assumed the role of vocabulary enricher during book discussion groups. They emulated her word-defining techniques and adapted ‘teacher as director’ stances and ‘teacher as facilitator’ stances when they initiated word learning opportunities for the groups. More collaboration among group members occurred when vocabulary enrichers acted as facilitators. In sum, learners' perceptions of teacher actions were an important aspect of vocabulary learning.
Vocabulary is most frequently taught in a spoken or written context. It happens very often that vocabulary is taught in context, but is not stored and memorized in context. And it is at this important point that the investigator turned to Peitz, Patricia and Vena Particia’s (1996) study: ‘Vocabulary Teaching Strategies: Effects on Vocabulary Recognition and Comprehension at the First Grade Level.’

A study examined teaching methods for vocabulary at the first grade level. The study compared teaching vocabulary in context and teaching vocabulary in isolation. The subjects were 32, culturally diverse first grade students from varying socio-economic background. The sample consisted of 14 boys and 18 girls heterogeneously grouped. Two teacher made tests were used, each consisting of 30 multiple choice items; Test A, to test vocabulary in isolation; and test B, to test vocabulary in context.

The results indicated that there was no significant difference in vocabulary acquisition by the sample. The results also indicated that, although there was vocabulary growth with both methods, the sample group’s growth in vocabulary taught in isolation was greater than that
of the vocabulary taught in context. The findings suggest that both methods of learning vocabulary will enable children to increase their vocabulary base and should be used.

3.2 REVIEW OF ARTICLES:

(http://www.geocities.com/gamach72/reflections.html)

One more thing that is depicted in the learning of vocabulary is that learners have difficulty with academic textual vocabulary because they are not familiar with it as it occurs with lower frequency than general vocabulary.

An academic word list should contain an even handed selection of words that appear across the various subject areas covered by the texts contained within the corpus states. Coxhead, A(2000) in his book A New Academic Word List TESOL Quarterly : points out 'An important issue in the development of word lists is the criteria for word selection.' (p.217)

This seems to be a very big issue in teaching vocabulary. Students come to the class-room with lot of expectations and needs. Students expect things that they actually do not need. It is often hard in
such cases to select the materials. To address this, it seems preferable to always make inquiries about the real reasons why students are learning the L2. Based on those reasons, material designers and teachers can better know the kinds of materials or words in the particular case of vocabulary teaching, they have to use in the class-room.

Coxhead also points out, “Direct teaching through vocabulary exercises, teacher explanation, and awareness raising, and deliberate learning using word-cards need to be balanced with opportunities to meet the vocabulary in message-focussed reading and listening and to use the vocabulary in speaking and writing” (p.228).

When presenting a new word to students, teachers should give the opportunity to encounter that word in all four language skills, and give them the opportunity to practise, it as often as possible, so that the new word can become part of their knowledge.

(http://www.geocities.com/gamach72/reflections.html)

Learning language chunks give lower level learners, especially, a sense of frequency, and also help to decrease their frustration for not being able to fluently produce the target language.
But on the other hand, similarities between words can make learning more difficult because of interference and the confusion students can make about pairs of words. Decarrico, J. S. (2001) in Vocabulary Learning and Teaching. Marianne Celce Murcia (Ed.) in ‘Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language’ points out, “Because many contexts are not rich enough, a single context is often not sufficient to allow students to guess the full word meaning. This fact underscores the need for repeated encounters with a word in diverse contexts” (p.290).

A word usually has more than only one meaning of interpretation. It all depends on the context or the situation in which it is used. Therefore it is an absolute necessity to provide students as many contexts and situations in which the word is used. As such, they can avoid pragmatic failures, which are very common in L2 learners’ language productions.

Further he points out “knowing a word” includes not only knowing the meaning of the word, its part of speech and its word family and other associations, but it also means knowing if its occurrence is restricted by certain collocations” (p.293).

A word has meaning only in context. And we know that words do not appear in a single context. There are different contexts in which a
word can appear and those contexts influence the meaning of that word. Therefore a student may know the meaning of a word and use it accurately in one context but use it inaccurately in another context.

Suffice it to say that new words should be presented in many different contexts, and the teacher should point out to the students the different possible meanings that those words can have depending on the context or the situation.

3.2.3 Krashen And Terrell: Words In L2 Learning.


Krashen and Terrell (1983) ‘Words in L2 Learning’ assert that vocabulary is acquired via comprehensible input and that its development is very important for the acquisition process. According to Krashen and Terrell while the learner’s attention is devoted to vocabulary recognition in the prespeaking stage, learning vocabulary continues to play an important role through the early speech stage and after speech emerges. Krashen and Terell contend that since vocabulary is basic to communication learners must be able to produce lexical items to convey their meaning. Similarly, Rivers (1983) states that an extensive vocabulary is essential for comprehensive communication. She also explains that in a sense, vocabulary cannot be taught since “selection for storage is an individual act of the learner” (p.130). This
is consistent with the earlier contention made by Corder that it is the learner who controls which elements of the input will become intake.

While recognizing the monumental task of developing an L2 lexicon D.L.F. Nilsen and A.P. Nilsen (1975, p.250) in ‘Semantic Theory’ contend that there are two sides to the problem of vocabulary learning, “Semantization” (when the meaning of a word becomes clear) and “internalization” (when the word is stored in memory in such a way that the learner can use it effectively). Concerning semantization, Beheydt explains that, “the semantization process is a permanent process that must be stimulated by repetitive, elaborative mental practice” (p.65). Van Els et al also point out some of the obvious factors influencing the learning of vocabulary which include characteristics of the learners (motivation proficiency, and learning strategies) and characteristics of the actual teaching situation (the teacher, and the material).

3.2.4 Richards : L₂ Vocabulary Knowledge Described.


The investigator took the help of the internet, to give her ideas more firmness and to broaden certain dimensions like vocabulary knowledge described, vocabulary learning theory, L2 vocabulary learning strategy or L2 Vocabulary teaching theory so on and for the same, views and ideas of
the experts in the concerned field were also taken. A short summary in all the concerned fields is presented as below:

L2 Vocabulary Knowledge Described:

In an effort to describe what it means to learn vocabulary, Richards presents eight broad assumptions to characterize lexical competence. They are as follows:

1. The native speaker of a language continues to expand his vocabulary in adulthood whereas there is comparatively little development of syntax in adult life (p.78).

2. Knowing a word means knowing the degree of probability of encountering that word in speech or print for many words we also "know" and the sort of words most likely to be found associated with the word (p.79).
   (frequency and collocability)

3. Knowing a word implies knowing the limitations imposed on the use of the word according to variations of function and situation (p.79)
   (temporal, social, geographical, field, mode, etc.)

4. knowing a word means knowing its syntactic behaviour associated with that word. (p.80)
   (e.g., transitivity patterns, cases)
5. knowing a word entails knowledge of the underlying form of a word and derivations that can be made from it. (p.80)

6. knowing a word entails knowledge of the network of associations between that word and other words in the language. (p. 81)

7. knowing a word means knowing the semantic value of a word. (P.82)

8. knowing a word means knowing many of the different meanings associated with the word (p. 82).

3.3 REVIEW OF BOOK:


Carter and McCarthy present another all encompassing description of learning vocabulary offered by Wallace (1982) who states:

The task is to know a word so that it may be recognized, recalled at will, related to an object or a concept, correctly used, pronounced and spelt, appropriately collocated, used at the right level of formality and with awareness of its connotations and associations (p.48).
Gass (1988a) in “Understanding Language” views language information, especially vocabulary, as a continuum ranging from “strongly” to “loosely” represented knowledge. Teichroew also supports a “continuum” representation of vocabulary knowledge. Teichroew believes that viewing learners as having productive and receptive vocabularies implies a dichotomy which is certainly not the case. Teichroew proposes that vocabulary knowledge can be best represented as a continuum with the initial stage being recognition and the final stage being production. Productive knowledge, however, ranges from producing a range of meanings to producing appropriate collocations.

Developing an L2 lexicon is different from learning other aspects of the target language in at least two ways. First, L2 learners come to the task with a broad background of knowledge and experience which includes the learners’ L1 proficiency. Thus, it is conceivable that in some cases of L2 lexical acquisition all that is necessary is to learn new labels for known concepts and meanings. However, this concept should be viewed with caution since learning the vocabulary of another language is only one aspect of L2 acquisition. Furthermore, as Van Els Bongaerts Extra, Van Os, and Janssen Van Dieten (1984) in ‘Vocabulary Acquisition’ state “conceptually, words from L1 and L2
will often correspond to a considerable extent, but hardly on a truly one-to-one basis" (p.251). Paradoxically, this cross-over could actually confound learners effort. Second, it has been recognized that vocabulary is one area of language that needs continued growth and development for both native and non-native speakers (Celce Murcia & Rosensweig, 1979, Rivers 1983 in 'Vocabulary Recognition & Words-Words') Since it is believed that vocabulary development should be a life-long undertaking, this concept has made an impact on L2 pedagogy.

Vocabulary seems to be very important and usable for learners, especially in the early stages of learning. Shapiro (1978) in 'Language Techniques' explains how "functional communication can take place through an ordered series of lexical elements" (p.253). Blum and Levenstan (1978) explain how L2 users often make themselves understood with few words, which suggests that vocabulary can be of extreme importance to learners from the very first stages of L2 acquisition. Evidence that some learners will concentrate on words that carry meaning, presumably in order to allow them to communicate is seen in Yoshida's study of 93 years old L2 lexical development over a 7 month period for which she gives the following account:

Among the words acquired by the subjects, general nominals (concrete objects) indicated the highest score: (60.6%). Action words
(verbs) shared the second highest (13.0%) And the third was modifiers (adjectives etc.) : (10.0%). The remainder were split among many categories (1978, p.96).


Susan Holden in her book has stated about oral communication. She states drama teaching in the class reflects real life situations. Students can learn the different language functions in a more natural way. They learn the language and not about the language (i.e. grammar).

She states that every student has a slightly different aim when she is learning English, and for many learners that aim may not be immediately realizable. Someone learning the language as 'just another subject' on a school time-table may view the possibility of actually using it to communicate with other people as somewhat remote. Anything that can be done to make the learning process less remote, and more obviously transferable to the world outside the classroom, is to be welcomed. Oral interaction involves at least two people, a speaker and a listener. Generally, these roles are changed about every
few minutes but they seldom occur in the tidy A/B, A/B sequence suggested by many course book dialogues.

In real life, people misunderstood each other, interrupt and get distracted by other people or by things they see and hear. They react and communicate not only through words, but also through facial expression, and gestures and non-verbal sounds.

These features of oral communication, however, are ones which come as a shock to most learners when they are in an English-speaking environment for the first time. They have learnt English in the over protected world of the classroom, and are unprepared for the ‘coughs and hesitations’ of the outside world. It is up to teacher to prepare them for this element of the unexpected and, as we shall see, this can be done through drama.

Susan Holden has also discussed the problems of using texts in reference of vocabulary teaching. She states that most of the words can be best taught by means of drama but paradoxically, it is in fact extremely hard to do successfully.

She discusses the benefits of using texts. According to her they can be:

> increase awareness of the extent to which words and gestures are closely linked.
prepare students for the sudden shifts in subjects and theme which occur in normal speech.

provide a focus for variations in register and the interplay of character and personal relationships:

accustom students to interpreting the meaning of written language which should, in turn, be extended to their understanding of non-dialogue types.

**Improvisation**

Underlying ideas and feeling

Selection of means of expression

Actual expression through words, movement, gesture, facial expression

Thus, according to Susan Holden "we speak with our vocal organs, but we converse with our entire bodies; conversation consists of more than a single interchange of spoken words" (p.60).


(www.google.com)

Students are often eager to know the other members of a lexical set when those members are presented one at a time. If related
words such as 'cold' and 'hot' are taught together, learners will certainly know that they refer to heat, but many can get confused about which word goes with which of the meanings.

To avoid interference between related words, it is better to present those words at different times, starting by the most frequently used or the most useful or mostly needed one.

Nation, P. is of the opinion, "It is difficult for course designers, as well as teachers and learners to appreciate that items in sets such as month, days of the week and numbers are best learned, initially, when not learned together" (p.6-10).

This is a true discovery for the investigator. As a learner, she always learnt her vocabulary words in lexical sets. And then as a teacher in the school, she transferred that strategy to her teaching. In addition, the text-book she used presented related words together. She now understand why her students used one word instead of the other in different situations. She wanted to give this a try. However she was curious about the way students who always wanted to learn all the members of a lexical set, would respond.

Nation depicts, "In addition to the criteria of frequency and avoidance of interference, course designers need to apply a criterion of
normal use, meaning that words should occur in normal communication situations, not in contrived, language focused activities” (p.6).

The job of the teacher is to actually prepare students for the real world. Language focussed activities are certainly good practices but they are not beneficial to students when they are in real life situations. The class-room setting should be the place where students are prepared to meet real life expectations. Nevertheless, words should not be presented only in communication. Students will also have to read papers, watch TV’s, listen to lectures and the radio etc. So, it is important that the language teachers use in the class-room takes into account all the real life situations in which students will happen to be.


(www.yahoo.com)

The common threat that runs through the current accounts of learning an L2 lexicon is that different learners employ different techniques and strategies. Accounts of this phenomenon attributes these differences to the learning environment or to individual learner characteristics such as age and L2 proficiency. In describing some of the techniques for vocabulary development used by L2 learners. Rivers cites Naiman, Frolich and Stern (1978) state : Some make lists and
memorize them; some read a great deal and mark with an asterisk a word they do not understand each time they meet it... some note down words in a short context repeatedly writing down the same words until their meaning and use are assimilated; some make associations with words that sound or look similar in their native language.... some practise using new words as they talk to themselves, in order to commit them to long-term memory; some read dictionaries (p.131).

In order to deal with the tremendous variety of techniques used by language learners, Ellis considers two groups: "those involved in studying the L2, and those involved in obtaining L2 input" (1985b, p.103) Ellis (1985b) refers to Naiman et al (1978) and Pickett (1978) to report a sample of the techniques used by the "students" to develop their vocabulary in the L2 which includes: (1) Preparing and memorizing vocabulary lists (2) learning words in context (without an attempt to keep lists); and (3) Practising vocabulary (through self-drill, reading, playing word games, etc.) The "obtainers" concentrate on different ways of putting themselves in contact with the L2, such as seeking out native speakers or making use of radio or cinema. It seems possible that the "obtainers", who are likely to seek out native speakers, would employ communication strategies in order to keep their conversations going. Considering the case Ellis (1985b) makes for
these communication strategies aiding the acquisition of lexis rather than grammar, it is possible to see how both possible to see how both of these groups of learners are actively developing their L2 lexicons.

The differences in approach adopted by learners are also broken into two categories by Hatch who distinguishes between "data gatherers" and "rule formers" (1974, p.7) Ellis (1985b) contends that vocabulary is very important for the first type of learner since they are more interested in fluency than accuracy. However, it is interesting to consider that Hatch’s second group of learners (the rule formers) could very well be memorizing vocabulary list much like the “studiers” described by Ellis (1985).

Learning an L2 vocabulary differs from learning on L1 vocabulary, and also differs from learning other features of the L2. However, in vocabulary acquisition, as in all aspects of language learning, understanding and learning are not all-or-nothing-processes” (Beheydt, 1987, p. 60) A learner’s ultimate attainment of a single word or structure is rarely achieved on its initial encounter. Vocabulary learning is a very complex process, which is essential for successful L2 acquisition, and will inevitably lead different learners to tackle the task in different ways. The lexicon an L2 learner can use, however limited, can be a very useful tool even in the earliest stages of learning. The
strategies learners use in developing an L2 lexicon vary tremendously. Different types of learners use different strategies which allow them, consciously or unconsciously, to expand their vocabulary.


Learning vocabulary is a rather more complex process than it might at first sight appear. To ‘know’ a word in a target language indicates the ability to:

(a) recognize it in its spoken or written form;
(b) recall it at will;
(c) relate it to an appropriate object or concept;
(d) use it in the appropriate grammatical form;
(e) in speech, pronounce it in a recognizable way;
(f) in writing spell it correctly;
(g) use it with the words it correctly goes with i.e. in the correct collocation;
(h) use it at the appropriate level of formality
(i) be aware of its connotations and associations.

Regarding the same Wallace Michael says that in vocabulary learning the ‘need to know’ principle could be applied. It means that the learners should not be told more about the meanings of the words
than they need to know to understand the context. Learners can be then best teachers if they are exposed to the target language in an appropriate way. Wallace encourages learners to find meaningfulness for themselves in words and in relationship between words they encounter in texts.

In the very book, the author focuses on the usefulness and effectiveness of meaningful presentation of vocabulary in situations and contexts; the encouragement of inferencing, use of realia, pictures and mime and activation of the learners background knowledge. The emphasis is on the active engagement of the learners. The book provides a very clear and practical guide to the teaching of vocabulary in EFL and other language teaching situations.

3.4 COMMENTS ON THE REVIEWED LITERATURE:

The reviewed literature provided the track to the present study. It not only served as the guideline to the study, but also made acquainted with positin of vocabulary teaching in ELT throughout the world. One thing is clear from the reviewed literature that learning and teaching of vocabulary is rather a more complex process than it might at first sight appear.

Researches depict various techniques of teaching vocabulary. They also talk at length about the difficulties faced by the learners in learning
vocabulary. They also advocate about an effort to construct independent strategies for vocabulary learning. They also put emphasis on the class-room instruction to be given before the teacher start teaching of vocabulary. This enabled me to make my instructions more clear and to the point. Class-room instruction serve the purpose of understanding the way to be applied by the learner to understand a word.

Articles on vocabulary teaching provided me with the guideline of understanding the students’ need while learning vocabulary. Writers have talk at length about the use of dictionary. They are of the opinion that the use of dictionary should be the very last resort of learners. Learners should then be trained to be independent of dictionaries. They should be taught strategies for guessing the meaning of words in the contexts in which they appear by looking at the relationships that exist among the words in a sentence. This provided solid base to my idea of not encouraging students to refer to dictionary. Therefore, I developed such strategies in which hardly a learner has to look into a dictionary.

Books on vocabulary teaching also provided a clear and practical guideline for the teaching of vocabulary. The authors of the books have focused on the usefulness and effectiveness of meaningful presentation of vocabulary in situations and contexts. They have also put emphasis on the active engagement of the learners in vocabulary teaching. They have also put
a emphasis on oral communication. They also commented of using the word in most real situations, and such situations can also be developed in classrooms. These gave me the idea of carrying out communicative tasks.

Thus, much I have gained from the reviewed literature. But it is also sad that hardly anyone has talked on the methods of retention of vocabulary. Learning of vocabulary, is one thing but to recall it at will (when needed) is another. That made me think twice and planned the strategies in such a way that the retention of vocabulary is facilitated by the very efforts of learning.

3.5 SUMMING UP:

In reviewing these studies, the internet also proved to be a boon for the study. Related literature not only provided the guideline to the study, but also made her acquainted with the position of ELT throughout the world in reference to vocabulary teaching. The status of vocabulary research suggested her certain strong points and certain gaps. She could use this insight in developing and executing her programe for vocabulary teaching.