

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS  
AN AWARENESS-RAISING APPROACH TO  
VOCABULARY TEACHING

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## ABSTRACT

*This study is an attempt to investigate to what extent the teaching and learning of vocabulary by an awareness-raising approach would be considered feasible and acceptable to teachers in high schools.*

*For this investigation, thus, materials representing an approach of a different nature to that currently practised in high schools were collected from different sources. The subjects were made to study these materials for three to five days. To determine their attitudes towards the materials at an initial stage and how acceptable or feasible the activities might be, a questionnaire was issued to all the subjects and interviews were conducted with some. Reactions to the materials at this stage were based on past experience, teaching habits, traditional expectations, etc.*

*Following this, the researcher arranged practice teaching sessions in which the use of the tasks was demonstrated in typical high school classes while the subjects observed. The same questionnaire was administered again and every subject was made to express his feelings about the approach. Reactions at this stage were based, on the one hand, on reflections on the materials in stage 1 and any modification of attitudes that might have taken place at this stage and, on the other, on the reaction to observations of the materials and the approach used in the classroom.*

*The emphasis was to find out the degree to which teachers can modify their attitudes initially through exposure to materials representing a different approach and through observations of such materials being taught. Therefore, a comparison was made between teachers'*

*initial reactions to the first questionnaire and their attitudes as expressed during discussions and in the same questionnaire administered post-teaching.*

*The result of the findings shows that teachers could modify their attitudes in a fairly short period of time. The teachers also reported that an awareness-raising approach to vocabulary learning would be acceptable and feasible in high school situation. But they had no much confidence about the value of such an approach in facilitating learners' learnings of new lexical items. On the bases of these findings, it is concluded that it is possible to introduce an awareness-raising approach to vocabulary learning in new textbooks for high school classes. Finally, recommendations are made.*

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CHAPTER ONE  
THE PROBLEM, SIGNIFICANCE, SCOPE AND  
LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1:1. Introduction

*It has often been reported that successful second language learning requires the active participation of the learner in the learning process. There is now a consensus among scholars that it is practically impossible to teach vocabulary unless the learners are actively engaged in the learning process and find meaningfulness for themselves. The trend is now to help learners to develop skills in vocabulary development rather than teaching the meanings of discrete lexical items. In other words, current practices in vocabulary teaching emphasize how learners learn rather than what they learn so that they become keenly aware of every opportunity of vocabulary expansion (Gairns and Redman, 1986; Carter and McCarthy, 1988; McCarthy, 1990; and Redman and Ellis, 1990).*

*Through research, particularly during the last fifteen years, many scholars have tried to analyse the underlying processes involved in vocabulary learning and have recommended approaches to be employed in the classroom which bring the learner closer to the centre of the teaching and learning process and reduce the role of the teacher to an organizer, or a director and an initiator of the activities.*

*A key question in implementing change in the teaching and learning process is the degree of awareness of teachers and in*

*particular their willingness to change their attitudes and modify their expectations as to what constitutes the way students should learn and what role they should play in the process (Ayneababa 1993:80). The main problem that this research is going to investigate is to what extent the teaching and learning of vocabulary by an awareness-raising approach would be considered feasible and acceptable to teachers in high schools.*

*An awareness-raising approach will require the role of the teacher to change from the sole authority and transmitter of knowledge to one who is at least for a part of the time a facilitator of learning through tasks carried out collaboratively. It is this question of the degree to which teachers can modify their attitudes initially through (i) exposure to materials representing a different approach and (ii) through observation of such materials being taught, that is being investigated.*

#### 1:2. Statement of the Problem

*The purpose of this study is, therefore, to seek answers to the following questions after exposing teachers to a range of more learner-centred vocabulary learning tasks:*

- i) What is the attitude of teachers towards a more communicative and task-based approach to vocabulary teaching and learning?*
- ii) Are such task-based activities perceived to be substantially different from those they are typically employing in senior secondary schools and in what ways?*
- iii) What problems do teachers think there might be in using such an approach in Ethiopian high school classes?*

- iv) *Which of these kinds of tasks are considered by teachers to be more acceptable or preferable in their own situation?*

### 1:3. Significance of the Study

*The approach to the teaching of vocabulary which is currently typically practised in high schools is teacher-centred. The teacher presents and explains the meanings of discrete lexical items generally without showing their relationships to other words or word forms already known. More recently methodologists have strongly recommended training learners in techniques that enable them to tackle the meanings of unknown words rather than teaching them the meanings of particular lexical items (Gairns and Redman, 1986; Carter and McCarthy, 1988; McCarthy, 1990; and Redman and Ellis, 1990). The trend is therefore to focus on raising students' awareness of how they can develop their own vocabulary so that they can take more responsibility for how and what they learn. To achieve this aim, more recent practices bring the learner closer to the centre of the teaching and the learning process and refocus the role of the teacher in vocabulary teaching and learning to that of an organizer, a director and an initiator of the activities.*

*One of the significant barriers to change in the teaching profession is the teacher (Ayneababa, 1993). So far, no attempt has been made to investigate the feasibility and acceptability to teachers of using more learner-centred approaches to vocabulary development in our situation, and in particular, to investigate attitudes to the use of task-based activities as an alternative to current practices. Therefore, this study attempts to investigate*

*the attitudes of a sample of teachers towards the feasibility and acceptability to teachers of using such approaches, given the constraints of our situation, i.e. time, class size, physical set up, teachers' beliefs and expectations, and teachers' beliefs about learners' expectations, etc.*

*Therefore, the researcher hopes that the result of the study will guide educators in the field as to the feasibility and acceptability of applying a task-based approach to vocabulary teaching and learning in high schools.*

#### *1;4. Limitations of the Study*

##### *1;4:1. The Subjects*

*The researcher is well aware that it would have been better to extend the number of the subjects and schools for the study. However, due to time constraints and problems in organizing teachers in schools, the study is limited to twenty teachers from four government high schools.*

##### *1;4:2. The Materials*

*The researcher felt that demonstrating all awareness-raising vocabulary development tasks could not be carried out within a short period of time, and would require the use and introduction of more materials. Therefore, the materials that the teachers were made to study were limited to only samples of vocabulary development tasks that the researcher thought would be more manageable in high schools.*

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

*When we speak or write, we usually try to select words that express our ideas effectively and appropriately. Our ability to express our ideas, feelings, emotions, etc. in a foreign language and our ability to comprehend what others say (whether in speech or writing) depends very much on our knowledge of the vocabulary of that language. Even if we master the grammar and the sound system of a foreign language, we cannot express ourselves effectively without adequate vocabulary knowledge.*

*Many scholars try to indicate the frustrating experience of the inability of people to find words to express themselves in a foreign language and stress the importance of lexical items in the communication process. As Wallace (1982:10) states, "Not being able to find words you need to express yourself is the most frustrating experience in speaking another language". Morgan and Rinvoluceri (1986:3) write, "... words are essential and the lack of them leads to feelings of insecurity". McCarthy (1990) also remarks:*

*No matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L<sub>2</sub> are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in an L<sub>2</sub> just cannot happen in any meaningful way (p.viii).*

*Therefore, adequate knowledge of foreign language vocabulary is indispensable to achieve communicative objectives.*

## 2.2 Emphasis on Vocabulary Teaching Since the 1950s

*Even though words play such an important role in the communication process, writers such as Wallace (1982), Lewis and Hill (1985), Gairns and Redman (1986), Carter and McCarthy (1988), Tylar (1990), and McCarthy (1990) point out that the teaching of vocabulary of a foreign language has for a long time been a neglected area. Carter and McCarthy, in particular, who trace developments in the teaching of vocabulary from 1945 onwards, point out that in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, when the American structuralist view dominated the study of languages and the audio-lingual approach to foreign language was in fashion, vocabulary was given a secondary status. During these years, foreign language learning stressed the mastery of the sound system and the grammatical structure but vocabulary was seen mainly as a problem of grading and selection.*

*It was since the introduction of the notional/functional syllabus in the 1970s, particularly since the work of Wilkins (1972), who criticised the neglect of vocabulary in the audio-lingual years, that we began to hear arguments against the then prevailing view of foreign language learning (Carter and McCarthy, 42). Even though Wilkins says that the usual pattern of structure first, vocabulary later is the wisest counsel, "... his desire to bring to vocabulary teaching the insights of lexical semantics ... have become a major feeding ground for vocabulary practitioners in the 1970s and 1980s" (Carter and McCarthy 1988:42).*

Similarly, Twaddel (1972 and 1973) cited in Carter and McCarthy points out that vocabulary teaching was not simply a matter of selection of lexical items on a criterion such as frequency. He argues that it is impossible to teach all vocabulary items that the learners need and so it is important to teach them guessing strategies which enable them to grapple with unknown words. Scholars say that this marks the beginning of viewing vocabulary as a language skill and the shifting of the responsibility to the learner.

### 2:3. Current Approach to Vocabulary Teaching

It was in the 1980s, the years in which the communicative approach to language learning became dominant that the learner was brought to the centre stage and vocabulary was beginning to be treated as a language skill and a means of achieving communicative objectives. During these years, scholars tried to show the semantic structure of the lexicon and incorporate the insight of lexical semantics with the vocabulary teaching and learning process.

Nowadays, there is a consensus among scholars that teaching and learning vocabulary should engage the learners in meaningful and communicative tasks that enable them to expand their own vocabulary knowledge by themselves. McCarthy (1990:121) writes, "Success in the vocabulary lesson crucially depends on the interaction between teacher and learners, and on the work of the learners themselves put into the assimilation and practising of new words."

*According to Gairns and Redman (1986:76) engaging learners in meaningful tasks and training them in strategies that enable them to learn the meanings of new lexical items by themselves has two practical advantages. First, students feel responsibility in what they learn. Second, it pays attention to individual needs i.e. it personalizes vocabulary expansion according to need, purpose and goal. In general, current practices in vocabulary teaching emphasize task-based communicative awareness-raising activities that engage the learners in the learning process rather than teaching them explicitly the meanings of discrete lexical items. Scholars suggest different techniques to be used in organizing and presenting new lexical items in the classroom. Some of these are as follows:*

#### *2:3:1. Sense Relations*

*Sense relation refers to the semantic relationship that exist between lexical items. Vocabulary items may be related to one another in terms of meanings i.e. they may be similar, or different in meanings so that they may or may not substitute for one another (McCarthy 1990:15-6). He also explains that sense relations are:*

*... relations between different words that might have been chosen on the "vertical" axis,... They are often called sense relations to distinguish the meanings of individual items in terms of what they mean in the real world (their denotation) from their meaning in relation to other words within the vocabulary system of the language (their sense) p.16.*

*Scholars suggest to use these relationships as organizing principles for teaching new lexical items, instead of just teaching random words. Organizing vocabulary items according to their*

*semantic relationship is fundamental in language learning because the meanings of words can only be understood and learned in terms of their meanings (Gairns and Redman 1986: 22). The most frequent sense relations that teachers and learners often encounter are synonymy, antonymy and hyponymy.*

### 2:3:1:1. Synonymy

*Synonymy refers to the idea of relationship of sameness i.e. when two or more words refer to the same thing or have the same meaning. McCarthy (1990), Gairns and Redman (1986), and Harmer and Rossner (1991) emphasize that it is unwise to expect any items to be exact synonyms, McCarthy (1990:17) quoting Collinson (1939) presents five factors which may distinguish words from one another: words may be close in meaning and yet not collocate with the same item; words may have different syntactic behaviour; words may belong to different contents and situations; words may be separated by geographical distribution, and some words may be more archaic than others. Gairns and Redman (1986:15) also state synonyms are "... group of words that share a general sense so may be interchangeable in a limited number of contexts, but which on close inspection reveal conceptual differences."*

*However, this does not mean that synonyms have no value in vocabulary teaching and learning. Studies suggest that teachers should be resourceful enough when and what to present in such a way that students are aware of*

boundaries that separate words from each other. McCarthy (1990: 17) argues that if the five factors mentioned above are taken into account, synonyms could be a useful organizing principle in learning and storing vocabulary out of contexts.

2:3:1:2. Antonymy

Antonymy refers to the relationships of oppositeness. New words are sometimes introduced to learners with their opposites. However, it must be noticed that there are several kinds of oppositeness which are relevant to learners and teachers. The basic distinction of antonym that may be expressed in English is between 'gradable' and 'ungradable' opposites. Studies reveal that there are forms of antonyms which truly represent oppositeness of meaning (male/female), and forms of antonyms which show gradable oppositeness i.e. with degrees in between (big/small). McCarthy (1990: 18) indicates that a word may have different opposites in different contexts (light bag/heavy bag, light wind/strong wind, light colours/dark colours). Therefore, simply presenting words with their opposites without taking into account such boundaries is not advisable. Teachers should use different tasks or activities that enable learners to see such varieties of oppositeness of meaning between lexical items.

2:3:1:3. Hyponymy

Hyponymy refers to the relationships of inclusion. The meaning of a word may be included in other



For example, the meanings of the words 'car', 'lorry', 'bus', and 'orange', 'apple', 'lemon' are included in the words 'vehicle' and 'fruit', respectively. In other words, 'car', 'lorry', 'bus' are hyponyms of the superordinate term 'vehicle', and 'orange', 'apple', 'lemon' of 'fruit'. Grouping lexical items according to their semantic similarities is one way of presenting new vocabulary items in the classroom. Organizing vocabulary items according to such relationships, e.g. by names of flowers, garments, or article of furniture, etc. offers the possibility of clear, diagrammatical representation of meaning (Carter and McCarthy 1988:25, McCarthy 1990:20).

In general, sense relations play a fundamental role in organizing and presenting new lexical items in the classroom. They give coherence to the lesson, provide a useful framework for the learner to understand semantic boundaries, and help us to make deductions about unknown words (Gairns and Redman 1986:31-2).

### 2:3:2. Collocation

Words are not only related to one another on the vertical axis but also on the horizontal axis. Relationship of words in the vertical axis refers to the relationship of words in terms of meaning while horizontal axis to the frequent occurrences of words together. Carter and McCarthy (1988:32) quoting Firth assert:

*Meaning operates at different levels; one type of meaning is collocation. Collocation is an abstraction at the syntagmatic level and is not directly concerned with the conceptual or idea approach to the meanings of words.*

*Here it is worth noticing that collocations are different from idioms. In collocation one can predict or reduce the meaning from understanding of its part. Bahns (1993) writes:*

*The main characteristics of collocations are that their meanings reflect the meanings of their constituent parts (in contrast to idioms) and that they are used frequently, spring to mind readily, and are psychologically salient ... p.57.*

*Gairns and Redman (1986:37) identify four common types of collocation: subject noun + verb, verb + object noun, adjective + noun, and adverb + past participle used adjectively. Similarly, Bahns (1993:57) quoting Benson, Benson and Ilson (1986a-b) divides collocations into grammatical collocations and lexical collocations. According to Bahns, while grammatical collocations consists of a noun, an adjective or a verb, plus a preposition, or a grammatical structure such as an infinitive clause, lexical collocation does not contain prepositions, infinitives or clauses but consists of various combinations of nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs.*

*Carter and McCarthy (1988:73) argue that what a word occurs with is as important as any other kind of statement about its meaning. Nattinger (in Carter and McCarthy) indicates two important values of collocation in foreign language learning. First, the meaning of a word has a great deal with words which it occurs with. Second, collocations permit people to know what kind of words they can expect to find together (1988:69-70). Nattinger also explains that these enable learners to expect what sort of information can follow from what has preceded, so they can guess the meaning after hearing only the first part of familiar collocations. Gairns and Redman also comment "...*

*collocation can provide a useful framework for revising items which are partially known and for expanding the learner's knowledge of them". (1986:39). Tylar (1990:2) writes:*

*One implication for teaching would be to ensure that we do not merely teach new items of vocabulary in isolation, but give a meaningful context for the word, if possible with several examples of its use in connected discourse.*

*In general, studying what words are likely to occur before and after is fundamental in language learning. In other words, knowledge of collocational appropriacy plays an important part in vocabulary development.*

### 2:3:3. Using Authentic Reading Texts

*Using reading text is the most common and widely used method of introducing new lexis to the learners. However, recent studies show that reading texts are not always the ideal vehicle of introducing new words in the classroom, and some drawbacks in reading texts have been pointed out by many scholars.*

*The first criticism against reading texts (regarding vocabulary development) is the lack of exercises that activate useful lexis from the texts. Reading texts often tend to test receptive vocabulary knowledge and even exercises for the most frequent productive vocabulary items are rare (Gairns and Redman 1986:115). It is also pointed out by scholars that usually interesting texts are so long. As a result, they may lead to vocabulary overloading. In other words, reading texts lack a systematic attempt to select, grade, repeat, relate and*

*revise lexical items, and there is an over-reliance on definition as a means of teaching and testing the meanings of lexical items.*

*Because of this, Morgan and Rinvolucri (1986: 4) state:*

*When we 'do' a reading passage or a listening comprehension with our students, surely we are teaching vocabulary? Sadly, in many classrooms this is not the case. Encountering and 'understanding' a word are seldom enough: as with meeting people, there need to be depth and interaction for the encounter to be memorable.*

*Nevertheless, the role of reading texts in vocabulary learning is underlined by many educators. Gairns and Redman write "They have the great advantage of contextualizing new language items for the learner, and an interesting text also serves to make that language more memorable" (1986: 115). Therefore, the above criticisms do not mean to altogether reject reading texts in vocabulary teaching and learning, but to avoid some weaknesses in such a way that their uses subscribe to current theories and beliefs in vocabulary development. The argument is that reading texts have to be authentic and engage learners in activities that enable them to relate and revise new vocabulary items.*

*It is also recommended by scholars that presenting reading texts and asking students to do the activities are inadequate in exploiting reading texts for vocabulary development. Methodologists point out that there should be pre-teaching activities in which students are introduced to a few of the difficult words that may hinder their understanding of the text and the subject. In other words, the teacher has to provide essential vocabulary for his students and discover gaps in the learners knowledge*

of the language or the topic by asking a series of questions on the subject. According to McCarthy:-

*This corresponds not only to a practical need for some sort of focus and formalization to the content of the lesson, but also to sound theoretical standpoint which says the new knowledge is most effectively absorbed when it is assimilated to the already known, and when the appropriate conceptual frameworks or schemata are activated in the mind of the learner (1990:108).*

Similarly, Morgan and Rinvoluceri (1986: 8) write:-

*... treating vocabulary before the students meet it in a reading text ... focus students' attention on either new or unknown vocabulary and at the same time stimulate a desire to find out what is actually in the text. They offer psychological reason for reading.... Arguably pre-text work on vocabulary focuses students on details in the text, which is not useful in terms of reading strategies.*

*What should be known here is that pre-teaching activities should be limited to only a few words that help learners to understand the subject; and the target words for which the text is presented, should not be pre-taught (McCarthy 1990:109).*

#### 2:3:4. Contextual Guesswork

*Guessing strategy is one way of encouraging learners to deduce the meanings of unknown words from the context.*

*Twaddell (1972 and 1973) saw the massive expansions of the learners' vocabularies at the intermediate level and the impossibility of teaching all the vocabulary items that the learners need. Hence, he underlines the importance of teaching the learners guessing strategies rather than the meanings of particular new items. Carter and McCarthy (1988:42) say that*

*this marks the beginning of viewing vocabulary as a language skill.*

*In the subsequent years, many educators and methodologists tried to point out the value of training the learners in the contextual guesswork in vocabulary development. It is beautifully stated by Nuttall (1982:70) that:-*

*Training students to infer meaning from context gives them a powerful aid to comprehension and will ultimately greatly speed up their reading. And one of the nice things about this training is that it can be enjoyable. It has the problem-solving characteristics that appeal to most people and challenges the students to make use of their intelligence to an extent is not always common in language classes.*

*Gairns and Redman (1986:84) also write, "The ability to guess from context is clearly a valuable skill and one that should play a part in textual exploitation in class."*

*Besides indicating the importance of training the learners in guessing strategies, scholars have also suggested different techniques to be employed in the training processes. Nuttall (1982:71) suggests to begin with sentences containing nonsense words and to get students to suggest what range of words could be used to complete given sentences, and to show them the possible fillers for any particular slot in a given sentence. Stressing the role of previous knowledge of the language in contextual guesswork, Gairns and Redman (1986:83) say that substitution of a nonsense word for a particular item is the most common classroom activity designed by many teachers to help learners to develop the ability to guess from the context.*

*One important point that learners have to realize is that contextual guesswork is 'about possibilities as opposed to certainties' (Nuttall 1982:72). That is, through contextual guesswork, learners may not arrive at the exact meaning of a particular, but at its possible meaning in the context that it is used. Another important point about contextual guesswork is the exploitation of different clues that lead learners to the meanings of unknown lexical items in the texts. Different educators give a number of recommended clues to be used in discovering the meanings of unknown words during contextual guesswork. Nattinger (in Carter and McCarthy 1986:63) recommends that learners should look for clues such as in the topic, other words in the discourse, and grammatical structure, as well as intonation in the speech and punctuation in writing. Similarly, Nation and Coady (in Carter and McCarthy: 104-5), identify two presuppositions of a strategy for guessing from context (i.e. learners sufficient command of vocabulary, grammar and reading skills, and their relevant background knowledge to the text) and suggest five steps involved in guessing the meaning of unknown words from the contexts. These are:-*

- i) Finding the part of speech of the unknown word.*
- ii) Looking at the immediate context of the unknown word and simplifying this context if necessary.*
- iii) Looking at the wider context of the unknown word. This means looking at the relationship between the clause containing the unknown word and surrounding clauses and sentences.*

- iv) *Guessing the meaning of the unknown word.*
- v) *Checking that the guess is correct.*

*In general, to use contextual guesswork in the classroom, (i) teachers have to be resourceful enough in using contexts that contain adequate clues that guide the learners to the meanings of unknown words, and (ii) learners have to be equipped with basic skills that enable them to exploit different clues in order to deduce the meanings of new lexical items from the contexts in which they are used.*

#### 2:3:5. Grammatical Clues

*Scholars such as Wallace (1986:86), Nuttall (1982:67) and McCarthy (1990:5) state that knowledge of grammatical clues plays an effective role in learners' vocabulary expansion and in inferring the meanings of unknown words. Developing this idea, Gairns and Redman write:*

*Focus on word building is likely to pay dividends for the learner both receptively and productively. With the receptive skills an understanding of ... word building is essential if the learner is to make informed guesses about the meaning of unknown items.... In terms of productive skills, a knowledge of some basic principles of word building and specific examples will serve to widen a learner's range of expression (1986: 48).*

*Therefore, scholars suggest that students must be aware of some common prefixes and suffixes which are usually added to the root either to modify the meaning, or to change one part of speech to another. Word formation is "... a resource in the language, something the learner should be allowed to experiment with and use strategically" (McCarthy 1990:5).*

*Exposing learners to a range of tasks that enable them to see how affixes work in the language is an extremely useful skill in tackling new lexical items.*

*In training learners to discover the meanings of new words using grammatical clues, Nuttall suggests to begin with simple exercises such as UNhappy, teachER, DISagree, and examinATION. She says this can be practised through supplying an affix to a number of bases, a base and several affixes, a list of affixes of similar function and a list of bases, an incomplete table of forms consisting of base words with various affixes and sentences containing words of a particular form (1982:67). It is also said that any teacher can devise exercises that familiarize his/her students with affixes (Wallace 1982:87).*

*All in all, increasingly attention is focusing on ways in which learners can be trained to take more responsibility for how and what they learn. Effective learning of new vocabulary items is probably the result of several strategies and techniques, some of which will be highly individual and idiosyncratic. McCarthy (1990:121) concludes "... meaning is not just lying on a plate, waiting to be picked up and instantly digested. The teacher has to present meaning in a way that it is comprehensible to learners, and learners have to relate new meanings to ones already known."*

CHAPTER THREE  
METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

3:1. Methods

3:1:1. The Subjects

*Samples of the study were twenty English language teachers taken from four government comprehensive high schools: Yekatit 12, Kokebe Tsiba , Tikur Anbesa and Medhanalem. The subjects were assigned to the researcher by the respective English Department Heads of the schools. All of them had their first degree and long years of teaching experiences.*

*The researcher has chosen to focus on the teachers rather than the learners because he feels that teachers may become a more substantial impediment to change than learners. Research by Ayneubaba (1993) suggests that teachers in particular exhibit a conflict between how they feel they would like to teach and how they would like students to learn. On the other hand, the way they feel about how they ought to teach is very likely to be determined by cultural factors, educational traditions, habits, lack of awareness, etc.*

3:1:2. The Materials

*A range of vocabulary developing task-based activities were collected from different sources. The collected tasks focused on:*

- i) showing learners how visual aids can be used as a guide to meanings;*

- ii) *enabling learners to become aware of semantic boundaries between lexical items (sense relations and word networks);*
- iii) *enabling learners to see operation of meaning at different levels (e.g. collocation);*
- iv) *helping learners to discover the meanings of unknown words by using grammatical clues;*
- v) *enabling the teacher to integrate new lexis with other skills (using authentic reading texts), and*
- vi) *enabling the learner to deduce the meaning of new lexis from the context in which it is used (contextual guess-work). (See Appendix 1, p. 52 )*

### 3:1:3. The Questionnaire

*The questions were designed to find out answers to the problems stated earlier. Therefore, they were mainly targetted towards:*

- i) *the emphasis that teachers actually give to vocabulary teaching and learning in English language lessons in relation to other aspects of English language teaching;*
- ii) *techniques that teachers frequently employ in English lessons to present the meanings of new vocabulary items;*
- iii) *teachers' attitudes towards the sample vocabulary development tasks suggested in the materials;*
- iv) *distinctive features of current vocabulary teaching approaches in secondary schools and the awareness-raising approach to vocabulary learning;*

- v) *an approach that teachers feel students are likely to learn more from;*
- vi) *the feasibility and acceptability of an awareness-raising approach to vocabulary learning in high schools;*
- vii) *problems that might hinder the implementation of such an approach in high schools, and*
- viii) *the extent to which each task would be feasible and acceptable in high schools. (See Appendix 2, p. 70 )*

#### 3:1:4. The Interviews

*The researcher used unstructured interviews for this study. The interviews were basically based on teachers' reaction in the questionnaire. Their main aim was to gather more information on what had been reported in the questionnaire. Therefore, the content of the interviews was basically not different from that of the questionnaire. Besides the interviews conducted with some, every teacher was given chance to express his feelings about an awareness-raising approach to vocabulary teaching, particularly, after the practical teaching sessions.*

#### 3:2. The Procedure

##### 3:2:1. Stage 1

*The subjects were made to study the materials for three to five days. In order to find out about their attitudes towards the materials at the initial stage and how acceptable or feasible the activities might be, a questionnaire was filled*

*to all the teachers and interviews were conducted with some. At this stage, the focus was on finding out the degree of openness of teachers to change of attitude based on initial exposure to materials exemplifying an approach of a different nature to that currently practiced. Reactions to the materials at this stage were based on past experience, teaching habits, traditional expectations, etc.*

3:2:2. Stage 2

*The researcher arranged practice teaching sessions in each school in which the use of the tasks was demonstrated in typical high school classes while the teachers observed. For the demonstration of the use of the tasks, the researcher chose Grade 11 students because he felt that the selected materials would best fit the understanding level of Grade 11 students. Then, the questionnaire was administered again and the teachers were asked to express their feelings or opinions regarding the feasibility and acceptability of the approach as a whole and the relative merits of individual tasks. At this stage, the focus was on finding out the degree of openness of teachers to change of attitude based on their subsequent exposure to the materials being taught. Reactions at this stage were based partly on reflections on the materials in stage 1 and any modification to attitudes that might have taken place at this stage and partly on the reaction to observations of the materials and the approach used in the classroom.*

*Finally, an attempt was made to compare changes that took place between their initial reactions to the first questionnaire and their attitudes as expressed during discussions and in the same questionnaire administered post-teaching.*



CHAPTER FOUR  
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As it was pointed out earlier, questions were designed to find out answers to the problems, and interviews were basically based on teachers' reactions in the questionnaires.

4:1. Emphasis and Priority of Language Aspects

Items 1 and 2 were more general questions designed to find out the value that teachers actually gave to vocabulary in relation to other aspects of the English language.

Item 1 asked teachers to indicate aspect of language that they actually gave emphasis to in English classes.

TABLE 1  
ASPECT OF LANGUAGE THAT TEACHERS ACTUALLY  
GAVE EMPHASIS TO IN ENGLISH LESSONS

Aspects of Language		Pre- responses	Post- response
a	Reading	1	1
b	Vocabulary	3	3
c	Grammar	15	14
d	Pronunciation	-	-
e	Writing	-	-
f	Listening	-	-
g	Speaking	1	2

According to the respondents, by far the greatest emphasis was given and much more time devoted to the teaching of grammar. Data gathered through interviews highly supported the information in the table above. It is easy to see that vocabulary teaching was not given due attention that it should deserve in the English language classes.

In item two, teachers were asked to indicate aspects of language that they thought should be given priority so that students' ability to use the language could be improved.

TABLE 2  
ASPECT OF LANGUAGE THAT SHOULD RECEIVE PRIORITY  
IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LESSONS

Aspects of Language		Pre- responses	Post- responses
a	Reading	2	2
b	Vocabulary	4	5
c	Grammar	1	-
d	Pronunciation	-	-
e	Writing	-	-
f	Listening	-	-
g	Speaking	13	13

As it is shown in Table 2 above, in both questionnaires over half of the subjects reported that 'speaking' should receive priority. The interesting point is that there was no agreement between teachers' beliefs and what they actually

taught. According to teachers' responses in item 1 earlier, teachers reported that they actually taught 'grammar', but almost no one reported in item 2 that 'grammar' should be given emphasis in English lessons. The researcher interviewed some subjects on this point. Their responses could be summarized in two ways: (i) students are not willing to participate in 'speaking' due to lack of proficiency in English, but this only reflects teachers' expectations (see the discrepancies of teachers' reactions to item 10c in pre-and post-teaching questionnaires on page 39 ), and (ii) the existing syllabuses emphasize 'grammar' teaching. Some subjects commented in the questionnaire that what teachers should teach had already been decided by the textbooks.

#### 4.2. Techniques Used in Teaching Vocabulary

Item 3(a-1) was intended to discover the most frequently used vocabulary teaching techniques in high school classes. The aim was to compare and contrast current vocabulary teaching practices in high schools with the awareness-raising and task-based communicative approach to vocabulary teaching.

TABLE 3  
 FREQUENCY USES OF VOCABULARY TEACHING TECHNIQUES IN HIGH SCHOOLS

	Techniques	Frequently Used		Sometimes Used		Rarely Used		Not Used At All	
		Pre-resps.	Post-resps.	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.
a	getting students to choose between alternatives meanings, definitions given in the textbook	14	15	5	4	1	1	-	-
b	getting students to choose the word to fill a blank space from a given list of possible new words	12	13	6	5	2	2	-	-
c	using a reading text to show students examples of how the word is used	10	11	8	9	2	-	-	-
d	using visual aids (e.g. pictures, diagrams) to make the meaning clear to the students	-	-	3	3	12	11	5	6
e	translating the meaning	3	4	4	6	8	7	5	3
f	using synonyms (i.e. words that have approximately the same meaning as the new word)	12	5	4	8	4	7	-	-
g	using antonyms (i.e. words that have approximately the opposite meaning)	2	1	9	10	9	9	-	-
h	Using hyponyms (e.g. the meaning of 'car', 'lorry' and 'bus' are included in the word 'vehicle')	3	-	6	4	8	7	3	9
i	using collocations (i.e. words that frequently go together)	6	1	8	4	5	8	1	7
j	using contextual guesswork (i.e. presenting words in contexts and encouraging students to deduce the meaning)	15	14	5	6	-	-	-	-
k	using grammatical clues (i.e. prefixes and suffixes)	4	3	8	7	4	7	4	3
l	using word networks (i.e. presenting words similar in meaning)	4	2	4	5	5	6	7	7

According to the information in the above table, responses of the subjects to the same questionnaire administered pre- and post- teaching sessions show certain discrepancies. For example, in the first questionnaire twelve subjects felt that they frequently used 'synonyms' in presenting new lexical items, but in the second questionnaire only five reported that they frequently used 'synonyms'. Similarly, in the preliminary questionnaire, six reported that they frequently used 'collocation', but in the post-teaching questionnaire only one reported that he frequently used 'collocation'. Data gathered through interviews greatly support the information in the post-teaching questionnaire. Thus, the researcher feels that discrepancies in responses on this item might have been the impact of some variables. For instance,

- i) teachers might have filled the first questionnaire without sufficient reading, or detail understanding of the vocabulary development material that they had been given to study, and
- ii) at the beginning, teachers might have misunderstood, or misinterpreted the concept of some of the techniques. In fact, some reported in the interview that they misunderstood the essence of 'word network'. They considered it to be the same as 'synonym'.

However, the information in Table 3 shows that the frequently and rarely used techniques in high schools were almost similar in both questionnaire. The information that the researcher has collected for this study shows the following rank order of techniques according to their frequency of use in class in presenting the meanings of new lexical items.

*Rank Order According to  
Preliminary Responses*

1. *using contextual guesswork*
2. *getting students to choose between alternatives meanings, definitions given in the textbook*
3. *getting students to choose the word to fill a blank space from a given list of possible new words*
4. *using a reading text to show students examples of how the word is used*
5. *using synonyms*
6. *using collocation*
7. *using grammatical clues*
8. *using antonyms*
9. *using hyponyms*
10. *translating the meaning*
11. *using word networks*
12. *using visual aids*

*Rank Order According to  
Post-teaching Responses*

1. *using contextual guesswork*
2. *getting students to choose between alternatives meanings, definitions, given in the textbook*
3. *getting students to choose the word to fill a blank space from a given list of possible new words*
4. *using a reading text to show students examples of how the word is used*
5. *using synonyms*
6. *translating the meaning*
7. *using grammatical clues*
8. *using antonyms*
9. *using word networks*
10. *using collocation*
11. *using hyponyms*
12. *using visual aids*

*The researcher feels that the rank order according to post-teaching responses should be taken to be more reliable than the rank order according to preliminary responses because the teachers filled in the second questionnaire after they had practically seen the use of each task.*

*It is noticed in the preliminary questionnaire that teachers reported that they rarely used translation in presenting the meanings of new lexical items. However, evidences (e.g. information from students) reveal that translating the meanings of new vocabulary items is common in English classes. This is also observed in the post-teaching questionnaire. The researcher believes that teachers might have avoided reporting their frequent use of translation in teaching the meanings of new lexical items, (particularly in the first questionnaire), because translation "... has been made responsible for interference of errors, lack of communicative competence, boredom in the classroom, and for learning about the language instead of learning to speak it" (Heltai 1989: 288).*

*The interesting thing is that the collected data reveal that the most frequently used techniques in teaching the meanings of new words are techniques that often test learners' achievement of vocabulary learning rather than techniques that help learners to tackle the meanings of new lexical items.*

*Techniques rarely used are techniques that play a fundamental role in:*

- i) providing useful framework for revising items which are partially known and expanding learners' knowledge of vocabulary items (collocation),*
- ii) organizing lexical items (hyponym), and*
- iii) teaching concrete vocabulary items (visual aids) (Gairns and Redman 1986; McCarthy, 1990). Therefore, the researcher feels that current vocabulary teaching practices in high schools*

lack many important features in the light of modern foreign language teaching theories.

This study also reveals that teachers strictly follow the textbooks in English language lessons. Each unit of ENE textbooks sequentially consists of a reading passage, vocabulary and comprehension and grammar exercises. The vocabulary part mainly consists of multi-choice, sentence completion, definition, and matching exercises in which students are expected to do according to the contextual meanings of words from the reading passages.

4.3. Teachers' Attitudes Towards Awareness-raising Approach to Vocabulary Development Tasks

Item 4 was designed to investigate teachers' attitudes towards the samples of awareness-raising vocabulary development tasks that they had studied.

TABLE 4  
TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE SAMPLES  
OF VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT TASKS

Alternatives		Pre-responses	Post-responses
a	very interesting	4	8
b	interesting	16	12
c	boring	-	-
d	very boring	-	-

Table 4 demonstrates that in both questionnaires no subject reported either 'boring' or 'very boring'. The information in the data also reveals that teachers liked the tasks more after they had practically seen the use of the materials in the classrooms. Therefore, it is possible to say that teachers have positive attitudes towards an awareness-raising approach to vocabulary teaching.

#### 4:4. Extent of Difference

In item 5, teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which the awareness-raising vocabulary development tasks suggested in the materials were different from current vocabulary teaching practices in high schools. Table 5 demonstrates the results.

TABLE 5  
EXTENT OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO APPROACHES

	Alternatives	Pre- responses	Post- responses
a	very different	4	3
b	different	13	16
c	not sure	-	-
d	not very different	3	-
e	not different at all	-	1

The majority of the respondents reported in item 5 that the awareness-raising vocabulary development tasks suggested in the materials were 'different' from current vocabulary teaching practices in high schools. Few subjects said in both questionnaires (with a slight change in the second questionnaire) that the two approaches were 'very different'. Similarly, few subjects felt in the first questionnaire that the two approaches were 'not different at all'.

*this is the second questionnaire. This implies that the subjects realized that though there were distinctive features, the two approaches were not completely different.*

4:5. Distinctive Features

*Item 6 (a-k) was designed to find out features that distinguish current vocabulary teaching practices in high schools from task-based approaches.*

TABLE 6  
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE TWO APPROACHES

	Distinctive Features	A Feature of Current Vocabulary Teaching Practice in high Schools		A Feature of an Awareness-raising Vocabulary Teaching Approach	
		Pre-resps.	Post-resps.	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.
a	teacher presents and explains the meaning of a new word explicitly	10	17	10	3
b	reduces teachers' role to manager and initiator of the activities	4	2	16	18
c	students rely entirely on their teachers	12	18	8	2
d	gives responsibility to students for what and how they learn	6	2	14	18
e	students learn the meanings of particular words	11	17	9	3
f	students learn how to work out unknown words for themselves	6	1	14	19
g	emphasizes individual work	15	19	5	1
h	emphasizes pair and group work collaboration	5	1	15	19
i	teacher is the source of knowledge	18	19	2	1
j	students learn by themselves, but also from each other and the teacher	4	-	16	20
k	sustains students' interest	11	6	9	14

As it is shown in the data, the teachers more or less identified the distinctive features of the two approaches. However, (particularly in the preliminary questionnaire), in a few cases, the respondents seemed to have failed to precisely distinguish and classify the distinctive features. For example, in the preliminary questionnaire, half of the subjects felt that 'presenting and explaining the meaning of a new word explicitly' was a feature of an awareness-raising approach to vocabulary teaching. Similarly, nine of them reported in the first questionnaire that 'learning the meanings of particular words' was a distinctive feature of task-based approach. Data collected through interviews, however, show that teachers clearly understood the distinctive features of the two approaches. Data collected through the second questionnaire highly supported the information gathered through interviews. For example, in the second questionnaire only three subjects reported that 'presenting and explaining the meaning of a new word explicitly' was a feature of an awareness-raising approach to vocabulary teaching.

The promising thing is that teachers were able<sup>to</sup> show certain sorts of modifications of attitudes. For instance, in the preliminary questionnaire, eleven teachers reported that 'current vocabulary teaching practices in high schools' would keep students' interest. In the second questionnaire, however, fourteen reported that an awareness-raising approach sustained students' interest.

#### 4.6. The Preferred Approach

In item 7, teachers were asked to report from which approach they thought students were likely to learn more.

TABLE 7

AN APPROACH THAT WOULD HELP LEARNERS TO LEARN MORE

Alternatives		Pre- responses	Post- responses
a	<i>from the current practices of vocabulary teaching in secondary schools</i>	14	11
b	<i>from the tasks similar to the ones I have just studied</i>	6	9
c	<i>I am not sure</i>	-	-

To this item, though there was a difference between the preliminary and post-teaching responses, the majority of the subjects felt in both questionnaires that students were likely to learn more from current vocabulary teaching practices in high schools. Though there were changes of attitudes, it seems that teachers did not seem to have much trust in the value of awareness-raising approaches in facilitating the learning of new lexical items. This contradicts what they had reported in item four earlier. The researcher tried to gather information on this issue through interviews. Accordingly, teachers felt that students were likely to learn more through explicit explanation. Therefore, teachers' reactions to item 7 were probably influenced by their expectations about the learning process and learning outcomes.

4:7. Feasibility of the Awareness-raising Approach

Item 8 was designed to find out what teachers thought about the feasibility of an awareness-raising approach to vocabulary learning in our situation if introduced in new textbooks for high school classes. To this item, almost all teachers reported in both questionnaires that it would be feasible 'to a certain extent'.

TABLE 8  
FEASIBILITY OF AN AWARENESS-RAISING  
APPROACH IN THEIR SITUATION

Alternatives		Pre- responses	Post- responses
a	Yes, completely	1	-
b	Yes, to a certain extent	18	19
c	No	1	1

This information suggests that there are some problems that might affect the use of such tasks in high schools.

4:8. Acceptability of the Awareness-raising Approach

Item 9 was intended to find out what teachers thought about the acceptability of an awareness-raising approach to vocabulary learning to them as teachers and to their students if used in new textbooks for high school classes.

TABLE 9  
ACCEPTABILITY OF AN AWARENESS-RAISING APPROACH  
IN THEIR SITUATION

<i>Alternatives</i>		<i>Pre- responses</i>	<i>Post- responses</i>
<i>a</i>	<i>Yes, completely</i>	1	3
<i>b</i>	<i>Yes, to a certain extent</i>	17	16
<i>c</i>	<i>No</i>	2	1

As it is shown in the data, nearly all reported in both questionnaires that it would be acceptable 'to a certain extent'. The fact that three subjects reported 'yes, completely' in post-teaching questionnaire indicates that it would be possible to persuade teachers to modify their attitudes.

4:9. Problems in Using Task-based Activities

Item 10 (a-k) asked teachers to indicate problems that they thought there might be in using such an approach in high school classes. Problems and responses of the subjects are shown below.

TABLE 10

PROBLEMS THAT MIGHT AFFECT THE USE OF AN AWARENESS-RAISING APPROACH

	Problems	A Serious Problem		A Minor Problem		Not a Problem	
		Pre-resp.	Post-resp.	Pre-resp.	Post-resp.	Pre-resp.	Post-resp.
a	time (i.e. 40 minutes is not sufficient to present and carry out such tasks)	4	8	13	9	3	3
b	the large number of students in classes make it difficult to organize students in pairs, or groups for this kind of activity	17	9	3	7	-	4
c	students will not be willing to participate in pair or group work due to lack of proficiency in the English language	14	2	5	4	1	14
d	the classroom will be too noisy	5	9	8	8	7	3
e	teachers believe that they are the only source of learning	3	2	2	6	15	12
f	teachers believe they should control the learning process	1	3	8	9	11	8
g	teachers do not believe that students can learn effectively from each other	9	7	7	6	4	7
h	teachers have no incentives to create and organize such activities	15	16	5	4	-	-
i	students believe that teachers are only source of knowledge	4	7	12	6	4	7
j	students will not trust the value of such tasks	6	3	11	5	3	12
k	teachers are not equipped with sufficient skills in modern methodology to use this approach	5	7	9	10	6	3



*According to the information in the table above, teachers' responses to the same questionnaire administered pre- and post-teaching sessions differ greatly and a number of observations can be made from it.*

- i) There was a tendency to report, particularly in the second questionnaire, that 40 minutes was not sufficient to carry out task-based activities effectively in the classroom. In the preliminary questionnaire four reported that time constraint was 'a serious problem', but in the post-teaching questionnaire eight said that time factor was 'a serious problem'. Similarly, after the post-teaching sessions, some subjects reported orally that awareness-raising tasks would require more time to organize and to put into use in the classrooms.*
- ii) It is encouraging to see certain changes of attitudes of teachers who had been accustomed to traditional ways of teaching for a long period of time in such a very limited trial study. In the first questionnaire, the majority of subjects reported that: (a) the large number of students would make it difficult to organize students in pairs, or groups, and (b) students would not be willing to participate in pair, or group work due to lack of proficiency in the English language. In the second questionnaire, however, comparatively fewer subjects said these were serious problems. But, it is observed in the data that teachers did not like much the noise that students made in the classrooms. For example, in the first questionnaire, five subjects felt that the classroom would be too noisy. In the second questionnaire, however, nine subjects reported that the classroom*

was too noisy. But no one reported orally that noise in the classroom affected the learning process.

- iii) Teachers differed greatly in their views on the advantage of students' learning from each other. In the preliminary questionnaire, nine felt that teachers did not believe that students could learn effectively from each other. Seven reported that this was 'a minor problem', and four said it was 'not a problem at all'. In the second questionnaire, subjects' reactions to this problem did not differ greatly. This partly reflects teachers' reactions to item 7 page 36 the subjects showed a tendency to prefer current practices in helping students to learn more. Therefore, the researcher feels that it would require more data to draw more reasonable or reliable conclusion(s) about this issue.
- iv) Table 10 also reveals some contradictory responses. Teachers' replies to item 10g to some extent contradict what they reported in items 10e and 10f, and what they felt in item 10j. It is shown in the data that (a) teachers did not believe that they were the only source of knowledge in the classroom; (b) teachers did not believe that they should control the learning process; and (c) students, particularly in the post-teaching questionnaire, liked task-based activities. But it seems that teachers were hesitant to report that students could learn effectively from each other. Here, too, it is possible to say teachers' expectations about the learning outcomes contradict their beliefs about the learning process. That is, on the one hand, they felt that teachers should

not control the learning process; on the other, they said that everything had to be explained explicitly to the students. This was exactly what Ayneababa (1993) arrived at.

- v) It is revealed in both questionnaires that teachers' lack of incentives to create and organize such activities was 'a serious problem'.
- iv) Lack of awareness of modern methodology also attracted the attention of the subjects. This was mainly revealed in the second questionnaire and in their comments after the post-teaching sessions. Pointing out the disastrous nature of forcing teachers to teach English from other fields in high schools, one subject commented that each and every English teacher in schools should be informed about modern language teaching theories and the use of such materials.

#### 4:10. Feasibility of Each Task

Item 11 was intended to find out what teachers felt about the feasibility of each task that they had studied. Table 11 below demonstrates their responses.

TABLE 11

## FEASIBILITY OF THE SAMPLE VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT TASKS

Task 'X' is possible to carry out, manage, or conduct in class	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Dis-agree		Strongly Disagree	
	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.
Task I - using visual aids as a guide to meaning	2	7	16	12	1	-	-	1	1	-
Task II - using sense relations and word network	4	6	14	12	2	2	-	-	-	-
Task III - using collocations	1	1	15	18	2	1	1	-	1	-
Task IV - using grammatical clues (prefixes and suffixes)	3	6	17	14	-	-	-	-	-	-
Task V - using contextual clues	13	11	7	9	-	-	-	-	-	-
Task VI - using authentic reading texts	9	5	11	15	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 11 shows that teachers agreed in both questionnaires that it would be possible to introduce awareness-raising vocabulary development tasks in high school classes. This implies that teachers had no negative attitudes towards the samples of vocabulary development tasks. This supports what they had reported in item 4 (see Table 4, page 32). Furthermore, it is noticed in the data that teachers had more confidence about the feasibility of using contextual guesswork and reading textbooks more than the other vocabulary development tasks. The researcher feels that the subjects had more confidence about the feasibility of these tasks because these tasks are very common in current vocabulary teaching practices in high schools (see Table 3, page 28).

4:11. Acceptability of Each Task

Item 12 was designed to find out what teachers thought about the acceptability of each task that they had studied for themselves as teachers and to their students.

TABLE 12  
ACCEPTABILITY OF THE SAMPLE VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT TASKS

Task 'X' would be acceptable to me (in terms of my role), and to students (in terms of theirs)	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.	Pre-resps.	Post-resps.
Task I - using visual aids as a guide to meaning	4	6	16	13	-	1	-	-	-	-
Task II - using sense relations and word network	3	7	16	12	1	1	-	-	-	-
Task III - using collocations	1	3	15	16	2	1	1	-	1	-
Task IV - using grammatical clues (prefixes and suffixes)	7	5	13	14	-	-	-	1	-	-
Task V - using contextual clues	15	13	5	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Task VI - using authentic reading texts	6	6	11	12	1	1	-	1	-	-

*It is revealed in the data that teachers liked the sample vocabulary development tasks more after the practical teaching sessions. It is also noticed, particularly in the first questionnaire, that teachers had more confidence about the acceptability of using contextual clues and reading texts. This is similar to what they had reported in item 3 earlier and item 11 above. All in all, however, Table 12 demonstrates that teachers positively accepted the samples of awareness-raising vocabulary developing tasks.*

CHAPTER FIVE  
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5:1. Conclusions

*On the bases of the data collected, for this study, we can draw the following conclusions.*

- i) Vocabulary teaching and learning is still a neglected area in the English language classes in high schools. Current practices in high schools emphasize grammar teaching (see Table 1, P. 25 ). Vocabulary teaching is limited to using reading passages whose exercises mainly require understanding the contextual meanings of words from the reading passages (see Table 3, p. 28).*
- ii) The most frequently used vocabulary teaching techniques in high schools are techniques that often test learners' achievement of vocabulary learning rather than techniques that enable the learners to use every opportunity of vocabulary expansion. Therefore, current practices in vocabulary teaching lack many important features in the light of modern foreign language teaching theories and practices.*
- iii) Though teachers had no much confidence about the value of task-based materials in facilitating learners' vocabulary expansion (which might have been the impact of their expectations about the learning process and the learning outcomes), teachers could modify their attitudes in a fairly short period of time. This is similar to the conclusion*

*Ayneababa (1993:78) arrived at. In fact, Wright and Bolitho (1993:298) point out that attitudes and beliefs change gradually. We should not expect a radical change overnight. Therefore, it is possible to introduce or include task-based vocabulary development activities in the new textbooks for high school classes.*

- iv) It is revealed in this study that teachers' lack of incentives could negatively affect the implementation of task-based materials in high schools.*

#### 5:2. Recommendations

*On the bases of the findings, the following recommendations are made.*

- i) Different studies show that lexical items play a fundamental role in the communication process. However, this study shows that the teaching and learning of vocabulary is not given due attention that it should deserve in English classes. Therefore, new textbooks that are being prepared should bring vocabulary teaching and learning to the centre, and should treat vocabulary learning as a language skill rather than as an appendage to reading comprehension.*
- ii) It is obvious that different teachers use different techniques and strategies in the classrooms. Methodologists stress that success in foreign language learning is probably the outcome of using different techniques and strategies in the learning process. Current vocabulary teaching practices in high schools, however, use a limited number of techniques, (which in fact lack many important features), in presenting*

*the meanings of new words. Hence, new textbooks should include different suggested vocabulary development strategies which would help the learners to grapple with the meanings of unknown words by themselves rather than to expect everything from their teachers.*

*iii) Courses in methodology are absolutely essential for language teachers. However, teachers in high schools are not conscious about modern foreign language teaching theories and practices. Therefore, a means by which teachers in high schools would be introduced to the concept of modern foreign language teaching theories should be found by the authorities concerned. For example, it is possible to orient teachers through in-service trainings, seminars, workshops, etc.*

*iv) To carry out their daily duties effectively, human beings need certain sorts of motivation. Therefore, teachers should get appropriate incentives from time to time according to their performance and achievements.*

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: Sample Vocabulary Development Materials

#### Introduction

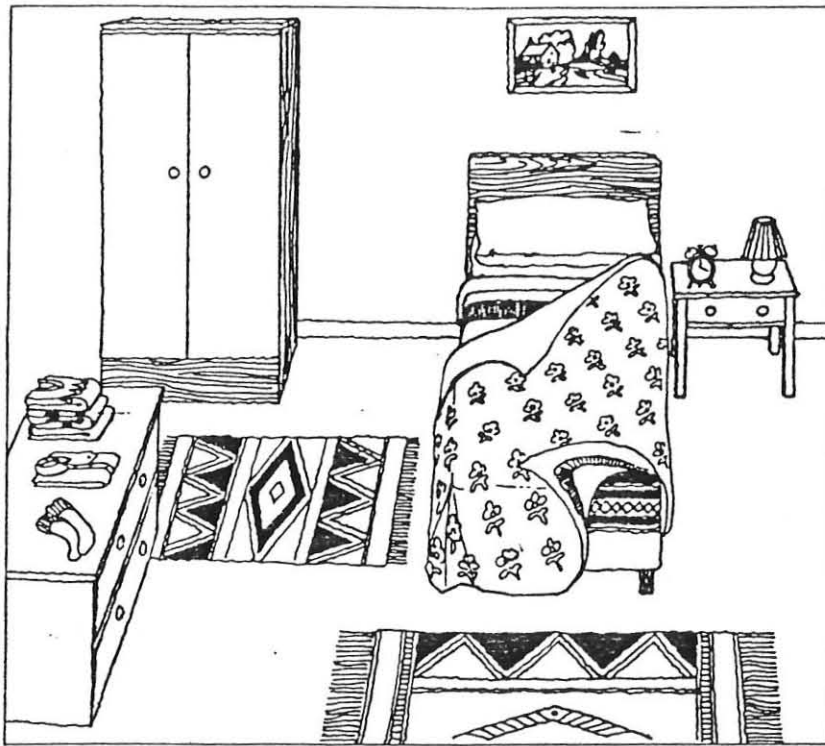
Dear teacher! Here are some of the tasks recently prepared by different writers for helping students develop their own vocabulary learning skills. I am sure that the techniques are not new to you, but the way they are used might be different from your experiences. Please, study these tasks carefully and be ready to fill in the questionnaire that will be issued to you soon. I would like to inform you that this has nothing to do with any kind of evaluation at all. It is purely a research work. Its main aim is to investigate what problems there might be in using a different approach to vocabulary teaching and learning in our situation, based on using tasks to help learners develop their vocabulary more independently and to determine what measures need to be taken before hand. The following tasks are only a few selected samples being used to carry out the trial study.

Thank You

Task 1: Using Visual Aids as Guide to Meanings

Example 1

Suggested Procedure: Give students a copy of the following text and picture and explain that they should compare the text and the picture to deduce the meanings of items 1-9 which are italicised in the text. They should write the numbers next to the respective items in the picture. Do the first example together, showing them the contextual clues which enable them to guess. Ask them to continue the activity in pairs, or small groups. When they have finished, conduct a feedback session to clarify any problems students might find.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

This, as you can see, is my bedroom. It's full of modern furniture. I've got a single bed and I don't sleep very well on it because the *mattress* (1) is so hard and uncomfortable and it makes a noise. The *bedspread* (2) is covered with flowers and it's quite pretty, I suppose, but it doesn't look very nice with the two *rugs* (3) on the floor near the bed. I'd like to get one with the same design as the rugs. My landlady has given me an *alarm clock* (4) which I have next to the bed so that I wake up on time. I've got a *wardrobe* (5) in the corner and my landlady gets angry if I don't put my clothes in it. I put the smaller things like shirts and socks in the *chest of drawers* (6) (well, sometimes I leave them on top of it). But it's a nice house, and my landlady changes the *sheets* (7) on the bed every week. Last week it was a lot colder so I asked her to give me an extra *blanket* (8). Oh, and one more thing about the bed: *pillows* (9) in England are very soft, so I need two for my head!

- Practice:* a) Look at the picture and decide on a colour scheme for the room.  
b) Talk about your own bedroom at home.

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Task 2: Sense Relations and Word Networks

Example 1

Suggested Procedure: Give the following text to your students. Tell them to work out answers individually, and then discuss answers in pairs or groups.

Activity 1: Sometimes pairs or groups of words can be related in meaning and belong to the same 'family', but one is more 'general' in meaning than the other (s). In each of the following exchanges the underlined words belong to the same family. Write these words in the correct columns beside each exchange.

	Most General	More Specific	Most Specific
<p><u>Example</u></p> <p>'Would you like some <u>fruit</u>'?</p> <p>'Yes, Please. Can I have an <u>apple</u>'?</p>	fruit	apple	
<p>a) 'I'll just <u>boil</u> this spaghetti'.            'It doesn't need much <u>cooking</u>, does it? It says on the packet: 'put in hot water and <u>simmer</u> for three minutes'.</p>			
<p>b) 'Oh Mummy! Look at that <u>Monkey</u>'            'Oh yes I think it's a <u>Colobus Monkey</u>. They're lovely <u>animals</u>'.</p>			
<p>c) 'I saw her <u>Walking</u> to College yesterday, <u>strolling</u> nonchalant along Park Street?            'Yes, she normally <u>goes</u> that way</p>			

Note: Using a mixture of both general and more specific words and expressions helps us to be clearer about what we mean and to avoid repeating the same words, thus making what we say or writing more interesting (Harmer and Rossner 1991:9),

Activity 2: Sometimes the meaning relation between two words is so close that they are very nearly SYNONYMS, that is, they have nearly equivalent meanings (e.g. big and large). However, it is rare that two words or expressions have exactly the same meaning: usually there is a difference of meaning, usage, etc.

Find appropriate synonyms or near synonyms to complete the following conversations. Do not repeat any of the words that A uses.

Example    A:    What a glorious day!  
              B:    Yes, lovely, isn't it.

- a)    A: You look tired.  
      B: Yes, I'm \_\_\_\_\_.
- b)    A: That film was awful, wasn't it.  
      B: Yes, it was \_\_\_\_\_.
- c)    A: Look at that fool trying to overtake.  
      B: What an \_\_\_\_\_.
- d)    A: You must be very pleased with the result.  
      B: Yes, I'm \_\_\_\_\_.
- e)    A: Did the hurricane damage your garden badly?  
      B: Yes, it \_\_\_\_\_ it.
- f)    A: Wake up! You were dozing off.  
      B: Sorry, I din't mean to \_\_\_\_\_.

Activity 3: Within families of words, it is often possible to find pairs of opposites, especially with adjectives (e.g. wide and narrow). Finding pairs like this can be helpful when trying to remember vocabulary.

Find the opposites or counterparts for the words in the box. Then use each pair of words to describe two people or things.

strong	evil	ancient	patient
decisive	broad	optimistic	luxurious
impetuous	exciting	cool	

Give the opposites of the following phrases in the box.

light bag	rough sea
light wind	rough texture
light colours	rough area
	rough person

Here are some expressions involving opposites. What do they mean?

off and on
a love-hate relationships
back and forth

**Task 3: Collocation**

It is often important to choose the right word to go with another word. For example, an adjective can be used to describe some nouns but not others. We can say a blonde woman or a blonde man but not \*a blonde dog or\* a blonde horse! 'Blonde' does not collocate with dog or horse.

Verbs and objects: We drive a car but we can't \* drive  
a motorbike

Subject and verbs: the telephone rang but not \* the  
telephone sounded

Adjectives and prepositions: full of but not \* full  
with

Prepositions: arrived at but not \* arrived to

Verbs and adverbs: I strongly believe but not \* I  
strongly think

**Activity 1:** Which of these verbs is commonly used with  
which object?

drive	your shoulder
ride	your homework
nod	a lorry
shrug	your head
tell	your bed
say	a lie
make	this bicycle
do	a word in Russian

Activity 2: Which of the combinations of adjectives and nouns below is unusual? Why? Suggest improvements where necessary.

a) a fat piece of wood	f) a wrong mistake
b) a wrong answer	g) a touching letter
c) a strange coincidence	h) a heavy drink
d) a dead apple	i) a touching hand
e) a fat dog	j) a heavy meal

Activity 3: Which prepositions usually follow these adjectives?

interested _____ Music
enthusiastic _____ the game
different _____ the bread we eat
keen _____ learning English
late _____ her appointment with the doctor
afraid _____ large dogs
polite _____ his boss
disgusted _____ himself

Activity 4: One way to show collocation is on a grid like this?

	person	tree	building	mountain	fence
tall				x	
high	x	x			

Complete the gride below in a similar way.

	a story	something	in a quiet voice
speak			
say			
tell			

	a lie	French	Yes or No	the truth
speak				
say				
tell				

Harmer and Rossner (1991:17-19)

Task 4: Grammatical Clues (Prefixes and Suffixes)

The ending of a word will often show what part of speech the word has become for example, the -tion at the end of authorization tells that the word is likely to be a noun; the -s at the end of hides tells us that this is either the third

person singular (present simple) of the verb hide or the plural of the noun hide.

Activity 1: In these words (below in the box) what endings are used for the following?

noun (singular)

noun (plural)

verb

adjective

waited	irrelevant	children
ashamed	vulnerable	poisonous
attacked	aggressive	flickering
simultaneous	movement	soaked

Activity 2: Complete the table below. What endings:

- a) turn nouns into verbs?
- b) turn verbs and adjectives into nouns?
- c) turn nouns and verbs into adjectives?

Noun	Adjective	Adverb	Verb
	quick		
simplification			
			legalize
dirt			
	painless		
		hopefully	
		xxxx	drive
	stupid		xxxx
		xxxx	retire

If word endings change the grammar of a word, word beginning often change the meaning of a word. For example, the word irrelevant means 'not relevant'. Ir - has the meaning of 'not'.

Activity 3: What meanings does the first part of each of the following words have?

- |                        |                         |                      |
|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| a) <u>dis</u> approve  | f) <u>nons</u> ense     | k) <u>sub</u> tract  |
| b) <u>in</u> expensive | g) <u>im</u> possible   | l) <u>co</u> incide  |
| c) <u>un</u> happy     | h) <u>ex</u> pel        | m) <u>re</u> arrange |
| d) <u>il</u> legal     | i) <u>over</u> estimate | n) <u>post</u> pone  |
| e) <u>de</u> scend     | j) <u>pre</u> dict      |                      |

Activity 4: Using beginnings (prefixes) make the opposite of the following words.

- |             |               |             |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| a) kind     | d) temperate  | g) resident |
| b) literate | e) centralize | h) polite   |
| c) honest   | f) regular    |             |

Task 5: Contextual Guesswork

1. Read the following short paragraphs and try to understand the meanings of the underlined words even though there may be some words you do not understand.

A. As you see there is no agreement between my father and mother. They quarrel every night. Last night my father said that he would marry another woman. My mother is also planning to go to another place. I am afraid that they will soon divorce each other. If they divorce, I do not know whether I will live with my father or with my mother.

- B. Look at this young man. He looks like an educated person. He always carries books. But he has never been to school. He cannot read and write at all. He is an illiterate person.
- C. I never expected that this meal would cost such a huge amount of money. It is really very expensive. One person can not afford to pay the bill. So let's split the cost.
- D. My friend failed in the exams. He said that his teachers gave him low marks because they did not like him. But this was only a pretext. He never attended classes regularly. He did not study hard. He failed in the exams not because teachers did not like him but because he did not work hard.
- E. Students need stationery to write with and to write on. A pen is an item of stationery. A pencil is an item of stationery. A writing pad is an item of stationery. An exercise book is an item of stationery.
2. Now work in pairs and discuss the meanings of the underlined words.

#### Task 6: Using Authentic Reading Texts

##### Suggested Procedure:

- i) Tell students in brief about the reading passage.
- ii) Tell them to discuss the following in pairs or groups.
  - a) Do students in some schools wear a school uniform?  
What kind of uniform?

- iii) Tell students to write down 5-10 words that they expect would appear in the reading passage.
- iv) Give out the text to read and tell them to do the exercises.
- v) Conduct a group feedback to clarify any problems or difficulties.

## 1.9 Clothes

**Words in context** Read the following passages and do the exercises.



Not so long ago, nearly all schoolchildren went to school wearing a school uniform. Boys wore a white shirt and a tie, a dark jacket, grey trousers and black shoes. Girls used to wear a white blouse and a dark, knee-length skirt. Today, in many countries, students have a very different kind of uniform. They wear tennis shoes, jeans, and a T-shirt. On a hot day students might even come to class in a pair of shorts. Teachers in the past would never have allowed these students into their class. Then the men teachers used to wear a suit and tie and most women teachers wore a dress or skirt. But when you look inside a classroom today, it is sometimes difficult to tell who are the teachers and who are the students!

(Now answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in Exercise 1.)

People from hot sunny countries often find it difficult to imagine how people who live in a very cold climate can live and work through the winter months. These people manage because they know what to wear in the cold. First, it is very important to keep your head, hands and feet warm. So everyone has a hat, thick gloves to keep their hands warm, and a pair of long socks and strong boots for their feet. Of course, you have to have a heavy overcoat and you should wear a thick woolly sweater under it. A scarf around the neck also helps to keep out the cold. What you wear under your clothes is important, too. People who live in cold climates always wear thick underwear. Long underpants may not look very nice, but they certainly keep your legs warm!



(Now answer questions 4, 5 and 6.)

### Exercise 1

Decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F) according to the information in the passages.

- 1 \_\_\_\_ In the past, many female students wore white blouses to school.
- 2 \_\_\_\_ Today, teachers never allow students to wear jeans to class.
- 3 \_\_\_\_ Today, many teachers wear the same kind of clothes to school as their students.
- 4 \_\_\_\_ In many cold countries people wear long socks over their hands and gloves over their feet.
- 5 \_\_\_\_ In cold weather it's a good idea to wear shorts.
- 6 \_\_\_\_ In cold weather it's a good idea to wear a scarf.

**Exercise 2**

Name the articles of clothing in the pictures.



1



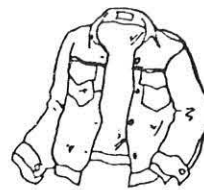
2



3



4



5



6

**Exercise 3**

In chart 1, decide whether the clothes are usually worn above the waist, below the waist, or both above and below the waist. In chart 2, decide whether the clothes are usually worn by women or by both men and women. Use crosses (X) to fill the charts.

Chart 1

	above waist	below waist	above and below
1 underpants			
2 suit			
3 dress			
4 tie			
5 shorts			
6 scarf			
7 skirt			
8 underwear			
9 shirt			

Chart 2

	women only	both men and women
1 T-shirt		
2 underwear		
3 jeans		
4 blouse		
5 dress		
6 boots		
7 jacket		
8 gloves		
9 skirt		

**Just for fun**

Which item of clothing is different from the other three in each group? More than one answer may be possible. Discuss your answers with someone else.

- a) shoes      b) socks      c) gloves      d) shirt
- a) socks      b) jeans      c) trousers      d) shorts
- a) underpants      b) blouse      c) sweater      d) dress
- a) scarf      b) hat      c) overcoat      d) tie
- a) tie      b) dress      c) suit      d) T-shirt

**Think about**

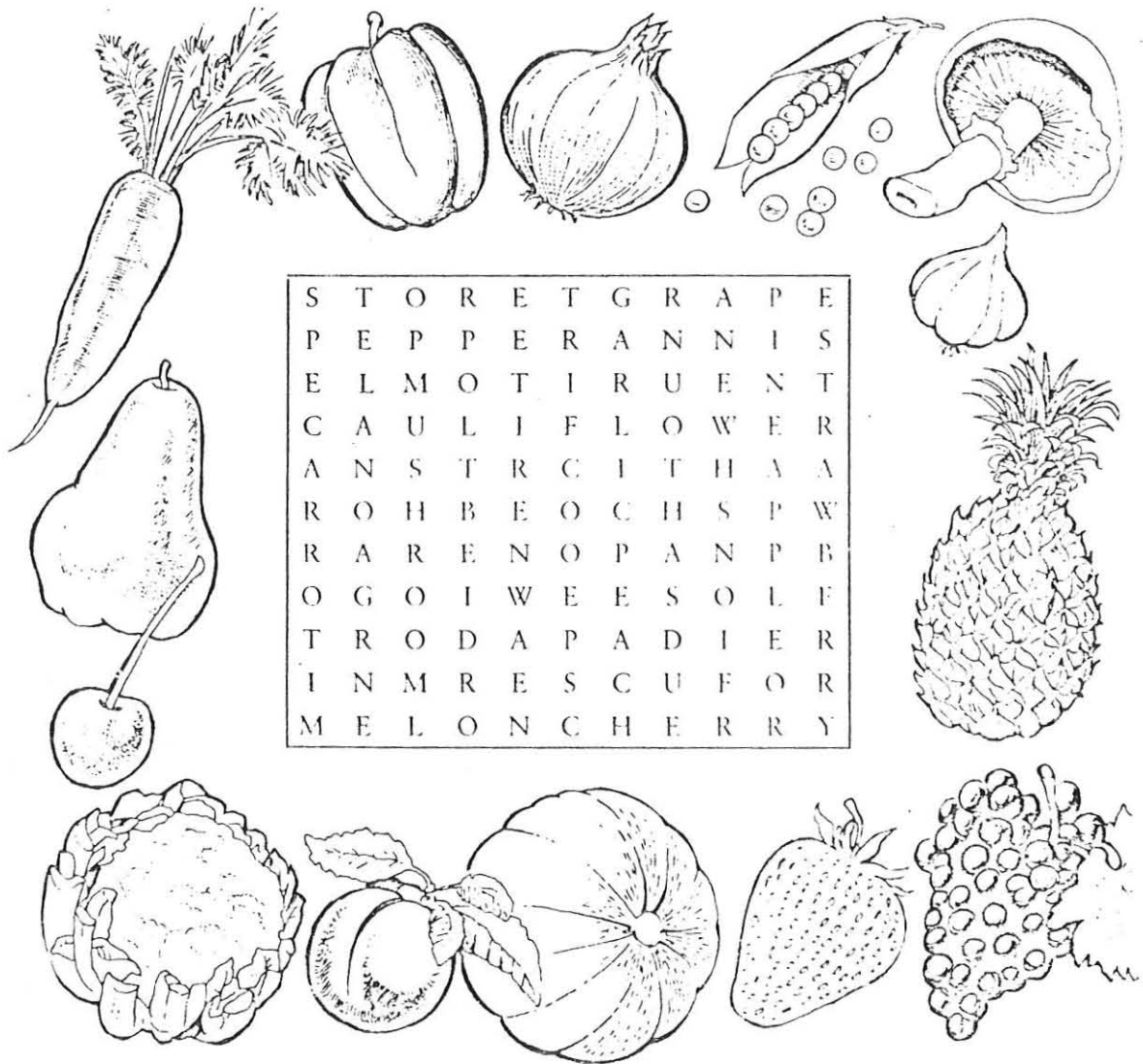
- How does a typical businessman/woman dress in your country?
- What do schoolchildren usually wear to school in your country?
- What clothes do you wear when it is a) very cold b) very wet c) very hot?
- Describe the traditional clothes or national costume of your country.

Suggested Procedure: Give out copies of the following material to students and tell them to find the names of all the fruit and vegetables in the puzzle in pairs or groups.

# 4 Food and drink

1

a The names of all the fruit and vegetables below can be found in the puzzle. The words may be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal. How many can you find?



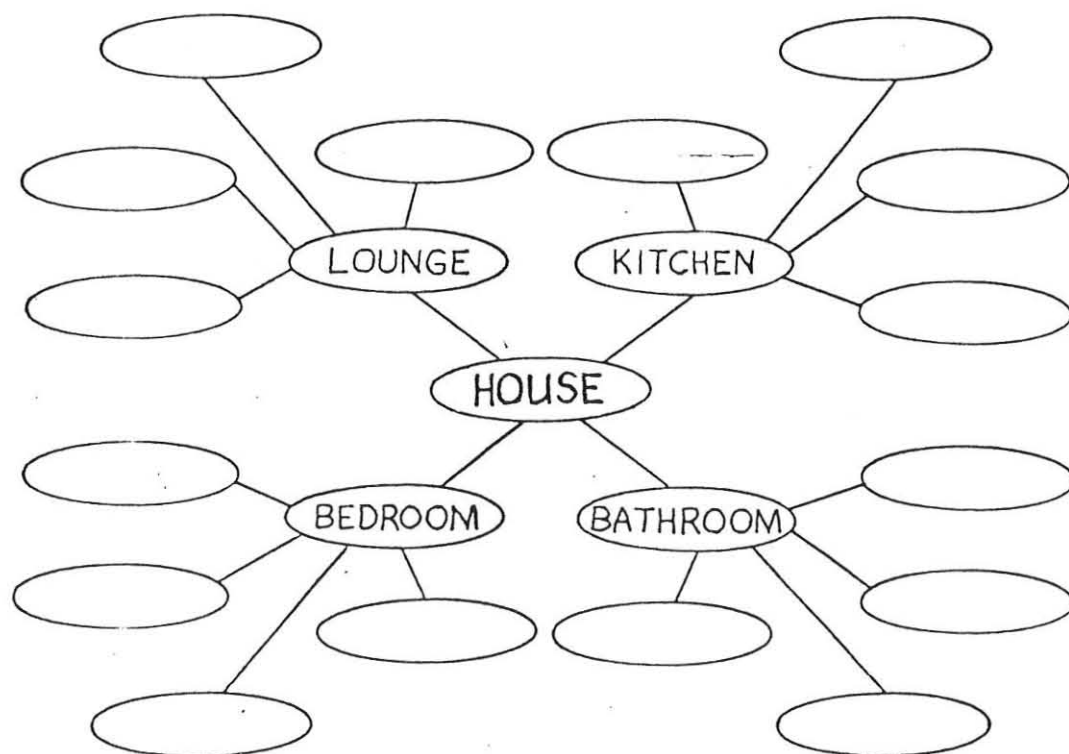
S	T	O	R	E	T	G	R	A	P	E
P	E	P	P	E	R	A	N	N	I	S
E	L	M	O	T	I	R	U	E	N	T
C	A	U	L	I	F	L	O	W	E	R
A	N	S	T	R	C	I	T	H	A	A
R	O	H	B	E	O	C	H	S	P	W
R	A	R	E	N	O	P	A	N	P	B
O	G	O	I	W	E	E	S	O	L	F
T	R	O	D	A	P	A	D	I	E	R
I	N	M	R	E	S	C	U	F	O	R
M	E	L	O	N	C	H	E	R	R	Y

b Now try to think of seven more kinds of fruit, seven more kinds of vegetable, and seven kinds of meat.

## 2 Around the house

1

**a** Here is a 'vocabulary network'. Can you complete it with words from the box? (Then add *one more* object for each room.)



saucepans	shower	sofa	towels	alarm clock	kettle	video
sheets	sink	washbasin	chest of drawers	coffee table		

**b** In which room do you normally:

listen to music?	waste time?
daydream?	think about your problems?
have arguments?	feel most relaxed?

Now compare your answers with a partner.

**c** Why do you have certain things in certain rooms? For example, why not put the television in the bathroom? Why not put the sofa in the kitchen? Think of some more examples and ask your partner to explain them.

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

School \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Qualification \_\_\_\_\_

Teaching Experience \_\_\_\_\_

1. To which of the following aspects of language do you actually give emphasis in English language lessons now?
  - a) Reading
  - b) Vocabulary
  - c) Grammar
  - d) Pronunciation
  - e) Writing
  - f) Listening
  
2. Which aspects of English Language teaching do you think should be given more priority so that students' ability to use the language can be improved?
  - a) Reading
  - b) Vocabulary
  - c) Grammar
  - d) Pronunciation
  - e) Writing
  - f) listening
  
3. When you teach a new English word, which of the following techniques do you use? Put ticks ( ✓ ) to show the frequency with which you ~~use~~ the following techniques?

	Techniques	frequently used	sometimes used	rarely used	not used at all
a	getting students to choose between alternatives meanings, definitions given in the textbook				
b	getting students to choose the word to fill a blank space from a given list of possible new words				
c	using a reading text to show students examples of how the word is used				
d	using visual aids (e.g. pictures, diagrams) and make the meaning clear to students				
e	translating the meaning				
f	using synonyms (i.e. words that have approximately the same meaning as the new word)				
g	using antonyms (i.e. words that have approximately the opposite meaning)				
h	using hyponyms e.g. the meanings of 'car', 'lorry' and 'bus' are included in the word 'vehicle'				
i	using collocation (i.e. words that frequently go together)				
j	using contextual guesswork (i.e. presenting words in contexts and encouraging students to deduce meaning)				
K	using grammatical clues (i.e. prefixes and suffixes)				
l	using word networks (i.e. presenting words similar in meaning)				

4. How did you, as a teacher, find the sample vocabulary development tasks that you have just studied?
- a) very interesting                      b) interesting  
 c) boring                                      d) very boring

5. To what extent is the approach suggested in the materials different from the current practices of vocabulary teaching in high schools?
- a) very different                      b) different                      c) not sure  
d) Not very different                      e) not different at all
6. Put the tick ( ✓ ) to show the distinctive features of the two approaches (i.e. current vocabulary teaching approach in secondary schools and the awareness raising approach to vocabulary learning.

	Problem	a feature of current vocabulary teaching practice in secondary schools	a feature of awareness raising vocabulary teaching approach
a	teacher presents and explains the meaning of a new word explicitly		
b	reduces teachers' role to manager and initiator of the activities		
c	students rely entirely on their teachers		
d	gives responsibility to students for what and how they learn		
e	students learn the meanings of particular words		
f	students learn how to work out unknown words for themselves		
g	emphasizes individual worker		
h	emphasizes pair and group work collaboration		
i	teacher is the source of knowledge		
j	students learn by themselves but also from each other and the teacher		
k	keeps students interest		

7. From which approach do you think students are likely to learn more?
- a) From the current practices of vocabulary teaching in secondary schools
  - b) from the tasks similar to the ones I have just studied
  - c) I am not sure
8. Do you think that an awareness raising approach to vocabulary learning will be feasible (i.e. possible to manage) if it is used in new textbooks for high school classes?
- a) Yes completely
  - b) Yes to a certain extent
  - c) No
9. Do you think that an awareness raising approach to vocabulary learning will be acceptable to you as a teacher in terms of your role and to your students in terms of their roles if it is used in new textbooks for high school classes?
- a) Yes completely
  - b) Yes to a certain extent
  - c) No
10. If your answer to either question '8', or question '9' above is 'To a certain extent', or 'No' what problems do you think there might be in using such an approach?

	Problem	a serious problem	a minor problem	not a problem
a	time (i.e. 40 minutes is not sufficient to present and carry out such tasks)			
b	the large number of students in classes make it difficult to organize students in pairs, or groups for this kind of activity			
c	students will not be willing to participate in pair or group work due to lack of proficiency in the English language			
d	The classrooms will be too noisy			
e	Teachers believe that they are the only source of learning			
f	Teachers believe they should control the learning process			
g	Teachers do not believe that students can learn effectively from each other			
h	Teachers have no incentives to create and organize such activities			
i	Students believe that teachers are only source of knowledge			
j	Students will not trust the value of such tasks			
k	Teachers are not equipped with sufficient skills in modern methodology to sue this approach			

11. To what extent do you think each task (that you have studied would be feasible to use in secondary school classes. Put the tick (✓) to show the degree of the feasibility of each task.

Task 'X' is possible to carry out, manage, or conduct in class	Strongly agree	agree	Neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
Task I - Using visual aids as a guide to meaning					
Task II- Using sense relations and word network					
Task III- Using collocations					
Task IV- Using grammatical clues (prefixes and suffixes)					
Task V - Using contextual clues					
Task VI - Using authentic reading texts					

12. To what extent do you think each task (that you have studied would be acceptable in secondary school classes. Put the tick (✓) to show the degree of the acceptability of each task.

Task 'X' would be acceptable to me (in terms of my role), and to students (in terms of their roles)	Strongly agree	agree	Neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
Task I - Using visual aids as a guide to meaning					
Task II - Using sense relations and word network					
Task III - Using collocations					
Task IV - Using grammatical clues (prefixes and suffixes)					
Task V - Using contextual clues					
Task VI - Using authentic reading texts					