A descriptive and explanatory study about vocabulary presentation techniques of English teachers in primary and secondary schools in Turkey

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Abstract

This study was conducted in order to identify vocabulary presentation and teaching techniques English teachers working in primary and secondary schools in Turkey preferred in their classes. Moreover, the relationships between these techniques and their opinions about vocabulary teaching, their educational backgrounds and in-service training they attended to were researched. For these purposes, a questionnaire was developed according to the literature reviewed by the researcher and applied to the teachers. What is more, interviews were done with some teachers, and the classes of two teachers were observed with their consent. Data collected from all tools were analyzed, discussed, and the study was concluded.

Keywords: Vocabulary teaching techniques, conveying meaning of vocabulary, role of vocabulary teaching

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Introduction

Vocabulary is a very important aspect of a language not to be ignored in language classes because if people do not have enough vocabulary, they cannot use this language to communicate with other people even though they know its grammar, phonology or syntax perfectly. "while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (Wilkins, 1972, cited in Yıldız, 2012, p. 7). Vocabulary is the main part of learning and using a language. People can communicate without grammar, but cannot when they have not any vocabulary. Therefore, it would be illuminating to clarify whether vocabulary is regarded as an important part of the language in classes or whether it is neglected because of emphasis on grammar or other specific skills. In addition, finding out different ideas of teachers about the importance of vocabulary and different reasons they have might also shed light on actual language practices in classrooms.

The importance of vocabulary teaching has been noticed recently. Therefore, many studies have been conducted to show its role in language classes both in the country and abroad. Some of them are stated below.

Forero and Munoz (2011) research the effect of the Total Physical Response (TPR) on teaching English vocabulary to third graders. In the study, students were observed while they were being taught English vocabulary with the TPR method. According to the results, it was clear that children learned vocabulary items faster and easier. Learning environment was so stress free that students were more motivated to learn.

Kale (2010) studies the role of using authentic videos in order to teach vocabulary in secondary EFL classrooms. The researcher conducts a case study which tries to find out the attitudes of students about the use of authentic videos to teach vocabulary and implications about using these videos to teach English vocabulary. According to teacher notes and interviews with seven students at intermediate and upper-intermediate levels, it was discovered that students liked learning vocabulary with these authentic videos, and vocabulary teaching was easy and enjoyable. Moreover, the writer states that the number of words to teach should be limited in order not to overload students with many words.

Şimşek (2008) worked on the effectiveness of collocations on vocabulary teaching with two classes of first graders in the English Language Teaching Department at Selçuk University. It was found out at the end of the study that use of collocations was not so much effective in teaching and learning vocabulary. Şimşek (2008, p. 50) states that this may be because of some limitations such as limited amount of time and number of participants or language levels of students. Therefore, the writer suggests that use of collocations to present and teach vocabulary can be studied with more participants. However, it was clear that the retention of vocabulary items was better in experimental group which was taught vocabulary in collocations than it was in the control group.

Gülsoy (2013) finds much difference between the experimental and control groups in the study which aims at finding the effectiveness of using games on vocabulary teaching to

sixth graders in a secondary school. It is clear that students can recall the items and do not forget them easily when the teacher uses games to teach vocabulary.

Türköz (2010) studied the effect of the method Suggestopedia/ Reservopedia on vocabulary teaching with elementary level students in the preparatory school at a university. The scores of the experimental group showed that stress-free environment that the method created encouraged students to believe in their potential to learn new words easily. The results proved that the method is effective both on learning vocabulary items and retention of these items.

Yıldız (2012) states some past studies in a study about semantic mapping: Tom-Bronowski (1983, cited in Yıldız, 2012, p. 61) compared the effectiveness of semantic mapping and contextual analysis to learn vocabulary items and found that students' performance who used semantic mapping was higher than the others' making use of contextual analysis. In another study Sagarra and Alba (2006, cited in Yıldız, 2012, p. 62) researches the effectiveness of rote memorization, semantic mapping and keyword method. According to the results of the study, it was clear that the group using keyword method was more successful in retention of the new words. The next study is from Turkey: Özden (1998, cited in Yıldız, 2012, p. 65) compared the effectiveness of semantic mapping technique with traditional approaches in the study in which preparatory students with intermediate level of English proficiency participated. At the end of the study, it was seen that the semantic mapping technique was effective to teach English vocabulary through reading passages and guessing the meanings of new words from context.

Türkeş (2011) studied the relation between Total Physical Response Storytelling and vocabulary learning of 5th graders in a primary school. According to post-test results, the researcher found out that experimental group scores better than the control group. However, the difference was not high statistically, which meant that TPRS was not much more effective than definitional vocabulary teaching.

Şenol (2007) conducted a study about the role of games in vocabulary learning and retention of vocabulary items with 40 students in a secondary school. Both experimental and control groups studied the same words, but games were used to teach vocabulary in the experimental one. Post-test results showed that games were effective to remember new vocabulary items.

Karakoç (2012) worked to find out the effect of nursery rhymes in teaching English vocabulary to young learners in a primary school. At the end of the study, it was clear according to test scores that experimental group which was taught English vocabulary with nursery rhymes was more successful than the other group. As the researcher states, teaching new vocabulary items with nursery rhymes was more effective than dependence on course books.

Gao & Ma (2011) compared vocabulary learning and teaching beliefs of pre-service and in-service teachers in Hong Kong with their counterparts in mainland China. In the study, more teachers from mainland China than their colleagues from Hong Kong believed that teaching vocabulary learning strategies was important in the vocabulary learning process.

Moreover, many teachers from China stated that teachers should be able to help their students use recently learned vocabulary items actively and correctly while less participants from Hong Kong were interested in this point.

Hassankiadeh (2013) looked for the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their learners' vocabulary learning in a study which compared memory based and function based beliefs of teachers teaching vocabulary. At the end of the study, it was clear that students who were taught vocabulary by teachers having function based beliefs scored better than the ones who were taught by teachers with memory based beliefs. The results showed that function based approach to teaching vocabulary was more effective than a memory based approach in language classes.

Macalister (2012) aimed at finding out the belief differences of pre-service teachers about the role of vocabulary in language learning process compared to their instructors. The results of the study indicated that Malaysian pre-teachers and their educators strongly agreed that reading was important to learn new vocabulary items while New Zealander teacher trainers did not have the same idea about the point. According to pre-service teachers, learning vocabulary items was essential to learn a language.

Üseini (2003) made a study about English teachers' attitudes about vocabulary teaching techniques used in Macedonian secondary schools. The interpretation of scores showed that teachers were aware of certain methods and approaches to teaching vocabulary, but few of them used these methods. On the one hand, most of the teachers agreed that vocabulary was important to learn a language although they also thought that it was neglected in secondary schools. On the other, it was clear that most of the teachers did not spend enough time to teach vocabulary. Moreover, many teachers stated that using dictionaries was important to learn a foreign language. About the use of different vocabulary teaching activities, it was seen that many teachers do not prefer using special reinforcement activities to teach vocabulary, as a result of which their students learned vocabulary only from their books. About the item about vocabulary teaching techniques, most of the teachers agreed that they used seven out of twenty two different techniques, which were "pictures and flashcards, opposites, translation and explanation, dictionaries, guessing from context, collocations and reading texts" (Üseini, 2003; p. 107).

There are different ways of teaching English vocabulary to students. For instance, Üseini (2003, p. 52) claims that using authentic situations and contexts is the best way to develop students' vocabulary. In addition, he also suggests that the teacher should use different techniques to teach the same word because learners are different, and they learn in different ways.

The richer is the teacher in techniques, the more easily will students acquire the words. The techniques that are studied in the current research are as the following: *using visuals; realia; demonstrating and acting out; antonyms and synonyms; translation; definition and explanation; using dictionaries; guessing the meaning of words by form and parts of speech, using contextual clues; using songs and tapes; using poems, nursery rhymes and limericks;*

examples; process; using riddles and tongue twisters; role plays and drama; using games and puzzles; computer based technology; films, videos, plays and TV programmes; using causes and effects; using collocations; memorization; using familiar or famous words; using series or scales; using commands; using semantically related vocabulary sets and *using illustrative situations.*

The most important reason for this study is to see how English teachers teach vocabulary and which vocabulary presentation and teaching techniques they use for effective vocabulary acquisition in the curriculum. Moreover, teachers' ideas about the role and importance of vocabulary are worth thinking about because these ideas and opinions shape their class activities and their own use of techniques. Therefore, this study provides a comprehensive and collective material to give ideas about teachers' preferences and opinions about vocabulary teaching in language classes. The fact that there are not many studies about the practices in the classes about the topic also shows the importance of the current study.

The following research questions guided the present study:

o What are the mostly preferred vocabulary presentation techniques by primary and secondary school English teachers?
o Do vocabulary presentation techniques used by English teachers in primary and secondary schools in Turkey differ according to their teaching experiences, their gender, in-service training they attended to and their educational backgrounds?
o What are the opinions and practices of English language teachers in primary and secondary schools concerning their roles in vocabulary instruction?

Methodology

The current study is interested in present opinions and practices of English language teachers about vocabulary teaching techniques shared, and that is why a descriptive model has been selected to be carried out according to a mixed design with the use of both a survey, an interview and observation in the process.

Moreover, an explanatory design was applied during the study because the data was collected both quantitatively and qualitatively. The results were explained and clarified at the end.

The questionnaire was developed by the researcher to find out which techniques were mostly used by the primary and secondary school English teachers to teach vocabulary in their classes after the related literature was reviewed. According to the expert views and reflections on the questionnaire for content validity, it was organized again.

It included three sections. The first section was about participants' demographic information such as gender, length of service, faculty and department of graduation because the researcher was interested in if there was any relation between these points and their preferences of vocabulary teaching techniques in their classes. The second one was about teachers' ideas about vocabulary, vocabulary learning and teaching. The last section included a list of vocabulary presentation and teaching techniques to which teachers respond according to the frequency they used them. The questionnaire was added as Appendix A at the end of the article.

In addition, some interviews were done with eight teachers. Questions in the questionnaire were main frames in these interviews, and detailed ones also guided the speech. Moreover, English classes of two volunteer teachers were observed and recorded so that the researcher could compare the data with the ones from other instruments. As a result, triangulation of data from these different collection tools was ensured in order to have more reliable results.

The subjects of the study were 377 English language teachers who worked in primary and secondary schools in different parts of Turkey. Teachers from 72 cities were represented from seven different geographical parts of Turkey.

Some demographic data were collected about the participants related to the study. According to these data, 76,7 % of teachers were female while 23,3 % of them were male. Moreover, their length of service and background knowledge about their graduation was important to know in the context of the study.

The essential data for the study were gathered from a questionnaire that included different types of questions, interviews and observations. Transcripts of the interviews were analysed qualitatively coding the data according to some themes. Some subtitles were listed under the categories of themes. As a result, teachers' opinions and practices about vocabulary teaching were summarised in tables. The analysis of the data from the questionnaire was different. In order to measure the expressions about vocabulary teaching techniques that English teachers mostly preferred and general statements related to vocabulary teaching of English teachers that worked in primary and secondary schools, statistics analyses such as mean, standard deviation values and frequency distribution were done. Whether responses to general statements about vocabulary learning and expressions about vocabulary teaching techniques differed significantly according to respondents' genders and their information about if they had attended any pedagogical formation or any training about vocabulary teaching before or not was measured with independent-samples T test. On the other hand, if the responses differed markedly according to subjects' teaching experience length of duration, faculty of graduation, department of graduation and weekly time they spared for vocabulary teaching or not was determined by One-Way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance). In order to identify which groups were different from each other in more than two groups that had differences, Post-Hoc Tukey –LSD tests were conducted. Lastly, an observation form was used during the observations, and it included some questions about techniques used to convey the meaning of new vocabulary items. Data from the answers to these questions were reported.

Results

Main findings of the questionnaire were presented and studied in this part. On the other side, only essential interpretations of detailed figures both from the observations and interviews could be included in the current paper.

Table 1

Agreement Levels with the Vocabulary Teaching Techniques Used to Teach Vocabulary

Vocabulary Teaching Techniques	Mean	Std D.	t	P
Mimicry, gestures and body language	4,12	,960	83,386	,000
Example sentences	3,97	,932	82,621	,000
Visuals (Pictures, photos, posters, etc.)	3,90	,883	85,711	,000
Definition or dictionaries	3,85	,924	80,814	,000
Demonstration, acting out	3,84	,936	79,654	,000
Translation	3,76	,994	73,363	,000
Series or scales (Related word groups such as days of the week, seasons or related words but graded among themselves such as *young-middle aged-elderly- old*)	3,50	1,021	66,510	,000
Super ordinates and hyponyms (i.e. the super ordinate "*furniture"* includes hyponyms such as *sofa, bed, coffee table, wardrobe, chair* or the title "*fruit"* includes subtitles such as *apple, orange, cherry, melon,* etc.*)*	3,38	1,144	57,285	,000
Word formation and parts of speech (word classes, word families)	3,31	1,115	57,716	,000
Realia (real objects)	3,24	,993	63,348	,000
Computer based technology	3,12	1,282	47,268	,000
Songs, chants and nursery rhymes	3,05	1,082	54,642	,000
Picture stories, picture dictionaries	3,05	1,102	53,774	,000
Role play activities and simulations	3,02	1,107	53,037	,000
Puzzles and games	2,99	1,039	55,861	,000
Activity or Process (real life activities or processes such as *how to make fruit salad, going on a picnic, visiting a patient,* etc.*)*	2,83	1,133	48,558	,000
Films, videos etc.	2,72	1,130	46,713	,000

Mostly preferred technique (Mean: 4,12; 43,2%) was "**Mimicry, gestures and body language"** as a result of the analysis of vocabulary teaching techniques subjects had preferred. The next techniques were following this one in order: "**Example sentences"** (Mean: 3,97; %31,8), "**Visuals** (Pictures, photos, posters, etc.)" (Mean: 3,90; %25,7) and "**Definition or dictionaries**" (Mean: 3,85; %25,5). The technique that was preferred least to teach vocabulary was "**Films, videos etc.**" (Mean: 2,72; %7,2).

After evaluating what English teachers' mostly preferred vocabulary teaching techniques were, mean and standard deviation results of the expressions, differences in vocabulary teaching techniques that teachers in the study preferred were researched in terms of these teachers' genders (male or female). Independent Sample t test was used for this purpose.

A statistically meaningful difference was identified in five techniques teachers used in terms of their gender as a result of searching the differences in vocabulary teaching techniques that teachers in the study preferred in terms of their genders.

According to the results, there was statistically meaningful difference in the preference levels of the techniques "Computer based technology" (p: 0,025<0,05 ; t: 2,220) and "Films, videos, etc." (p: 0,025<0,05; t: 2,247) in terms of genders of the teachers in the study. This difference was more meaningful in favour of male teachers. In other words, male teachers preferred these two techniques more than female teachers did. Moreover, statistically meaningful difference in the preference levels of the techniques "Songs, chants and nursery rhymes" (p: 0,018<0,05; t: -2,374), "Mimicry, gestures and body language" (p: 0,046<0,05; t: -2,004) and "Series or scales" (p: 0,004<0,01; t: -2,874) was indentified in terms of genders, too. However, the difference between these techniques was meaningful in favour of female teachers. That is, female teachers preferred these three techniques more than male teachers did. Although there were differences in prefence levels of other techniques between female and male teachers, these differences were not statistically meaningful.

Differences in vocabulary teaching techniques that English teachers in the study mostly prefer in primary and secondary schools have been studied in terms of their length of service. In order to identify these differences, One-Way Variance Analysis has been applied.

When vocabulary teaching techniques that teachers in the research preferred were studied in terms of subjects' length of service, it was seen that seven techniques had statistically meaningful differences in terms of length of service of the teachers.

According to the results, a statistically meaningful difference was identified in the preference level of the technique "Realia (real objects)" (p: 0,020<0, 05; F: 3,316) in terms of subjects' length of service. This difference was meaningful between teachers that had started teaching recently and those that had been teaching for over 15 years, and this meaningfulness was in favour of teachers teaching for over 15 years. Besides, a statistically meaningful difference was identified between the preference levels of the techniques "Translation"

(p:0,000<0,05; F:6,261), "Picture stories, picture dictionaries" (p:0,016<0,05; F:3,472), "Computer based technology" (p:0,000<0,05; F:7,126) "Films, videos etc."(p:0,003<0,01; F:4,839), "Role play activities and simulations" (p:0,002<0,01; F:5,011) and the length of service of teachers in the study. The differences were in favour of teachers who had started teaching recently. Teachers whose length of service was between 1-5 years preferred the techniques "Translation", "Picture stories, picture dictionaries", "Computer based technology", "Films, videos etc." and "Role play activities and simulations" more than other teachers did. Moreover, the preference levels of the techniques "Word formation and parts of speech" (p:0,020<0,05; F:3,333) had also a statistically meaningful difference in terms of length of service of the subjects, and this difference was in favour of teachers who had been teaching for over 15 years. Teachers who had been teaching for over 15 years preferred these techniques more than other teachers did.

Differences in vocabulary teaching techniques that English teachers in primary and secondary schools preferred mostly to teach vocabulary in terms of whether the teachers had attended in-service training about vocabulary teaching or not were researched. For this purpose, Independent Sample t test was applied.

When these differences were analysed , it was clear that there has been statistically meaningful differences in ten techniques preferred by the teachers in terms of whether teachers had attended in-service training about vocabulary teaching or not. These techniques were "Realia (real objects)" (p:0,027<0,05; t:2,226), "Visuals (Pictures, photos, posters, etc.)" (p: 0,000<0,01; t:3,860), "Translation" (p: 0,012<0,05; t: -2,527), "Demonstration, acting out" (p: 0,014<0,05; t: 2,469), "Picture stories, picture dictionaries" (p:0,013<0,05; t:2,507), "Computer based technology" (p:0,000<0,05; t:5,227), "Puzzles and games" (p:0,004<0,01; t:2,884), "Mimicry, gestures and body language" (p:0,003<0,05; t:2,965), "Films, videos etc." (p: 0,014<0,05; t: 2,463) and "Activity or Process" (p: 0,041<0,05; t: 2,051).

Differences in preference levels of the techniques "Realia (real objects)", "Visuals (Pictures, photos, posters, etc.)", "Demonstration, acting out", "Picture stories, picture dictionaries", "Computer based technology", "Puzzles and games", "Mimicry, gestures and body language", "Films, videos etc." and "Activity or Process" were meaningful in favour of teachers who attended in-service training about vocabulary teaching. It meant that teachers who had attended in-service training about vocabulary teaching preferred these techniques more than others who had not. The difference in preference levels of the technique "Translation" was meaningful in favour of teachers who had not attended any in-service training about vocabulary teaching. Teachers who had not attended any in-service training about the topic preferred this technique more than others who had done.

The second part of the questionnaire was about opinions and ideas of English teachers about vocabulary learning and teaching. The participant teachers responded 7 items according to their agreement degree. The likert-type items included options such as "*totally agree*, *agree*, *undecided*, *disagree* and *totally disagree*".

Participants in the study mostly agreed with the expression "Vocabulary teaching is very crucial in learning a language, so I spend extra time with vocabulary work in the classes." (Mean: 3,79). According to this result, 69,2% of teachers (29% of whom agreed

totally) expressed that vocabulary teaching was very important in the language learning process, and so, they spent extra time to teach vocabulary. The other expression "There are more important aspects to teach in class than vocabulary." that would be evaluated and compatible with this item was agreed the least in the group (Mean: 2,60; 26%). Moreover, 59,7% (225 teachers) of the subjects expressed that they did not do any preparation before the class, and they taught the words when they encountered them during the class. In order to support this point, agreement level with the item "I plan my vocabulary presentation before the class." was the lowest (Mean: 2,47; 23,9%). What was more, 43% of teachers (11% agreed totally) expressed that they did not have time to teach vocabulary (Mean: 3,31). According to these scores, it appeared that although teachers were aware of the importance of vocabulary in language classes, they did not spend time planning teaching it. While some of them could spend extra time to teach vocabulary, some felt overloaded with different things from vocabulary. Therefore, it seemed that because of such reasons as workload, many of them could not have enough time to plan vocabulary.

According to questionnaire responses, it appeared that teachers prefer mimicry, gestures and body language; example sentences; visuals like photos, posters and pictures; and definition or dictionaries to convey the meaning of new vocabulary items mostly. Moreover, interviewees were asked to order the techniques according to their preferences in their classes. It appeared that their most popular techniques were realia, demonstration, visuals, puzzles and games, definition or dictionary use, songs, chants and nursery rhymes, translation and example sentences. However, in the observations it was seen that primary teachers preferred mainly mimicry, gestures and body language to convey the meaning of new vocabulary items while secondary school teachers used example sentences and mostly translation in the class. Although teachers expressed that they used these different techniques in their classes, the classes observed in terms of vocabulary teaching did not agree mostly with these results. It was seen that teachers generally preferred one or two techniques in order to convey the meaning of new vocabulary items. English teachers could try to make use of many different vocabulary teaching techniques so that they could help and guide their students to improve their vocabulary if they had not had so far. It was seen that many teachers agreed about the important role of vocabulary to learn a language, and they stated that they preferred different techniques to convey the meaning of new vocabulary items and teach them. Nevertheless, if the opinions and behaviours did not match, the result might not satisfy people.

It was seen from the analyses that there was not found out a statistically meaningful difference between agreement levels of teachers with the expressions that measure general ideas about vocabulary teaching and their preference levels of techniques that mostly preferred in vocabulary teaching in terms of teachers' faculties of graduation, which meant that teachers' educational backgrounds did not have a significant impact on their opinions about vocabulary teaching and the techniques they preferred to convey the meaning of new vocabulary items and teach them in their classes. If teachers were motivated to improve their professional skills in order to teach vocabulary, they could do that no matter whichever faculty or department they graduated from. However, there was found a statistically

meaningful difference among these techniques in terms of genders of the teachers. For instance, generally male teachers preferred technological techniques in their classes such as computer based technology; films, videos while female ones were in favour of using songs, chants and nursery rhymes; mimicry, gestures and body language more in order to present and teach new vocabulary items. Moreover, many teachers who had been teaching English for over 15 years prefer realia in their classes while fresh teachers whose length of service was between 1-5 years stated that they preferred translation; picture stories, picture dictionaries; computer based technology; films, videos; role play activities and simulations more to teach vocabulary. Lastly, it was seen that in service training had an important role in teaching new vocabulary items because teachers who had attended in-service training about vocabulary instruction before stated that they used different techniques such as realia; puzzles and games; activity or process while teachers who had not attended any in service training about the topic preferred translation mostly in vocabulary sessions of their English classes.

According to the content analyses of the interviews, it was seen that teachers agreed about the importance of vocabulary in language classes. However, they stated that they did not have enough time to teach vocabulary in their classes. On the other hand, they expressed that they had many materials to teach new vocabulary items such as flashcards, real objects, pictures and computers. About the difficulty of teaching vocabulary, some teachers agreed that it was easy to teach because they had many materials and techniques to motivate their students while others thought that it was difficult when students were not motivated to learn them or the teacher did not want to give simply the translation of the new item. Moreover, teachers had many reasons in order to plan their vocabulary teaching. For instance, they stated that planning was time saving and needed especially to teach complicated items. Nevertheless, there were teachers who thought that they did not need planning because of easy or familiar items or they could not plan their vocabulary teaching because of different timing for their classes. About the role of language skills, some interviewees stated that vocabulary was mainly important and reading and speaking help to improve it. There were teachers who expressed that all language skills were equally or separately important while grammar was primarily important according to some others. Lastly, to the question of responsibility about vocabulary, some teachers stated that it depended on students' age while some others thought that it was firstly the teacher's job to teach it and motivate students to learn it. Another group expressed that responsibility was shared between teachers and students.

In the observations, it was seen that teachers did not use many different techniques or materials to convey the meaning of new vocabulary items and teach them. The primary teacher preferred some visual techniques such as drawing picture on the board and mimicry and gestures while secondary school teacher generally used translation technique during the class.

Discussion and Conclusion

It seemed that unlike the teachers in Üseini's study (2003), teachers in the current study preferred most of these techniques in their classes more or less. However, as in Üseini's

study (2003), it seemed that many teachers thought that dictionaries were important materials in language classes.

It was clear that in order to convey the meaning of new vocabulary items, teachers used simple and economic techniques which they could readily prefer during the class. They mostly used body language and example sentences in order to clarify the meanings. Moreover, it appeared that they thought that learners could get the meaning with visual tools easily.

On the other hand, materials like films or videos were not preferred much. This might be because of lack of enough technical materials in the school such as projectors and computers or enough time during the classes. Maybe they thought that these materials were time consuming, which directed them using other materials or techniques that were economic both in price and time spent.

According to Macalister's study (2012), it appeared that pre-service teachers thought vocabulary was important in language learning process as fresh teachers in this study did. Therefore, it seemed that the findings of two studies were similar about teachers' ideas the role of vocabulary in language classes.

Many of the teachers did not agree with the expression "Learning vocabulary is students' own responsibility". Therefore, it appeared that like teachers from China in the study of Gao and Ma (2011), many participants in this study thought that teachers were expected to help and guide students to learn new vocabulary items.

As an answer to the last research question, it appeared that most of the teachers were aware of the crucial role of vocabulary in language classes. Moreover, it was seen that many teachers agreed that learning vocabulary was not only the students' responsibility. This responsibility was shared by both the teacher and students. However, most of the teachers did not plan their vocabulary class, and they preferred teaching new items when they encountered them during the class without any or much preparation before the class time.

In conclusion, as a result of this study, some possible suggestions may help or guide the teachers about the topic:

- Language teachers are expected to be motivated learners. If teachers become learners at the same time, they feel a need to improve their professional development.

- Teachers need to update themselves according to recent information about teaching new vocabulary items. They can follow recent and successful trends to improve their language teaching skills through language teaching magazines or in-service training opportunities such as seminars or conferences.

- There are many different language learners in language classes. The teacher should make the classroom environment richer in techniques and materials to

present the meaning of new vocabulary items and teach them so that these different learners can learn vocabulary more efficiently.

Like many other studies, the current study has some limitations without which it could result in more effective, valid and reliable findings.

The first limitation for the study has been the application of the questionnaire. The researcher has tried to reach many teachers all over Turkey so many teachers have sent the questionnaire responses through e-mails rather than hard copies. Therefore, it has been difficult to get responses from more teachers.

The second limitation is the few number of teachers who have volunteered to attend the interviews and to be observed. The researcher has had the most difficulty in finding teachers for the observations. It would be more effective to find more teachers to interview and observe in order to generalize the results more confidently.

The last limitation may be the reliability of the interviews and observations. Current situations and the relationship with the researcher may affect the objectivity and reliability of the results.

The suggestions for further researches may be doing similar but more comprehensive ones with more participants for better generalization. Next researchers may study with primary and secondary school teachers separately about the topic. Moreover, opinions of high school English teachers about the role of vocabulary in language classes and vocabulary presentation and teaching techniques they prefer using in their classes may be interests of researchers to see the differences if there are any.

In addition, learner perspectives about vocabulary learning may motivate the researchers for another study related to the topic. Teachers' opinions about how their students learn new vocabulary may also be studied.

In conclusion, this study has tried to find answers for its research questions. The results for these answers or limitations may give ideas to the researchers who are interested in the topic.

Acknowledgement

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Appendix A

The questionnaire

Dear English Teacher,

This questionnaire aims to discover the most frequently used vocabulary presentation techniques by English language teachers in primary and secondary schools. The results will be used for research purposes. You do not need to identify your name. Your sincere answers will be appreciated. Thank you for your contribution.

Zehra YAKAN

Please tick the appropriate box.

- ➢ *Gender:* Female [   ]   Male [   ]
- ➢ *Length of Service:* 1-5 years [   ]   6-10 years [   ]   11-15 years [   ]   16 years + [   ]
- ➢ *Faculty of graduation:*

  Faculty of Education [   ]   (if yes- English language teaching [   ]

  - German Language teaching [   ]
  - French Language Teaching [   ]

  Faculty of Literature   [   ]   (if yes- English Literature [   ]

  - American Culture and Literature [   ]
  - Linguistics [   ]

  Other faculties**:** [   ]   (If yes, which one? _____)

- ➢ *(For those from other faculties other than faculty of education) Have you received any pedagogical training?:* Yes [   ], No [   ]

- ➢ *How long did it last?* _____

- ➢ *Have you attended any in-service training (seminar, conference) about vocabulary teaching?*

  Yes [   ]   No [   ]

- ➢ *How much time a week do you spare for vocabulary teaching?*

Half an hour [   ]   1 hour [   ]   2 hours [   ]   3 hours [   ]   Other[   ]_____

Mark the following statements from "totally agree" to "totally disagree".

	totally agree	agree	undecided	disagree	totally disagree
I'm too loaded to spend time to teach vocabulary.					
Vocabulary is difficult to teach.					
I plan my vocabulary presentation before the class.					
I teach vocabulary opportunistically (when there is need in class, without preparing in advance)					
Learning vocabulary is students' own responsibility.					
There are more important aspects to teach in class than vocabulary.					
Vocabulary teaching is very crucial in learning a language, so I spend extra time with vocabulary work in the classes.					

Please identify the frequency of your use of the following vocabulary presentation techniques from "always" to "never".

5: Always   4: Often   3: Sometimes   2: Rarely   1: Never

No	While teaching vocabulary, which of the following techniques do you choose?	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	**Realia** (real objects)					
2	**Visuals** (Pictures, photos, posters, etc.)					
3	**Definition or dictionaries**					
5	**Translation**					
7	**Demonstration, acting out**					
9	**Picture stories, picture dictionaries**					
6	**Computer based technology**					
7	**Puzzles and games**					
8	**Songs, chants and nursery rhymes**					
9	**Mimicry, gestures and body language**					
10	**Films, videos etc.**					

11	**Example sentences**					
12	**Word formation and parts of speech** (word classes, word families)					
13	**Series or scales** (Related word groups such as days of the week, seasons or related words but graded among themselves such as *young-middle aged-elderly- old*)					
14	**Role play activities and simulations**					
15	**Super ordinates and hyponyms** (i.e. the super ordinate "*furniture*" includes hyponyms such as *sofa, bed, coffee table, wardrobe, chair* or the title "*fruit*" includes subtitles such as *apple, orange, cherry, melon,* etc.*)*					
16	**Activity or Process** (real life activities or processes such as *how to make fruit salad, going on a picnic, visiting a patient,* etc.*)*					