The Presentation-Practice Route to Teach Vocabulary to Young Learners: A Casa Study at International Schools in Uzbekistan

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Abstract

Teaching vocabulary to young learners is an essential aspect of language acquisition that requires a specific approach or strategy to ensure that learners acquire a wide range of vocabulary. Expanding vocabulary is a critical aspect of language learning as it equips learners with the learning tools to confidently articulate their thoughts and ideas in the target language. Developing vocabulary also enables learners to grasp complex concepts and ideas. One technique that has proven effective in language classes is the presentation-practice route. In light of this, the purpose of this study is to describe the teaching techniques employed by English teachers at Genius International School in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, when using the presentation-practice route to teach English vocabulary. The study adopted a descriptive research methodology, with data collection conducted through interviews and observations of English teachers at the school. Qualitative analysis was used to analyze the data collected from the respondents. The study's findings revealed that the teachers employed several techniques to encourage learners' mastery of vocabulary, including contextualization, the use of visual aids, and the incorporation of interactive activities. These techniques were found to be effective in facilitating learners' comprehension and retention of English vocabulary.

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INTRODUCTION

Expanding vocabulary is a critical aspect of language learning as it equips learners with the tools to confidently articulate their thoughts and ideas in the target language (Arndt & Woore, 2018; Deni & Fahriany, 2020). Developing vocabulary also enables learners to grasp complex concepts and ideas (Br Sembiring & Simajuntak, 2023). To this end, it is essential for teachers to utilize effective techniques in teaching vocabulary. Teachers have the responsibility of exposing learners to the language and ensuring that they master the spelling, pronunciation, meaning, part of speech, collocations, and contextual usage of each word taught (Chonnia & Izzah, 2022; Dubiner, 2018). Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to explore different methods and identify the most effective techniques for presenting vocabulary to their learners. Based on observations made at Genius School, this study seeks to investigate the techniques employed by English teachers in teaching vocabulary to young learners. This study is focused on the implementation of the presentation-practice route to teaching vocabulary to young learners. It aims to find

out the quality of the presentation-practice route technique used by teachers at Genius School in teaching English vocabulary to young learners. By identifying effective techniques, this study provides insight into best practices for teaching vocabulary to young learners.

Teaching vocabulary is a crucial aspect of language learning, and English teachers employ various learning activities to develop learners' vocabulary (Hidayatullah & Haerazi, 2022). These activities include designing learning activities in the form of incidental learning, explicit learning, or independent strategy development in language classes (Higby et al., 2020; Ihsan & Syafitri, 2021). Incidental learning emphasizes providing learners with opportunities for extensive reading and listening to acquire vocabulary as much as possible (Al Adawiyah, 2023; Chen et al., 2022). In incidental learning, the focus is on exposing learners to a variety of texts and spoken language, allowing them to encounter new words in context. On the other hand, explicit learning involves the direct teaching of vocabulary through explicit instruction and practice (Khan et al., 2018; Khazaie & Jalilifar, 2015). This approach may include the use of visuals, context, or memorization techniques to aid in vocabulary acquisition. Independent strategy development refers to teaching learners the strategies they can use to learn vocabulary on their own, such as using flashcards, dictionaries, or context clues (Kho et al., 2021; Kusmayanti & Hendryanti, 2021). English teachers must choose appropriate learning activities based on their learners' needs, abilities, and learning preferences. By utilizing different learning activities, teachers ensure that learners acquire vocabulary efficiently and effectively. Furthermore, incorporating incidental learning as part of the learning activities can provide learners with a more comprehensive and natural learning activities to vocabulary acquisition, which leads to more long-term retention and usage of new vocabulary.

The presentation-practice strategy is widely acknowledged as an effective technique for teaching vocabulary to young learners (Lee & Chen, 2019; Nation, 2006). It is commonly used in some international schools as a proven strategy to enhance learners' vocabulary development. The technique follows a two-step process, starting with the presentation of new vocabulary to learners, followed by guided practice activities designed to help learners reinforce and retain the new words (Nayan & Krishnasamy, 2015; Rafida, 2017). In the presentation phase of the strategy, learners are introduced to a new topic or concept, and the teacher provides them with a vocabulary list related to the topic. This list serves as a foundation for learners to develop their understanding of the new words. The teacher then uses various means to present the new vocabulary, such as using pictures, realia, or stories, to engage learners and facilitate their understanding and retention of the new words.

The presentation phase usually involves introducing new vocabulary items through a variety of learning tools, such as pictures to create the new acquired vocabulary more engaging and memorable for learners. After the presentation phase, the practice phase begins. In this phase, learners are given guided practice activities that allow them to practice using the new vocabulary in context. These activities may include exercises such as gap-fills, sentence completion, and role-playing, which encourage learners to strengthen their understanding of the new words and their usage (Situmorang & Simanjuntak, 2023; Spinelli et al., 2021). To reinforce learners' vocabulary memory, it is crucial for teachers to present the given topic using the vocabulary listed. By reinforcing the new vocabulary within the context of the topic, learners can better understand and internalize the new words. Furthermore, providing learners with opportunities to use the new vocabulary in speaking and writing activities can also enhance retention and application of the new words in real-life contexts. Overall, the presentation-practice strategy is an effective and

flexible approach to teaching vocabulary to young learners. By providing learners with a solid foundation of new vocabulary and then reinforcing their understanding through guided practice activities, teachers can help learners to acquire and use new vocabulary in a meaningful way (F. Teng, 2019; M. F. Teng & Zhang, 2021).

Once the new vocabulary has been introduced, teachers move on to the practice phase of the presentation-practice strategy. In this phase, learners are given opportunities to practice using the new vocabulary in context through activities such as gap-fills, sentence completion, and role-playing. These activities provide learners with a chance to use the new words in a controlled and structured way (Terai et al., 2021; Vaahtoranta et al., 2021), allowing them to practice and reinforce their understanding of the new vocabulary items. It is important for teachers to design practice activities that are appropriate for learners' level and abilities, to ensure that they can effectively engage with the new vocabulary (Zano, 2022). Teachers may also encourage learners to use the new vocabulary in their own speaking and writing, providing opportunities for learners to use the new words in meaningful communication.

The presentation-practice strategy is a flexible technique that can be adapted to meet the needs of different learners and teaching contexts. For example, teachers may vary the presentation phase by introducing new vocabulary items through songs or videos, and the practice phase may involve group or pair work to facilitate collaboration and communication among learners. Overall, the presentation-practice strategy is an effective technique for teaching vocabulary to young learners as it combines vocabulary introduction with guided practice activities, allowing learners to engage with and internalize the new words in a meaningful way. Based on the description above, the researcher decided to explore the idea of word knowledge, approaches, stages, and techniques used to teach vocabulary to young learners by the English teachers of Genius School.

Literature review
World Knowledge

It is important to describe what the vocabulary is before we discuss the techniques of how to teach vocabulary. Nation (2006) states that without grammar very little can be conveyed and without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed. Another term for vocabulary is a "lexical item". A vocabulary can be a single word (for example bag, book), multiple words are combined to make a new word with a meaning (for example washing machine, post office), a phrasal verb (look through), and longer multi-word expressions (call it a day, How are you?) to express a single concept. Grammatical items are also included in the term of vocabulary (for example, pronouns: we, they, somebody; determiners: the this). Grammatical items are called 'closed sets' because they have less meaning on their own and are used to demonstrate links between words. Meanwhile, lexical items are frequently added, removed, and modified (F. Teng, 2019; Zano, 2022). In this article, teaching vocabulary refers to the lexical items of the language.

According to Khan et al. (2018), vocabulary teaching is the most important aspect of teaching English, because words are the foundation of a language. What do learners need to know in terms of vocabulary? First of all, they should know about a lexical item's written and spoken form and its most usual meaning (Haerazi & Irawan, 2020). They should also be aware of its pronunciation, and what parts of speech the word belongs to. Besides, it is very important to teach which words it is often used with and the use of the word (context). There is another component that also needs to be taught, and that is the relationship with the learner's first language. It can be represented in this diagram below:
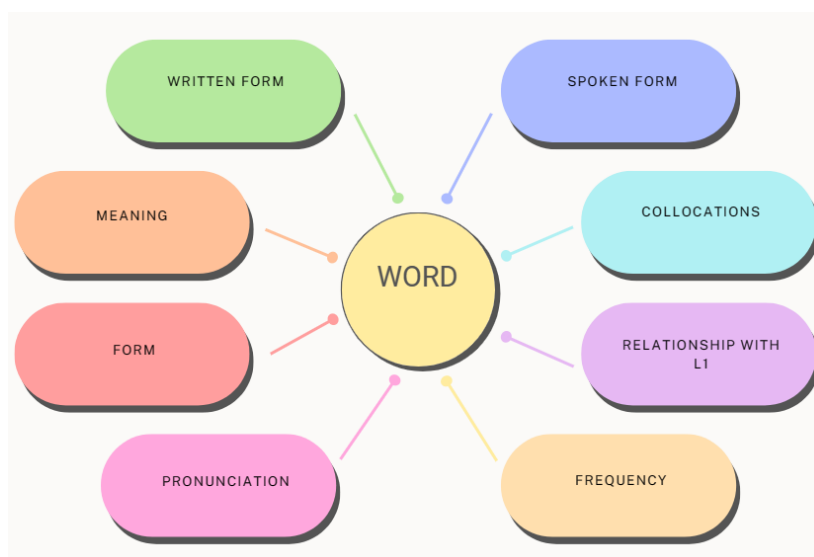
Figure 1. Word knowledge

Vocabulary Selection

Before presenting new vocabulary, it is important to choose the items to teach. The best way to select which vocabulary items to present is based on learners' needs and interests. Firstly, the word's frequency should be taken into consideration. We should review how often the word is used in spoken or written language. Secondly, teachers should select teachable vocabulary in terms of its importance, pronunciation, and similarity in learners' L1 (M. F. Teng & Zhang, 2021).
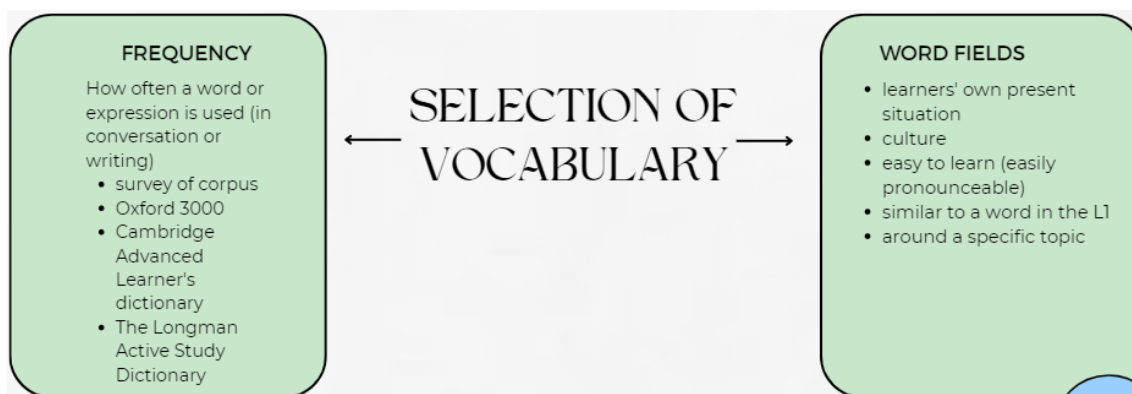

Figure 2. Selection of vocabulary

Vocabulary Presentation

Methods, approaches, strategies, and techniques are essential points in teaching vocabulary to language learners (Haerazi & Irawan, 2019). Haerazi et al. (2021) stated that even a good method was useless if a teacher didn't know how to use it. The best way of teaching vocabulary is to ask learners to read a text or listen to audio tracks so that they can see or hear (Alfatihah & Tyas, 2022; Haerazi et al., 2021). The core reason to give learners a text to read is to introduce them to new linguistic input. There are different learners with various learning styles and several characteristics. Some of them have a short attention span, and some of them are playful, imaginative, or love imitating. Some learners are auditory, kinaesthetic, or visual (Hidayatullah et al., 2022; Hidayatullah & Haerazi,

2022). Teachers should apply different approaches and use techniques effectively to conduct a productive lesson and make students stay interested. Learners master vocabulary if teachers implement constructive and appropriate techniques. MFP technique is the most considered in teacher training or TEFL courses which stands for Meaning, Form, and Pronunciation.

o *Meaning.* The words can be introduced with pictures, mime, gestures, and realia (real objects) by explaining a definition, an example, a synonym, an antonym, related words and translation.

o *Form.* It deals with the presentation of spelling, and explanation of the parts of speech the word belongs to.

o *Pronunciation.* It covers individual sounds, stress and intonation.

Presentation-Practice Route

The most common technique involves a presentation-practice route and the presentation route involves offering some cues, pictures, or information about target vocabulary and elicitation or modeling (Pebriantika & Aristia, 2021; Selim & Islam, 2022). The practice route encourages learners to practice by repeating and using them in short dialogues, etc. To present the vocabulary, teachers show pictures, and flashcards or bring real objects into the classroom to show them, mime, draw a quick sketch or diagram on the board, get learners to act it out, tell an anecdote or short story, model, demonstrate, point to the object, explain with examples, ask learners to search in a dictionary or ask them who know to explain to those who don't. After the presentation, learners should practice what they learned by using it. Terai et al. (2021) suggest several ideas for practicing, such as discussions, role-play, matching pictures to lexical items (collocations, synonyms, and sets of related words), classifying items into lists, filling in gaps or crosswords, and memory games.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design in order to examine the teaching techniques used in vocabulary instruction. The primary source of data was the natural context, and the researcher served as the primary means of data collection (Cohen et al., 2018). To gather data, the researcher conducted observations and interviews. The observation phase involved the examination of several classes, with the aim of examining the actual practices and techniques used by teachers in the classroom (Fahmy El-Sabaa et al., 2017). During these observations, the researcher not only observed the teachers, but also the learners, in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how they respond to the various teaching techniques utilized in the vocabulary instruction process. By adopting this methodological approach, the study aimed to provide a rich, in-depth analysis of the teaching techniques used in the vocabulary instruction process.

In order to gain further insight into the vocabulary instruction process, the researcher conducted a series of interviews with the participating teachers. The purpose of these interviews was to confirm the data obtained through prior observations. Additionally, several rounds of observations and interviews were conducted in order to gather comprehensive information regarding the techniques used by teachers to select, present, and apply a presentation-practice route when teaching vocabulary. Through this rigorous methodological approach, the study aimed to obtain a thorough understanding of the instructional practices employed by educators in the vocabulary instruction process. The resulting data offers valuable insights into the pedagogical strategies used by teachers, and can inform future efforts to optimize the teaching and learning of vocabulary in educational contexts.

In this study, the collected data are subjected to qualitative analysis using established ways. Specifically, three primary activities were utilized: data condensation, data display, and drawing conclusions. During the data condensation stage, researchers worked to reduce the collected information into meaningful and manageable units, while retaining the important aspects of the data. Next, data display techniques are utilized to organize and represent the information of English teachers' experiences or learning processes in applying in applying the presentation-practice strategy. It is done in a visually accessible manner, using tools tables, charts, and diagrams. Finally, researchers drew conclusions from the data, synthesizing the main information in order to answer the research questions and meet the study objectives. This process involved an iterative and reflexive approach, with conclusions being drawn based on repeated review and analysis of the collected data. The qualitative analysis approach allowed for a nuanced and in-depth exploration of the collected data, enabling the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic under investigation (Cohen et al., 2018; Thomas et al., 2022). Overall, the findings from this study contribute to the existing body of knowledge regarding effective vocabulary instruction techniques and offer valuable insights into the pedagogical strategies utilized by educators.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to explore the vocabulary teaching techniques utilized in English language classes at Genius School in Tashkent, the researcher conducted observations and interviews. The observations were carried out during regular English lessons taught to 1st through 5th-grade classes, which consisted of 20 pupils each. The researcher was present in the classroom during instruction, and closely observed the teachers' pedagogical practices related to vocabulary instruction. These observations were designed to provide a detailed and accurate account of the various techniques employed by teachers across different grades and levels. In addition to the classroom observations, the researcher conducted interviews with 10 English teachers at the school.

The purpose of these interviews was to gain further insight into the vocabulary instruction methods utilized by the teachers. The interview questions focused on topics such as the selection of vocabulary words, the presentation of new words to students, and the application of vocabulary instruction techniques during classroom activities. The interview data was collected through audio recordings and field notes, and was analyzed in conjunction with the observation data to provide a comprehensive overview of the vocabulary instruction process at Genius School. Through the use of both observations and interviews, the study was able to gain a comprehensive understanding of the vocabulary teaching techniques utilized in English language classes at Genius School. The resulting data provides valuable insights into effective pedagogical strategies for teaching vocabulary to young learners, and can inform future efforts to optimize the teaching and learning of English language skills in educational settings.

In this study, the researcher collected and analyzed data in order to investigate the vocabulary teaching techniques used by teachers in English language classrooms. Following the rigorous data collection and analysis process, the study findings revealed that teachers employed a diverse range of strategies in order to effectively select, present, and practice vocabulary with their students. The study findings indicated that teachers utilized a range of methods for selecting vocabulary words, including choosing words based on their relevance to the curriculum, student interest and relevance, and frequency of use in spoken and written English (Afifah & Devana, 2020; Khan et al., 2018). In terms of presentation, teachers were found to utilize a range of techniques, such as visual aids, realia, and contextualization, in order to facilitate students' understanding and retention

of new vocabulary words (Kho et al., 2021; F. Teng, 2019). Furthermore, the study revealed that teachers utilized a variety of techniques for practicing vocabulary with their students, such as using games, activities, and collaborative exercises to reinforce newly learned words. Teachers also often incorporated a spiral approach to vocabulary instruction, revisiting previously learned words to ensure mastery and retention (Hidayatullah et al., 2022; Ihsan & Syafitri, 2021). The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the diverse range of strategies utilized by teachers for vocabulary instruction in English language classrooms. These insights can inform the development of effective pedagogical practices in language instruction, and may serve to improve the overall quality of English language education in educational settings.

This study investigated the vocabulary selection strategies employed by English language teachers in classrooms at Genius School in Tashkent. Based on the findings, it was determined that teachers prioritize the selection of vocabulary words based on their frequency and usefulness in daily life. The study found that teachers often select words that are relevant to students' everyday routine activities, particularly for younger learners in 1st and 2nd grades. During interviews, teachers provided specific examples of topics they select to teach vocabulary, such as weather, family, or breakfast. In addition to frequency and usefulness, teachers also take into consideration the ease of pronunciation and shortness of the word when selecting vocabulary for younger learners (Nugraha et al., 2022).

For older students in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades, teachers typically choose vocabulary from a wider range of topics, such as hobbies, holidays, or stories. This approach is consistent with the findings of some studies who suggested that children have shorter attention spans compared to adults (Deni & Fahriany, 2020; Irwansyah, 2023), and may therefore require more varied and engaging content in order to maintain focus and motivation. Overall, the study findings shed light on the complex and multifaceted process of vocabulary selection in English language classrooms. The results have important implications for language teachers, curriculum developers, and education policymakers, and may inform future efforts to improve the quality of English language instruction in educational settings.

In the context of vocabulary instruction, teachers have divergent views regarding the most effective order of presenting meaning, form, and pronunciation of a new word. Although some teachers prioritize presenting the meaning before form and pronunciation, others find it debatable and believe that it depends on the learners' preferences (Aprianoto & Haerazi, 2019). In fact, during a recent interview with a group of teachers, they debated whether to introduce the written form or spoken form first, taking into account the fact that some students learn better by seeing, while others prefer hearing. In light of this, some teachers recommended identifying individual students' learning preferences before choosing whether to present the form/pronunciation or written/spoken versions first. Teachers' opinions were divided on the optimal strategy for teaching new vocabulary, with some advocating for prioritizing hearing the pronunciation before seeing it written, while others favored presenting the written form first (Azis & Husnawadi, 2020; Kinasih & Olivia, 2022). Overall, the question of the most effective sequence of presenting vocabulary depends on the individual learner and their preferred learning style.

In teaching vocabulary to young learners, teachers often employ a range of techniques to facilitate the learning process. Although translation is generally considered an ineffective way of teaching vocabulary (Almahasees & Qassem, 2021; Ariani, 2020), it is still used in some contexts, such as with first-grade learners who have limited world knowledge and experience. In an observational study of vocabulary instruction, the present author noted the use of translation, and probed this technique further during a

subsequent interview with the teachers. The teachers explained that, in some cases, translation was used to help young learners better understand target vocabulary. Additionally, teachers commonly used real objects such as pictures, toys, flashcards, and photos to present vocabulary to younger learners. Gestures, mimes, and actions were also found to be effective ways of facilitating understanding. The Total Physical Response (TPR) method, which involves using physical movement to reinforce language learning, was frequently used by teachers (Baiq Sumarni et al., 2022; Zulpan, 2018), particularly in conjunction with songs. Overall, the use of multiple techniques in teaching vocabulary to young learners is necessary to engage their different learning styles and promote effective vocabulary acquisition.

In teaching English to young learners in the 3rd and 4th grades, teachers employ various strategies to help their students comprehend and practice new vocabulary. One effective approach is to provide full definitions, examples, synonyms, and antonyms of the vocabulary words. By doing so, teachers aim to deepen learners' understanding of the words' meanings and usage in context. To enhance vocabulary practice, teachers may also incorporate fun activities like puzzles and serial pictures into their lessons (Ayu et al., 2020; Chonnia & Izzah, 2022). These activities help students to engage with the new words in a meaningful way and promote retention of the vocabulary over time. Overall, these techniques can be highly effective in building the vocabulary skills of young English language learners, setting them on the path towards continued language acquisition and fluency.

Effective vocabulary instruction for 5th-grade learners involves the use of contextualization, elicitation, and personalization techniques. To provide context, teachers offer examples of sentences and situations in which the vocabulary words are used. This approach helps learners to understand the words' meaning and usage in a relevant and meaningful way. In addition, elicitation techniques such as questioning or using word associations can encourage students to think critically and actively participate in the learning process (Asyari et al., 2016; Bilki et al., 2022). Furthermore, personalization techniques can help students to internalize the vocabulary by connecting it to their own experiences and interests. This approach can make the vocabulary more meaningful and memorable for learners, enhancing their ability to use the words effectively in their own communication. Overall, these techniques can be highly effective in building the vocabulary skills of 5th-grade learners, enabling them to better comprehend and communicate using the English language.

In vocabulary instruction, the practice stage is a crucial part of the presentation-practice route. For younger learners, teachers often use sorting and matching activities to reinforce the newly introduced vocabulary. These activities can help learners to identify and categorize words according to their meaning or usage, promoting deeper understanding of the vocabulary (Dubiner, 2018; M. F. Teng & Zhang, 2021; Vaahtoranta et al., 2021). In contrast, for 5th-grade learners, text identification tasks are more appropriate, as they require students to identify the new vocabulary in a meaningful context. Moreover, the "repeat after me" technique is a common technique used by teachers for younger learners, as it has been found to be highly effective. Through this technique, learners listen to their teacher and then repeat the words, allowing them to practice pronunciation, stress, and syllables. This approach can help learners to improve their oral language skills and build their confidence in using the newly acquired vocabulary. In summary, the use of appropriate practice activities and techniques is crucial in supporting effective vocabulary acquisition and retention for learners of different ages and proficiency levels.

CONCLUSION

The study investigated the vocabulary teaching techniques utilized in English language classes at Genius School in Tashkent. Through classroom observations and interviews with 10 English teachers, the study found that teachers employed a diverse range of vocabulary selection strategies, presentation techniques, and practice methods to effectively teach vocabulary to young learners. The selection of vocabulary words was often based on their relevance to the curriculum, student interest, and frequency of use in spoken and written English. Teachers utilized a range of presentation techniques, such as visual aids and contextualization, to facilitate students' understanding and retention of new vocabulary words. Furthermore, teachers utilized a variety of techniques for practicing vocabulary with their students, such as using games, activities, and collaborative exercises to reinforce newly learned words.

The study also found that there were divergent views among teachers regarding the most effective order of presenting meaning, form, and pronunciation of a new word. Some teachers prioritized presenting the meaning before form and pronunciation, while others found it debatable and believed that it depended on the learners' preferences. In addition, translation was still used in some contexts, such as with first-grade learners who have limited world knowledge and experience. Overall, the study findings provide valuable insights into effective pedagogical strategies for teaching vocabulary to young learners, and can inform future efforts to optimize the teaching and learning of English language skills in educational settings.

In conclusion, the study sheds light on the complex and multifaceted process of vocabulary selection and instruction in English language classrooms. The findings suggest that effective vocabulary teaching requires a diverse range of strategies that take into consideration the students' needs and preferences. The study provides important implications for language teachers, curriculum developers, and education policymakers, and may inform future efforts to improve the quality of English language instruction in educational settings. The study highlights the importance of teachers' use of various presentation techniques and practice methods to facilitate students' understanding and retention of new vocabulary words. Additionally, the study findings underscore the need for teachers to identify individual students' learning preferences before choosing the most effective sequence of presenting vocabulary. Overall, the study provides valuable insights into effective pedagogical strategies for teaching vocabulary to young learners in English language classrooms.

RECOMMENDATION

The research conducted on the vocabulary teaching techniques utilized in English language classes at Genius School in Tashkent provides a valuable insight into effective pedagogical strategies for teaching vocabulary to young learners. However, there are some potential areas for further research that could build upon the findings of this study. One potential avenue for future research could be to explore the effectiveness of specific vocabulary teaching techniques in different contexts. For example, it would be interesting to investigate whether certain techniques are more effective for teaching vocabulary to students with different levels of proficiency or different age groups. Additionally, further research could be conducted to compare the effectiveness of different vocabulary teaching techniques, such as visual aids versus collaborative activities, in order to identify the most effective methods for teaching vocabulary to young learners.

Another area for potential research is the role of technology in vocabulary instruction. With the increasing availability of digital resources, teachers have access to a wide range of tools that can be used to facilitate vocabulary instruction. However, there is

still relatively little research on the effectiveness of these tools for teaching vocabulary to young learners. Future research could investigate the impact of digital resources, such as vocabulary learning apps or online games, on vocabulary acquisition and retention. Furthermore, research could also examine the ways in which teachers can effectively integrate technology into their vocabulary instruction to maximize learning outcomes. Overall, further research in these areas could help to improve the quality of English language education and inform the development of more effective pedagogical practices in language instruction.

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