

**THE IMPACT OF THE “SPELLING BEE” ON VOCABULARY  
LEARNING IN AN ESL CLASS:A CASE STUDY OF GREEN OLIVE  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL AND BAYERO UNIVERSITY, KANO  
(BUK STAFF) NURSERY II PUPILS**

**BY**

**LAURE JIBRIL GARBA**

**SPS/11/MEN/00010**

**AUGUST 2015**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POST  
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DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS, ENGLISH (LANGUAGE)**

**AUGUST 2015**

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this work the product of my own research undertaken under the supervision of Professor Aliyu Kamal, has not been presented, and will not be presented with my consent elsewhere for the award of a degree or certificate. All the sources have been duly acknowledge.

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## **CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that the research work for this dissertation and its subsequent preparation by Laure Jibril Garba (SPS/11/MEN/00010) were carried out under my supervision.

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Professor Aliyu Kamal  
(Supervisor)

.....  
Date

## APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been examined and approved for the award of degree of Master of Arts in English (Language)

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Date

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my entire family for their support and prayers throughout my study.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Vocabulary learning is an important part of any language learning process. This study discusses the impact of the “Spelling Bee” in teaching vocabulary in the English as a Second Language (ESL) class in a carefully controlled study of 52 Nursery II pupils. The study uses the 50 wordlist and a “Spelling Bee” quiz to measure the role of the “Spelling Bee”. The result shows that the “Spelling Bee” is an effective way of teaching vocabulary when comparative analysis was made between experimental group, pre-test and controlled group. The researcher used the guideline given by “Spelling Bee” organisers and Vacca, Vacca and Gove’s, (2000), for both direct and indirect teaching which provides opportunities for both receptive and productive learning to occur. The study examines why English spelling is regarded as the most difficult task to accomplish. In conclusion, the study shows that “Spelling Bee” is a competitive game that grooms the pupils with the ability to spell, use, and pronounce words correctly. It also improves the ESL nursery school pupils English Language, Spelling Capabilities, Comprehension and Communicative skills based on the data analysis presented. The experimental group expanded their vocabulary compared to the control group.. The findings shows that nursery II pupils can learn 4-6 words per day and the suitable time for spelling each word is within the minimum of 30 second, maximum of 1 minute which enable them to read English text faster than the control group.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Preamble**

This chapter is the general introduction to the study; it comprises background of the study, statement of the problem, aim and the objectives, significance of the study and the scope of the study.

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Over the past two decades, research has revealed a great deal about the kind of vocabulary instruction that is most effective for helping students comprehend what they read (Baumann, Kame'enui et al., 2003; Beck & McKeown, 1991; Blachowicz & Fisher, 2000; Nagy & Scott, 2000 in Hiebert and Kamil 2005). The National Reading Panel of UK (2000) concluded that no one single instructional method is sufficient for optimal vocabulary learning; therefore, methods that will help students acquire new words and increase the depth of their word knowledge over time. Effective instruction includes opportunities for both incidental word learning and intentional word teaching.

Vocabulary teaching and learning are constant challenge for teachers as well as students because historically there has been minimal focus on vocabulary instruction in the ESL classroom. Due to this, an increased emphasis on vocabulary development is crucial for the English language learner in the process of language learning. According to Colorado (2007, as cited in Adger, 2002), the average English native speaker enters the nursery school knowing at least 5,000 words while the average English language learner may know 5,000 words in his/ her native language

but only a few words in English. The reality is that native speakers continue to learn new words while English language learners face the double challenge of building that foundation and closing that language gap.

Therefore, this study examines why English spelling is perfidious, and describes the pattern of the English spelling so as to improve the spelling ability of the ESL learners. The study also gives suggestions on how to teach and learn spelling in a fun way so as to boost the size of the nursery school pupils' vocabulary in order to improve their English Language, Spelling capabilities, comprehension and communication skills.

## **1.2 The “Spelling Bee”**

“Spelling Bee” is a competition where contestants are asked to spell words. The origin of the “Spelling Bee” is believed to be in the United States. Nowadays, “Spelling Bee” events are organized in many parts of the world. As an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English as a Second Language (ESL) activity, “Spelling Bee” can be devised as a group or class activity that provides a fun way to practice spelling.

According to Webster’s third New International Dictionary, “Spelling Bee” is a fairly old and widely-used word which refers to a community social gathering at which friends and neighbours join together in a single activity (sewing, quilting, barn raising, etc.) usually to help one person or family. The earliest known example in print is a *spinning bee*, in 1769. “Spelling Bee” is apparently an American term. It first appeared in print in 1875, but it seems certain that the word was used orally for several years before that. Those who used the word, including most early

students of language, assumed that it was the same word as referred to the insect. They thought that this particular meaning had probably been inspired by the obvious similarity between these human gatherings and the industrious, social nature of a beehive. But in recent years scholars have rejected this explanation, suggesting instead that the “bee” is a completely different word. One possibility is that it comes from the Middle English word *bene*, which means "a prayer" or "a favour" (and is related to the more familiar word *boon*). In England, a dialect form of this word, *been* or *bean*, referred to "voluntary help given by neighbours toward the accomplishment of a particular task. Nine newspapers collaborated to start the National “Spelling Bee” in 1925. In 1941, [Scripps](#) took over sponsorship of the “National “Spelling Bee”. There was no Scripps “National “Spelling Bee” during the war years of 1943–45. Co-champions were declared in 1950, 1957, and 1962. Of the 87 champions, 46 have been girls and 41 have been boys. The program experienced steady growth between the 1920s and the 1970s, and between 1980 and 1990 the number of participants doubled. In recent years the program underwent a second growth spurt and a significant surge in popularity.

Awolusi (2010) reveals that to boost the power of language of ESL, students should spend time to improve their vocabulary. With knowledge of more words, students will be able to understand more of language. Learning English as a Second Language take time, and building ones vocabulary is an important key to improve his communication skills. Thus, students need to learn how to understand and use vocabulary in context. “Spelling Bee” is an oral competition designed to provide young people between the ages of 7 and 14 with an opportunity to participate in a positive spelling exchange to improve their English Language, Spelling capabilities, comprehension and communication skills.

It also develops self-esteem, confidence and interpersonal skills of students by exposing them to positive role model, tutors and peers supports through the course of the preparation. “Spelling Bee” is used to enrich the learning experience of the youth in English through extra-curricular activities, where parents, schools and the community at large can be engaged. It promotes correct spelling and reduces the difficulties associated with the English language learning; which is one of the criteria of marking the WAEC examination.

When “Spelling Bee” is effectively applied all the four skills are in use: speaking, listening, writing and reading (i.e. receptive and productive learning). According to Bygate all the four skills go at once. Poor reading culture is one of the major things that lead to the falling standard of education. “Spelling Bee” encourages reading culture among the participants. Gabb (2000) also, poses a very important question on why learner face difficulties in moving into fluency stage even though they have had basic decoding skills. She identifies a number of “barriers” some of which are limited vocabulary and lack of background knowledge. “Spelling Bee” tackles this problem, because it exposes L2 learner with ample words (vocabulary).

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

According to Fradkin (2009), both native and non-native English speakers (ESL) regard English spelling as one of its most difficult task in the language learning. The English spelling system is not based on a phonetic correspondence between sounds and letters, as is the spelling of Spanish and certain other languages. Instead, English spelling reflects the historical development of the language. The same or similar combination of letters (homonyms) can produce different pronunciations such as: *tough* and *cough*, *wind* and *find*, *flood* and *brood*. Similarly, different combinations of letters can produce the same pronunciation (homophones) *such as: ate* and

*eight, bare* and *bear, peace* and *piece*. For example, the sound *sh* is written four different ways, as *shin shape*, as *chin machine*, as *tiin nation*, and as *sin sugar*. The letter *a*, for example, is pronounced five different ways in the words *same, cat, ball, any*, and *star*. The letter *o* is pronounced differently in *hot, to, go*, and *for*. Conversely, one vowel sound may be spelled in many ways; the *oo* sound is written eight ways in the words *soon, chew, true, tomb, rude, suit, youth*, and *beauty*. Due to the aforementioned spelling complications ESL learners find it difficult to spell a word of this category correctly, which leads to poor comprehension. In other words, inability to spell or pronounce the words may lead to poor reading and comprehension ability.

#### **1.4 Aim and Objectives**

The aim of this study is to assess the impact of the “Spelling Bee” in teaching vocabulary to ESL nursery school pupils. The following are the objectives of the present study:

1. Determine if the “Spelling Bee” method will boost nursery school pupils’ vocabulary,
2. Find out the number of words nursery school pupils can learn within a given period of time and determine if the “Spelling Bee” will improve the pupils’ communicative skill.
3. Find out the time that will be suitable for the spelling of each word and determine if the speed of the spelling will boost their spelling capabilities.
4. Determine whether the size of the vocabulary learnt through “Spelling Bee” will affect the pupil’s reading performance, and
5. Determine if nursery school pupils’ poor ability in spelling is caused by inadequate method of teaching employed by the teachers.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. Will “Spelling Bee” boosts nursery school pupils’ vocabulary?
2. How many words nursery school pupils can learn within a given period of time that will improve the pupils’ communicative skills?
3. What time span will be suitable for the spelling of each word introduced to the pupils and see whether it will improve the pupil’ spelling capabilities.
4. Will the size of the vocabulary learnt affect the pupils’ reading performance?
5. Is poor ability in spelling caused by inadequate method of teaching employed by the teachers?
6. Will there be any significant change in the number of vocabulary items acquired by pupils who are taught the “Spelling Bee”?

### **1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

There are different language games in teaching vocabulary to the ESL class. This study focuses on the role of the “Spelling Bee” among nursery school pupils learning English as a second language, because the “Spelling Bee” has been used on primary and secondary school students for many years. It is also limited to Green Olive International School and Bayero University, Kano nursery school pupils.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The “Spelling Bee” can be an effective tool for ESL students and teachers. To get the pupils interested, teachers have to incorporate fun activities into the lesson plans. When the ESL lessons are fun, pupils will be excited to learn, making it easier for teachers to teach. Pupils who learn

English through fun activities will retain the lesson in their memory and may be inspired to learn more about the topic based on the pilot study conducted. The research findings will be useful to ESL teachers, students and nursery school pupils in identifying the extent to which teachers should teach the “Spelling Bee” and its importance in improving the pupils’ vocabulary because it is teacher-learner centred activity. It would also be significant to future researchers who wish to undertake a research in similar area.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter reviews some related literature on vocabulary, “Spelling Bee” and various methods of teaching “Spelling Bee” to ESL class. It also discusses the various contributions made by different scholars and researchers in the area of the impact of “Spelling Bee” in an ESL class. National Reading Panel (2000) identified the components of reading as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Vocabulary holds a special place among these components. Vocabulary is not a developmental skill or one that can ever be seen as fully mastered. The expansion and elaboration of vocabularies is something that expands across the lifetime (Kamil and Hiebert, 2005).

#### **2.1 The Methods of Teaching the “Spelling Bee”**

Bailly (1980) proposes that to teach the “Spelling Bee”, the following procedure should be considered:

- a. To select the areas students are having trouble such as homophones as in “which” and “witch” or such as receive or accommodate. To work on the level of words until they are ready for the next.
- b. To provide the word list at various levels to help the students figure out what level is right for them.
- c. Tell the students to memorise how to spell the words such as rich, itch, and sandwich.

- d. Quiz them, and group them to quiz them, and use the words in their writing.
- e. Reading is a great way to improve one's spelling. Ask them to read frequently and look up the words you do not know in a dictionary, or ask someone what that mean. Try using words they have just learned in conversation'.

In line with the above, teacher should stung the students by the “Spelling Bee” and motivate them to remember that “Spelling Bee” is a performance, stand in front of other people and spell. Spelling, like speaking in front of others, makes some people nervous. So it needs practice. Find a friend or family member to be the pronouncer and answer all of your questions about the word. You can ask what it means, how you say it, what language it comes from, and what part of speech it is. Stand up and pretend you are in front of a microphone, ask your questions, and spell the word. You may even get a bell for when you misspell.

Even when one knows the word, it can be hard to spell it correctly. But, what if one does not know? Every speller faces this challenge. One can prepare to make the possible guess by studying patterns of words. Even if one does not recognise a word, he might be able to guess what pattern it fits into, which will help him make a better guess at how to spell it. (Bailly, 1980, p.1-2)

### **2.1.1 Guidelines for Effective Teaching of the “Spelling Bee”**

To prepare the “Spelling Bee” activity the following guidelines must be followed:

- Start with easy words so as not to intimidate participants especially in non-competitive cultures.
- Reduce the affective filter. If participants feel uncomfortable, they will not get involved in the activity.
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Repeat the words as necessary.
- Begin with easy words and progress to more difficult ones.

For EFL or ESL students, “Spelling Bee” can be carried out in different ways: competitively, noncompetitively, individually, alternatively, in a team.

### **2.1.2 Different Activities for Teaching the “Spelling Bee”**

According to the “Spelling Bee” guidelines: If the “Spelling Bee” is prepared as a non-competitive activity, which can be used for a large class one can follow the following steps:

- Choose interesting words.
- Dictate the words to the participants.
- Give participants time to write the words.
- When done, ask participants to compare and have a discussion on the correct spelling.
- Show the correct spelling on the board.
- Participants work in groups to use the dictated words to provide sentences, a story or a short paragraph depending on their level of proficiency.

- Representatives of groups read out their sentences, stories or paragraphs.

To assign the activity in a more competitive way, follow the following steps:

- Choose 4-10 students to stand in front of the class.
- Dictate a spelling word to one participant.
- If the participant spells the word correctly, he remains at the front of the line.
- If he does not spell the word correctly, he sits down, leaving the competition.
- Write each well-spelt word on the board.
- The participant who remains standing is the winner and gets a prize! (Hutagalung, 2012, myenglishpage.com.)

## **2.2 The Patterns of the Words**

Bailly (1980) proposes that “Spelling Bee” can be taught by using these patterns:

- a. One of the easiest places to start noticing word patterns is Greek and Latin origin. Example telephone starts with the tele- Greek root tele means “far” when the telephone was invented it needed a name. So the inventor took a couple of Greek roots and made up a name for it out of tele- “at a distance, far” + phone “voice”. Many of the most difficult words in English are made out of Greek and Latin roots.
- b. Another pattern is to collect words that come from a particular language. For this, one needs to be able to read big dictionary. In the dictionary, find the section that gives the history of words, example wiki, mahi-mahi, and aloha all come from Hawaiian. Make lists of words that follow those patterns.

- c. Another way to look for pattern is to figure out all the ways a certain sound can be spelled in English and make lists. Pick a sound in a word, any sound, and then figure out the most common ways to spell that sound. For example, the sound of the letter z is sort of buzzing sound. And it is mostly spelled a z. The word *busy* is not a z. *Xerox* too is not z. Most of the words that come from Greek often spell that z- sound with an x, and that is why Xerox starts with a buzz that is not a z.
- d. Keep words that seem weird or interesting. Make lists of the ways a given letter can pronounce (or silent) as well as what letters can make each sound. And pattern words that go against those patterns.

But some words do not play by rules: sometimes a root changes spelling or losses a letter. Keep special notes about these exceptions, they are both sorts of words that can make a big difference for you in a “Spelling Bee”. One important thing is that, all the patterns have exceptions, and those exceptions can be asked in “Spelling Bee”. So along with patterns, keep lists of any exceptions that you find. Sometimes, the most interesting words follow no helpful patterns of words at all. It is important to learn those symbols that dictionaries use to indicate how words are pronounced. Start out by writing out the pronunciation symbols (called “diacritics”) for some words you may know how to pronounce, such words. Learning diacritics can be challenging, but it will help you correctly pronounce words you have never heard, and that will help when you get those weird words in “Spelling Bee”. (Bailly, 1980:.2)

According to Seely (2005:209-11), the key to a generally more approach to spelling is to look constantly for patterns. There are two kinds of patterns which are helpful:

- a. Pattern of sound/letters relationship.

Looking for correspondences between sound and letters of English seems a daunting task.

The first sound in the name 'George' can be spelled in eight different ways: j as in *jug*, g as in *gesture*, dg as in *judge*, gg as in *suggest*, dj as in *adjust*, de as in *grandeur*, di as in *soldier*.

- b. Patterns of letter/letter relationship.

Looking for how words are arranged in words:

- a. Words with no double letters.

Pedal, imitate etc.

- b. Words with one pair of double letters, such as accelerate, assist etc.

- c. Words with two pairs of double letters as in accommodate, address etc. (Seely 2005:209-11).

## 2.3 Vocabulary

Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world. Schemas for even simple concepts such as *fish* may be infinitely expanding, from fish to specific fish, to the anatomy of fish, to broiled fish, to other sea creatures. The more one knows about the concept *fish*, the more words one will bring into the understanding of the concept. In addition, depending on one's interest and backgrounds, one will bring different words to that understanding. A fishmonger may know more or fewer fish-related words than a marine biologist, but will certainly know different words, some of which make up the jargon used in the business of selling fish. The words one knows define who he is.

The word vocabulary itself can be confusing. Sometimes educators talk about a "sight vocabulary" or a set of the most common words in English (Fry, Fountoukidis, & Polk, 1985). It is certainly important for children to recognise instantly a set of 100, 300, or more words in print, especially because a small number of words (according to Adams, 1990) accounts for 50% of the words children encounter in a typical reading passage. However, he uses words vocabulary and word meanings synonymously. Furthermore, there are other types of vocabularies other than sight vocabulary, including concept vocabularies, content area vocabularies, and so on. Each different vocabulary has different demands and should be taught in different ways (Stahl, in press 200:98).

Vocabulary is generically defined as the knowledge of words and word meanings. More specifically, vocabulary refers to the kind of words that students must know to read increasingly demanding text with comprehension (Kamil & Hiebert, 2005). It is something that expands and deepens over time. Vocabulary is a "core component of language proficiency and prove much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read and write". They further emphasised that, insufficient vocabulary tends to discourage the learner from exploiting other avenues of language learning. From this point of view, the researchers are of the opinion that vocabulary is the core component of language proficiency and it contributes to learners' ability to read, write, listen and speak very well.

Vocabulary is knowledge of words and word meanings. However, vocabulary is more complex than this definition suggests. First, words come in two forms: oral and print. Oral vocabulary includes those words that we recognize and use in listening and speaking. Print vocabulary includes those words that we recognize and use in reading and writing. Second, word knowledge

also comes in two forms, receptive and productive. Receptive vocabulary includes words that we recognize when we hear or see them. Productive vocabulary includes words that we use when we speak or write. Receptive vocabulary is typically larger than productive vocabulary, and may include many words to which we assign some meaning, even if we do not know their full definitions and connotations or ever use them ourselves as we speak and write (cited in Hiebert, 2005).

Over the years, estimates of student vocabulary size have varied greatly, hindered in part by issues such as the types of vocabularies being considered (e.g. receptive/ productive or oral/print). Depending on how they approached such issues, early vocabulary researchers reported figures ranging from 2,500 to 26,000 words in the vocabularies of typical grade 1 students and from 19,000 to 200,000 words for college graduate students (Beck & McKeown, 1991; in Kamil and Hiebert in press). Researchers began to define more clearly what they meant by vocabulary size, the estimates became more precise. Now, there is considerable consensus among researchers that students add approximately 2,000 to 3,500 distinct words yearly to their reading vocabularies (Anderson & Nagy, 1992; Anglin, 1993; Beck & McKeown, 1991; White et al., 1990).

The students' knowledge of the root word would help them determine a related word's meaning when they encounter that word in a text. To be included in a family, the relationship of a word had to be "semantically transparent." That is, the meaning of the related word can be determined by using knowledge of its root word and the context of text. Therefore, words within a family related to the root *laugh* can include *laughed*, *laughing*, and *laughter* but not *laughingstock*. Based on this definition, Nagy and Anderson estimated that school texts from grades 3 through 9

contain approximately 88,500 distinct word families. Clearly, acquiring meanings for this many words is a formidable task.

Most students do steadily acquire a large number of new words each school year. To understand the magnitude of this accomplishment, consider what learning this number of words would require in terms of instruction. To directly teach students even 3,000 words a year would mean teaching approximately 17 words each school *day* (e.g., 3,000 words/180 schooldays). Estimates vary, but reviews of classroom intervention studies suggest that, in general, no more than 8 to 10 words can be taught effectively each week. This means no more than approximately 400 words can be taught in a year (Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986). Using a simple calculation,  $3,000 - 400 = 2,600$ , produces the conclusion that students must find ways other than direct classroom instruction to learn words.

Stahl, (in press: 96-99) further elaborated that, the estimates of how many words are in the English language vary. English is promiscuous in the way that it adds words and takes words from sources such as other languages, slang, and compounding. Of course, neither children nor adults need to know all of these words, but they are out there to be learned and used. A more reasonable estimate for the number of words that children need to know is that of Nagy and Anderson (1984), who estimated that the number of different word families found in the books that children read from Grades 1 through 12 is approximately 87,000. Of course, many of these words appear only once and readers may not have to know them to understand what they read. Even so, Nagy and Anderson concluded that an average high school senior knows about 45,000 different words. Forty-five thousand is still a great many words to learn. If it is assumed that a child enters Grade 1 knowing roughly 6,000 different words, the child needs to learn 39,000

additional words or so over the next 12 years. That is about 3,000 new words per year. Three thousand new words a year mean that the child must learn roughly 10 new words each *day*. Nevertheless, although this may sound like an impossible goal to achieve, research suggests that the average child does learn roughly 3,000 words per year (White, Graves, & Slater, 1990). This average, however, obscures some important differences. White and his colleagues found a range of growth between 1,000 words for low-achieving children and 5,000 for higher achieving children. This range is important. If one child's vocabulary grows, only a fifth as much as another's, the differences between low-achieving and high-achieving children will only grow larger over time. D'Anna, Zechmiester, and Hall (1991) report even lower estimates of how many words children know and how many words they need to know. Some of these estimates are as low as 5,000 root words over the course of the elementary school years. This would be a more manageable number of words to teach. However, these root words do not include less common but still essential words. Children are generally intelligent and inquisitive, making them naturally curious and receptive to learning new and interesting words. Thus, concentrating exclusively on root words, although they are certainly important, would deny children a source of pleasure in the "gift of words," Scott and Nagy (2004).

There are, however, four problems with teaching word meanings:

1. The sheer number of words that children need to learn to understand and use with proficiency both oral and written language.
2. The gap in levels of word knowledge among children.
3. The gap in levels of word knowledge begins even before children enter school.
4. Traditional vocabulary instruction does not teach children word-learning strategies and how to appreciate words.

## **1. The Sheer Number of Words to be Learned**

Achieving thorough vocabulary knowledge is a goal that may never be reached, even by intelligent adults. Even educated adults know thousands of words, yet, there are always words that we see or hear that we do not know.

“A few years ago, as an example, I was reading *Newsweek* and encountered the word *quotidian*.

This is a word that I did not know, and I was

Surprised to see it in a mass-market magazine. Since then, however, I have come across  
*quotidian* numerous times”.

## **2. The Gap in Word Knowledge among Children**

If children must learn 10 words a day to make normal progress in vocabulary development, then there is a need to find ways to facilitate this learning. Clearly, 10 words a day is more than can be taught directly. Based on observation teachers directly teaching 10 to 12 words per week, but never that many per day, at least not successfully. Although direct teaching of specific words is effective in improving comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986), the large number of words that average children must learn cannot be acquired in any way other than from seeing words in context that is, from wide reading (Stahl, 1991). The widening gap in word learning between children who have reading problems and normally achieving children is an important result of reading problems. Because children with reading problems tend to have smaller vocabularies (mainly through a lack of exposure to words in challenging books rather than through differences in abilities), they often have difficulty understanding and participating in class discussions of reading selections that contain challenging words.

### **3. The Word-Knowledge Gap Begins Early**

The word-learning gap may begin before children enter school. Although children may have sufficient vocabulary to communicate well at home and in their immediate neighborhoods, the "academic" vocabulary they encounter when they start school can be as unfamiliar as a foreign language (Stahl & Nagy, 2004). In a widely cited study, Hart and Risley (1995) found that children from advantaged homes (i.e., children of professionals) had receptive vocabularies as much as five times larger than children from welfare homes (i.e., children in families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children). They found that children in welfare homes had fewer words spoken to them, with more words spoken in imperative sentences (e.g., "Turn off the TV.") and fewer in descriptive or elaborative sentences ("Look at the yellow daffodils starting to bloom over by the door."). Their picture is of a widening gap between the well off and the poor, a gap that threatens to widen over time (Hart & Risley, 1995).

These early differences in vocabulary knowledge can influence children's reading throughout the elementary years and beyond. Dickinson and Tabors (2001) found that children's word knowledge in preschool still had significant correlations with their comprehension in upper elementary school. In contrast, Biemiller and Slonim (2001), who examined children's growth in word meanings between Grades 2 and 5, found that children in the bottom quartile learned more words per day (averaging 3 root words) than did children in the upper quartile (averaging 2.3 root words per day). They suggest that children in the lower quartile had more words to learn, So, given the same exposure to words in school, were able to learn more. However, as children in the lowest quartile started so far behind, they knew only as many word meanings by Grade 5 as typical Grade 4 students. Biemiller and Slonim (2001) suggest that, to close this gap, vocabulary instruction should begin earlier.

#### 4. Traditional Instruction

Vocabulary instruction traditionally has consisted of minimal instruction involving memorization of definitions, instruction that was not very effective. Beck, McKeown, & Kucan (2002), Calderon et al., and Carlo et al. along with others (cited in Stahl & Nagy, 2004), have provided valuable information about how to do this. All of these approaches view word learning as a part of a knowledge curriculum; that is, as an "instructional conversation" (Saunders & Goldenberg, 1999) in which words are embedded, rather than taught as isolated factoids. Programmes that make word-learning part of an integrated curriculum generally share several common characteristics: (a) frequent reading aloud to children, (b) the use of different methods to teach different kinds of words, (c) point of contact teaching, (d) extensive teaching to ensure that word meanings "stick," (e) teaching complex concepts, and (f) concerted efforts to help children acquire an appreciation of the power of words.

One of the problems with vocabulary teaching is that it takes a great deal of time. One study, which admittedly attempted to provide the "Cadillac" of vocabulary instruction, devoted about 20 minutes to the teaching of each word (Beck, McKeown, & Caslin, 1983 cited in Stahl). In most classrooms, of course, teachers allot much less instructional time to teaching words. Even so, given the number of words that must be taught, vocabulary instruction can be time-consuming. Although it may seem to be understood, it is critical to remember that not all words are the same. As Graves (2000) observed, words are of different types:

- Words for which children know synonyms, such as *evil*, *crimson*, *speaking*, or *superior*;
- Words that can be explained with definitions, examples, and context, such as *challenge*, *pedal*, *harp*, or *betray*; and

- Words that represent complex concepts, such as *liberty*, *biome*, or *probability*. Each of these different types of words can be taught differently, thus making vocabulary teaching an easier-to-manage and less time-consuming task.

- Choosing which words to teach involves teacher judgment, a process in which good teachers are continually engaged.
- To teach words in a meaningful manner requires instruction that is more extensive, in a review of vocabulary instructional studies, Stahl and Fairbanks (1986) found three principles that characterized effective vocabulary instruction:

1. Effective vocabulary instruction provides both definitional and contextual information about a word.
2. Effective instruction requires that children engage in deep processing of each word, including generating information that ties the new word to already known information.
3. Effective instruction involves multiple exposures to each word.

“We remember having to memorize lists of word definitions, with tests over the lists on Fridays. If the test was in the morning, nearly all of the words were out of our heads by lunch. Not only was this memorization boring to most of us, but it also did not lead to appreciable growth in our vocabularies (National Reading Panel, 2000; Stahl, 1998; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986). Why? Because in this approach to instruction, definitions are treated as arbitrary pieces of information, just as are infrequently called phone numbers.”

1. **Contextual Knowledge.** Just as learning to extend word meaning with dictionaries is critical, children also need to know how that new word fits into different contexts. Adeptness with word use involves examining words in context and, more importantly, generating context.
  - ◆ Generating sentences: Generating sentences is a useful way for children to learn about word meanings, but the sentences created need to clearly express the meaning of the targeted words. Teachers can assign three or four children say sentences that contain the targeted word, and then have the rest of the class rate how well the sentences express the word's meaning.
  - ◆ Scenarios: Having groups of children make up scenarios that contain a word or, as this activity is time-consuming; a group of words can also be useful in building vocabulary. Scenarios can bring words together, allowing children both to put the words in context and to understand the relationships between words. Scenarios can be in the form of prose, such as stories, or plays that groups of children can act out.
  - ◆ Possible Sentences: Possible Sentences activities allow children to predict both the meanings of the words to be learned and the content of what they are going to read. In Possible sentences, children are given a set of 10 to 12 words that have been taken from a passage they are about to read. Of these words, about four should be known to the children and the rest unknown. Children are asked to make up sentences, each containing two words from the list that might appear in the passage.

**2. Generating Rich Connections.** The second principle of effective vocabulary instruction is that children need to generate rich connections between the new word and already known information. This involves more than learning a simple association, as in the old-fashioned dictionary memorization activities of our school days. Merely comprehending the word in context, during wide reading alone or with point of contact teaching, leads to more learning, but not as much as does having students process the word deeply, generating connections between the new word and different contexts and prior knowledge of other words.(Stahl & Clark, 1987; Stahl & Vancil, 1986). Discussion makes children active thinkers, because they are trying to contribute to the discussion. These connections, of course, only occur if an individual child believes that her or his contribution will be accepted and valued by others. Teachers need to make special efforts to create a classroom community in which the contributions of all children are equally accepted. True discussion, in which all children can participate without intervention by the teacher, is a powerful tool for vocabulary learning, but considerable vocabulary learning also can occur in recitation, in which the teacher monitors the turn taking.

**3. Providing Multiple Exposures to a Word's Meaning.** The third principle of effective vocabulary learning is to provide multiple exposures to a word's meaning. This does not mean mere repetition or drill of the word and a synonym or a definition (e.g., *companion* means "friend"), but seeing the word in different context in sentences, with a definition, and with elaborated information. Repetition can be overdone, but a child probably has to see a word more than once to place it firmly in his or her long-term memory.

Graves (2000, as cited in Taylor, 1990) defines vocabulary as the entire stock of words belonging to a branch of knowledge or known by an individual. He also states that the lexicon of a language is its vocabulary, which includes words and expressions. Krashen (1998, as cited in Herrel, 2004) extends Graves' definition further by stating that lexicon organises the mental vocabulary in a speaker's mind. An individual's mental lexicon is that person's knowledge of vocabulary (Krashen, 1998, as cited in Herrel, 2004). Miller (1999, as cited in Zimmerman, 2007) states that vocabulary is a set of words that are the basic building blocks used in the generation and understanding of sentences.

According to Gardener (2009, as cited in Adger, 2002) vocabulary is not only confined to the meaning of words but also includes how vocabulary in a language is structured: how people use and store words and how they learn words and the relationship between words, phrases, categories of words and phrases (Graves, 2000, as cited in Taylor, 1990) Cummins (1999, as cited in Herrel, 2004) states that there are different types of vocabulary:

Reading vocabulary: This refers to all the words an individual can recognize when reading a text.

Listening vocabulary: It refers to all the words an individual can recognize when listening to speech.

Writing vocabulary: This includes all the words an individual can employ in writing.

Speaking vocabulary: This refers to all the words an individual can use in speech.

Without knowledge of vocabulary, neither language production nor language comprehension would be possible. Thus, the growth of vocabulary knowledge is one of the essential pre-requisites for language acquisition and this growth of vocabulary knowledge can only be

possible when teachers employ effective vocabulary teaching and learning strategies these are the objectives of this research.

### **2.3.1 The Role of Vocabulary in Reading Instruction**

The National Reading Panel of the US identified eight specific findings that provide a scientifically based foundation for the design of rich, multifaceted vocabulary instruction. These conclusions of the National Reading Panel are summarised as follows:

1. There is a need for direct instruction of vocabulary items required for a specific text.
2. Repetition and multiple exposures to vocabulary items are important. Students should be given items that will be likely to appear in many contexts.
3. Learning in rich contexts is valuable for vocabulary learning. Vocabulary words should be those that the learner will find useful in many contexts. When vocabulary items are derived from content learning materials, the learner will be better equipped to deal with specific reading matter in content areas.
4. Vocabulary tasks should be restructured as necessary. It is important to be certain that students fully understand what is asked of them in the context of reading, rather than focusing only on the words to be learned. Restructuring seems to be most effective for low achieving or at-risk students
5. Vocabulary learning is effective when it entails active engagement in learning tasks.
6. Computer technology can be used effectively to help teach vocabulary.
7. Vocabulary can be acquired through incidental learning. Much of a student's vocabulary will have to be learned in the course of doing things other than explicit vocabulary learning. Repetition, richness of context, and motivation may also add to the efficacy of incidental learning of vocabulary.

8. Dependence on a single vocabulary instruction method will not result in optimal learning. A variety of methods was used effectively with emphasis on multimedia aspects of learning, richness of context in which words are to be learned, and the number of exposures to words that learners receive. (National Reading Panel, 2000, p. 4-4)

Adding further complexity, in education, the word vocabulary is used with varying meanings. For example, for beginning reading teachers, the word might be synonymous with “sight vocabulary,” by which they mean a set of the most common words in English that young students need to be able to recognize quickly as they see them in print. However, for teachers of upper elementary and secondary school students, *vocabulary* usually means the “hard” words that student encounter in content area textbook and literature selections. Then vocabulary is defined vocabulary as knowledge.

### **2.3.2 Incidental Word Learning**

Since the early 1980s a number of reading researchers have focused on vocabulary acquisition by native speakers of English. While there is a great deal of variation in the estimates of number of words known by native speakers of various ages and level of education, many researchers agreed that vocabulary acquisition occur at impressively fast rate from childhood throughout the years of formal education and at a slower pace on into adult life. For the native speakers acquire words ‘incidentally’ as they encounter them in the speech and writing of people, those words are not taught by parents or teachers or in any formal way. The term **incidental** often causes problems in the discussion of research on this kind of vocabulary acquisition. In practice it usually means that the research subjects are given a reading or listening task without being told to focus on the vocabulary in the input and without being told that they are going to be taking

vocabulary test. Schmitt (1990 cited in Read, 2000:45), who has published influential work on consciousness in the second language acquisition, argues that learners do not acquire knowledge of words or any other elements of language unless they (consciously) notice them in some sense.

According to National Reading Panel of the US, 2000 most word learning occurs incidentally through experiences with oral language and wide reading. Although this learning is called incidental, children's opportunities for word learning often reflect conscious choices on the parts of parents, family members, and teachers to use language in ways that invite children to ask and answer questions and to hear and read words that expand their vocabularies. Garner (2009) suggested the following ways of helping learners to remember previously learned words. Spend time on a word by dealing with two or three aspects of the word, such as its spelling, pronunciation, parts, related derived forms, its meaning, its collocations, its grammar, or restrictions on its use.

### **2.3.3 Incidental Word Learning Through Oral Language**

Based on the researches conducted on vocabulary, logic suggest that the more oral language experiences children have in their early years, the more words and word meanings they acquire. It is the kind and extent of these early oral language experiences that profoundly affect children's later reading and school success. Young children whose experiences include hearing a lot of language and being encouraged to use and experiment with language themselves tend to achieve early reading success; children who have limited experiences with language often have trouble learning to read, and as they progress through school, they remain at risk for reading and learning problems (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001).

An extensive body of research indicates that through incidental learning that is, through exposure to and interaction with increasingly complex and rich oral language and by encountering many new words in text, either through their own reading or by being read to (National Reading Panel, 2000). However, such incidental encounters cannot ensure that students will acquire in-depth meanings of specific words (Fukkink & de Glopper, 1998). For some words, such as those that are crucial for understanding a literature selection or a content area concept, most students need to have intentional and explicit instruction.

Explicit instruction means that word learning is the direct focus of the activity, and both children and teachers are aware of this focus such as Didactic- Interactional Book Reading, Explicit Targeted Vocabulary, and Novel-Name Nameless Category (N3C) presentation strategy.

According to Schwanenflugel et al (1996: 160) there are three explicit strategies that have value in promoting vocabulary development:

- ◆ Didactic- Interactional Book Reading
- ◆ Explicit Targeted Vocabulary
- ◆ Novel-Name Nameless Category (N3C) presentation strategy

Didactic- Interactional Book Reading represents an effort to balance building vocabulary and comprehension. In it style, teachers often pull out the vocabulary word and provide a synonym or re-cast to broaden the definition of the target word. This strategy may require minimal interaction from children (children passively listen to the target words defined or simply repeat) to more extensive expressive interaction (children extensively use the word in response to a

question or in choral repetition; Justice, 2000 cited Schwanenflugel et al (1996: 160). Reese and Cox (1999) observed that 4-year-olds with smaller vocabularies may actually do better with didactic-interactive style compared to a standard interactive style. Teachers are arguing stop and make note of specific new words in the context, describing relations between the word and the context. On subsequent rereading, they might ask children to make some sort of response when they hear these new words they are learning.

### **Explicit Targeted Vocabulary**

Another strategy for encouraging vocabulary growth is to create set targeted vocabulary words that are to be directly dealt with in multiple ways. One successful intervention using this approach was by Wasik and Bond (2001). In that study, 4-year-olds were taught 10 target vocabulary words weekly using an integrated package of books, objects, and activities. Children were presented with concrete representations of the words and were provided with definitions prior to book reading. Teachers then interactively read two books that contained these words several times over the week. Then, use of these target words was encouraged by classroom activities that allowed children play with the objects. Children made expressive and receptive vocabulary gains for the targeted vocabulary words, and general gains on a standardised test of receptive vocabulary. Teachers are requested to develop a set of 10 target words weekly, five from each of two books they were planning to reread during the week. Teachers were expected to create activities that would allow children to use the target words elsewhere in the classroom, and the children were to use the words expressively in their speech. They created informal assessment.

Novel-Name Nameless Category (N3C) Presentation strategy.

This usually occur between the age of 1-2 years, normally developing children experience what has been called a vocabulary spurt (Dromi, 1987), where children move from learning few words per week to nine words per day (or 3,000 words per year). The responsibility for this spurt can be attributed to a number of universal strategies that children develop relating to word learning. The N3C principle allows 2- year-old children to fast map nouns, verbs, and adjectives (Golinkoff, Hirsh-Pasek, Mervis, Frawley, & Parillo, 1995, cited in Schwanenflugel et al 1996: 161). The moment the children develop more complex vocabulary, they are able to move beyond the N3C principle to more sophisticated context learning strategies. But for the kindergarteners' still building basic vocabulary, N3C is a key vocabulary learning strategy. By nesting an unknown picture or objects for a new word among pictures or objects of commonly known things, the teacher can evoke the N3C strategy. Preliminary evidence indicates that the N3C strategy is an active tool for children's words learning even at 7 years old (Liu, Golinkoff, & Sak, 2001; Sugimura & Maeda, 1997). Despite the ubiquity of this strategy in research on child word learning, there is virtually no research on its use as teaching strategy. From this study, the N3C presentation format was promoted as a vocabulary introduction strategy. Specifically, teachers were asked to introduce the five targeted vocabulary words they had selected from their chosen text one at a time, (either concrete objects or pictures) in an N3C format (e.g., presenting a representations of unknown words such as radish, next to two representations of unknown words such as carrot and tomato).

#### **2.3.4 Oral Language Experiences at School.**

Once children begin school, the teacher talk they hear throughout the day poses opportunities to familiarize them with the kind of oral language that promotes vocabulary growth. Yet,

researchers have found that talk in primary and elementary school classrooms is often limited to commonly recognized words and largely involves concrete talk about the “here and now” (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001). In a review of the very large body of research related to the teaching and learning of vocabulary indicates that there are very strong reasons for implementing a systematic and principled approach to the teaching and subsequent learning of vocabulary as a cornerstone for developing comprehension. Several researchers and vocabulary experts agree that vocabulary learning is really a special case of reading comprehension (Blachowicz and Ogle, 2001; Cunningham and Stanovich, 1998; Nagy and Anderson, 1984; McKeown, et al., 1983 cited in Hiebert, 2005).

In addition, by implementing a systematic and principled approach to teaching and learning vocabulary, learners see vocabulary as a very important element in language learning and reading (Beck, McKeown, and Kucan, 2002; Bormuth, 1966; Davis, 1944, 1968 in Kamil and Hiebert in press). Besides indicating what methodology seems to work best in helping learners acquire vocabulary, a review of the research reveals that there is a large body of information available about what kinds of vocabulary to focus on. Therefore, there are a wide variety of word lists that can be used successfully (Vacca, Vacca, and Gove, 2000; Allen, 1999; Baker, Simmons, and Kameenui, 1995; Bauman and Kameenui, 1991; Adams and Cerqui, 1989; Marzano and Marzano, 1988; Nagy, 1988). Thus, the consensus among the researchers and experts, related to choosing or rejecting one or another means of instruction, suggests that those who are choosing or rejecting a programme have a thorough understanding of the following:

- How the programme deals with vocabulary
- The principles behind the methodology that is used

- The theoretical and experimental justification upon which the methodology is based (Nation, 1990)

### **2.3.5 Direct and Indirect Vocabulary Teaching**

Most researchers and vocabulary experts believe that the best methodology employs both direct and indirect teaching and provides opportunities for both receptive and productive learning to occur. Thus, vocabulary teaching can fit into any course that involves language learning, not just reading or language arts classes. The amount of time spent either on direct or indirect instruction depends on the teacher's judgment in relation to a large number of factors, such as time available, the age of the learners, and the amount of contact the learners are likely to have with the variety of English words, both in and out of school (Vacca, Vacca and Gove, 2000; Allen, 1999; Marzano and Marzano, 1988).

It is often thought and expressed that vocabulary will be learned simply through wide exposure to listening and reading. In this regard, research indicates that reading and listening will increase the quality of receptive knowledge of words. However, in many cases, direct instruction must be provided in order to encourage quantity of receptive word knowledge before quality growth will occur (Beck, McKeown, and Kucan, 2002).

Receptive knowledge of words requires that the learner recognize a word and recall its meaning when it is met. Instructional techniques that help students become familiar with a large number of words are the best facilitators for this level of vocabulary learning and, because of this

facilitation, can eventually lead to greater student reading comprehension (Beck, et al., 1987; Anderson and Freebody, 1981). In direct vocabulary instruction, learners do many specific exercises and activities that focus their attention directly on certain words in lists, learning word parts, and vocabulary games like “Spelling Bee”. These techniques will benefit all learners, but have been shown to especially benefit learners with limited personal experience with words as well as limited knowledge of words (Vacca, Vacca and Gove, 2000; Omanson et al., 1984; Jenkins, Stein, and Wysocki, 1984; McKeown et al., 1983; Kame’enui, Carnine, and Freschi, 1982 cited in Hiebert, 2005). Direct vocabulary instruction techniques have also been shown to benefit all readers who are required to read a specific text and deal with vocabulary items that are necessary for understanding that text (Herbert and Nelson-Herbert, 1993).

It is also helps to make learners aware of new words by glossing them (Watanabe, 1997), highlighting them in the text and by using dictionary. Effective vocabulary instruction requires educators to intentionally provide many rich, robust opportunities for students to learn words, related concepts, and their meanings. Students need strong instructional opportunities to build their personal warehouse of words, to develop deep levels of word knowledge, and acquire a toolbox of strategies that aids their independent word acquisition.

### **2.3.6 What is a Word?**

According to Bechman and Palmer’s (1996: 17) book of *Language Testing in Practice Vocabulary Testing* is all about assessing knowledge of words. But word is not an essay concept to define, in both theoretical and different applied purposes. However, vocabulary in the light of current development in language teaching and applied linguistics. The meaning of a word is an

issue that is of considerable interest to linguists on a theoretical level. Researchers who attempted to measure how many words native speaker and non-native speaker of English know have produced wildly varying figure because of their different ways of defining what a word is. Another question is does vocabulary consist of single words, or larger lexical items.

There are important things to talk about. One is the difference between **tokens** and **types** which applies to any count of the word in the text. The number of tokens is the same as the total number of word forms, which means the individual words occurring more than once in the text are counted each time they are used. On the other hand, the number of types is the total number of different words form, so that a word which is repeated many times is counted only once (Nation and Meara, 2000 cited in Schmitt, 2010:39-52).

Secondly, words like the, a, to, and, in, and that leads to the question of whether they are to be regarded as vocabulary items. Words of this kind that is, articles, prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns auxiliaries, etc. referred to as **function words** and are seen belonging more to the grammar of the language than to its vocabulary. Unlike **content words** such as nouns, full verbs, adjectives and adverbs which have little if any meaning in isolation and serve more to provide links within sentences, modify the meaning of content words and so on. Generally speaking in vocabulary test, it is the content words that attention is focus. (Bechman and Palmer, 1996: 18).

Thirdly, when words are restricting to content words, another problem is that these words come in variety forms. Example words like wait, waits, waited, and waiting; similarly words society, societies, society's and societies'. In both cases, they are normally regarded as different forms of

the same words. In vocabulary studies, the base and the inflected forms of a word are collectively known as **lemma**. when researchers undertake a study that involved counting the number of words (in the sense of types) in a written or spoken text, one of the first steps is normally to lemmatise the tokens, so that inflected forms are counted as instances of the same lemma as the base form.

However, base words not only take inflectional endings but also have variety of derived forms, which often change the word class and add new element of meaning. Example: the word leak, with inflected forms leaks, leaking, and leaked as well as these derivatives: leaky, leakiness, leaker and leakage. Even though there is distinction between the ‘literal loss of a fluid’ and the more metaphorical ‘loss of secret information’ all these words are closely related in form and meaning. Such set of word forms, sharing a common meaning known as **word family**.

The situation is more complex with a word such as society and the other words social, socially, sociable etc. shared the same soci form but they are not in the same family. Different forms and word families is very important in relation to measures of vocabulary size. One of the reasons for widely varying estimates of how many words a native speaker knows is that some researchers are counting word forms while others focus on word families. If a vocabulary-size test is based on a sample of say 200 items taken from a list which includes a lot of related word forms, it will lead to a larger estimate of vocabulary size than a 200-item sample taken from a list of word families another complication in defining word is homographs. These are single word forms that have at least two meanings that are different and belong to different word families. Example, the word *bank* has the following meanings: an institution that provides financial services, the sloping ground beside a river. It also refers to a row of dials or switches, to the titling of an aircraft’s

wing as it turns. There is no single or underlying meaning that link all four of these definitions. So in testing context, knowing the meaning of one word does not mean a learner has acquired any of the others Test items can be designed to assess not only the basic meaning of a word, but also its derived forms, its spelling, its synonyms and other words associated with it; they can also be designed to assess the grammatical structure into which a word fits. (Goulden, Nation and Read 1990: 21-43).

### **2.3.7 What is meant by Knowing a Word?**

According to Richards 1976 what is meant by knowing a word means:

1. Knowing a word means knowing many of the different meanings associated with a word.
2. Knowing a word means knowing the semantic value of a word.
3. Knowing a word entails knowledge underlying form of a word and the derivations that can be made from it.
4. Knowing a word means knowing the syntactic behaviour associated with the word.
5. Knowing a word implies knowing the limitations on the use of the word according to variations of function and situation. (Richards, 1976: 83).

Also, studies conducted which are reviewed by a number of authors such as (Nation, 1990) are as follows:

1. Words belonging to different word classes vary according to how difficult they are to learn. Rodger (1969) found that nouns are easiest to learn because learners

can form mental images of them, following by adjectives; on the other hand, verbs and adverbs were the most difficult.

2. Mnemonic techniques are very effective methods for gaining an initial knowledge of word meanings in second language (Cohen 1987; Hulstijn; 1997). It involves teaching learners to form vivid mental images which link the meanings of L2 word and L1 word that has similar sound. This technique works best for the receptive learning of concrete word.

- a. In order to be able to retrieve L2 words from memory- rather than just recognising them when presented. Learners need to say the word themselves as they learn it.
- b. Words which are hard to pronounce are learned more slowly than ones that do not have significant pronunciation difficulty.
- c. Learners at low level of language store vocabulary according to the sound of words, whereas at more advance levels words are stored according to meaning.
- d. Lists of words which are strongly associated with each other- like opposite (rich , poor) or word sets (shirt, jacket, sweater) are significantly more difficult to learn than lists of unrelated words, because they of the cross-association that occurs among the related words.
- e. More generally, learners commonly confuse L2 words which look and sound alike (Bechman and Palmer, 1996).

Champelle (1994 cited in Read, 2000) outlines four of vocabulary knowledge:

Vocabulary size: refers to the number of words that a person knows. In work with native speakers scholars have attempted to measure the total size of their vocabulary by taking a sample of words from a large unabridged dictionary. In the case of second language learners the goal is normally more modest: it is to estimate how many of the more common words they know based on a test of their knowledge of a sample of items from a word-frequency list. As Chappelle (1994: 165) points out, when testing communicative approach to vocabulary ability, vocabulary size not only measured in an absolute sense, but rather in relation to particular context of use. For example, how adequate is the learner's vocabulary for reading.

Knowledge of word characteristics: Richards (1976) and Nation's (1990) frameworks were developed. Just as native speakers do, second language learners know more about some words than others. Their understanding of particular lexical items may range from vague to more precise (Cronbach, 1942). As Laufer (1990) points out, learners are likely to be confused about some of words that they have learned, because the words share certain common features, e.g. affect, effect, quite, quiet etc. and again, as with vocabulary size, the extent to which a learner knows a word varies according to the context in which it is used.

## **1. Useful Words**

Words in the language have different levels of utility. In this regard, it has been found that, there is a notion of tiers to be one helpful lens through which to consider words for instructional attention. Tier One consists of the most basic words—*clock*, *baby*, *happy*—rarely requiring instruction in school. Tier Three includes words whose frequency of use is quite low, often being

limited to specific domains—*isotope*, *lathe*, *peninsula*—and probably best learned when needed in a content area. Tier Two words are high-frequency words for mature language users—*coincidence*, *absurd*, *industrious* and, thus, instruction in these words can add productively to an individual's language ability. To get an idea of the process of identifying Tier Two words, consider an example. That is, most of the words are likely to appear frequently in a wide variety of texts and in the written and oral language of mature language users.

## **2. Selecting from a Pool of Words**

The decision about which words to teach must also take into account how many words to teach in conjunction with any given text or lesson. Given that students are learning vocabulary in social studies and science as well as reading or language arts, there needs to be some basis for limiting the number of words so that students will have the opportunity to learn some words well. The researchers consider which of the words will be most useful in helping students understand it. Teachers should feel free to use their best judgment, based on an understanding of their students' needs, in selecting words to teach. They should also feel free to treat words in different ways. Tier Two words are not only words that are important for students to know, they are also words that can be worked with in a variety of ways so that students have opportunities to build rich representations of them and of their connections to other words and concepts.

## **3. Selecting Words for Young Children**

Selecting words to enhance the vocabulary repertoires of young children, those who are just learning to read. Two immediate distinctions between vocabulary work with intermediate and older students and work with students in the earliest grades, typically kindergarten through early second grade.

- ◆ The first is the find best sources for new vocabulary are trade books that teachers read aloud to children rather than the books children read on their own.
- ◆ The second distinction is that in contrast to introducing words before a story, to young children it most appropriate to engage in vocabulary activities after a story has been read.

There are two reasons why vocabulary activities for young children should occur after a story.

First, if a word is needed for comprehension, inasmuch as the teacher is reading the story, the teacher is available to briefly explain the word at the point in the story where it is needed.

Secondly, because the words that will be singled out for vocabulary attention are words that are very likely unfamiliar to young children, the context from the story provides a rich ample of the word's use and thus strong support for children's initial learning of the word.

A concern that surfaces in deciding which words to teach is whether words are appropriate for students at certain grade levels. Key to this concern is to understand that no formula exists for selecting age-appropriate vocabulary words despite lists that identify "fifth-grade words" or "seventh-grade words." There is simply no basis for determining which words students should be learning at different grade levels. For example, that *coincidence* is an "eighth-grade word" according to a frequency index means only that most students do not know the word until eighth grade. It does not mean that students in seventh or even third grade cannot learn the word or should not be taught it.

There are only two things that make a word inappropriate for a certain level. One is not being able to explain the meaning of a word in known terms. If the words used to explain a target word

are likely unknown to the students, then the word is too hard. The other consideration for word selection is that the words be useful and interesting ones that students will be able to find uses for in their everyday lives. Of course, this is a matter of judgment, best decided by those who know the individual students. Work that have been done with kindergarten and first-grade children shows that sophisticated words can be successfully taught to young children.

### **2.3.8 How do we choose which Words to Test?**

The history of vocabulary assessment in the twenty century is very much associated with the development of **objective testing**, especially in the United States objective tests are ones in which the learning material is divided into small units, each of which can be assessed by means of a test item with a single correct answer that can be specified in advance. It is not possible to test all that native speaker of a language might know. Researchers started with a large dictionary and then drawn a sample of words representing 1 per cent (1 in 100) of the total dictionary entries. The next step is to test how many of the selected words are known by a group of subjects. Finally, the test scores are multiplied by 100 to given an estimate of the total vocabulary size. Measuring the vocabulary size of second language learners may be less problematic in the sense that they generally know fewer words than the native speakers do.

Secondly the words they know are likely to be common. The new studies that have estimated the vocabulary size of learners of English (such as Nurrweni and Read, 1999 cited in Read 2000: 87) have used lists of high – frequency words such as the *Teacher's Word Book* as basis of their sampling. It is straightforward matter to draw a sample of words from an estimated list, and the sample usually represents a much higher proportion of the items than does sample taken from a large dictionary.

In numerous countries where English is a foreign language, university students are taught through the medium of the national language but they need to read English text related to their field of study. The primary objective of English teaching in secondary school is to prepare students to meet their reading needs at the university level. Scholars work on the assumption that, in order to read independently, learners should know at least 95 per cent of the running words in a text. This means that on average only one word in 20 will be unfamiliar to them. The point is that adequate knowledge of a word is a prerequisite for effective language use. Learners whose vocabulary is below a certain threshold level struggle to decode the basic element of a text, to the extent that they find it hard to develop higher level understanding of the content.

### **2.3.9 How do we find out whether the Selected Words are known?**

Once a sample of words has been selected, the next step is to find out by means of some kind of tests to measure whether each word is known. In studies of vocabulary size, the criterion for knowing a word is usually quite liberal, because of the large number of words that need to be covered in the time available for testing. The following test formats have been commonly used:

- ◆ Multiple choice items
- ◆ Matching of words with synonyms or definition
- ◆ Supplying an L1 equivalent for each L2 target word.
- ◆ The check list (or yes or no).

For the purpose of testing vocabulary size, they are time consuming to construct and the test-takers' performance is too dependent on the choice of distractors. Even though, the next two tests are simple to construct than multiple choice ones, they represent a low level of word knowledge: the ability to associate each target word with another word or phrase that has the 'same' meaning. Such tests do not give any indication of whether the learners will understand the word when they encounter it in use, especially if it has a different meaning from the one they have learned. With an L2 to L1 translation task there is additional draw back that the test-takers may produce a range of answers that have to be scored subjectively, which take more time than for a more objective test format. The checklist test is really the simplest possible format for testing vocabulary and, according to Melka Teichrow (1982:7 cited in Read, 2000: 89); it has been in used with native speakers at least since 1890. In comparison with other test items, Anderson and Free body saw its simplicity as a virtue, in that 'it strips away irrelevant task demands that may make it difficult for young readers and poor readers. However, researchers have come to different conclusions about its validity as a measure of children's vocabulary knowledge. Slims (1929) concluded that it was measuring the children's familiarity with the words from having seen them in books, rather than how well they understand them.

The obvious criticism of the checklist in its classic form is that there is no way of knowing how validly the test-takers are reporting their knowledge of words. They can have a different idea from the researcher as to what 'knowing a word' means and may be genuinely mistaken about particular words, confusing one with another. Making good estimates of vocabulary size is a complex task. At all three levels- defining the units to be counted, selecting a sample and deciding on a test format, there are challenging questions to be resolved before a reliable measure can be obtained.

The purpose of assessing the learners' progress in vocabulary learning and more specifically, to give them an incentive to keep studying vocabulary on regular basis. The underlying assumption is that it is important to build their vocabulary size in the second language, which requires a systematic study of words by individual learners in addition to any class work on vocabulary. In term of construct definition, a progress test is clear case where a syllable- based definition is appropriate. There is an obvious tendency for teacher to choose test task according to how easy they are to prepare and to mark, but some consideration should be given to the relationship between the requirements of the test items and the learning objectives of the class programme.

The target words in the progress tests have usually come from a unit in the course book, or from a specialised word list, such as one of the sub-lists of University Word list (Nation, 1990). A third possibility is that the learners select their own words. This is appropriate for learners who are relatively advanced in language learning and where there is a range of future language needs represented within the class. Example of such learners are postgraduate students preparing for study or research in several different disciplines, recent migrants who are seeking employment in a range of occupations or adults proposing to travel to a foreign country to pursue a variety of social or cultural interest.

## **2.4The Role of Context in Vocabulary Assessment**

The role of context in vocabulary assessment is a vital issue that need to be discussed whether it can be separated from other aspects of language proficiency. In the early years of objective testing, many vocabulary tests presented the target words in isolation, in lists or as the stems of multiple choice items. It was considered that such tests were pure measures of vocabulary

knowledge. In fact, the distinguished American scholar John B. Carroll wrote in an un-published paper in 1954 (cited in Spolsky, 1995: 165) that test items containing a single target word were the only ones that should be classified as vocabulary item. Any longer stimulus would turn the item into a reading-comprehension one.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

There are different ways of teaching vocabulary in ESL class, but the model used is direct and indirect vocabulary teaching which is believed to be the best according to many scholars. According Vacca, Vacca and Gove (2000), Allen (1999) and Marzano&Marzano (1988), direct and indirect is a method that provides opportunities for both receptive and productive learning to occur. Direct and indirect vocabulary teaching depends on the teacher's judgement in relation to large number of factors, such as time available, age of the learners, and the amount of the contact the learners are likely to have with variety of English words, both in and out of the school.

It is often thought and expressed that vocabulary will be learned simply through wide exposure to listening and reading. In this regard, research indicates that reading and listening will increase the quality of receptive knowledge of words. However, in many cases, direct instruction must be provided in order to encourage quantity of receptive word knowledge before quality growth will occur (Beck, McKeown, and Kucan, 2002; Kameenui, Dixon, and Carnine, 1987 cited in Hiebert, 2005).

Receptive knowledge of words requires that the learner recognise a word and recall its meaning when it is met. Instructional techniques that help students become familiar with a large number of words are the best facilitators for this level of vocabulary learning and, because of this

facilitation, can eventually lead to greater student reading comprehension ( Anderson and Freebody, 1981).

In direct vocabulary instruction, learners do many specific exercises and activities that focus their attention directly on certain words in lists, learning word parts, and vocabulary games like “Spelling Bee”. These techniques will benefit all learners, but have been shown to especially benefit learners with limited personal experience with words as well as limited knowledge of words (Vacca, Vacca and Gove, 2000; Omanson et al., 1984; Jenkins, Stein, and Wysocki, 1984; McKeown et al., 1983; Kameenui, Carnine, and Freschi, 1982 cited in Hiebert, 2005).

There are major differences between the present study and past related literature. Previous researchers focuses more attention on boosting vocabulary through reading, while, this research is on teaching vocabulary through “Spelling Bee”( direct and indirect method), to improve their English , Spelling capabilities, comprehension and communication skills. It also develops self-esteem, confidence and interpersonal skills of students by exposing them to positive role model, tutors and peers supports through the course of the preparation.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the general methodology used in the research. The population and sampling as well the instrument for the collection of data are also discussed. Also, the detailed description of the validity of the instrument of the data is discussed.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This research is experimental in nature, where by the researcher used twenty (26) pupils in the experimental group and twenty (26) pupils in the control group in the process of conducting the research.

#### **3.2 Population of the Study**

Population of the study that are of the interest of the researcher for the purpose of the study includes all the pupils in the Nursery Schools.

##### **3.2.1 Population of the Sample and Size**

The participants' age is from 5-7 years old. They are pupils of Green Olive International School and Bayero University, Kano Staff Nursery School. Sample on the other hand refers to the portion or fraction of that population in which the researcher select and that is capable of representing the entire population in making generalisation. Because of the large size of the population, time factor and economic constraints the researcher selects a sample out of the population. After obtaining the statistics of the educational zone the researcher selects two (2)

schools out of the total number in the ten (10) educational zones, that is, one (1) private school from Dala Local Government and one (1) public school from Gwale Local Government.

### **3.2.2 Sampling Technique**

Two techniques were employed by the researcher in selecting the above: cluster and simple random technique. The reason why the researcher selected these two techniques are as follows: all the Nursery Schools across the 34 Local Government Areas were grouped into 10 zones. The research employed simple random sampling technique in order to do away with biasness, because this technique allows every subject an independent and equal opportunity of being selected. For that, the researcher selected five zones as the sample out of the ten (10), by writing the name of each zone on a piece of paper and then folding the paper. The papers were mixed-up. Random selection with replacement was done until the five (5) zones were selected. The same procedure was followed in selecting the two schools.

### **3.3 Instrument for Data Collection**

The instrument used in the data collection for the purpose of the research is the “Spelling bee” quiz (test).

#### **3.3.1 Validation for the Data Collection Instrument**

In order to ascertain of the validity content of the test item, the researcher conducted a pilot study. The study was conducted at Mafaz Science Academy, Gwammaja. The study had the total of 20 pupils (participants), 10 pupils for the experimental group and the other 10 for the control group selected from the same school. All the participants had studied English for a minimum of two-three years and had scored 50 -70 per cent in their pre-test, but had difficulty in

differentiating the /p/ and /f/ sound as in: *pin-fin, pan-fan, pat-fat, fill-pill and pork and fork*. The participants had 30 minute for four days teaching; they were taught three and four letter words (in the area of their difficulty). The task involved spelling some words taught to them written and orally. After they wrote them, they were asked to spell the words orally. For the first instance, some participants could not perform well even though they wrote the words correctly.

The pupils were taught three and four letter words including /p/ and /f/ sounds being their area of difficulty. At the end they were quizzed (“Spelling Bee” quiz). The researcher chose 10 students to stand in front of the class and dictated a spelling word to one participant. If the participant spells the word correctly, he remains at the front of the line. If he does not, he sits down, leaving the competition. Write each well-spelt word on the board. The participant who remains standing is the winner (and gets a prize!). And the members of the control group failed to differentiate and spell certain words like pork, pill, fun/fan, pat, pill/fill etc. This leads to their disqualification.

### **3.4 Data Collection Procedure**

The procedure followed by the purpose of the researcher for collecting data for the purpose of this research was paying a visit to the selected Nursery School and administering the data collection instrument. The researcher visited the sampled Nursery Schools and conducted a “Spelling Bee” quiz. The subjects used in this research were (28) students from Green Olive International School, and (24) students from Bayero University, Kano Staff Nursery School.

The study had the total of 52 pupils (participants), 26 for the experimental group and the other 26 for the control group selected from the same school. All the participants had studied English for a minimum of two-three years and had scored 50 -70 per cent in their pre-test, but had difficulty

in differentiating the /p/ and /f/ as in pat and fat, /i/ and /i:/ as in ship and sheep, /s/ and /z/ as in sip and zip sounds. The participants had a four-day 30 minute teaching; they were taught three and four letter words (in the area of their difficulty). The task involved spelling a set number of three and four letter words taught to them written and orally. After they wrote them, they were asked to spell the words orally. For the first instance, some participants could not perform well even though they wrote the words correctly.

In direct vocabulary instruction, learners did some specific exercises and activities that focused their attention directly on certain words on a list, learning word parts and vocabulary games. These techniques will benefit all the learners, but have been shown to especially benefit those with limited personal experience with words, as well as limited knowledge of words (Vacca, Vacca and Gove, 2000; Omanson et al., 1984; Jenkins, Stein, and Wysocki, 1984; McKeown et al., 1983; Kameenui, Carnine, and Freschi, 1982 cited in Hiebert 2005).

### **3.5 Method of Analysis**

Dictation is part of what is being taught to them in English, but there is nothing like the “Spelling Bee”. Due to that they can write down what is dictated to them. When it comes to spell the words orally, they find it difficult due to the lack of exposure. In addition, there is a great difference between their first and second performances. In addition to that, the pupils also spell the words faster than before besides engaging themselves with spelling exchanges. Also for the confusing words, the speller put the words in a context. Richards and Renandya (2002) see vocabulary as a “core component of language proficiency and prove much of the basis for how well learners

“speak, listen, read and write”. They further emphasised that insufficient vocabulary tends to discourage the learner from exploiting other avenues of language learning.

The teaching was designed to suit the Bailly method of teaching “Spelling Bee”, which comprises finding the difficult area of the students, giving them word list to memorise and then quizzing them. In order to make it competitive, the “Spelling Bee” organisers’ guideline was used.

- Choose 4-10 students to stand in front of the class.
- Dictate a spelling word to one participant.
- If the participant spells the word correctly, he remains at the front of the line.
- If he does not spell the word correctly, he sits down, leaving the competition.
- Write each well-spelt word on the board.
- The participant who remains standing is the winner (and gets a prize!)(Bailly, 1980, p.1-2).

The instrument used by the researcher for using data in this research was simple percentage.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND FINDING

#### 4.0 Introduction

In this chapter analyse the data collected in the “Spelling Bee” quiz, so as to answer the research question of this study as stated in chapter one. The “Spelling Bee” result was tabulated and percentages were computed; and explanation was made as to the impact of the “Spelling Bee” in Nursery II within Kano State.

#### 4.1.0 The Significant Change in the Number of Vocabulary Items Acquired by Pupils Who are taught the “Spelling Bee”.

With regard to a significant change in the number of vocabulary items acquired by pupils who are taught the “Spelling Bee” based on the weeks the research took in teaching the pupils new words and the “Spelling Bee” Quiz conducted as below.

#### 4.1.1 Data Presentation of the Green Olive International School

The study had the total of 28 pupils (participants), 14 pupils for the experimental group and the other 14 for the control group selected from the same school. All the participants had studied English for a minimum of two-three years and had scored 30 -60 per cent in their pre-test, but had difficulty in differentiating the /p/ and /f/ sound as in: *pin-fin, pan-fan, pat-fat, fill-pill and pork and fork*, /s/ and /z/ sound as in: *sip-zip, sink-zink*, /b/ and /v/ sound as in: *ban-van, berry-very* etc. The participants had a two weeks 15 minute teaching; they were taught three and four letter words ( in the area of their difficulty). The task involved spelling a set number of three

and four letter words taught to them written and orally. After they wrote them, they were asked to spell the words orally. For the first instance, some participants could not perform well even though they wrote the words correctly.

In direct vocabulary instruction, learners do many specific exercises and activities that focus their attention directly on certain words in lists, learning word parts, and vocabulary games. These techniques will benefit all learners, but have been shown to especially benefit learners with limited personal experience with words as well as limited knowledge of words (Vacca, Vacca and Gove, 2000; Omanson et al., 1984; Jenkins, Stein, and Wysocki, 1984; McKeown et al., 1983; Kameenui, Carnine, and Freschi, 1982 cited in Hiebert 2005).

The teaching was designed to suit the Bailly method of teaching “Spelling Bee”, which comprises finding the difficult area of the students, giving them word list to memorise and then quizzing them. In order to make it competitive, the “Spelling Bee” organisers’ guideline was used.

- Choose 4-10 students to stand in front of the class.
- Dictate a spelling word to one participant.
- If the participant spells the word correctly, he remains at the front of the line.
- If he does not spell the word correctly, he sits down, leaving the competition.
- Write each well-spelt word on the board.
- The participant who remains standing is the winner (and gets a prize!) (Bailly, 1980, p.1-2).

The participants chosen between the ages of 5-7 (Nursery II pupils) because the previous research was conducted on children aged between 7-14 years (primary and secondary students).

Secondly, the pupils are going to primary 1 where they are going to start reading. Having more words will help them while reading any given text. The study was an empirical research, hence its findings are expected to be generalised. The study was conducted at Green Olive International School, Gwammaja. The pupils were taught three and four letter words including /p/ and /f/, /i/ and /i:/, /u/ and /u:/ etc. sounds being their area of difficulty. At the end they were quizzed ("Spelling Bee" quiz). The researcher chose 28 students to stand in front of the class and dictated a spelling word to one participant. If the participant spells the word correctly, he remains at the front of the line. If he does not, he sits down, leaving the competition. Write each well-spelt word on the board. The participant who remains standing is the winner (and gets a prize!)

#### **4.1.2 Dictation outcome of Green Olive International School**

The pupils were asked to write down 10 three and four letter words they know in day 1, as their pre-test and average score is 33%. Then the researcher drilled them on their difficult areas i.e. with words like *pin-fin, fan-pan, fat-pat, fill-pill, fork-pork, sip-zip, sink-zink, van-ban, berry-very, get-gate, and met-mate*. After the lesson, they were asked to write the words they hear as the evaluation. The average score of the experimental group was 67% marks. Day 2: the researcher repeated the lesson for the second time. At the end of the lesson, they were asked to write down the words they hear in a piece of paper. The average score of the experimental group was 84% marks. Day 3: they were drilled on just six words so as to learn on their pace such as *fat-pat, fan-pan and pin-fin*. Day 4: *pin-fin and pill-and fill*. Week II: day 1: *sip-zip and van-ban*. Day 2: *get-gate met-mate and cat-cut*. Each word is used in a given context.

#### 4.1.3 The “Spelling Bee” Quiz of Green Olive International School

Day 3: the pupils were tested by presenting them with words that have the /f/ and /p/, /s/ and /z/, /b/ and /v/, /e/ and /ai/, /Λ/ and /□/ sounds orally. The average score of the experimental group was 39% marks in the 1<sup>st</sup> round and 66% marks in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round due to the lack of exposure to speak before audience. Then they were asked to go home and study each word very carefully.

Day 4: the pupils were asked to spell the word list presented to them; the average scored was 77% marks in the 1<sup>st</sup> round and 84% marks in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round. At the end, the experimental group and the control group were asked to spell the word list presented to them with /f/ and /p/, /s/ and /z/, /v/ /b/, /e/ and /ai/, /Λ/ and /□/ sounds. All the members of the control were disqualified in the process of the competition. Because, the rule says: If the participant spells the word correctly, he remains at the front of the line. If he does not, he sits down, leaving the competition. And the members of the control group failed to differentiate and spell certain words like *met/mate*, *get/gate* *pork*, *pill*, *cat/cut*, *pat*, *pill/fill* etc. This leads to their disqualification. The members of the experimental group scaled, and number 10 was declared as the winner with 24 marks, followed by number 7 with 15 marks, then number 6 scored 10 marks, etc. This clearly indicates the effectiveness of the “Spelling Bee” in teaching vocabulary in Nursery II pupils.

#### 4.1.4 Target Words Used at Green Olive International School

1. Twenty words were selected for this experiment. The words consist of noun and some verbs.

Out of the 20 words presented to them are:

a) Vowel length i.e. (i and i :) as in *pill-fill*, *cat-cut*.

b) Consonant discrepancy as in *Fat-pat, fan-pan, pin-fin, fork-pork, van-ban, zip-sip*.

c) Diphthong discrepancy such as *met-mate, gate-get*.

**TIME:** the time taken to spell the words was controlled. Each group had an equal amount of time per word, one (1) minute approximately per word

#### **4.2 Data Presentation of Bayero University, Kano Staff Nursery School (BUK staff)**

The study had the total of 24 pupils (participants), 12 pupils for the experimental group and the other 12 for the control group selected from the same school. All the participants had studied English for a minimum of two-three years and had scored 28-50 per cent in their pre-test, but had difficulty in differentiating the /p/ and /f/ sound as in: *pin-fin, pan-fan, pat-fat, fill-pill and pork-fork*, /b/ and /v/ as in *ban-van, very-berry*, /i/ and /i:/ as in *lip-leap, ship-sheep*, /s/ and /z/ as in *sip-zip*, /o/ and /a/ as in *tap-top*, and words such as *bell, may, day, pay say, ray, den, ben, book, girl, fish, soap*. The participants had a four-day 30 minute teaching; they were taught three and four letter words ( in the area of their difficulty). The task involved spelling a set number of three and four letter words taught to them written and orally. After they wrote them, they were asked to spell the words orally. For the first instance, some participants could not perform well even though they wrote the words correctly.

In direct vocabulary instruction, learners do many specific exercises and activities that focus their attention directly on certain words in lists, learning word parts, and vocabulary games. These techniques will benefit all learners, but have been shown to especially benefit learners with limited personal experience with words as well as limited knowledge of words (Vacca,

Vacca and Gove, 2000; Omanson et al., 1984; Jenkins, Stein, and Wysocki, 1984; McKeown et al., 1983; Kameenui, Carnine, and Freschi, 1982 cited in Hiebert 2005).

The teaching was designed to suit the Bailly method of teaching “Spelling Bee”, which comprises finding the difficult area of the students, giving them word list to memorise and then quizzing them. In order to make it competitive, the “Spelling Bee” organisers’ guideline was used.

- Choose 4-10 students to stand in front of the class.
- Dictate a spelling word to one participant.
- If the participant spells the word correctly, he remains at the front of the line.
- If he does not spell the word correctly, he sits down, leaving the competition.
- Write each well-spelt word on the board.
- The participant who remains standing is the winner (and gets a prize!) (Bailly, 1980, p.1-2).

The participants chosen were between the ages of 5-7 (Nursery II pupils) because the previous research was conducted on children aged between 7-14 years (primary and **secondary** students). Secondly, the pupils are going to primary 1 where they are going to start reading. Having more words will help them while reading any given text. The study was an empirical research, hence its findings are expected to be generalised. The study was conducted at Bayero University, Kano Staff Nursery School (public school). The pupils were taught three and four letter words including /p/ and /f/, /b/ and /v/, /s/ and /z/, /i/ and /i:/, etc. sounds being their area of difficulty. At the end they were quizzed (“Spelling Bee”quiz). The researcher chose 22 students to stand in

front of the class and dictated a spelling word to one participant. If the participant spells the word correctly, he remains at the front of the line. If he does not, he sits down, leaving the competition. Write each well-spelt word on the board. The participant who remains standing is the winner (and gets a prize!)

#### 4.2.1 Dictation outcome of BUK Staff Nursery School

The pupils were asked to write down 10 three and four letter words they know in day 1, as their pre-test the average score is 28%. Then the researcher drilled them on their difficult areas i.e. with words like *pin-fin, fan-pan, fat-pat, fill-pill and fork-pork*. After the lesson, they were asked to write the words they hear as the evaluation. The average score of the experimental group was 34% marks. Week 1 day 2: the researcher drilled the pupils with different areas of their difficulty. At the end of the lesson, they were asked to write down the words they hear in a piece of paper. The average score of the experimental group was 66% marks. By the end of the day the researcher observed that, the pupils learn four to five words a day. Day 3: the researcher introduced new words to the pupils based on their ability on the basis of consonant discrepancy such as *hen, ten, ben* and *pen*. Day 4: *sip – zip, shop – chop*.

WEEK II: day 1: pay	day 2: van	day 3: cat	day 4: bed
Day	ban	sat	bet
Say	top	mat	pet
May	tap	rat	let

WEEK III: the minimal pairs used base on vowel length:

Day 1: cat- cut      day 2: ship – sheep      day 3: hit-heat      day 4: girl

Cap – cup      sit – seat      bit - beat book

Hat – hut      lip – leap pit - peel      soap

WEEK 4: day 1: the words used base on diphthong discrepancy:

Met – mate

Get- gate

Let - late

#### **4.2.2 The“Spelling Bee” Quiz for the BUK Staff Nursery School**

Day 2: the pupils were tested by presenting them with words that have the /f/ and /p/, /v/and /b/, /s/ and /z/, /i/ and /i: /, /a/ and /o/ etc. sound orally. The average score of the experimental group was 54% marks in the 1<sup>st</sup> round and 77% marks in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round due to the lack of exposure to speak before audience. Then they were asked to go home and study each word very carefully.

Day 3: the pupils were asked to spell the word list presented to them; the average scored was 75% marks in the 1<sup>st</sup> round and 81% marks in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round. Day 4: the experimental group and the control group were asked to spell the word list presented to them with /f/ and /p/ sounds. All the members of the control were disqualified in the process of the competition. Because, the roles say: If the participant spells the word correctly, he remains at the front of the line. If he does not, he sits down, leaving the competition. And the members of the control group failed to

differentiate and spell certain words like *pork, pill, fun/fan, pat, pill/fill, let/ late, get/gate, ship/sheep* etc. This leads to their disqualification. The members of the experimental group scaled, and number 4 was declared as the winner with 18 marks, followed by number 8 with 17 marks, then number 7 scored 16 marks, (2 marks for each word) etc. This clearly indicates the effectiveness of the “Spelling Bee” in teaching vocabulary in Nursery II pupils.

#### 4.2.3 Target Words Used at Bayero University, Nursery School (BUK Staff)

Forty words were selected for this experiment. the words consists of nouns and verbs. The words presented to them are the content words. Generally speaking in vocabulary test, it is the content words that attention is focus such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs (content words) etc. :

- a) Vowel length : ,/i/ and /i:/ as in *lip-leap, ship-sheep*, /o/ and /a/ as in *tap-top*,
- b) Consonant discrepancy: *Pin-fin, pan-fan, pat-fat, fill-pill and pork -fork, /b/ and /v/ as in ban-van, very-berry /s// and /z/ as in sip-zip, may, day, pay say, ray, den, ben*
- c) Words treated in treated in other subject: *t bell, book, girl, fish, and soap.*

**TIME:** the time taken to spell the words was controlled. Each group had an equal amount of time per word, one (1) minutes approximately per word.

#### 4.3 Data Analysis

The analysis of the data comprises the presentation of the table showing the presentation and percentage of the spelling bee quiz result. The pre-test result, the post-test result, the result of the Spelling Bee quiz during the period of the study, and the final result of the spelling bee quiz

when the experimental group and controlled group were merge to test the effectiveness or other wise of the spelling bee among the ESL nursery II school pupils.

Table 1: tabular Analysis of 4.12.Overall assessment of the spelling bee quiz of Green Olive.

# SPELLING BEE QUIZ

DICTATION		SPELLING BEE QUIZ					
DAY 2		DAY 2	DAY 3		DAY 4		DAY 4
S/N	/f/ & /p/words	/f/ & /p/words	1 <sup>ST</sup> ROUND	2 <sup>ND</sup> ROUND	1 <sup>ST</sup> ROUND	2 <sup>ND</sup> ROUND	LAST ROUND
1	2	8	0	2	4	5	
2	1	4	0	0	0	0	
3	4	6	1	7	6	6	
4	3	9	7	6	9	9	
5	2	5	0	0	1	1	
6	6	10	1	7	7	8	10
7	5	5	2	9	10	10	15
8	5	0	2	6	8	9	
9	8	6	0	0	3	7	
10	9	10	10	10	10	10	24
11	2	3	1	2	6	6	
12	3	4	5	7	4	6	
13	8	8	4	5	4	4	
14	7	6	6	5	5	3	
TL	67%	84%	39%	66%	77%	84%	

Table1: The description of the experiment is shown below.

#### DICTATION

S/N	TOTAL FREQUENCY	DAY 2	DAY 2	FRQUENCY PERCENTAGE
1	20	2	8	50%
2	20	1	4	25%
3	20	4	6	50%
4	20	3	9	55%
5	20	2	5	35%
6	20	6	10	80%
7	20	5	5	50%
8	20	5	0	25%
9	20	8	6	70%
10	20	9	10	95%
11	20	2	3	25%
12	20	3	4	35%
13	20	8	8	80%
14	20	7	6	65%
TTL		67%	84%	

Table 2: The description of the experiment is shown below.

#### SPELLING BEE QUIZ OF WEEK II DAY 3

S/N	TOTAL FREQUENCY	1 <sup>ST</sup> ROUND (10 WORDS)	2 <sup>ND</sup> ROUND (10 WORDS)	FRQUENCY PERCENTAGE
1	20	0	2	10%
2	20	0	0	0%
3	20	1	7	40%
4	20	7	6	65%
5	20	0	0	0%
6	20	1	7	40%
7	20	2	9	45%
8	20	2	6	40%
9	20	0	0	0%
10	20	10	10	100%
11	20	1	2	15%
12	20	5	7	60%
13	20	4	5	45%
14	20	6	5	55%
TTL		39%	66%	

Table 3: The description of the experiment is shown below.

#### SPELLING BEE QUIZ OF WEEK II DAY 4

S/N	TOTAL FREQUENCY	1 <sup>ST</sup> ROUND	2 <sup>ND</sup> ROUND	FRQUENCY PERCENTAGE
1	20	4	5	45%
2	20	0	0	0%
3	20	6	6	60%
4	20	9	9	90%
5	20	1	1	05%
6	20	7	8	75%
7	20	10	10	100%
8	20	8	9	85%
9	20	3	7	50%
10	20	10	10	100%
11	20	6	6	60%
12	20	4	6	50%
13	20	4	4	40%
14	20	5	3	40%
TTL		77%	84%	

Spelling bee appears to be one of the effective methods of teaching vocabulary in ESL class. The participants in the experimental group enlarge their vocabulary compared to the controlled group.

Table 2: Tabular Analysis of 4.2.0. Overall assessment of the spelling bee quiz of Bayero University, Kano

	DICTATION		SPELLING BEE QUIZ				
	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 2 (WEEK IV)		DAY 3 (WEEK IV)		DAY 4
S/N	Ten /f/ & /p/words	Ten /f/ & /p/words	1 <sup>ST</sup> ROUND	2 <sup>ND</sup> ROUND	1 <sup>ST</sup> ROUND	2 <sup>ND</sup> ROUND	LAST ROUND
1	0	8	7	8	7	8	
2	0	0	4	5	3	2	
3	0	2	6	6	3	8	
4	3	5	6	7	8	9	18
5	2	5	3	5	8	7	
6	6	10	7	5	3	3	
7	5	5	8	9	8	9	
8	0	0	8	6	8	9	17
9	4	6	5	6	10	7	
10	9	10	5	10	10	10	16
11	3	3	6	5	5	5	
12	2	3	5	5	2	4	
TL	34%	57%	54%	77%	75%	81%	

Table 1: The description of the experiment is shown below.

DICTATION

S/N	TOTAL FREQUENCY	DAY 1	DAY 2	FRQUENCY PERCENTAGE
1	20	0	8	40%
2	20	0	0	0%
3	20	0	2	10%
4	20	3	5	40%
5	20	2	5	35%
6	20	6	10	80%
7	20	5	5	50%
8	20	0	0	0%
9	20	4	6	50%
10	20	9	10	95%
11	20	3	3	30%
12	20	2	3	17%
13		34%	57%	

Table 2: The description of the experiment is shown below.

SPELLING BEE QUIZ OF WEEK IV DAY 2

S/N	TOTAL FREQUENCY	1 <sup>ST</sup> ROUND	2 <sup>ND</sup> ROUND	
1	20	7	8	75%
2	20	3	2	17%
3	20	3	8	55%
4	20	8	9	80%
5	20	8	7	75%
6	20	3	3	20%
7	20	8	9	56%
8	20	8	9	56%
9	20	10	7	85%
10	20	10	10	100%
11	20	5	5	17%
12	20	2	4	20%
TTL		75%	81%	

Table 3: The description of the experiment is shown below.

SPELLING BEE QUIZ OF WEEK IV DAY 3

S/N	TOTAL FREQUENCY	1 <sup>ST</sup> ROUND	2 <sup>ND</sup> ROUND	
1	20	7	8	75%
2	20	4	5	45%
3	20	6	6	60%
4	20	6	7	65%
5	20	3	5	40%
6	20	7	5	60%
7	20	8	9	85%
8	20	8	6	70%
9	20	5	6	55%
10	20	5	10	75%
11	20	6	5	55%
12	20	5	5	50%
TTL		54%	77%	

The formula used for calculating simple/ frequency percentage used in this study.

Observed frequency x 100

Total frequency            1

#### **4.4 Discussion**

Based on the above, the researcher conducted the study by applying Spelling Bee method of teaching. The ESL Nursery II pupils (subject) when the task (word list) was given to them and tested (Spelling Bee Quiz) it was found on the average that they can spell and understand the meaning of 80% of the target words. The study shows that the pupils taught by Spelling Bee method (experimental group) scored higher on the vocabulary post-test than the control group. The use of the pre-test allows the researcher to select from a set of potential target words. That is ones that none of the subjects are familiar with. One interesting phenomenon observed in the study was that the learners gain slightly higher mean of score in the later post-test than in the earlier one. Chum and Plass (1996) found that this applied to words for which a picture was used to annotate the meaning. Ellis's (1995 cited in Read, 2000) study, suggest that pictures triggered recall in a way that the target words by themselves did not. Thus, apart from the timing issue, these findings highlight the need to consider the format of tests to be used as dependant measures in experiment of this kind and in particular the form of the stimulus material.

Therefore, the researcher chose spelling bee method in the study. The researcher also, accompanied the method with flash cards, practical demonstration, pictures, and physical objects as the stimulus material. From the analysis above, those pupils under the experiment group obtained more words compared to the control group. This gave the experiment group a chance of winning the quiz. In an attempt to answer the research questions, it was found that spelling bee is an effective way of boosting the ESL nursery school pupils' vocabulary. And all the objectives stated in chapter one were achieved and the research questions are answered as follow:

## QUESTION 1

Will “Spelling Bee” boosts nursery school pupils’ vocabulary?

“Spelling Bee” boosts ESL nursery school pupils vocabulary based on the result of the presented. The result of the present study confirms that English as a Second Language (ESL) nursery school pupils can acquire vocabulary from “Spelling Bee”. In other words “Spelling Bee” is an effective way of teaching vocabulary to ESL class. The experimental group expanded their vocabulary compared to the controlled group. The pre-test result of the Experimental group of Green Olive International School 1 (E1) was 30% and the post-test is 67%. During the training the score was changed to 84%. After the task, i.e. during the “Spelling Bee” quiz in the first round the score was 39% in the second round it changed to 66%, the final score is 84%. The Experimental group 2 (BUK Staff Nursery School) had 28% in pre-test and post-test score is 57%. In the process of the training the score had changed to 54% in the first round and 77% in the second round. After the task the final score is 81%. Also, the mark scored by the controlled is very poor compared to that of experimental group.

However, the study shows that the “Spelling Bee” boosts the nursery II pupils’ vocabulary and the more words one has the more he can succeed. This showed that the experimental group has better ability to use the English vocabulary than the control group

## QUESTION 2

How many words nursery school pupils can learn within a given period of time will improve the pupils' communicative skills?

The finding of the research presented shows that, the number of words learns each school day is within the range of 4-6 words. That is 12-18 words per week, 42-72 per month equivalent to 144-216 words per term. 432-648 /180 school days. If the pupils are directly introduced to the new words three school days per week, based on types rather than tokens. The number of types is the total number of different words form, so that a word which is repeated many times is counted only once. This shows that the experimental group has more advantage to communicate effectively compared to the control group. Because, the results shows the total number a nursery II pupil can learn effectively within the school days without any stress. The more word a learner has the more he can succeed.

## QUESTION 3

What time span will be suitable for the spelling of each word introduced to the pupils and see whether it will improve the pupil' spelling capabilities.

The finding clearly shows that, the suitable time for spelling each word is within the minimum of 30 seconds, maximum of 1 minute. This shows that the spelling capability of the pupils is improved and this leads to fast reading among the experimental group because slow reading breakdown a text into senseless chunk which in turn interferes with a full comprehension of the text.

#### QUESTION 4

Will the size of the vocabulary learnt affect the pupils' reading performance?

The number of vocabulary obtained affects the performance of the nursery school pupils' reading performance. Because the pupils were exposed to new words and their meanings. And each word was used in a given context; this gives a room for comprehending any given text given to them which comprises those words. Their reading ability is faster than before, which also boost the comprehension of the text given to them. Scholars work on the assumption that, in order to read independently, learners should know at least 95 per cent of the running words in a text. This means that on average only one word in 20 will be unfamiliar to them. The point is that adequate knowledge of a word is a prerequisite for effective language use. Learners whose vocabulary is below a certain threshold level struggle to decode the basic element of a text, to the extent that they find it hard to develop higher-level understanding of the content. The experimental group showed significant improvement over a control group on reading ability.

#### QUESTION 5

Is poor ability in spelling caused by inadequate method of teaching employed by the teachers?

Based on the data analysis presented, poor ability of spelling among ESL nursery school pupils is caused by inadequate method of teaching employed by the teachers. "Spelling Bee" unlike the traditional method of spelling words is competitive in nature, where by the teacher serves as a guide. It is a competitive game that grooms the students with the ability to spell and pronounce words correctly and also, to make use of such words effectively in their writing. And "Spelling

Bee” quiz is an effective way testing ESL nursery school pupils vocabulary compared to Multiple choice items ,Marching of words with synonyms or definition ,Supplying an L1 equivalent for each L2 target word, The check list (or yes or no), used by the teachers.

For the purpose of testing vocabulary size, they are time consuming to construct and the test-takers’ performance is too dependent on the choice of distractors. Even though, the next two tests (Marching of words with synonyms or definition, supplying an L1 equivalent for each L2 target word,) are simple to construct than multiple choice ones, they represent a low level of word knowledge: the ability to associate each target word with another word or phrase that has the ‘same’ meaning. Such tests do not give any indication of whether the learners will understand the word when they encounter it in use, especially if it has a different meaning from the one they have learned. With an L2 to L1 translation task there is additional draw back that the test-takers may produce a range of answers that have to be scored subjectively, which take more time than for a more objective test format. The checklist test is really the simplest possible format for testing vocabulary and, according to Melka Teichrow (1982:7 cited in Read, 89); it has been in used with native speakers at least since 1890. In comparison with other test items, Anderson and Freebody saw its simplicity as a virtue, in that ‘it strips away irrelevant task demands that may make it difficult for young readers and poor readers. However, researchers have come to different conclusions about its validity as a measure of children’s vocabulary knowledge.

The obvious criticism of the checklist in its classic form is that there is no way of knowing how validly the test-takers are reporting their knowledge of words. They can have a different idea from the researcher as to what ‘knowing a word’ means and may be genuinely mistaken about particular words, confusing one with another.

Considering the presentation and analysis of the data presented in the preceding section, there is significant change in the number of vocabulary items acquired by pupils who are taught the “Spelling Bee” compared to the control group who are not exposed to the “Spelling Bee” teaching method.

#### **4.5 Finding**

1. Spelling Bee boosts ESL nursery school pupils vocabulary based on the data analysis presented. The result of the present study confirms that English as a Second Language (ESL) learners can acquire vocabulary from Spelling Bee. In other words Spelling Bee is effective way of teaching vocabulary to ESL class. The experimental group expanded their vocabulary compared to the controlled group.
2. The numbers of words learn each school day is within the range of 4-6 words. That is 12-18 words per week, 42-72 per month equivalent to 144-216 words per term. 432-648 /180 school days. If the pupils are directly introduced to the new words school days per week. The communicative skill of the experimental group is improved compared to the control group who has limited number of words.
3. The suitable time for spelling each word is within the minimum of 30 seconds, maximum of 1 minute. This improves the reading ability of the experimental group. The pupils of this group can read faster than the control group.
4. The number of vocabulary obtained affects the performance of the nursery school pupils’ reading performance. Because the pupils were exposed to new words and their meanings. And each word was used in a given context, this give them a room for comprehending

any given text given to them which comprises those words. Their reading ability is faster than before, which also boost the comprehension of the text given to them.

5. Based on the data analysis presented, poor ability of spelling among ESL nursery school pupils is caused by inadequate method of teaching employed by the teachers. “Spelling Bee” being it a game, i.e. learning in a fun way, motivates the pupils towards reading anything that comes their way (boost reading culture).

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter summarises the study followed by a conclusion. Furthermore the ESL nursery school pupils “Spelling Bee” result was presented which shows the role of the “Spelling Bee” in boosting the vocabulary of ESL nursery II pupils.

#### **5.1 Summary**

In the course of carrying out this study, objectives were stated and research questions were drawn in chapter one. In chapter two, literature related to the study was reviewed so as to have an insight into what has been done previously in the area of vocabulary and spelling. In chapter three, the design of this research which is empirical in nature was given. The population covered by the study and the sample and how the sample was selected using sampling techniques had been discussed. “Spelling Bee” quiz was presented as the data collection instrument. The instrument was validated through the pilot study conducted by the researcher.

Chapter four dealt with how the collected data was analysed. In the process of analysing the data the “Spelling Bee” quiz was also translated into tables and percentages were commutated were necessary. Discussion was made with a view to making comparison whether or not “Spelling Bee” is an effective way of boosting the ESL nursery school pupils’ vocabulary. Following the presentation and analysis of the obtained data, “Spelling

Bee”boosts ESL nursery school pupils’ vocabulary, the objectives are achieved and the research questions are answered.

The participants were randomly assigned to twenty-six experimental group and twenty-six controlled group that is the total of fifty- two (52) research subjects. Twenty-eight from Green Olive International School (private school) and twenty-two from Bayero University, Kano Staff School (public school). The experimental group completed a vocabulary spelling task. The task involved spelling a set of number of words. The experimental group of Green Olive International School were to memorised 4 words each day for 6 days within the two weeks of the research. No word for the controlled group. While the experimental group of Bayero University, Kano Staff School were to memorise 4- 6 words each day for 12 days within the four weeks of the research. “Spelling Bee” quiz was administered after the treatment. The result of the groups was compared to determine whether “Spelling Bee” is significant or effective in teaching vocabulary to ESL class. The controlled group spelled only few words while the participant in the experimental group spelled 39 and 28 out of the 40 words given to them.

Considering the presentation and analysis of the data presented, the objectives of the study are achieved and summarised as follows:-

1. When comparing the method of teaching Spelling Bee and different studies conducted by different scholars such as Beck, McKeown & Kucan (2002) it is found that, vocabulary instruction traditionally has consisted of minimal involving memorization of definitions,

instruction that was not effective. Because if the test was in the morning, nearly all the words were out of the students' head by lunch. Not only that is boring but it also did not lead to appreciable growth in vocabulary. Another study shows that having children memorizing synonyms for unfamiliar words in a passage did not affect their comprehension of that passage (Stahl, 19998; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986). While, "Spelling Bee" is an effective method of boosting the ESL nursery II pupils vocabulary by comparing the results obtained as they were presented in table 1 and table 2 of 4.1.2 and 4.2.0, one can clearly see that, the number of words obtained from the beginning to the end of the study has expanded. Although there are different methods, one can apply in boosting the vocabulary but "Spelling Bee" is the best method. Awolusi (2010) explains that, "Spelling Bee" is an oral competition designed to provide young people between the ages of 7 and 14 from primary to secondary schools with an opportunity to participate in a positive spelling exchange to improve their English Language, Spelling capabilities, comprehension and communication skills. It also develops self-esteem, confidence and interpersonal skills of students by exposing them to positive role model, tutors and peers supports through the course of the preparation. When "Spelling Bee" is effectively applied all the four skills are in use: speaking, listening, writing and reading. According to Bygate all the four skills go at once. Poor reading culture is one of the major things that lead to the falling standard of education. "Spelling Bee" encourages reading culture among the participants.

2. Over the years, estimates of student vocabulary size have varied greatly, hindered in part by issues such as the types of vocabularies being considered (e.g. receptive/ productive or oral/print). Depending on how they approached such issues, early vocabulary researchers reported figures ranging from 2,500 to 26,000 words in the vocabularies of typical grade 1 students and from 19,000 to 200,000 words for college graduate students (Beck & McKeown,

1991in Kamil and Hiebert in press). Researchers began to define more clearly what they meant by vocabulary size, the estimates became more precise. Now, there is considerable consensus among researchers that students add approximately 2,000 to 3,500 distinct words yearly to their reading vocabularies (Anderson & Nagy, 1992; Anglin, 1993; Beck & McKeown, 1991; White et al., 1990).

According to Stahl & Fairbanks (1986) to directly teach students even 3,000 words a year would mean teaching approximately 17 words each school day (e.g., 3,000 words/180 school days). Estimates vary, but reviews of classroom intervention studies suggest that, in general, no more than 8 to 10 words can be taught effectively each week. This means no more than approximately 400 words can be taught in a year. Based on the study whereby the researcher effectively used “Spelling Bee” method in teaching ESL nursery II pupils, the number of words learns each school day is within the range of 4-6 words. That is 12-18 words per week, 42-72 per month equivalent to 144-216 words per term, 432-648 /180 school days. If the pupils are directly introduced to the new words three school days per week. And the suitable time for spelling each word is within the minimum of 30 seconds, maximum of 1 minute.

3. The number of vocabulary obtained from the “Spelling Bee” affects the performance of the nursery II school pupils’ reading performance compared to the traditional method which consists the memorization of definitions, instruction that was not effective. While the “Spelling Bee” is a competitive game that grooms the pupils with the ability to spell and pronounce words correctly and to make use of such words effectively in their writing. Also, it is the effective way of boosting the vocabulary of ESL pupils in fun way, which can give the pupils room for retrieving the meaning of each word when it comes to reading.

4. Poor ability of spelling among ESL nursery school pupils is caused by inadequate method of teaching employed by the teachers. Although direct teaching of specific words is effective in improving comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986), the large number of words that average children must learn cannot be acquired in any way other than from seeing words in context that is, from wide reading (Stahl, 1991).

## **5.2 Conclusion**

In light of the above presentation some ideas need to be emphasised. Firstly, it appears that the enlargement of vocabulary is a continuous process, which requires regular emphasis. The larger one's vocabulary becomes, the better one succeed. And for ESL pupils and teachers, it can be quite challenging to learn and teach English. To get the students/pupils interested, teachers have to incorporate fun activities into the lesson plans. When the ESL lessons are fun, students/pupils will be excited to learn, making it easier for teachers to teach.

Secondly, the "Spelling Bee" is a competitive game that grooms the students/pupils with the ability to spell and pronounce words correctly and also, to make use of such words effectively in their writing. Also, it is the effective way of boosting the vocabulary of ESL students/pupils in fun way. It also comprises a lot of activities in producing best product.

Nevertheless, this can only be successfully completed if the teachers effectively apply appropriate method in the teaching and learning of "Spelling Bee". By considering the level and background of the students/pupils. Finding the areas they have problem of spelling, proving word list according to their ability, ask them to memorise and reinforce them best on their ability.

However, the “Spelling Bee” plays a vital role in boosting the vocabulary of the learners (spellers). It encourages: reading culture; interactive teaching and learning; creative thinking; learning the correct spelling and pronunciation of words; their use in sentences and in multiple contexts.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

It is recommended that both private and public schools should try to employ technique for language teaching. This will expose the pupils with the ability to learn how to spell and pronounce words correctly, and use them in multiple contexts. Also, to provide the pupils with below tips.

Firstly, the participant listens to the word, and then spells it out. And in the process of the learning the participant has to read a lot, within and outside the curriculum. And lastly, he has to jot down any new word he comes across.

I. The "Spelling Bee" participant is expected to follow the below steps in order to achieve the desired objectives:

- a. Keep a “great words” journal for every new and interesting word.
- b. Designate a spelling wall in class and home. Post new words to the wall every day.
- c. Do it in a play way (as Akeelar did spell and jump rope).
- d. Read great books to improve your spelling and expand your vocabularies. L1 learners and L2 learners may incidentally gain knowledge of meaning form through reading.

- e. Find friends neighbours, to challenge you with great words.
- f. Scour the dictionary in search of words/ to slump friends and teachers.

II. Teachers should try to consider the level of the pupils for effective teaching and learning. And the wordlist appropriate for them.

III. Teachers should try to provide suitable instructional materials for effective teaching and learning the “Spelling Bee”.

IV. Group method can be used in our public schools.

V. All the methods given are for native speakers, it is advisable for teachers to select a method that will suit the ESL learners as applied in this study.

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