Volume 17 Issue 10
Originally issued as G3

GLOBAL JOURNAL OF HUMAN-SOCIAL SCIENCE: G
LINGUISTICS & EDUCATION
Volume 17 Issue 3 Version 1.0 Year 2017
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals Inc. (USA)
Online ISSN: 2249-460X & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

Learning and Teaching Vocabulary Acquisition: Analysing One Unit of a Textbook on the Saudi Arabian Context

By Hind Mashrah
Taif University

Abstract- Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education is seeking for the best English language textbook to be taught in schools to develop the education in the future. To choose the most beneficial one, frameworks were designed to evaluate a unit of a textbook in Saudi Arabia based on two standard criteria: frequency and learnability of vocabulary and the four strands in teaching and learning vocabulary. This paper is built on two important concepts: Nation's four strands through pedagogical approaches and vocabulary learnability and Lewis' theories in lexical approach and syllabus design. The results were the vocabulary is infrequent but learnable, two of the four strands have heavily activities whereas other two strands have few activities, and no consistency to recycle all vocabulary.

Keywords: vocabulary; second language acquisition; textbook; lexical approach; lexical syllabus; noticing hypothesis; pedagogy; syllabus design; learnability; frequency.

GJHSS-G Classification: FOR Code: 930199



Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

© 2017. Hind Mashrah. This is a research/review paper, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported License http:// creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/), permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Learning and Teaching Vocabulary Acquisition: Analysing One Unit of a Textbook on the Saudi Arabian Context

Hind Mashrah

Abstract- Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education is seeking for the best English language textbook to be taught in schools to develop the education in the future. To choose the most beneficial one, frameworks were designed to evaluate a unit of a textbook in Saudi Arabia based on two standard criteria: frequency and learnability of vocabulary and the four strands in teaching and learning vocabulary. This paper is built on two important concepts: Nation's four strands through pedagogical approaches and vocabulary learnability and Lewis' theories in lexical approach and syllabus design. The results were the vocabulary is infrequent but learnable, two of the four strands have heavily activities whereas other two strands have few activities, and no consistency to recycle all vocabulary.

Keywords: vocabulary; second language acquisition; textbook; lexical approach; lexical syllabus; noticing hypothesis; pedagogy; syllabus design; learnability; frequency.

I. Introduction

English is considered an important language for the global communication and Saudi Arabia shows much care for developing its educational system generally, and for teaching the English language in particular. Currently, the Saudi government is concerned with identifying English textbooks with the potential to support new and developed strategies and methods for language teaching and learning. In order to follow up on that goal, the policy of the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia is to distribute different textbooks that are from various companies from Europe and North America to schools in (Saudi Arabia Ministry of Education, Taif, n.d.). Afterwards, EFL (English as a Foreign language) teachers will fill out questionnaires and express their points of view toward these textbooks: that is, whether a particular textbook is valuable and worthwhile to teach to students. The purpose of this step is to compare all the textbooks, which have been adopted from various foreign companies, and to decide on which of the textbook(s) should be the primary one(s) in schools. This step will take several years to accomplish. In this regard, I have selected one unit of a particular textbook. I have noticed that the unit is heavily focused on new vocabulary items and contains activities and exercises to learn this vocabulary. Researchers in the vocabulary area have developed new strategies for teaching and learning vocabulary through designing various activities to make words easier to learn and remember. Major thinkers, such as Nation and Lewis, have made great contributions in the field of teaching vocabulary, proposing different perspectives and methodologies to enhance second language acquisition.

II. Choosing Between the Perspectives of Nation and Lewis

For the purpose of my major research project, it is important to separate Nation's from Lewis's perspective, since Nation's framework is more appropriate to rely on in this project. However, presenting Lewis' contributions is significant because they have been influential in a number of ways. First, Lewis's recommendation is to teach vocabulary by using the co-text, which means relying on a linguistic situation that occurs regularly. If there is a group of vocabulary items that associate with a particular topic, new words should be learned through combining those vocabulary items with particular verbs that come up in that context in order to teach students L2 (second language)use (Lewis, 1993). Generally, Lewis (1993) considers lexis to be a focal point in the syllabus, so as to deal with vocabulary as a way into the language system. Feng-Xia (2009) supports Lewis' lexical approach and believes that it can be an ideal strategy for giving students a large group of useful words, especially institutional utterances and sentence heads. According to Lewis, some of the main components of the lexical syllabus are (Lewis, 1993):

1. Increased attention to the base form of lexical verbs: The lexical approach highly recommends teaching the base form of verbs and then focusing on frequently used simple present tense forms.
2. Collocations: Important collocations are commonly occurring sets of nouns, verbs, and adjectives that form comprehensible collocations.
3. Institutional utterances: The old method was to give students a sample to follow and produce the exact sentences. However, Lewis's alternative method is to provide a group of sentences for comprehension and reflection. This method is intended to help

Author: Taif University. e-mail: hind.mashrah@gmail.com

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

students build a basis for understanding the patterns of the sentences.

Furthermore, Lewis (1993) provides some key points to make learning vocabulary more effective and to avoid confusion in vocabulary learning. He advises that when teachers introduce new words to students, they should combine learning words with exploring the grammar that is associated with those words, so collocations need attention in order to learn them. Also, Lewis stresses that learning vocabulary should be taught with verbs, especially the irregular ones. In the lexical approach, seeing how verbs collocate with nouns is a way to enhance learning these words quickly and to increase attention, which promotes acquisition of vocabulary. Finally, teaching the time of day to students is a method of learning time expressions along with the verbs and the tenses that are required. Generally speaking, Lewis has been influential in showing the importance of lexis in the syllabus and how to analyze word patterns linguistically in terms of using grammar and collocations. Thus, in a general way Lewis's work lies behind much of what I will discuss in this essay. However, this major research paper has a special focus of analyzing how a textbook may teach vocabulary. Therefore, it is more beneficial to adopt Nation's structure for teaching and learning vocabulary because it is less theoretical and seems more concerned with classroom routines and therefore better suited to my task.

Nation (2007), with his more pedagogical approach, incorporates different points of view as follows:

A. He concentrates on a more pedagogical orientation and recommends learning activities and new strategies to teach vocabulary throughout what he calls *the four strands*. By the four strands, Nation means meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency development.
B. The concept of the four strands integrates many theories and concepts that are involved under these strands. For example, the *noticing hypothesis* plays a key role in the four strands by transforming comprehensible input to intake. The role of noticing is also to enhance the output by focusing students' attention on their linguistic gap. Thus, vocabulary items should be learnable to maximize language learning and second language acquisition, and to facilitate memorization of new words.
C. Based on the four strands, Nation's structure for a vocabulary course achieves recycling learnable words by having them recur throughout the four strands in a textbook or a course.

It is reasonable to note that Nation is extremely interested in classroom strategies, methods, and pedagogical matters, but he seems less centrally interested in theoretical psycholinguistic and syllabus issues. In the case of Lewis, his lexical approach concentrates on the theories of vocabulary and syllabus design, and he demonstrates how to structure the whole syllabus around lexis. His emphasis on linguistic and psycholinguistic issues is not uninteresting, but he does not stress the kind of specific teaching and learning strategies and methodology that are so clear in the work of Nation.

III. The Purpose of the Research

In this project, I plan to undertake two purposes; the first is to devise frameworks or tools for analyzing textbooks that have good scholarly justifications, and the second is to justify these frameworks in a limited way by looking at a sample unit from a textbook. The reason for having two purposes is because Saudi Arabia has a policy to set up some frameworks to justify which textbooks are the most valuable (Ministry of Education, n.d.). Therefore, these frameworks should be worthy and beneficial as a guide to analyzing and evaluating the textbooks.

Consequently, I will argue that in order to design a vocabulary course, two basic principles should be taken into account, based on Nation's (2007) concepts:

1. The primary focus should be on selecting vocabulary that is learnable and frequent; and
2. Additionally, it is essential to integrate all skills– reading, writing, listening, and speaking--in the process of implementing the four strands.

It is essential to link these two concepts to have the best possible vocabulary course. For instance, if a textbook reflects some of the strands, but not all of them, it is not a very sufficient textbook, even if it includes a list of suitably frequent and learnable words. The presence of the four strands is necessary in order for the list of words to become as learnable as possible, so that the effort will be worthwhile for L2 (second language) learners because the words will be maximally easy to memorize and remember.

First Principle: Well-Reasoned Vocabulary Selection Criteria for a Syllabus

Learnability

Nation (2001) pays tribute to various researchers, such as Anderson and Jordan (1928), Henning (1973), Higa (1963), Stoddard (1929), and White (1988) who have made contributions to the development of methodology for learning vocabulary. Generally, two themes have emerged from their work. The first is research into teaching vocabulary on the basis of first language (L1) and second language (L2) similarities. This theme deserves brief attention because it is so prominent although, in the specific case of

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

learners whose L1 is Arabic, many of the recommendations are in fact not applicable. For instance, White (1988) presents a factor that facilitates learning vocabulary items, in that it can be helping to perceiving the similarity between L1 and L2 words. For example, "the English word *class* is *classe* in French, and the English word *school* is *Schule in* German"(p. 50). In Addition, Anderson and Jordan (1928, p. 486-487) compare three types of Latin-English word pairs based on differences in learning and retention. The first type is *identical words* that have a very high similarity in meaning and form such as *mater-mother, victoria-victory*. The second type is *association words*, that is, English words that have derivations that are very close to Latin words with related meaning such as *lingua /language /lingo* (slang for language). The third type is *non-association words* that have no similarity in their meaning, sounds, and derivation and, therefore, words that require students to learn them through rote memory. The results show that identical words are easier to learn and retain than association and non-association words; so, the ranking among the three types, based on how fast one can learn and memorize words, places identical words first, association words second, and non-association words last. Consequently, the research results of White, as well as Anderson and Jordan, highlight the potential logic of using cognates and paying attention to derivations to teach vocabulary to L2 learners, due to their value for retention. This is interesting in so far as it highlights the general idea that careful attention to vocabulary selection can often be useful. However, comparing L1 and L2 will not be a useful strategy when the L1 and L2 are unrelated. For example, the Arabic language has distinct features that are totally different from the English language, so that this approach would not be very helpful for Saudi students learning English vocabulary.

The second theme is more relevant to my research and seems to present the best methodology for teaching vocabulary to learners whose first language may well be totally different from the target language. For example, White (1988) outlines some teaching strategies to assist learners in memorizing vocabulary. The first strategy hinges on demonstrability; that is, it is easier to present concrete words, such as *car, money,* or *sunglasses*, than abstract terms such as, *freedom, transport,* or *motivation*. The second strategy is brevity; that is, short words are easier to learn than long ones, such as, *automobile* is more difficult to learn than *car*. Thirdly, White notes that regularity of form can be important: for instance, verbs with regular forms are easier to learn and retain than irregular forms; thus, for instance, *drive-drove-driven* is more difficult to learn than *walk-walked-walked*. White's point is that some new words are compounds, within which L2 learners may already have learnt the component parts, such as *handbag* or *blackboard.* As a result, such compound nouns can be very easy to learn because of L2 learners' previous knowledge of terms. The fifth aspect is opportunism: for example, teachers may teach certain terms which are available within a particular situation, or teachers may think that learning specific vocabulary will be very useful for their students. Examples would include, for instance, vocabulary related to the classroom: *pen, pencil, blackboard, chair, desk*. Finally, white suggests that arranging vocabulary around centers of interest can assist L2 learners to cover many areas, such as food, transport, clothing, or travelling. Teachers are advised to survey the learners and then organize lesson plans or a whole syllabus to teach vocabulary selected in that interest-centred way.

Another strategy to make words more learnable is by taking account of the frequency and the frequency rank of words. In order to present a detailed picture, Nation (2001) differentiates among four types of vocabulary: high-frequency words; academic words; technical words; and low-frequency words. For the purpose of this paper, high-frequency and low-frequency words are the major category of words for textbook analysis. According to Nation and Hwang (1995), modern lists of high-frequency words are largely the same as the old General Service List that was created by West (1953) in which he arranged the most frequent 2000 words based on the rank of their frequency of occurrence. Although West's list wasquite limited and is no longer up-to-date, it remains important for students to gain knowledge of the most frequent 2000 words because such a basic list will cover many of the most useful words. Table 1 shows that there are various methods to teach high-frequency words, which teachers can employ in order to devote adequate time to teaching these words, such as: direct teaching; direct learning; incidental learning; and planned encounters (Nation, 2001, p. 16).

Table 1: The various methods to teach and learn high-frequency vocabulary.

Direct Teaching
Teacher explanation
Peer teaching
Direct Learning
Study from word cards
Dictionary use
Incidental Learning
Guessing from context in extensive reading
Use in communication activities
Planned Encounters
Graded reading
Vocabulary exercises

Moreover, some strategies have been suggested by Nation (2001) in which students can

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

recognize the meaning of low-frequency words through guessing based on the context, using word cards and word parts to remember words, and using dictionaries. This practice does not mean that learning low-frequency words is in itself a successful way to master a language well, but continuing to learn such words can help learners to increase their vocabulary knowledge. In addition, language users probably need to know 15,000 to 20,000 words to decrease disturbance during reading text (Nation, 2001). According to Nation, word frequency lists show slight disagreement about the frequency rank order of specific words, yet 80% of the word lists have quite close agreement, particularly about high-frequency words. Thus, Nation emphasizes reliance on both rank and frequency when selecting a list of words for teaching because frequent words are likely to be not only learnable but also worth learning (2001). Nation (2001) also recommends teaching and learning high-frequency vocabulary because it can assist L2 learners to manage the four strands of a course. On the other hand, it is important for students to learn low-frequency words in contexts that are rich in high-frequency words, because high-frequency words help learners discover the meaning of low-frequency words through various contexts of use. Learning such low-frequency words can give learners opportunities to expand and refine their vocabulary learning.

Higa (1963) has proposed yet another way to teach words. He experimented with a control list consisting of individual words, compared with experimental lists, consisting of four associative strength lists and two semantic distance lists. There weresix types of the experimental paired word lists are: (1) antonyms such as *dark/light*; (2) coordinates such as *apple/pear*; (3) synonyms such as *fast/rapid*; (4) connotations such as *home/family*; (5) strong associates in free association such as *bed/sleep*; and (6) not strong associates but words with a common response in free association such as *man/girl*. The findings reveal that,among the four associative strength lists, the strong associate and the antonym lists are more challenging to learn than the control list, and also, among the two semantic lists, the synonym list is more difficult to learn than the control list. Consequently, Higa highly recommends that teachers would be better to teach individual lists rather than the six types of paired words to facilitate learning vocabulary items.

In addition, Stoddard (1929) points out the importance of the distinction between learning vocabulary, either receptively or productively, as a factor in understanding how new words may best be learned. Likewise, Nation (1982) also differentiates between productive learning and receptive learning: productive learning is students' ability to perform L2 words through speaking and writing, whereas receptive learning pushes L2 learners to translate L2 words when they read them or listen to them. Stoddard (1929) compared the effect of two types of learning: English translation /French word, or French word /English translation. There were two groups of French as second language (FSL) students in the experiment: one group learnt French/English pairs, and the other group learnt English/French pairs. The students were not given along time to study the lists, and they were given 15 minutes to do a test in which two types of word lists were administered. The first test required the students to see the English translation and write the French word; and the second required the students to see the French word and write the English translation. The findings revealed that the students who learnt French-English pairs outperformed in the French-English part of the test as compared to the other part. Similarly, the students who learnt English/French pairs did better on the English/French part of the test than on the other part of the test. As a result, we may infer that the direction of learning word pairs seems to be a crucial factor that can affect vocabulary recall. Furthermore, there are implications for differing learning goals; that is, if students need to learn vocabulary to read, the best way to learn words would be through L2/L1pairs, whereas if they need to learn vocabulary to write, it is recommended to learn vocabulary from L1/L2 pairs.

The last strategy for facilitating learning and retention of vocabulary is to determine the level of L2 students' overall language proficiency. Henning (1973) points out that L2 learners who are in the beginning stage of learning English store words based on sound, which can be inferred from their tendency to confuse between words that have the same sounds, such as *there* and *their*. Consequently, beginners are liable to encounter interference between such words because of the similar sounds if teachers teach their students these words at an early stage. However, advanced students tend to store words based on the meaning of the vocabulary, such as *eat* and *food,* because words and their meaning associate together in memory at that proficiency level. Thus, Henning suggests that teachers should not teach homophones to beginners in order to avoid confusion, but if they do, the best way for beginners to learn homophones is through the written form so as to notice the differences between the words.

Second Principles: Syllabus Design Based on the Four Strands, and Inclusion of Effective Activities

In order to design a vocabulary course, Nation (2011) states that a wider set of principles for organizing the course as a whole is required, namely, the four strands, as referred to earlier. He proposes the four stands because they may be considered to provide a good balance of learning opportunities throughout a vocabulary course. The four strands include the concept of comprehensible input, which as hypothesized by Krashen, plays an essential role throughout the

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

meaning-focused input in listening and reading (Krashen, 1985). Thus, learners should be familiar with approximately 98% of vocabulary in order to be able to listen and read. In addition to the significance of input, output–which is supported by Swain (1995 &2005)—supports the importance of output as a way to encourage learners to speak or write because output demonstrates learners' ability to understand the language and to use it in speaking and writing which also fits within the four strands. Finally, providing activities that require different rates of speed leads to enhancing L2 learners' fluency in all four skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. To implement the four strands, Schmidt suggests the noticing hypothesis, which is considered to be a guide for learners to promote their understanding, performance, and proficiency of language learning (1990 & 2001).

IV. The Role of the Noticing Hypothesis in the Four Strands

Nassaji and Fotos (2011) declare that noticing is a complex process that facilitates acquisition; therefore, some researchers agree with the importance of noticing to enhance acquisition but may still disagree with its definition and operationalization. According to Schmidt (1990 & 2001), when L2 learners notice input, intake helps to become a part of their developing language system. Noticing requires L2 learners' full attention to and awareness of intake. In fact, Izumi (2002) and Nassaji and Fotos (2011) argue that attentional processes include diverse elements: such as*alertness*, *orientation*, and *detection*, and each of which functions in different ways. *Alertness* has to do with the learner's readiness to receive stimuli; *orientation* concerns directing attention to focus on a specific input and to neglect other input; and *detection* is responsible for the selection and registration of stimuli in the memory. The most effective of these three processes is detection because it is crucial for learning, and the two others assist detection to promote learning. Additionally, information that has been detected becomes ready for learning through other cognitive processes, such as hypothesis testing, and the detection process leads to intake and can occur without conscious awareness. Thus, although noticing certainly is important, the process may actually be more complicated than Schmidt first suggested.

Recently, second language acquisition researchers have investigated how the attentional processes of L2 learners can affect interlanguage development. Thus, Izumi (2002) points out that some pedagogical approaches are key to promoting noticing by L2 learners; he centers on the impact of visual input enhancement and of output production. Visual input enhancement can guide attention through such external means such as bolding, highlighting, or underlining, while output production can promote attention through the production process and through learners' coping with problematic issues when they produce output. To summarize, visual input enhancement is an *external* attentional means whereas output is an *internal* attentional resource.

Strand One: Meaning-Focused Input; Learning Vocabulary through Listening and Reading Receptively

The meaning-focused input strand encompasses language learning through listening and reading. Nation and Newton (2009) explain that "meaning-focused" refers to drawing students' attention to focus on understanding, and maximizing their knowledge or enjoyment through listening and reading. Nation and Newton mention that Hinkel (2006) suggests some activities for developing this strand such as extensive reading, shared reading, reading newspapers and magazines, listening to stories, watching television and movies, or listening to conversations. With regard to input itself, Nassaji and Fotos (2011) observe that input may occur when L2 learners are exposed to what they hear and see in the target language and then attempt to figure out the meaning of that input. Input can be oral,—for instance, through listening to the radio or written—for example, through reading a newspaper. Nation (2007) presents Krashen's claim that comprehensible input plays an essential role in facilitating learning the language through meaning-focused input in listening and reading (Krashen, 1985). Comprehensible input is also a significant way for learners to acquire an L2 when learners encounter a large volume of input throughout this strand.

Nation and Newton (2009) and Nation (2007) demonstrate the most essential conditions for achieving the full value of the meaning-focused input strand:

1. What L2 learners listen to or read should be familiar to them.
2. The input should be meaningful, interesting to the learners and easy to comprehend.
3. L2 learners need to be exposed to large quantities of input.
4. The knowledge that will be gained through listening and reading should be surrounded with meaningful contexts, cues, and background knowledge.
5. Regarding the size of vocabulary, Hu and Nation (2000) confirm that 95% to 98% of the vocabulary should already be known by learners; so, no more than five per one hundred words should be unfamiliar to them.

If any one of these conditions is not met, it is not possible to claim that the meaning-focused input strand is fully present in a course because learners gain a small portion of vocabulary from each encounter with a word. Also, learning does not occur until learners are provided with good reading and listening skills to help them

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

acquire vocabulary items. As a result, learners have to be exposed to large amounts of input to apply this strand.

a. *Listening and Vocabulary*

Nation (2011) mentions two effective methods of learning vocabulary in the listening class. The first is through negotiation, as supported by Ellis, Tanaka, and Yamazaki (1994); that is, negotiation allows students to recognize the meaning of new words and obtain a full explanation through discussion in the classroom. Negotiation should be around interesting topics, with a lot of repetition in generative situations so as to use the new words with deliberative attention. The second possibility for learning vocabulary in the listening classis through listening to stories. Elley (1989) and Nation and Newton (2009) agree that the best methodology for learning vocabulary through listening to stories is by providing interesting, comprehensible stories that entail a good amount of repetition. The teacher should choose the right level of graded reader, which means that the story contains a controlled number of unknown words. The teacher has to read the story slowly, checking students' understanding from time to time. If the teacher finds a new word, he or she should stop and give a quick definition or translation by writing on the board. Writing on the board is an important step because, in this way, students will become able to recognize all new and repeated words in a particular story, according to Nation and Newton (2009). To increase listening fluency, there should be no unknown vocabulary, but there shouldthen be pressure to perform faster. A good strategy is to repeat the opportunity to listen to the same story several times at different rates of speed.

b. *Reading and Vocabulary*

The best methodology for gaining access to voluminous language input is through reading extensively. Nation and Wang (1999) calculated that L2 learners need to read one graded reader every two weeks. The reason is to give students opportunities for repeated encounters with the same words through reading various stories, as that leads to maximizing incidental learning of new words. Nation (2005) distinguishes between intensive reading and extensive reading. From the perspective of vocabulary, extensive reading is the best way to gain new vocabulary and knowledge while also developing fluency and enriching students' knowledge. However, extensive reading requires that students already recognize around 95% to 98% of the words. Moreover, extensive reading belongs in the meaning-focused input strand because students are exposed to large quantities of input. In contrast to extensive reading, intensive reading deals with a heavier load of new vocabulary; learners can be successful if they know less than 95% of running words in an intensive reading text (Nation, 2004). Vocabulary learning in intensive reading is in the language-focused learning strand. The most effective activities that related to intensive reading, from Nation's perspective, are matching words with definitions, and word-part building and analysis (Nation, 2001 & Nation, 2005).

Strand Two: Meaning-Focused Output; Learning Vocabulary through Speaking and Writing Productively

The meaning-focused output strand includes language learning through writing and speaking. Nation and Newton (2009) single out some popular activities to promote this strand; for instance, giving a speech, writing a letter, or taking part in conversations. Similar to the conditions for meaning-focused input, the meaning focused output strand has conditions to make it effective:

1. Familiarity of the topics allows L2 learners to write and talk more freely.
2. Conveying a comprehensible message is the main purpose during speaking and writing.
3. To fill in their linguistic gaps, learners have to use their previous knowledge, dictionaries or communicative strategies to reach a satisfying level of learning.
4. L2 learners have to exploit opportunities to produce as much output as they can.
5. A small portion of the language required for meaning-focused output may be new, and learners need to learn it.

At this point, Nation and Newton (2009) support the role of output in second language acquisition by mentioning Swain. According to Swain (1995), output pushes learners to process language more deeply than input and learners have a degree of control over ways of learning to produce output, such as identifying their own linguistic limitations and determining how to internalize language knowledge to fill the gaps. Discovering linguistic gaps can be achieved throughout noticing/triggering, which is considered a major function to acquire and facilitate producing modified output (Swain, 2005). To demonstrate the value of output, Nation (2007 & 2009) refers to the two types of learning: productive and receptive. Productive learning gives learners opportunities to look for and produce words as a way of gaining knowledge. By contrast, receptive learning assists learners to recognize the meaning of words. In addition, Nation relates the issue of receptive learning to Joe (1998), who stresses the importance of generative use that involves using previously learned language in new ways, so that students gain access to deeper learning. Swain (1995) disputes Krashen's input hypothesis in the sense that, although comprehensible input is an essential part of learning in L2, it is not sufficient to cause L2 acquisition. Consequently, L2 learners should be exposed to many situations in order to push them to produce written or oral communication.

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

Furthermore, through output, L2 learners are able to move from the semantic level of comprehension to the syntactic level as required for production. In de Bot's (1996) research, output also has other roles to maximize acquisition, such as promoting fluency and providing different types of feedback. Furthermore, communication strategies assist learners to cultivate their ability to produce output through conversational discourse. Participating in conversation helps L2 learners shift from declarative knowledge to procedural knowledge.

c. *Speaking and Vocabulary*

The number of words required in listening and speaking is smaller than in reading and writing. Nation and Crabbe (1991 & 2011) recommend that the teacher gives learners a manageable list of vocabulary at the early stage, so that it can be learned quickly and can lead to increased fluency at the same time. Nation and Crabbe offer a list of 120 words that they term "survival vocabulary". This survival vocabulary list consists of greetings, numbers, ways of requesting food, politeness formulas, and ways to seek help and directions. Additionally, listening and speaking tend to involve colloquial language; that is, they tend to use mainly the 2000 most frequent words in English (Nation, 2005). In order to design activities based on the most important spoken words, the teacher can have the students listen to a story and ask them to write down the words that are repeated and how they are used in a particular context. After that, the teacher may design speaking activities based on the selected words. Thus, written input of those words can lead to using the same input in oral negotiation (Newton, 1995). One of the most effective activities that helps promote fluency in such speaking activities is the 4/3/2 technique, in which students are asked to retell the same story to different listeners three times, 4 minutes, 3 minutes, and 2 minutes respectively. Nation (1989), Arevart and Nation (1991), and Jong and Perfetti (2011) all report the importance of this activity to maximize fluency in speaking, as well as grammatical accuracy and complexity.

d. *Writing and vocabulary*

According to Nation (2005), there is a strong relationship between vocabulary knowledge, students' level of proficiency, and the quality of students' writing. Along with Nation, Corson (1997) states that vocabulary that is taught receptively can generally become available for production in writing. Nation (2005) agrees with Corson's perspectives and points out the importance of integrating words that students have already learned receptively, in order to recycle them during writing. This can be achieved through linked skills activities, that is, activities that combine three skills, such as reading, listening, and writing; or listening and speaking, and writing; with writing always coming at the end of the sequence. For example, reading, speaking, and writing can be linked together in one activity as follows: first, the students are asked to read a passage on a specific topic; second the students are to discuss the same topic with their peers based on questions prepared by a teacher, and third, they step write about what they have read and discussed. Similarly, Wajnryb (1988) suggests another linked skills activity, the dictogloss activity, in which L2 students take notes while they listen to a passage; then, with their peers, they discuss what they have written in order to reconstruct the text; and finally they compare their own writing with the original text.

Strand Three: Language-focused learning

This strand involves concentrating on language features such as grammar, spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary, and discourse. According to Nation and Newton (2009), the broad goal of language-focused learning is to deal with meanings, and more specifically, the goal is to learn language features. Some common activities that are valuable in this strand include: learning vocabulary from cards, intensive reading, receiving feedback about writing, guessing meanings of words from the context, pronunciation, and translation. Although such activities have a major impact on learning and language use, this strand—like each of the others—should occupy only approximately one-quarter of the whole course (Nation, 2007). Some conditions that are important for complete realization of this strand are:

1. This strand promotes attention to vocabulary and language features.
2. L2 learners have deep and thoughtful ways of processing the language feature.
3. This strand provides opportunities for repeated attention to familiar language features.
4. These features should be simple and not focus on developmental knowledge that students do not yethave.
5. Features that are practiced in language-focused learning should also appear in the other three strands.

Moreover, Nation and Newton (2009) argue that the presence of this strand has four effects. First, it can add to implicit knowledge. Second, it draws students' attention methodically to learning a language. Third, it concentrates on learning systemic language features. Fourth, it can contribute to promoting strategies for language learning.

Based on Nation (2011), two of these strategies for language-focused learning deserve more detailed discussion: learning by using cards, and learning by engaging in intensive reading. First, both Nation (2001) and Milton (2009) agree with the importance of learning from word cards because it highlights the association between a word in the foreign language and its meaning in the first language. A simple way to apply this strategy is to ask L2 students to write down the foreign words to be learnt on one side of the card, and write down the

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

meaning of these words in their first language on the other side of the same card. Students can then look at the L2 words and try to remember the meaning; if they cannot remember, they can turn their card over and see the meaning.

Second, according to Nation (2009), intensive reading is beneficial in raising students' attention to language features within the context of use. Some principles that can assist instructors in teaching vocabulary through intensive reading are: (1) teaching high-frequency words from the first 2000 words and the Academic Word List; (2) avoiding low-frequency words or being careful not to go through the list too quickly; and (3) implementing strategies to retain and memorize vocabulary, such as guessing based on the context, analyzing words, and using a dictionary.

Strand Four: Fluency development

According to Nation (2007 & 2011), this strand involves all of the four skills, listening; speaking, reading, and writing. This strand aims to help L2 students use what they have learnt to be fluent and the students' goal is to receive and convey comprehensible messages. Some activities to enhance fluency are: skimming and scanning; the 4/3/2 technique; ten-minute writing; and listening to stories. As with the other strands, Nation (2007) and Nation and Newton (2009) demonstrate the conditions for fluency development to implement this strand:

1. No new language features should be encountered when students practice all the four skills and the content should be familiar to students;
2. The main goal for students is to receive and convey comprehensible messages;
3. Pressure and encouragement are important in developing fluency; and
4. Students should be exposed to and also produce large quantities of input and output.

Two major categories of activities to increase fluency through repetitive reception or production within this strand are: (1) repeated reading and the 4/3/2 technique; and (2) extensive reading and listening.

e. *Balancing and integrating the four strands*

In order to achieve an appropriate distribution among the four strands, receptive and productive skills can be approximately balanced whether inside or outside the classroom. The teachers' task is to ensure that they are balancing the teaching of each of the four strands after two weeks or one month by checking whether each in-class or out-of-class activity has a place under each of the four strands, as well as how much time is devoted to each of them (Nation & Newton, 2009). Ellis (2005), who is referred to by Nation and Newton (2009) outlines some justifications for dividing the time roughly among the four strands. He includes principles of instructed language learning as follows: (1) instruction needs to focus on meaning, but (2) instruction also needs to focus on form. Three of the strands: meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, and fluency development, consist of activities that concentrate on conveying or receiving messages, so each one of them should occupy one-quarter of the total time because all three of these strands focus heavily on the meaning, which is one part of the learning process. However, the language-focused learning strand focuses on form, so it should also occupy approximately one-quarter of the time. Furthermore, Ellis (2002) suggests a different approaches for balancing the four stands according to the teacher's judgement, in this case based on students' level of proficiency. Beginners need more meaning-focused learning and less fluency development, whereas advanced students benefit from more fluency development and less meaning-focused learning. Apart from balancing the time devoted to each of the four strands, integrating them into an associated overall syllabus is important as well. For instance, speaking classes typically involve meaning-focused input and output activities, with fluency exercises adding a small portion of language-focused learning activities. In addition, a content-based course could incorporate language-focused learning that leads to meaning-focused input and output activities along with fluency activities. Giving appropriate time for each strand depends on many factors, such as the teacher's skills and preferences, the learners' expectations, the school's expectations, and the beliefs about language teaching and learning.

f. *Selecting a Sample Unit of the Textbook that is Used for Analysis*

As noted above, the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia recently signed contracts with different companies in Europe and North America to obtain English language textbooks with new strategies and methods in teaching and learning English (Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education, Taif, n.d.). The procedure that the Ministry of Education follows is designed to enhance education. Each high school has a different textbook from a specific company, and after completing one semester or one year of teaching the text edition, English teachers will start evaluating the materials and send their evaluations to the Ministry of Education. Afterwards, members of the Ministry of Education will start looking at all of the teachers' concerns and ideas, and choose the best textbook or textbooks to be authorized as the primary textbooks to be used in Saudi Arabia. This process will take several years to reach a final decision on selecting textbooks.

Education First: High School English in Saudi Arabia (2012) is a textbook being distributed in high school for boys in Taif, Saudi Arabia. This particular textbook was chosen for analysis because it has been distributed in Taif, where I live, and thus it has special importance for

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

me. It contains eight units and each unit has four lessons. After examining the textbook, I saw that some lessons have one or two lists of vocabulary, and others have none. Regarding the four skills, all units contain the four skills in varying concentrations. For instance, Unit 7(Going to the doctor) focuses more on reading and writing skills than other skills. In contrast, Unit6 (Meetings) neglects the writing skill and concentrates mostly on listening and speaking skills. For the purpose of this paper, I will thoroughly analyze Unit 3 (Animal tails). I selected this Unit because it includes 60new words and is the most heavy-vocabulary Unit in the textbook, so it seems especially appropriate for analysis of vocabulary- teaching strategies. My discussion will focus on both strengths and weaknesses of this unit as they relate to the framework of learn ability and the four strands of vocabulary teaching and learning.

Overall, although some strengths are demonstrated, it is clear that there are also weaknesses in this Unit as well. For example, Unit 3 (Animal tails)mentions some of the 60new words only one time in one lesson with a few exercises; however, the next lesson of the same Unit has another group of new words provided with a few activities to learn these new words. Thus, there seems to be very limited opportunities to recycle the new words and to reinforce them in the students' memory across the four strands. So, I decided to take this particular Unit as an example not only to evaluate the effectiveness of the textbook, but also to illustrate the way the framework I have presented above may function when used for such an evaluation based on vocabulary learn ability and the four strands. The following discussion will provide further detail regarding the analysis of the chosen Unit of the textbook.

g. *Description of Unit 3 of the textbook*

In order to provide a background for the more detailed discussion that follows, it is necessary to give an overview of Unit 3. This Unit talks about different types of animals, and the grammar focuses on comparisons among the animals using *(as…as/than).* There are 60new words in this Unit: 36names of animals and their categories; 22 adjectives that can be applied to animals; and two verbs that can have animals as their subjects. The first lesson has a warm-up discussion for students to work with classmates; then, the next task involves matching the adjectives with characteristics of the animals, for instance, *as quiet as a mouse*. The second lesson involves listening to a lecture and is divided into two activities: first, after students listen to the lecture, they match adjectives with their definition (new vocabulary); and second, students listen to the same lecture again and try to put a tick beside the right description of each animal. The same lesson also has a grammar section about comparisons between animals using *(as…as/than)*, such as *snakes are as quiet as turtles.* The third lesson has very short paragraphs for students to read, which present new vocabulary about major animal groups. The second part of the third lesson is about listening; it is made up of two activities: (1) listening to three stories and answering questions; and (2) listening to the same stories and writing different types of comparison using *(as...as/than).* The fourth and final lesson has two main activities: (1) reading a passage and answering questions related to it; and (2) writing a story by selecting one or more animals and describing them by using some adjectives that students have learned while studying this Unit.

Consideration of the Unit in Terms of the Vocabulary Included and the Teaching Strategies for Learnable Vocabulary

The below table shows techniques forselection oflearnable vocabulary and for making words readily learnable, as discussed previously in the beginning part of this project, and showswhether each is exemplified in this Unitor not (✓ means present; × means absent). The table will then be explained in more detail.

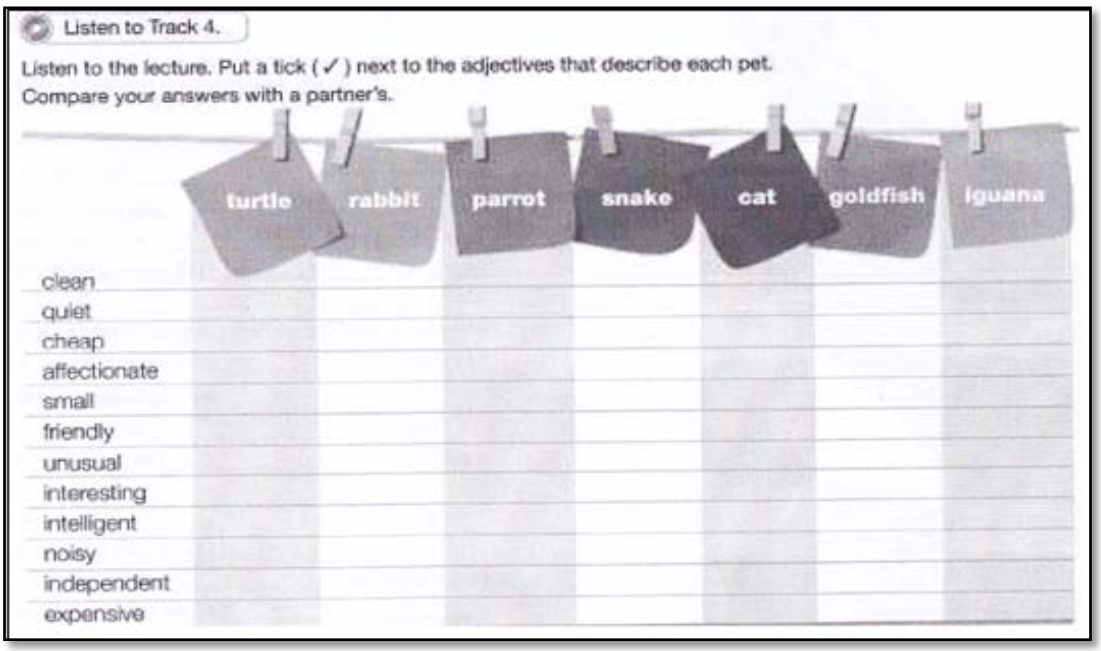
Table 2: Teaching Methods of Learnable Vocabulary

Strategies	Researcher	Leson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4
Demonstrability	White (1988)				
Brevity					
Individual word list	Higa (1963)				
Students' Level of Proficiency	Henning (1973)				
Centres of Interest	White (1988)				
Frequency	Nation (2001)	Most of the words are not high-frequency words			
The similaritiy between L1 & L2 words	Anderson and Jordan (1928) & White (1988)				
Regularity	White (1988)				
Compound Nouns					

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

Opportunism					
Receptive and Productive Learning through Translation	Stoddard (1929)				

As indicated in the table above, White (1988) identified demonstrability as a key strategy for selecting learnable vocabularycan be found in this Unit. Unit3 talks about describing pets and wild animals; so,the textbook uses animals as concrete nouns. Thus, this Unit follows exactly what White (1988) recommends with respect to teaching concrete words rather than abstract ones. Second, White's (1988) suggestion was to teach shorter words rather than the longer ones; while this is generally the case here, for instance *quiet, clean,* and*strong*, this Unit does also include a few longer words like *independent, affectionate,* and *expensive*. Third, Higa (1963) declares that teaching individual words is better than associating words; so,this Unit follows Higa's advice andhas two individual lists: the firstlist is the names of animals associated with the second list, which isanimals' features. As shown below in Graphic 1, the activity applies this strategy by having students listen to the lecture and match the name of an animal with its feature(s). Fourth, Henning's (1973) perspectiveis to avoid teaching homophones at the beginner level to prevent the confusion of learning such words, and it can be seen that this Unit avoids teaching homophones and draws associations between the name of ananimal and its description. This will help beginner-level students store the meaning in their memory. Finally, exploiting centers of interest is one techniquethat White (1988) mentions as a way to make words more learnable. Although the vocabulary items in this Unit mainly are not very high-frequency words, the topic itself would properly be intereting to learners; one can expect that students may enjoy learning words related to animals. Moreover, the activities in this Unit are presented in a way that attracts students toknow more about animals of the world at the same time as learning new words.



Graphic 1: This activity associates animals' names with their features.

V. Actual Frequency of the New Vocabulary

In order to recognize whether the vocabulary items in the textbook are high-frequency or low-frequency words, the new words have been analyzed by usingCorpus of Contemporary American English COCA corpus (2012), to which the website *Word and Phrase .Info*relates. Earlier in this paper, I mentioned that Nation (2001) refers to West's General Service List as a primary printed list giving the frequency of occurrence and the rank of the first 2,000 words; however, I will avoid using it here because it has become dated and it looks at only printed texts. Although Bauman and Culligan (1995)

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

added 248 words to West's list by working from the newer*Brown Corpus*, *the Brown Corpus*has not been updated. On contrast, the COCA list is regularly updated, with 450 million words from 1990 to 2012, allowing *Word and Phrase .Info*to provide detailed and current information on the most frequent 60,000 words,i ncluding items from spoken as well as print sources. In fact, COCA is based on various types of texts, such as spoken and written including magazine, news, and academic texts.

By examining the nouns in Table 1using the tool provided by *Word and Phrase .Info*, we can see that the new nouns in the Unit under analysis can be placed at a frequency rank of around 1,100 to 19,000. Indeed, the word *ox* is such a very low-frequency word that it does not appear anywhere amongthe 60,000 lemmas accessed by *Word and Phrase .Info*. The reason for not considering most of these words to be high-frequency words is because Nation (2001) advises that the list of themost frequent 2000 words is considered the most suitable list for high-frequency words and is a good initial foundation for students planning to go on to further work in the academic field. Additionally, in *Word and Phrase .Info*, the most extremely frequent words are identified as thoseunder the 1,000 rank, such words as *small* and *strong*. The frequency range of the adjectives in this Unit is about the 1,000 to 12,000 rank among 60,000 lemmas, which also is not considered to be very high-frequency. Finally, the frequency rank of the verbs is between 4,000 to 6,000 frequent words according to *Word and Phrase .Info*. The following tables 3, 4, and 5 present new vocabulary from the Unit, categorized by word type and listed in order of frequency rank.

Table 3: Nouns by Frequency Rank

Noun	Frequency Rank
Bird	948
Fish	1,123
Horse	1,283
Cat	1,785
Mouse	3,326
Insect	3,428
Snake	3,504
Bat	3,720
Bee	4,283
Lion	4,343
Elephant	4,394
Rabbit	4,412
Shark	4,478
Frog	5,430
Owl	6,031
Amphibian	6,228
Turtle	6,583
Tiger	6,863
Fox	7,586
Dolphin	8,287
Gorilla	9,570
Alligator	9,742
Parrot	10,220
Crocodile	10,412
Mammal	10,789
Toad	12,784
Eel	13,592
Zebra	14,397
Panda	15,238
Peacock	16,024
Giraffe	16,035
Kangaroo	16,356
Goldfish	17,036
Reptile	17,162
Iguana	19,894
Ox	Beyond 60,000

Table 4: Adjectives by Frequency Rank

Adjective	Frequency Rank
Small	203
Strong	458
Interesting	1,073
Independent	1,269
Quiet	1,439
Clean	1,519
Expensive	1,670
Busy	1,934
Cheap	1,940
Proud	1,993
Unusual	2,048
Blind	2,733
Friendly	2,777
Wise	3,255
Intelligent	3,737
Brave	4,901
Noisy	6,660
Slippery	7,843
Sly	9,917
Hairy	9,926
Moody	12,129
Affectionate	12,454

Table 5: Verb by Frequency Rank

Verb	Frequency Rank
Scratch	4,688
Lick	6,014

This analysis shows that, in terms of English as a whole, most of the names of animals are not very high-frequency words based on their rank in the COCA corpus.However, although most of these words are relatively low-frequency, which arguably might cause difficulty in learning them,including them in the Unit may well be reasonable because students would be interested in learning new words especially about animals, even if they are infrequent in terms of the

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

English language as a whole. This interesting result highlights a potentially important aspect of the set of criteria outlined in the earlier part of this essay: frequency in itself may not be a clear-cut determiner of which words should or should not be included. Also, as noted earlier, unfamiliar words can be reasonably learnable if presented in the context of other words that are more frequent and familiar. Certainly, in the case of this Unit, it can be shown that the infrequent animal-related vocabulary is contextualized by many much more frequent and familiar words in the same Unit, as illustrated in the table 6 below:

Table 6: Illustrative Table of Familiar Words by Frequency Rank

Word	Frequent Rank
The	1
Be	2
And	3
Of	4
A	5
In	6
To	7
Have	8
To	9
It	10
I	11
That	12
For	13
You	14
He	15
with	16
On	17
Do	18
Say	19
this	20

a) Summary of Factors Relating to Inclusion and Teaching of New Words

Considering the above overall factors related to vocabulary choice in the Unit, it can be noted that, although most of the new words are not high frequency, other factors compensate for that to quite an extent. For example, the factors of demonstrability, brevity and interest have been demonstrated in the Unit. Individual word lists areavailable in Unit 3: the first is animals' names, and the second list is adjectives. The goal of these two lists is to match each animal with its feature(s).Finally, attention to learners' level of proficiency is found in this Unit because the two lists do not have homophones and the students are beginner level in this Unit; sostudentswill be able to store words in their memory easily based on sounds because the words do not have similar sounds. However, the factor of L1/L2 similarity, as already explained, is not relevant in this case. Along with L1/L2 similarity, the concept of receptive and productive learning words through translation is not found in the Unit as well. As the table indicates, other potential factors are also absent from this unit that it does not include regularity of verbs and compound nouns. In addition, opportunism makes it difficult to decide whether English teachers are going to add new vocabulary to the main list. To consider this issue, it is important to use the focus group technique for the teachers and to interview the students to see if they are interested into adding new words, besides the main list of vocabulary in a particular lesson, to allow the students to express their opinions and concerns on this issue. With respect to the absence of these factors, we should note that it is important to add the missing factors because of their role in helping the students enhance their vocabulary knowledge and to explore a large variety of words.

Consideration of the Unit in Terms of Implementation of the Four Strands,Including Effective Strategies to Embody Each Strand

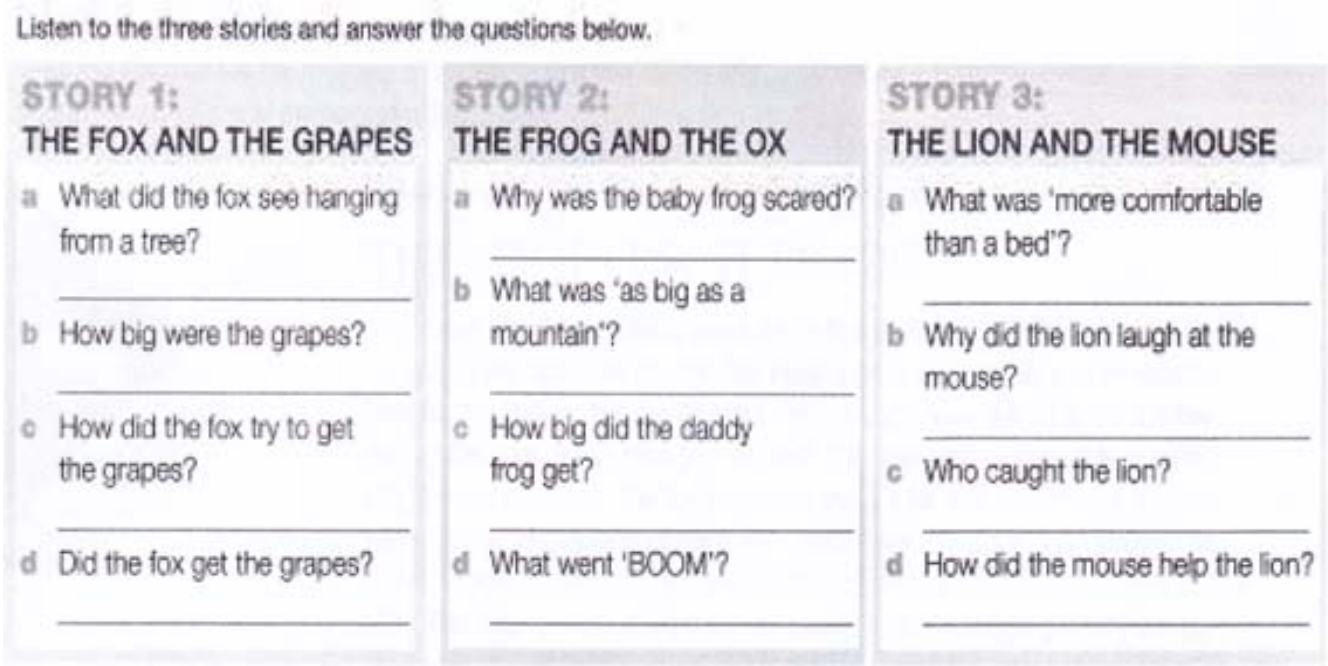
Basically, Unit 3reflects each ofthe four skills, but not with equal focus. It has many receptive learning activitiesbutfewer productive learningones; that is, the Unit concentrates more strongly on meaning-focused input than on meaning-focued output. For instance, parts of lessons 3 and 4 are mainly reading-based; similarly, listening is the focus of lessons 2 and 3, that is, the students have an opportunity to listen twice and to answer two exercises per lesson. By contrast, meaning-focused output does not playa largerole inthe exercises,based on speaking and writing to learn the vocabulary: the only speaking activities in this Unit are thewarm-upactivities in lessons 1 and 2, and writing a paragraph in lesson 4. To analyze the Unit more thoroughly, the following table shows the ways in which frequent and learnable vocabularyis associated with the four stands in Unit 3.Note that *Yes*indicates that the Unit has at least some activities ina particular strand to learn and retain the frequent and learnable vocabulary items, whereas *No* indicates that there are no activities to enhance frequent and learnable words in this specific strand. Finally, *Some what* suggests that there are activities in a particular strand, butthat–as explained below –the yare not sufficient to learn and acquire the new words.

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

Table 7: Representation of frequent and learnable vocabulary across the four strands

Strand / Criteria	Meaning-focused input	Meaning-focused output	Language-focused learning	Fluency development
Learnable word	Yes	No	Yes	No
Frequent word	Yes	No	Yes	No
Repeated word	Some what	No	Some what	No

As shown in Table 7, all 60new animal-related words including the nouns, adjectives, and verbs, which are mainlyinfrequent but potentially learnablewords, are presented under the meaning-focused input strand within activities to promote students' skills in reading and listening. The Unit has provided good activities to achieve the conditions of this strand; yet, they are not ideally sufficient to memorize the words because students will tend to forgetthe items from one lesson of the Unit when they encounter other new words in the next lessons of the same Unit. According to Nation (2001), one encounter with vocabulary items is inadequate to transfer the input to intake. Anderson and Jordan (1928) report thatmost forgetting of words occurs immediately after initial learning; so, it is essential to do some repetition immediately after students learn new words. Lessons 2 and 3 have listening activities that should be repeated two to three times to answer the questions, as appears in Graphic 2.


Listen to the three stories and answer the questions below.

STORY 1:
THE FOX AND THE GRAPES

a What did the fox see hanging from a tree?

b How big were the grapes?

c How did the fox try to get the grapes?

d Did the fox get the grapes?

STORY 2:
THE FROG AND THE OX

a Why was the baby frog scared?

b What was 'as big as a mountain"?

c How big did the daddy frog get?

d What went 'BOOM"?

STORY 3:
THE LION AND THE MOUSE

a What was 'more comfortable than a bed"?

b Why did the lion laugh at the mouse?

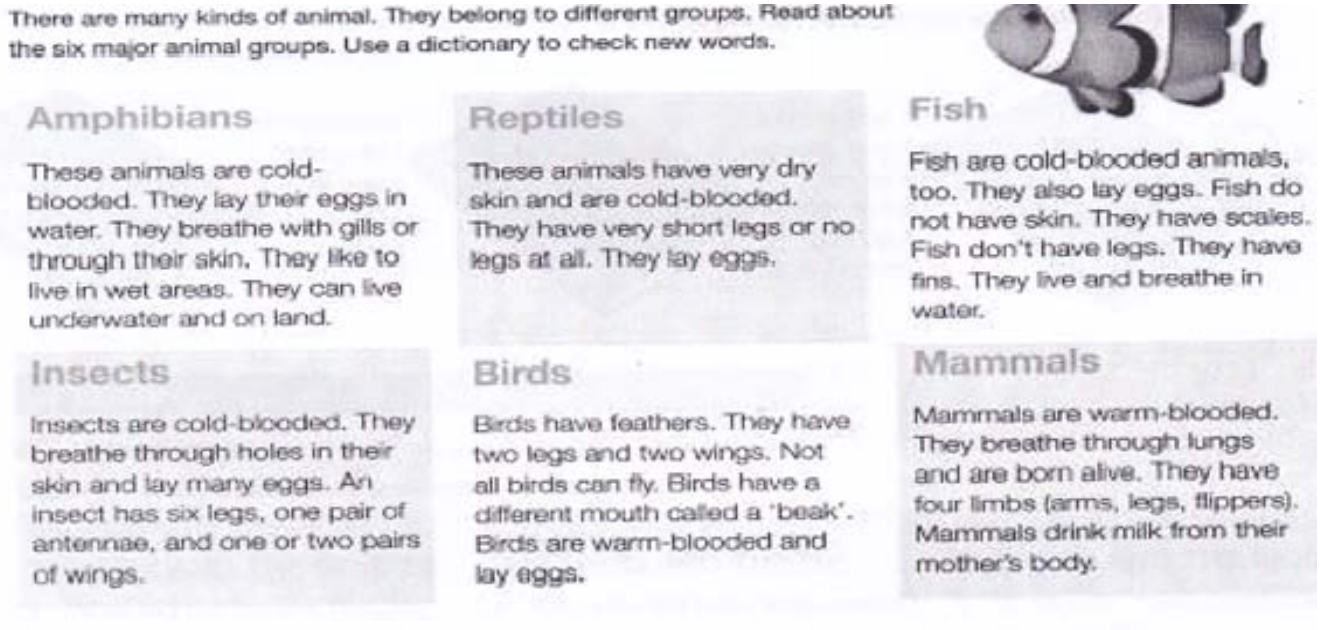
c Who caught the lion?

d How did the mouse help the lion?

Graphic 2: Listening to three stories about animals

As shown in Graphic 3, there are two reading exercises in lessons 3 and 4 in which students read small paragraphs and then answer questions. Thus, there is at leastsome repetition of new words in the Unit, but there are inadequate exercises to help L2 learners absorb and strengthen their recall of the new words after they finish this Unit.

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)



There are many kinds of animal. They belong to different groups. Read about the six major animal groups. Use a dictionary to check new words.

Amphibians

These animals are cold-blooded. They lay their eggs in water. They breathe with gills or through their skin. They like to live in wet areas. They can live underwater and on land.

Reptiles

These animals have very dry skin and are cold-blooded. They have very short legs or no legs at all. They lay eggs.

Fish

Fish are cold-blooded animals, too. They also lay eggs. Fish do not have skin. They have scales. Fish don't have legs. They have fins. They live and breathe in water.

Insects

Insects are cold-blooded. They breathe through holes in their skin and lay many eggs. An insect has six legs, one pair of antennae, and one or two pairs of wings.

Birds

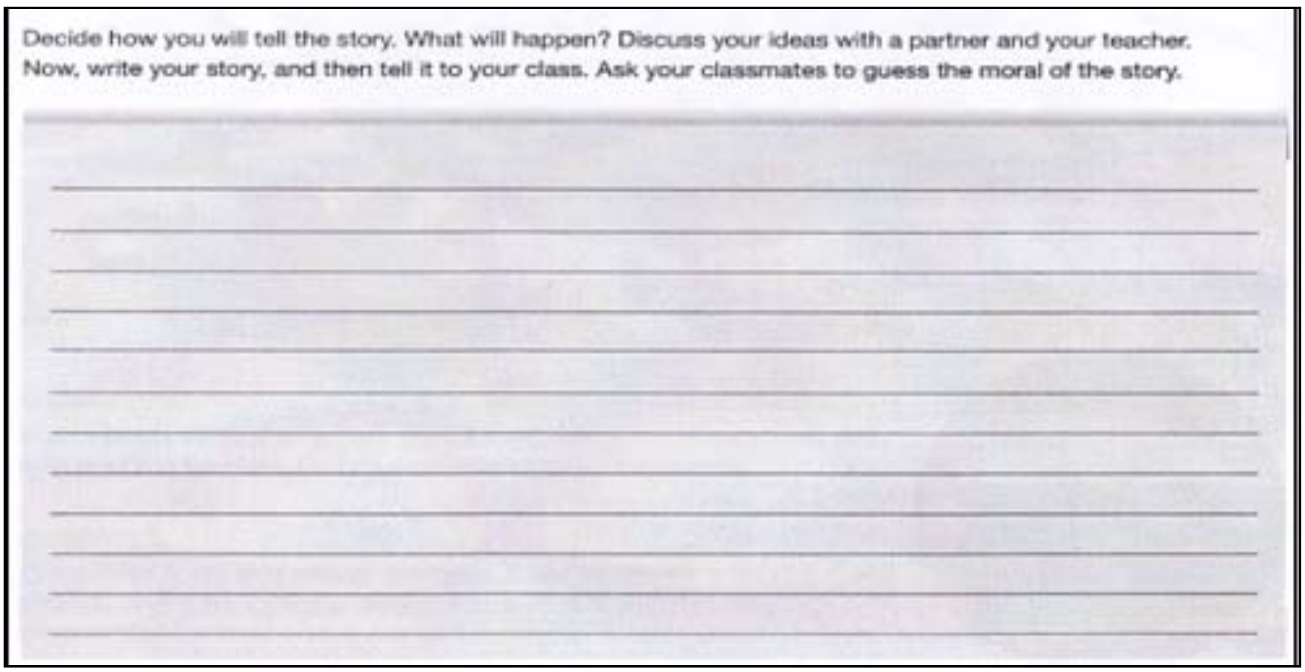
Birds have feathers. They have two legs and two wings. Not all birds can fly. Birds have a different mouth called a 'beak'. Birds are warm-blooded and lay eggs.

Mammals

Mammals are warm-blooded. They breathe through lungs and are born alive. They have four limbs (arms, legs, flippers). Mammals drink milk from their mother's body.

Graphic 3: Reading small paragprahs about six types of animals

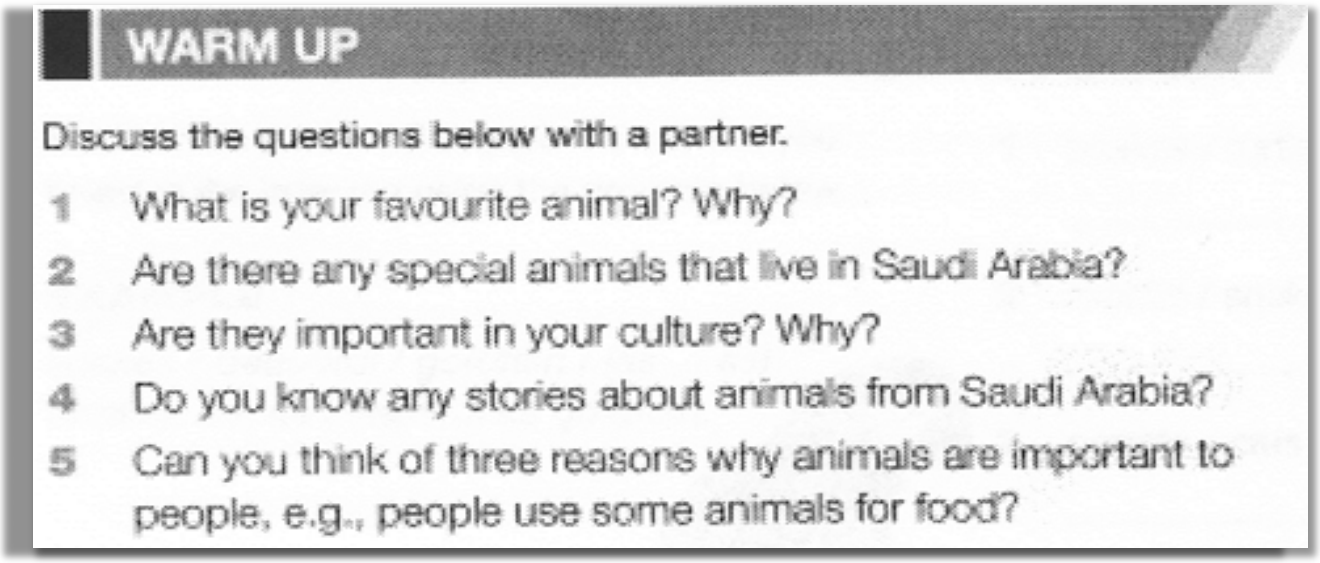
Unlike the meaning-focused input strand, there are few activities in this Unit which address the meaning-focused output strand. This Unit does not meet the conditions, as outlined earlier in this essay, that students should produce language as much as they can whether in writing or speaking. In lesson 4, there is only one activity to write a small paragraph about retelling a story about animals, as illustrated in Graphic 4. Only a few discussion exercises are presented as warm-up activities in this Unit as well as shown in Graphic 5. Thus, students have very limited chances to practise and strengthen their abilities to transfer input to output through speaking and writing. On top of that, no repeated exercises are available for new vocabularythatlearners have learned through studying this Unit; each of the three lessons involves new words with very few activities to practise speaking and writing.



Decide how you will tell the story. What will happen? Discuss your ideas with a partner and your teacher. Now, write your story, and then tell it to your class. Ask your classmates to guess the moral of the story.

Graphic 4: Writing activity about retelling a story

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)



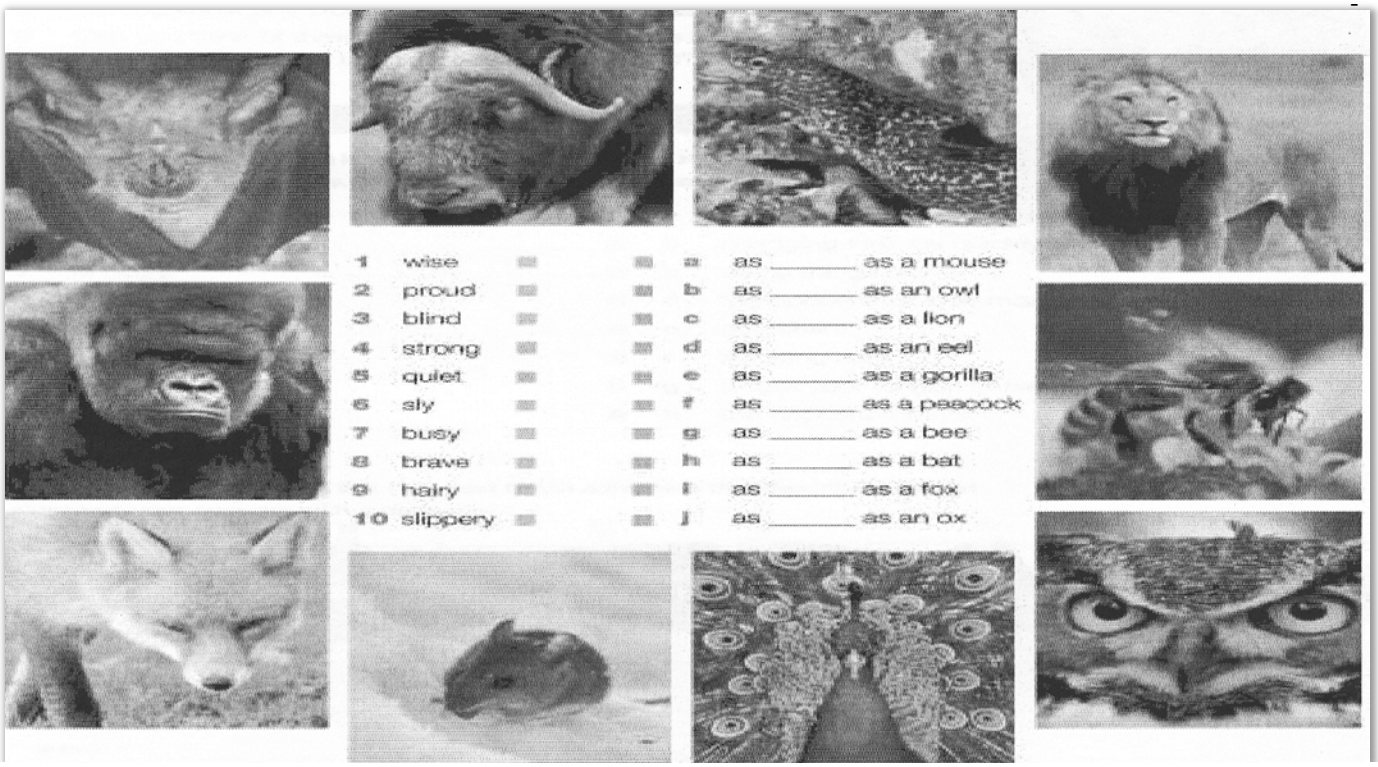
WARM UP

Discuss the questions below with a partner.

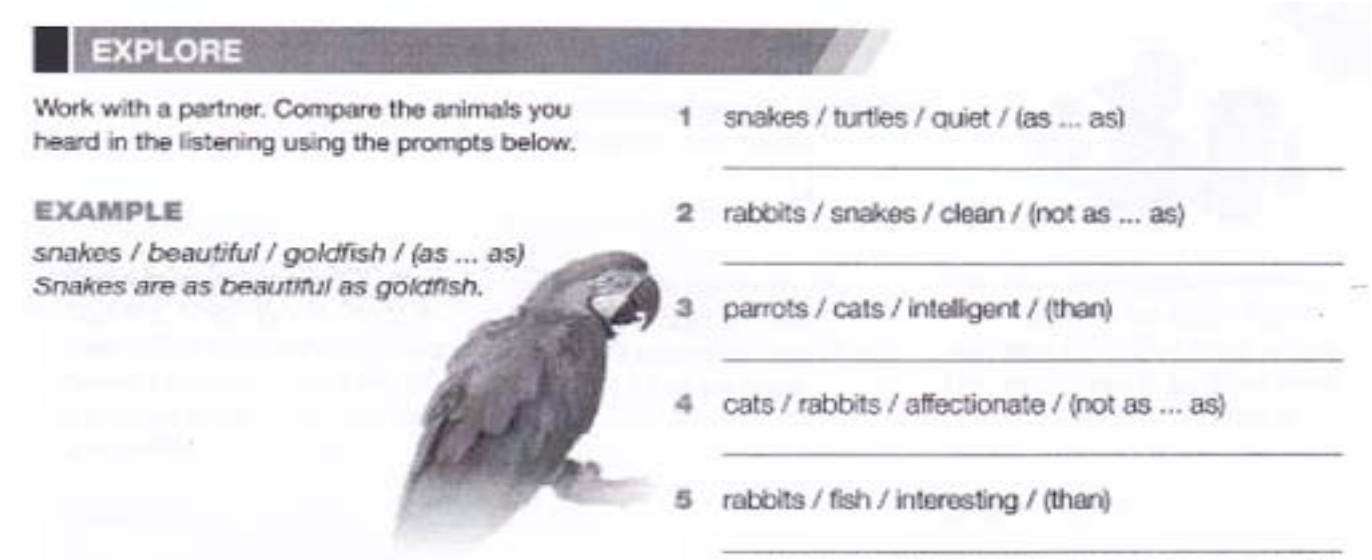
1 What is your favourite animal? Why?
2 Are there any special animals that live in Saudi Arabia?
3 Are they important in your culture? Why?
4 Do you know any stories about animals from Saudi Arabia?
5 Can you think of three reasons why animals are important to people, e.g., people use some animals for food?

Graphic 5: Discussing questions as a warm-up activity

Regarding the language-focused learning strand, the Unit offers vocabulary and grammar in keeping with the conditions for this strand that were mentioned earlier.This Unit focuses on comparisons among animals,as illustrated in Graphic 6 and Graphic 7.



© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)



Graphic 6 & 7: Some grammar activities in comparison

Some activities draw the student's attention to learning and retaining a certain group of vocabulary through a certain degree of repetition and recycling. By contrast, there are no activities in this Unit to enhance the fluency development strand: it is clear that the unit has not applied the conditions of this stand because there is a new list of words in each of the three lessons, with just some basic activities, and there are no activities to enhance fluency. Regarding the conditions of this strand, the students are exposed to and apparently expected to produce a large amount of input and output equally; yet, this Unit does not give them anopportunity to learn the skills neededin order to do so.

VI. Conclusion

After analyzing the Unit of the textbook, the first outcome reveals that the Unit has infrequent but learnable new words which contribute effectively to increase the acquisition of vocabulary knowledge and to make the language easy to learn and retain. However, the activities provided do not assist L2 learners in retaining these words for the long term due to inadequate presence of the four strands that support learnable words. On that basis, the second outcome is that this Unithasat best only partially applied the four strandsby providing a significant number of activities for two strands –meaning-focused input and language-focused learning, but few activities for the other two – meaning-focused output and fluency development. Additionally, although some activities do recycle the same vocabulary, not all new vocabulary receives this attention. Thus, there is no consistent recycling of vocabulary to reinforce retaining new words and their meanings.

The tools that have been used to analyze and evaluate this Unit of the textbook are (1) factors related to vocabulary frequency and learnability, and (2) Nation's four strands, namely: meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency development. As demonstrated, these tools were able to highlight some strengths and weaknesses in the textbook Unit that was analyzed, but they should be considered as only provisional. The toolshave quite clear limitations, such as the challenge of determining how best to deal with the criterion of frequency, which was noted in the previous discussion. Therefore, I may not use exactly the same tools in the future when different textbooks will be analyzedand evaluated. As afuture extensionof this kind of textbook study, the presentframeworks or tools should be expanded and developed in order to coverthe whole textbook, and other vocabulary-related criteria should be added in addition to the major ones already proposed, in order to have a full analysis based on developing new tools.

Furthermore, there are limitations to the effectiveness of examining only the textbook content itself. There is also a need to observe EFL(English as a Foreign Language)teachers during the class for one or more terms, in order to see how they follow the instructions of the materials provided,andif they neglect some activities that can help students understand the lessons–perhaps because of time limits or other issues in the classroom–and also whether they in fact find ways to enhance or extent the textbook material in such a way as to improve on the book. In addition, I strongly recommend interviewing students who have studied the same materials, so asto allow them to express their perspectives. Similarly, using afocus group technique could beagood way to allow EFL teachers to freely discuss their points of view toward the value of keeping the same material for future classes. Applying these two methods–the interview and focus group–can be considered good steps to gain valid and reliable information from teachers and students, and these

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

steps would facilitate teachers' and students' voicesto reach the Ministry of Education. This could ,in turn, assist the Ministry in advising textbook publishers to some necessary steps to make their titles appealing and effecting Saudi learners and teachers. This is important because enhancing the teaching and learning of the English language in Saudi Arabia is a governmental priority. By taking EFL teachers' perspectives seriously, textbook publishing companies will be able to devote their efforts to improving the materials to become as beneficial and valuable as possible for students whose goal is to acquire the language easily and effectively.

VII. Acknowledgments

Through this acknowledgment, I express my sincere gratitude to Dr. John Sivell, Professor, Department of Applied Linguistics at Brock University, who has been associated with this major research paper and who has shared his valuable opinions and experiences through which I received the required information crucial for my major research paper.

References Références Referencias

1. Anderson, J. & Jordan, A. (1928). Learning and retention of Latin words and phrases. *Journal of* Educational Psychology, 19, 485- 496.
2. Arevart, S. & Nation, I.S.P. (1991). Fluency improvement in a second language. *RELC Journal, 22*(1), 84-94.
3. Bauman, J. & Culligan, B. (1995). *The general service list*. Retrieved from http:// www. auburn. edu/ ~nunnath/engl6240/wlistgen.html
4. Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (2012). Retrieved from http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/
5. Corson, D. (1997). The learning and use of academic English words. *Language Learning, 47*(4), 671–718.
6. De Bot, K. (1996). The psycholinguistics of the output hypothesis. *Language Learning, 46*(3), 525-555.
7. Elley, W. (1989). Vocabulary acquisition from listening to stories. *Reading Research Quarterly, 24*(2), 174-187.
8. Ellis, R., Tanaka, Y. & Yamazaki, A. (1994). Classroom interaction, comprehension, and the acquisition of L2 word meanings. *Language Learning, 44*(3), 449-491.
9. Ellis, R. (2002). The place of grammar instruction in the second/foreign language curriculum. In E. Hinkel & S. Fotos (eds), New perspective on grammar teaching in second language classroom(pp.13-34). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence
10. Erlbaum. Ellis, R. (2005). Principles of instructed language learning. *System, 33*, 209–224.
11. Education First: High School English for Saudi Arabia. (2012). (2011-2012 Pilot Edition). Luzern,Switzerland: Signum International.
12. Feng-xia, Z. (2009). Using lexical approach to teach vocabulary. *US-China Foreign Language, 7*(8), 44-47.
13. Henning, G. (1973). Remembering foreign language vocabulary: Acoustic and semantic parameters. Language Learning, 23(2), 185-196.
14. Higa, M. (1963). Interference effects of intralist word relationships in verbal learning. *Journal of Verbal* Learning and Verbal Behaviour, 2, 170-175.
15. Hu, M. & Nation, I.S.P. (2000). Unknown vocabulary density and reading comprehension. *Reading in a* Foreign Language, 13(1), 403-430.
16. Izumi, S. (2002). Output, input, enhancement, and noticing hypothesis: An experimental study on ESL relativization. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 24, 541-577.
17. Joe, A. (1998). What effects do text-based tasks promoting generation have on incidental vocabulary acquisition? *Applied Linguistics, 19*(3), 357-377.
18. Jong, N. & Perfetti, C. (2011). Fluency training in the ESL classroom: An experimental study of fluency development and proceduralization. *Language Learning, 62*(2), 533-568.
19. Krashen, S. (1985). *The Input hypothesis: Issues and implications*. Essex, UK: Longman Group Limited.
20. Lewis, M. (1993). The lexical approach: The state of ELT and a way forward. Hove, UK: Language Teaching Publications.
21. Milton, J. (2009). Measuring second language vocabulary acquisition. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
22. Nassaji, H & Fotos, S. (2011). *Teaching grammar in second language classrooms*. New York, NY: Routledge.
23. Nation, I.S.P. (1982). Beginning to learn foreign vocabulary: A review of the research. *RELC Journal,13*, 14-36.
24. Nation, I.S.P. (1989). Improving speaking fluency: *System, 17*(3), 377-384.
25. Nation, I.S.P. & Crabbe, D. (1991). A survival language learning syllabus for foreign travel. *System,19*(3), 191-201.
26. Nation, I. S. P. & Hwang, K. (1995). Where would general service vocabulary stop and special purposes vocabulary begin? *System, 23*, 35–41.
27. Nation, I.S.P. & Wang, K. (1999). Graded reader and vocabulary. *Reading in a foreign language, 12*(2), 355-380.
28. Nation, I.S.P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

29. Nation, I.S.P. (2004). Vocabulary learning and intensive reading. *EA Journal, 21*(2), 20-29.
30. Nation, I.S.P. (2005). Teaching and learning vocabulary. In E. Hinkel (ed.), *Handbook of research in* second language teaching and learning(pp. 581-595). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
31. Nation, I.S.P. (2007). The four strands. *Innovation in language learning and teaching, 1*(1), 2-13.
32. Nation, I.S.P. (2009). *Teaching ESL/EFL reading and writing.* New York, NY: Routledge.
33. Nation, I.S.P. & Newton, J. (2009). *Teaching ESL/EFL listening and speaking*. New York, NY: Routledge.
34. Nation, I.S.P. & Crabbe, D. (2011). A survival language learning syllabus for foreign travel. In J. Macalister & I.S.P. Nation (eds), Case studies in language curriculum design: Concepts and *approaches in action around the world*(pp. 8- 20).
35. New York, NY: Routledge.Nation, I.S.P. (2011). My ideal vocabulary teaching course. In J. Macalister & I.S.P. Nation (eds), *Case* studies in language curriculum design: Concepts and approaches in action around the world (pp.49-62). New York, NY: Routledge.
36. Newton, J. (1995). Task-based interaction and incidental vocabulary learning: a case study. *Second* Language Research, 11(2), 159-177.
37. Saudi Arabia Ministry of Education, Taif. (n.d.). Curriculum system program for high school. Retrieved From www.taifedu.gov.sa
38. Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics, 11*(2), 129-151.
39. Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction*(pp 32). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
40. Stoddard, G. (1929). An experiment in verbal learning. *The Journal of Educational Psychology, 20*(6),452-457.
41. Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook & B. Seidlhofer (eds), Principle and practice in applied linguistics: Studies in honour of H.G. Widdowson (pp.125-144). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
42. Swain, M. (2005). The Output Hypothesis: Theory and Research. In E. Hinkel (ed.), *Handbook of* research in second language teaching and learning(pp. 471-483). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. The Corpus of ContemporaryAmerican English (COCA) (2012). Retrieved from http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/
43. Wajnryb, R. (1988). The dicto-gloss method of language teaching: A text-based communicative approach in grammar. Retrieved from http://mee-meesworld.blogspot.ca/2011/11/dictogloss-method-of-language-teaching.html
44. West, M. (1953). *A general service list of English words*. Essex, UK: Longman Group UK LTD.
45. White, R. (1988). The ELT curriculum: Design, innovation and management.
46. Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell Ltd. Word and Phrase .Info (2012). Retrieved from http:// www. Wordand phrase.info/

© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)