

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Background

Traditionally language teaching meant making the learners able to read and write in the particular language. Listening and speaking skills were totally neglected. But today language teaching means teaching all the four skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. All these skills are equally focused on language teaching and learning.

Language teaching came into its own as a profession in the twentieth century. The whole foundation of contemporary language teaching was developed during the early part of the twentieth century, as applied linguists and others sought to develop principles and procedures for the design of teaching methods as well as materials.

The English language has been the most widely used language in the world today. It got special prominence as the world language during 1990s. It is accepted as an international language or global language today. It means English has become not only the language of the people who speak it as a mother tongue but also the language of the world. It seems to be one of the main languages of international communication. It is used in most of the areas and must be mastered by each individual in the world for various purposes. Nowadays, it is taught as a second or foreign language in many countries of the world.

The importance of the English language is growing rapidly. It is being used as an international language and, therefore, can be termed as one of the most popular and prestigious languages in almost all parts of the world. Its need is greatly felt in Nepal too. English being the most prestigious language helps the people to build their personality and career. It helps the learners to integrate oneself into the English speaking society. Thus, the need and importance of English Language Teaching (ELT) is growing day by day all over the world.

The English language is being used in almost all the fields. It is used in business, politics, and information technology, science and education. It has an important role to educate the people by releasing world's current events.

English is most widely used as a lingua-franca of the world. Undoubtedly, it covers a wider range in the human life. There is no doubt that English has got ovation in Nepal in its use in pedagogy, mass media and so on. In Nepal, it is taught from primary level to the Bachelor's level as a compulsory subject.

Though teaching and learning English in Nepal was started one and a half century ago, it could not be satisfactory. Several reasons such as lack of trained teachers, lack of sufficient materials, lack of proper fund, problem in curriculum and textbook designing etc. have been thought responsible for the obstruction. The other main problems were the selection of appropriate teaching approaches, methods and techniques. Similarly, the ELT situation is also influenced by the unstable political situation and the ruling party's ideology and their view to English.

In the past, literature was the focus of the teaching language and the reading and writing skills were more emphasized. The medium of instruction was mother tongue of the teachers and /or those of students. The spoken form of the language was almost neglected. Several attempts have been made to develop effective approaches and techniques for teaching English in Nepal. Now, the curriculums have been designed on the basis of the communicative approach. There are also several non-governmental organizations like Nepalese English Language Teachers Association (NELTA), Linguistic Society of Nepal (LSN), Literary Association of Nepal (LAN) helping to develop the teaching and learning of English. NELTA is regarded as the most effective and influential organization to have been working towards the promotion of ELT situation in Nepal.

Vocabulary teaching is the first and foremost important step in language teaching. In a classroom where students do not find themselves comfortable with an L₂, language learning can be made interactive and interesting with the

introduction of appropriate vocabulary exercises. This paper is an attempt to study and explore the appropriate technique that can be incorporated in the teaching of vocabulary items in an English language classroom.

However, it seems important to point out that in almost all cases there are some differences in the number of words that an individual understands and uses. Even the terms “uses” and “understands” need clarification. For example, the major way in which we “use” vocabulary is when we speak and write; the term expressive vocabulary is used to refer to both since these are the words we use to express ourselves. We “understand” vocabulary when we listen to speech and when we read; the term receptive vocabulary is used to refer to the vocabulary of which the source is either listening or reading.

(retrieved on 20th July, 2011 from : www.englishraven.com)

1.1.1 Vocabulary: An Introduction

To round out the terminology, meaning or oral vocabulary refers to the combination of listening and speaking vocabulary items, and literate vocabulary refers to the combination of our reading and writing vocabulary items. Are our listening, speaking, reading and writing vocabulary items all the same? Are they equally large? Is our meaning vocabulary larger or smaller than literate vocabulary?

Vocabulary simply means the stock of words and their meanings. Generally speaking, the knowledge of vocabulary is of two types: the productive and the receptive. The productive vocabulary means the knowledge of words that any speaker can produce any time he speaks or writes. The latter type is the ones that can be recognized when one come across them in the written or spoken form but he cannot produce them as natural. In other words, the receptive vocabulary is the passive stock of words and their meanings but they are larger in number than productive ones. Given the focus of this paper, it is attempted to review the rather complex topic of developing fluency. However, it is

important to briefly address one aspect of decoding that is crucial for beginning readers: high-frequency vocabulary. High-frequency vocabulary refers to those words that are used over and over again in our communications—they are important to both our meaning and literate vocabularies.

A set mere 100 words make up about 50% of most English texts; 200 words make up 90% of the running words of materials through third grade; and 500 words make up 90% of the running words in materials through ninth grade. If a reader is to have at least a modicum of fluency, it is critical that these words be taught systematically and effectively.

(retrieved on 26th July, 2011 from : www.englishraven.com)

Richards (1976), provides an interesting attempt to detail the different kinds of knowledge a second language learner needs in order to speak in a native like way. He devised a list of what he termed ‘assumptions’ which underlie what it means to really know a word. These assumptions are that:

1. The native speaker of a language continues to expand his vocabulary in adult-hood, whereas there is comparatively little development of syntax in adult life.
2. Knowing a word means knowing the degree of probability of encountering that word in speech or print
3. Knowing a word implies knowing the limitations imposed on the use of the word according to variations of function and situation.
4. Knowing a word means knowing the syntactic behavior associated with that word.
5. Knowing a word entails knowledge of the underlying form of a word and the derivatives that can be made from it.
6. Knowing a word entails knowledge of the network of associations between that word and the other words in language.
7. Knowing a word means knowing the semantic value of a word.
8. Knowing a word means knowing many of the different meanings associated with the word. (p.83)

1.1.2 Teaching of Content Words

Words can broadly be divided into two classes: content words and function words. Function words signify the type of words that have little meaning on their own, but can show grammatical relationships in and between sentences. They have only grammatical meanings. Function words are conjunctions, prepositions, articles like and, to, the, etc. Function words are also called form words, empty words, structural words, etc.

Content words are those words which refer to a thing, quality, state or action and which have meaning (lexical meaning) when they are used alone. Content words are mainly nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, e.g. write, sorrowful, large, early, house, etc. Content words are also known as full words or lexical words. In any given sentence in English there will be words that carry stress and others that don't. This is not a random pattern. Stressed words carry the meaning or the sense behind the sentence, and for this reason they are called "Content Words" – they carry the content of the sentence. Unstressed words tend to be smaller words that have more of a grammatical significance – they help the sentence "function" syntactically and for this reason they are called Function Words. Obviously the "content" of a sentence carries more significance than the particular "way" it is put together. An easier way to think of it is that if you take out all the "function" words from a sentence, the sentence will still have a certain amount of meaning and can be understood. Doing the opposite will remove the meaning from a sentence and render it obsolete. It is logical that the meaningful units within a sentence will carry the most significance and therefore stress.

| Content Words | Examples | Function Words | Examples |
|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Main Verbs | go, talk, writing | Pronouns | I, you, he ,they |
| Nouns | student, desk | Prepositions | on, under, with |
| Adjectives | big, clever | Articles | the, a, some |
| Adverbs | quickly, loudly | Conjunctions | but, and, so |
| Negative Aux. Verbs | can't, don't, aren't | Auxiliary Verbs | can, should, must |
| Demonstratives | this, that, those | Verb "to be" | is, was, am |
| Question Words | who, which, where | | |

(retrieved on 1st August, 2011 from www.englishraven.com)

The first thing to realize about vocabulary items is that they frequently have more than one meaning. The word 'play' for example, basically refers to something you do to enjoy. But it can have different forms and meanings such as a verb, a phrasal verb, a noun etc. A word can have different meanings in relation to other words or contexts. According to Harmer (1993, p.159) '...besides its contextual meaning in a particular situation, the students should be taught every possible way the meaning of a word can be changed, stretched or limited. Word meaning is frequently stretched through the use of metaphor and idiom. It is also governed by collocation. The students are taught how a word goes with the other words. Similarly, some words are used only in certain social and topical contexts. Students need to know how different words collocate with each other and can change their meanings metaphorically.'

1.1.3 Importance of Teaching Content-Words

Chomsky 1966, p.127 produced a formal model of the vocabulary or lexicon of a language that is given a subordinate role in relation to the syntactic component which is an inventory of base forms or morphemes particular to the specific language. However, word meanings are treated at an abstract universal level and are associated with the semantic components of the system. Chomsky attempted to illustrate how meaning could be shown to follow formal rules in the same way as syntax and phonology. This congruence is not the result of haphazardly shared experience, but can be seen in his opinion that “the congruence is not the result of haphazardly share experience, but innate ideas and principles that determine what can be known in what may be a rather restricted and highly organized way”. This connection of sound and meaning between speakers and hearers presupposes a set of shared rules governing what can be said and understood in language.

To equate the rules of meaning with those of grammar involves specifying the ‘logical’ relations between words and sentences in terms of a formal conceptual language, in the same way that grammatical models can be expressed symbolically, thus avoiding the circularity of natural language descriptions of it. The semantic component of the theory is a compositional process in which the meaning of a sentence is obtained from the meaning of its constituent words, which are themselves decomposable into semantic ‘primitives’ expressible in formal terms. The major subcomponent of the semantic theory is a dictionary which contains definitions of word meanings and, indeed, represents the universal conceptual structure of the mind. Word meaning, therefore, becomes the key to the discovery of the mental reality underlying actual linguistic behavior. (Katz 1966, p.116)

It should be clear for the purposes of this study, with its interest in the development of word meanings by children acquiring a second language through social contact, an empirical approach to understanding the

formulation of concepts which words embrace is most appealing. There are numerous reasons for believing that vocabulary is important in second language acquisition. Of all errors types, learners consider vocabulary errors the most serious. Lexical information is clearly used in helping to determine syntactic relationships. If words cannot be separated from the speech stream and if lexical information cannot be used to interpret the utterances, the input will not be comprehended. In teaching vocabulary many skills like teaching spelling, word-grammar, word-formation and word-meaning are involved. Students learn words by hearing others use them in utterances. They master new words by using them in their own utterances. Since the mastering of words constitutes their uses, the skill of other aspects like spelling, grammar, word-formation and meaning are equally important. It is also important in comprehension. Additionally, large corpora of errors consistently indicate that lexical errors are the most common among second language learners. Moreover, native speakers find lexical errors to be more disruptive than grammatical error.

(Johansson 1978, as cited in Meara, 1984, p. 229)

Words and their meanings teaching strategy is regarded as action taken by the teacher to teach or practice target vocabulary. It is noteworthy to mention here that vocabulary items are imparted mostly by translation: either a list of words with their translation at the beginning of the lesson or the translation of the content having new words or glossaries at the very end. This is an erroneous practice as it leads to a state of confusion for the learners. On the teaching skills of vocabulary items, Frisby (1957, p. 98) commented that "While the teacher is not, himself, concerned with the actual selection of vocabulary for text book purposes since practically all the books we use are based on limited vocabularies, it is important that he/she (the teacher) should know the principles, which underlie vocabulary selection". Thus it signifies that a language teacher should be innovative and proficient in the application of

methodologies pertaining to teaching vocabulary items in a classroom situation. Following are the main methodologies for teaching vocabulary items in an English language classroom.

1.1.4 Techniques for Teaching Content-Words

Harmer (1993, p.159) says ‘Learners acquire vocabulary in various ways. Students are exposed to a lot of new vocabulary during lessons: by the teacher, by texts or other materials they work with. A lot of this vocabulary is automatically absorbed’. Beside this incidental acquisition there are “pre-planned lesson stages in which learners are taught pre-selected vocabulary items”. Various techniques and activities are aimed directly at learning vocabulary, which is usually put into sets of somehow related words, often by topic or meaning.

As McCarthy (1992, p.108) suggests, “before presenting new language, pre-teaching activities might be beneficial to activate existing knowledge to make the encounter with new words more meaningful. Pre-teaching activities often arouse students’ attention and desire to explore a particular topic or subject in greater detail.”

Thornbury (2004, pp 76-79) suggested two general possibilities of arranging vocabulary presentation. The teacher provides the learners with the meaning of the words and then progresses to introduction of their forms or vice versa – the form is introduced first, followed up with illustration of the meaning. In the latter, forms are often presented in text or another form of con-text and students are encouraged to discover meanings and other properties of words themselves. This type of activity is called the discovery technique. There are many possibilities how to explain or illustrate the meaning of the words. In the first place it is necessary to mention techniques typical for ‘Direct Method’ as specifies them using real objects (called realia) or pictures or mime. The same author continues that these means are especially appropriate for teaching elementary levels, where many concrete objects are taught. These types of

presentation are usually supplemented with the use of Total physical response (TPR), which is a technique where the teacher gives commands and students perform the actions. In it the intention is to replicate the experience of learning one's mother tongue.

He listed these options as well and furthermore included an idea of clarifying the meaning by examples, such as "providing an example situation" or "giving several example sentences". All these techniques are more or less useful for a particular situation, level and vocabulary, the best way would be in many cases to combine them and use several other together.

Besides explaining the meaning in vocabulary presentation, it is also important to focus on forms, since the sound of words is one of the aspects influencing the organization of the mental lexicon. This is arranged by various drilling activities. From experience, songs and chants are very suitable for drills, providing rhythm, catchy rhymes and an element of fun. According to him, introducing the written form of the word should follow not long after the presentation of the pronunciation. After presentation, learners should be provided with plenty opportunities to practice the newly gained language. This is done by various forms of practice activities. In the first stage, usually mechanical practice is applied in the form of some of kind of oral repetition. Furthermore in the same place he claims, 'it is necessary to integrate new vocabulary into existing knowledge in the mental lexicon, which is done by types of activities, where students make judgments about words, e.g. matching, comparing etc'. This mechanical practice is then followed by more open and communicative activities "where learners are required to incorporate the newly studied words into some kind of speaking or writing activity."

1.1.5 The Use of Flashcards in Teaching Content-Words

Vocabulary flashcards are great tools for teaching and learning activities. They can be fun, colorful, and creative ways to aid in memory and retention of vocabulary items. You can use them as a simple one-on-one quiz session, or an exciting game for a big group! Flashcards are a tried and tested teaching and learning device inside and outside the classroom, for kids and adults alike. Many websites offer vocabulary flashcards to learn various new words. Some of these flashcards are designed to teach your English; while others can be helpful to learn a new language entirely. The key to using flash cards is to look at the word or definition on one side, and test yourself to see if you can remember the answer written on the other. Each of these websites has flashcards offering both the word and the definition so one can perfect his/her knowledge of the vocabulary on the list and improve overall vocabulary.

We find a few research works and journals carried out on the experimental studies of vocabulary teaching in the classrooms of the same school in the group of population having almost the same level of background knowledge of English language and age group.

As Hill (1990, p.1) pointed out, “the standard classroom is usually not a very suitable environment for learning languages. That is why teachers search for various aids and stimuli to improve this situation. Flashcards are one of these valuable aids. They bring images of reality into the unnatural world of the language classroom. Flashcards bring not only images of reality, but can also function as a fun element in the class. Sometimes it is surprising, how they may change a lesson, even if only employed in additional exercises or just to create the atmosphere.”

Flashcards meet with a wide range of use not only in acquiring vocabulary, but also in many other aspects of foreign language teaching. demonstrated this fact on an example, where he used one compiled them and illustrated the possibility of use in five very different language areas. His example shows employing flashcards in teaching information

such as word type, prefixes, suffixes, opposites, synonyms, example sentences. The information you include depends on the trouble using the word correctly or trouble remembering the word. Furthermore he pointed out that “potential of Flashcards is so great that only a taste of their full potential can be given” in his book. To be more specific, beside lessons where they are in the main focus, they might be used just as a stimulus for writing and discussion, as an illustration of something being read or talked about, as background to a topic and so on. It is hard to illustrate the meaning of some words, especially the abstract ones such as ‘opinion’ or ‘impact’. Therefore, in some cases, other tools are used to demonstrate the meaning, or alternatively flashcards might be supplemented by other tools. There are many reasons for using flashcards in language teaching. He pointed out that they are motivating and draw learners’ attention. Furthermore, he refers to the fact that they provide a sense of the context of the language and give a specific reference point or stimulus. Flashcards, being suitable for any group of learners independently on age or level, can be used in various ways.

(Wright, 1990, pp. 4-6)

Hill (1990) listed several advantages, such as availability (one can get them in any magazines, on the internet, etc.); they are cheap, often free; they are personal (teacher selects them); flexibility - easily kept, carried and useful for various types of activities (drilling, comparing, etc.), they are “always fresh and different”, which means they come in a variety of formats and styles and moreover the learner often wonders what comes next. As he adds “What is done is limited only by the preparation time available, the visuals to hand and the workmanship of the individual teacher.” (p. 1)

Learners always pay attention and are curious about what are they going to do with the flashcards shown. However, there is always a downside: it can be quite time consuming to find the right flashcards for a specific type of activity for a beginning teacher who lacks his or her own collection. Still on the whole,

this drawback is greatly outweighed by the above-mentioned pros.

Furthermore, when the collection of flashcards is once made, it can serve for a long time.

Another matter is the question of how to use flashcards effectively. It counts as general methodological knowledge that in learning languages, students should perceive the input through as many channels as possible. Therefore it is important to include variety of stimuli in teaching. It is important to find a balance and not to use them or visuals only but to combine them with other techniques and different types of stimuli (movement, verbal stimuli, sound, etc). Moreover, they are used for demonstration of the meaning and should be repeatedly connected with the spoken and subsequently also written form of the word or chunk of language.

The key with learning and remembering new information is repetition. It is very rare for someone to learn 10 new words one time and then remember all for them. It is more common for people to learn something through review and repetition, flashcards are a great way to store vocabulary and then review the new words.

There is much debate about what information and how much information should be included on a flashcard. It comes down to personal preference. Make sure that the words you write on the flashcard are spelled correctly and that the transcription is accurate. Also remember that remembering the word has little value if you can't use it correctly in a sentence, either spoken or written.

Learning new vocabulary is all about improving the students' ability to use the language correctly.

There is no right or wrong way to use flashcards to improve English vocabulary, experiment and find the way that is best suits one. Once they remember and use a word in their own sentences correctly, replace it with a new word that has to be taught.

1.2 Review of the Related Literature

Vocabulary is one of the most significant aspects of language teaching resulting in a challenge to the language teachers. A number of methods and techniques have been proposed to tackle with this challenge and their effectiveness has been experimented through many researches. Researches reveal that in most of the language teaching situation, it can fairly be implemented and its effectiveness is admirable. Calderon, Hertz – Lazarowitz, and Slavin, (1998, p. 153) have combinedly published an experimental study on ‘Effects of bilingual cooperative integrated reading and composition on students making the transition from Spanish to English reading’.

(retrieved on 17th August, 2011, form www.englishraven.com)

Al-Salmi (2010) made a great study entitled “Teaching Vocabulary Using Shared Reading and Flashcards” in relation to the use of flashcards and shared reading in teaching vocabulary. His findings were proved useful when learners seem to have difficulty remembering the vocabulary using flashcards. In this study it was possible through shared reading. Shared reading is a text that is shared among the participants for their mutual pleasure and understanding. Shared reading is a widely recognized tool for promoting not only literacy but also broader forms of social development in children. It is a technique which involves all the children reading together with the teacher scaffolding their reading. Many teachers of English in Oman do shared reading using big books. Many others rely only on flashcards to teach vocabulary. Form refers to spelling (written form) and pronunciation (spoken form). Knowing the meaning of a word means knowing what objects or ideas it refers to. It also means knowing what other words are associated with it. Knowing vocabulary use implies an understanding of the situations where the word occurs and is used.

(retrieved on 1st August, 2011 from www.englishraven.com)

Shokouhi, (2009) published a research entitled ‘The effect of guessing vocabulary in reading authentic text’. The purpose of his study was to find if the use of Contextual Guessing Strategy (CGS) technique of instruction was

more effective vis-à-vis direct vocabulary instruction. His study was able to demonstrate unmistakable learning from CGS from one or a very few exposures to unfamiliar words in natural text. The success of CGS vis-à-vis other methods of vocabulary learning depends on how the comparison is made; the strength of CGS lies in its long-term, cumulative effects. Thus, the results suggest that a more effective way to produce large-scale vocabulary growth is through CGS. Another subsidiary but still crucial finding of this study was that instruction in CGS culminated in an increase in reading comprehension ability of the high school students. The interaction of reading comprehension test performance and contextual learning was significant, with some subjects scoring near the ceiling. However, the complexities involved with vocabulary-to-comprehension processes are also acknowledged. Finally, the motivating effect of using authentic texts in the classroom was a certain possibility. He believed that authentic texts must be circumspectly used in the EFL pre-university situations due to their oddity in such an educational setting. They should be intervened as instructional materials before they are exploited as vocabulary and reading comprehension measures.

He had the findings that CGS technique was more effective than the non-context method in improving reading and teaching vocabulary. The tentative estimation would be that some of the assumptions about the futility of teaching contextual clues should be rigorously reexamined and that CGS can account for a substantial proportion of vocabulary growth during the school years.

(Adopted from 'Arizona Working Papers in SLAT - Vol. 17')

Another significant research has been done by Rawat (2008). It was an attempt to find out and compare the techniques that were used by public and private English teachers of lower secondary level while teaching English vocabulary in terms of word meaning word pronunciation and word spelling. The findings were that the most of the teachers of public schools use mother tongue translation, modeling and reading aloud. On the other hand, private schools use

contextual presentation modeling and dictation techniques to teach word meaning word pronunciation and word spelling.

Baral (2006) carried out research on ‘Effectiveness of cooperative learning’ on the lower secondary students’ achievement in English.’ He had attempted to determine whether the cooperative learning (CL) is more effective than any other methods of teaching in practice with respect to achievements of students in English. The ultimate result of the study indicates that CL is more effective instructional paradigm for ELT compared to the current method(s) of teaching in practice. In the case of the language skills, the CL has more impressive impact on the performance of the students in the areas of listening and speaking than in reading and writing.

Regmi (2004) carried out a research work on ‘A study on the effectiveness of group work Techniques in teaching English tense’. It was an experimental research. Students were divided into experimental and control group.

Experimental group were taught through group word techniques and control group were taught through usual techniques. The research shows the positive effect of the technique. Following the same methodology, likewise, several experimentations have been carried out on the effectiveness of different methods and techniques on vocabulary teaching.

Richards and Renandya (2002) hold that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write is provided by their vocabulary. They maintain that learners, without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring novel vocabulary, often achieve less than their potential. Taken together, a prima facie case for the development of intervention programs that boost vocabulary in students with poor language skills seems to be inevitable. Even though applied linguists agree that the acquisition of vocabulary is probably the greatest stumbling block in language acquisition, there is no consensus on how vocabulary should be taught. For that matter, there are various techniques and devices for vocabulary teaching in methodology textbooks one of which is the appropriate

use of flashcards. However, it is important to briefly address one aspect of decoding that is crucial for beginning readers: high-frequency vocabulary. High-frequency vocabulary refers to those words that are used over and over again in our communications—they are important to both our meaning and literate vocabularies

Nelson (2002) says in his book entitled ‘Use flashcards to build a better English vocabulary’, ‘using flashcards is the single most effective and simplest way to improve vocabulary and to easily remember the new words that one learns.’ Flashcards can be used to learn vocabulary quickly at any level. This is also a great way to interact with other people and a good icebreaker when he asks people for some pronunciation help.

Perry and Macdonald (2001) carried out a work together entitled ‘World knowledge and vocabulary instruction’. They have argued that students need to become acquainted with the most frequent vocabulary items related to their specializing field in order to become able to read and understand second language subject-specific texts more easily so that they have a large vocabulary. The words to be focused in teaching will be chosen on the basis of their frequency and usefulness. They further pointed out the importance of the repetition of such vocabulary items in their own words “We need to provide repeated exposures to target words in different contexts and provide activities which encourage deeper and more active processing.”

(retrieved on 19th August, 2011 from www.englishraven.com)

Nagy and Scott (2000) described five noteworthy components of word knowledge. First, they pointed out that word learning is incremental—that is, we learn word meanings gradually and internalize deeper meanings through successive encounters in a variety of contexts and through active engagement with the words. For example, the average twelfth grader is likely to have a deeper and more sophisticated understanding compared to the knowledge of an average fourth grader, who still has a more simplistic understanding of the terms. We also know words at varying levels of familiarity from no knowledge

to some knowledge to a complete and thorough knowledge, which serves us especially well in speaking and writing. It may be that, for some words, students may only need to have a general understanding of a term to keep comprehension intact. For other words, a deeper understanding may be necessary for students to successfully comprehend a passage.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The following were the specific objectives of the study:

- a. to work out the effectiveness of teaching of vocabulary items (word meaning) using flashcards.
- b. to find out if the vocabulary teaching with the use of flashcards has any advantages over the traditional method of teaching without using them.
- c. to enlist some pedagogical implications.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study mainly concerns with the teacher's involvement in effective teaching through the use of flashcards. So, I hope this study will be beneficial for all people interested in teaching and learning the English language and particularly to the language teachers, teacher trainers and the persons carrying out research into different aspects of vocabulary teaching. The study will be useful for language teachers in that they can find some useful ways to construct and use flashcards and equally useful for teacher trainers because they can develop different strategies in their training courses and encourage the language teachers to strictly use them in the classroom with the goal of improving professional practice.

CHAPTER - TWO

METHODOLOGY

The following strategies were adopted to fulfill the above mentioned objectives:

2.1 Sources of Data

The study was based primarily on the primary sources. The secondary sources were consulted when it was felt necessary to do so. The primary sources were used for collecting data and the secondary sources were to facilitate the research.

2.1.1 Primary Sources of Data

The primary sources of data were the regular students of Management and Education streams of Grade XII from Shanischare Higher Secondary School, Shanischare, Jhapa, Nepal.

2.1.2 Secondary Sources of Data

As secondary sources of data, I consulted various books, journals, reports, articles, research works and other internet sources relevant to the research area.

2.2 Population of the Study

The population of this study was the total regular students of Grade XII from the Management and Education streams of Shanischare Higher Secondary School with ages ranging from 17 to 19.

2.3 Sampling Procedure

The sampling procedure in this research was random one. The selection was made on the basis of the first alphabet of the respective students' names i.e. first five names from boys and similarly first five from girls of each class in the alphabetical order from both Management and Education stream. The first 10

students selected on the basis of alphabetical order from the Management stream were treated as ‘treatment group’ and the 10 students from the Education stream were treated as ‘controlled group’. Before my actual experimental classes begin, I consulted the selected students and inform them about my study and established rapport with them. Then I had regular classes six periods a week in each of them for about one month (four weeks).

2.4 Tools for Data Collection

The tools I used to elicit the data include different tests. Before intervention, I set a questionnaire as the pre-test consisting of 10 multiple choices (MC) items with four different distracters each item weighing 1 mark. And each of these items tried to elicit the students’ present knowledge regarding the use and importance of flashcards in teaching and learning new vocabulary items and their reading habit of new vocabulary items. It was a kind of diagnostic test. After the fifteen days’ classes I had a progress test in both classes. After another fifteen days, I took the post test which consisted of the same items as in the progress test. The reason for choosing such divergent format was that it was more convenient because the number of population was somewhat big and the other reason was that these students were more familiar with all such types than other test types in their English textbooks at high school levels. The texts were selected from their prescribed text-book ‘The Heritage of Words’ to represent the authentic materials. However, the reading comprehension items remained constant and intact for both progress and post tests. We considered the hiatus between the administration of the progress and post tests (about 15 days’ time) to be considerably right so as to diminish the test effects (memory factors) of them.

2.5 Process of Data Collection

In this study, the four main meaning classes of words or content words (i.e. adjectives, adverbs, nouns, and verbs) were given due consideration. The materials chosen for inclusion come from a wide range of topics and styles by different authors to meet the demands of the study. Also, to account for the generalizability of the research findings, a reasonable proportion of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs were chosen for pre and post tests in this study. The difficulty level of each text was adjusted to the level of proficiency level students. The situational contexts were not modified and therefore the overriding idea expressed in the contexts survived intact.

A final set containing 25 items was identified as the most appropriate vocabulary test to accomplish the objectives of the study. Together, the choice and selection of the target words and reading passages in this study were based on three criteria:

- a) the target words and reading passages had to be appropriate to the subjects' level,
- b) low-frequency words were chosen, and
- c) the target words had to be unfamiliar with the subjects

Five reading comprehension passages were found to be most well thought-out for both progress - and post-test in this study. The passages were expository and narrative prose texts as well as poetry since the participants were more familiar with these types of text in their educational setting and textbooks.

At first, I prepared a set of questionnaire consisting of the MC items for pre-test including the possible areas the students can respond in cases of class teaching. For I didn't have to take any permission from the authority I started my classes as usual. But I consulted the selected students and informed them about my study and established rapport with them. My objective was to observe the fruitfulness of using flashcards in teaching prepared vocabulary items, I used in the class with treatment group. An after completing the teaching, I prepared the set of questionnaire to elicit the result. In order to find

out their involvement in the class learning activities, I distributed the questionnaires to them and requested them to answer the questions and return them on time. Then, I collected the answer sheet, tabulated and analyzed the data obtained.

2.6 Limitations of the Study

1. The study was limited to only twenty students from Shanischare Higher Secondary School, Shanischare, Jhapa, Nepal.
2. The study was based on only twenty students studying in Grade XII from the two streams: Management and Education respectively.
3. Only the random sampling procedure was used for sampling the population.
4. The study was limited to the use of the research tools such as test of different types.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This section deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the primary sources. The data were obtained through a pre-test, a progress-test and a post-test. The analysis and interpretation of the data are given under following sub-heading:

- a) Individual Test Scores Obtained from Different Tests
- b) Analysis and Interpretation of Test Results.

3.1 Individual Test Scores Obtained From Different Tests

The individual scores are collected and calculated the data in the following way so as to find the accurate result from both of the groups i.e. the treatment and controlled group.

3.1.1 Pre-test Scores

The pre-test items consisted of simply multiple choice items that tried to elicit the students' present view and knowledge regarding the use of flashcards and their reading habit/style in learning new vocabulary items.

3.1.1.1 Individual Scores in the Pre-test

The score the treatment group obtained on pre-test is shown on the table next page following table along with the students' grading, scoring in the percentage.

**Table No 1: Individual Scores in the Pre-test
(Treatment group)**

| SN | Students | Full Marks | Pass Marks | Score | Score in % | Grading | Student in % |
|-------|-----------------|------------|------------|-------|---------------|---------|--------------|
| 01 | S ₁ | 50 | 17.5 | 21 | 42 | B | 30 |
| 02 | S ₂ | 50 | 17.5 | 24 | 48 | B | 30 |
| 03 | S ₃ | 50 | 17.5 | 28 | 56 | A | 30 |
| 04 | S ₄ | 50 | 17.5 | 19 | 38 | C | 20 |
| 05 | S ₅ | 50 | 17.5 | 27 | 54 | A | 30 |
| 06 | S ₆ | 50 | 17.5 | 24 | 48 | B | 30 |
| 07 | S ₇ | 50 | 17.5 | 17 | 34 | D | 20 |
| 08 | S ₈ | 50 | 17.5 | 21 | 42 | C | 20 |
| 09 | S ₉ | 50 | 17.5 | 30 | 60 | A | 30 |
| 10 | S ₁₀ | 50 | 17.5 | 16.5 | 33 | D | 20 |
| Total | | | | 227.5 | Average Score | 22.75 | |

(NB: In this table-1, the highest score (50 percent and above) is given the rank 'A', the second highest scores ranging from 40 to 49 percent is ranked as 'B', the rank 'C' is allotted to the scores ranging from 35 to 39 percent and the failures whose score is below 35 percent are ranked 'D'.)

As the table shows, 30 % of the students scored rank 'A' which means they secured from 50 to 60 % score out of the 50 full marks. It is the highest score on the pre-test. Similarly, 30 % of the students scored rank 'B' which means they secured ranging from 40 to 49 % marks. It is the second highest score. Twenty percent of the students fall under the 'C' rank that means they have scored only pass marks that ranges from 35 to 39 %. The lowest rank 'D' whose score is below 35 % is obtained by 20 % of the students. The average score is 22.75 which is not so satisfactory score. Around 50 % of the population is below the average and about 50 % of the students are above it.

3.1.1.2 Individual Scores in the Pre-test

The score the controlled group obtained on pre-test is shown in the following table along with the students' grading, scoring in the percentage.

**Table No 2: Individual Score in the Pre-test
(Controlled group)**

| SN | Students | Full Marks | Pass Marks | Score | Score in % | Grading | Student in % |
|----|-----------------|------------|------------|-------|---------------|---------|--------------|
| 01 | S ₁ | 50 | 17.5 | 23 | 46 | B | 30 |
| 02 | S ₂ | 50 | 17.5 | 17 | 34 | D | 20 |
| 03 | S ₃ | 50 | 17.5 | 29.5 | 58 | A | 30 |
| 04 | S ₄ | 50 | 17.5 | 28 | 56 | A | 30 |
| 05 | S ₅ | 50 | 17.5 | 16.5 | 33 | D | 20 |
| 06 | S ₆ | 50 | 17.5 | 20 | 40 | B | 30 |
| 07 | S ₇ | 50 | 17.5 | 30 | 60 | A | 30 |
| 08 | S ₈ | 50 | 17.5 | 17.5 | 35 | C | 20 |
| 09 | S ₉ | 50 | 17.5 | 20.5 | 41 | B | 30 |
| 10 | S ₁₀ | 50 | 17.5 | 19.5 | 39 | C | 20 |
| | Total | | | 221.5 | Average Score | | 22.15 |

(NB: In this table-2, the highest score (50 percent and above) is given the rank 'A', the second highest score from 40 to 49 percent is ranked 'B', rank 'C' is allotted to the score ranging from 35 to 39 percent, and the failed ones whose score is below 35 are ranked 'D')

As the table shows, 30 % of the students scored rank 'A' which means they secured 50 % and above scores out of the 50 full marks. It is the highest score on the pre-test. Similarly, thirty percent of the students scored rank 'B' which means they secured from 40 to 49 % marks. Twenty percent of the students fall under the rank 'C' rank that means they have scored only marks that ranges from 35 to 39 %. Rank 'D' denotes the lowest score which is below 35 % and is obtained by twenty percent of the students. The average score is 22.15 which is not so satisfactory score. Around 60 % of the total students are below the average and the rest 40 % of the students are above it.

It clearly shows that the class consists of mixed ability groups. Some of them are very weak and some are medium in general perception on the use of flashcards in learning vocabulary and its impact in learning content words. The students are supposed to have some ideas regarding the learning vocabulary items and their meanings as they are studying in Grade XII.

3.1.2 The Progress Test

After the interval of the first two weeks' classes, I administered the on-going progress test to get an insight into the effectiveness of the intervention i.e. teaching through the use of flashcards. The aim was to find out how the classes are in progress and what further improvements in teaching strategy were necessary.

3.1.2.1 Individual Test Scores in the Progress Test

The following table shows the students' progress in learning and retaining the words after they were taught using the flashcards in their classroom.

**Table No 3: Individual Scores in the Progress-test
(Treatment group)**

| SN | Students | Full Marks | Pas Marks | Score | Score in % | Grading | Student in % |
|-------|-----------------|------------|-----------|-------|----------------|---------|--------------|
| 01 | S ₁ | 50 | 17.5 | 24.5 | 49 | C | 20 |
| 02 | S ₂ | 50 | 17.5 | 33.5 | 67 | A | 40 |
| 03 | S ₃ | 50 | 17.5 | 31.5 | 63 | A | 40 |
| 04 | S ₄ | 50 | 17.5 | 19 | 38 | D | 20 |
| 05 | S ₅ | 50 | 17.5 | 32.5 | 65 | A | 40 |
| 06 | S ₆ | 50 | 17.5 | 26 | 52 | B | 20 |
| 07 | S ₇ | 50 | 17.5 | 21 | 42 | C | 20 |
| 08 | S ₈ | 50 | 17.5 | 27 | 54 | B | 20 |
| 09 | S ₉ | 50 | 17.5 | 35 | 70 | A | 40 |
| 10 | S ₁₀ | 50 | 17.5 | 19.5 | 39 | D | 20 |
| Total | | | | 269.5 | Average Scores | | 26.9 |

(NB: In the table previous page, the highest score (ranging from 60 % and above) is given the rank 'A', the second highest scores from 50 to 59 % is ranked 'B', rank 'C' is allotted to the scores ranging from 40 to 49 %. Those who secured the score from 35 to 39 % is ranked 'D' which is the lowest score in the progress test.)

As table 3 shows 40 % of the students scored rank 'A' which means their scoring is 60 to 70 marks and 20 % of the students obtained from 50 to 59 percent and have rank 'B' which denotes the second highest mark in this test. Among them the ten percent of the students fall under the rank 'C' securing 40 to 49 % of the total marks. Finally 20 % of the students scored 35 to 39 % marks, the lowest score among the treatment group of the population. The average obtained by the students is 26.95. What the table reveals is 50 % of the students obtained above the average score and the rest 50 % students scored below it.

However, if we put the scores secured by the same population during the pre-test aside and compare the result with the score obtained by them in the progress test, it can be seen the highest scores (i.e. 50 to 60 %) obtained by the twenty percent of the students in the pre-test has climbed to 40 % whose score is higher than sixty percent with grading 'A'. Similarly, twenty percent of the failure students remained the same in percent but the score much improved than in their pre-test (i.e. scoring above 35%).

3.1.2.2 Individual Scores in the Progress-test

The table on the next page shows the students' progress in learning and retaining the words after they were taught as usual without using the flashcards in the classroom.

**Table No 4: Individual Scores in the Progress-test
(Controlled group)**

| SN | Students | Full Marks | Pass Marks | Score | Score in % | Grading | Student in % |
|-------|-----------------|------------|------------|-------|----------------|---------|--------------|
| 01 | S ₁ | 50 | 17.5 | 27 | 51 | B | 30 |
| 02 | S ₂ | 50 | 17.5 | 19 | 38 | D | 30 |
| 03 | S ₃ | 50 | 17.5 | 33 | 66 | A | 20 |
| 04 | S ₄ | 50 | 17.5 | 30 | 56 | B | 30 |
| 05 | S ₅ | 50 | 17.5 | 19.5 | 39 | D | 30 |
| 06 | S ₆ | 50 | 17.5 | 24.5 | 49 | C | 20 |
| 07 | S ₇ | 50 | 17.5 | 32 | 64 | A | 20 |
| 08 | S ₈ | 50 | 17.5 | 18.5 | 37 | D | 30 |
| 09 | S ₉ | 50 | 17.5 | 28 | 56 | B | 30 |
| 10 | S ₁₀ | 50 | 17.5 | 21.5 | 43 | C | 20 |
| Total | | | | 253 | Average Scores | | 25.3 |

(NB: In table-4, the highest score (ranging from 60 to 70 % and above) is ranked 'A', the second highest score from 50 to 59% is ranked 'B', the rank 'C' is allotted to the score ranging from 40 to 49 %. Those who secured the score from 35 to 39 % are ranked 'D' which is the lowest score obtained in the progress test.)

As we see the from table 4, thirty percent of the students scored rank 'A' which means that their scoring ranges from 60 to 70 %. Thirty percent of the students obtained the second highest marks in this test that ranges from 50 to 60 %. Similarly, the lowest score that thirty percent students scored is from 35 to 39 %. The average figure obtained by the students is 25.3 of the full marks. What the table reveals is that around fifty percent of the students obtained above the average score and about the same number scored below it.

Comparing the result of the progress-test with the pre-test result, there is slight progress in the controlled group. Though it seems some improvement but it is not because of their learning technique but because of their experience and intuition. The average score in the progress-test it was 26.9 which is a bit greater by 4.2 % than that of pre-test.

3.1.3 Post-test score

After the interval of the second two weeks' classes, I administered the post-test to get an insight into the effectiveness of the intervention i.e. teaching through the use of flashcards. The aim was to find out how the intervention of the flashcards proves worthy in teaching strategy and its effectiveness. The test items were the same as in the progress test containing same number of items and value.

3.1.3.1 Individual Test Scores in the Post-test

Two weeks later I conducted the progress test, I had the post test. The individual score of the treatment group is presented in the following table.

**Table No 5: Individual Score in the Post-test
(Treatment Group)**

| SN | Students | Full Marks | Pass Marks | Score | Score in % | Grading | Student in % |
|-------|-----------------|------------|------------|-------|---------------|---------|--------------|
| 01 | S ₁ | 50 | 17.5 | 39 | 76 | B | 40 % |
| 02 | S ₂ | 50 | 17.5 | 41 | 82 | A | 50 % |
| 03 | S ₃ | 50 | 17.5 | 43.5 | 87 | A | 50 % |
| 04 | S ₄ | 50 | 17.5 | 27 | 54 | D | 10 % |
| 05 | S ₅ | 50 | 17.5 | 40.5 | 81 | A | 50 % |
| 06 | S ₆ | 50 | 17.5 | 39 | 76 | B | 40 % |
| 07 | S ₇ | 50 | 17.5 | 37.5 | 75 | B | 40 % |
| 08 | S ₈ | 50 | 17.5 | 40.5 | 81 | A | 50 % |
| 09 | S ₉ | 50 | 17.5 | 43 | 86 | A | 50 % |
| 10 | S ₁₀ | 50 | 17.5 | 38 | 76 | B | 40 % |
| Total | | | | 389.0 | Average Score | | 38.9 |

(NB: In table-5, the highest score (ranging from 80 to 90 percent and above) is ranked 'A', the second highest scores from 70 to 79 percent is ranked 'B', the rank 'C' is allotted to the score ranging from 60 to 69 %. Those who secured the score from 50 to 59 % are ranked 'D' which signifies the lowest score in the post test.)

A close observation of the table-5 reveals the fact that the ranking range is changed to higher scoring. The same rank 'A' allotted to the students scoring 60 to 70 % marks in progress test is upgraded to 80 to 90 % in the post test calculation. The forty percent of the population of the progress test was raised to fifty percent in number in the post test. Similarly the rank 'D' allotted to the population scoring from 35 to 39 % has improved up to 50 to 60 % though the percent remains the same in the post test. As the table shows the average score which was 26.95 of the progress test has climbed to 38.9. The number of the population scoring higher than the average score is 80 % whereas it was 50 and 60 % in the pre-test and progress test respectively. The rank 'A' which allotted to the population scoring 60 to 70 % of the full marks in the progress test was scored by 40 % of the students. The rank 'D' which was allotted in the progress test to the population scoring the marks from 35 to 40 % the lowest mark scored by ten percent.

In comparison to the marks in pre-test, the post-test score shows the remarkable development of the vocabulary retention and presenting different aspects of vocabulary learning not to talk about the meanings of content words only. In the pre-test, the scores were distributed around the average score of 20.8 with rank 'A' allotted to 50 to 60 % as the highest score and rank 'D' allotted to those whose score is below 35 % out of 50 full marks as the lowest score. However, in the post-test the scores are distributed around the average score 37 with 70 % to 80 % marks as the highest score and 50 % to 59 % as the lowest score. The average score in post-test is nearly twice as high as that of pre-test.

3.1.3.2 Individual scores in the Post-test

Two weeks later I conducted the progress test, I had the post test. The individual score of the controlled group is presented in the following table.

**Table No 6: Individual Scores in the Post-test
(Controlled Group)**

| SN | Students | Full Marks | Pass Marks | Score | Score in % | Grading | Student in % |
|-------|-----------------|------------|------------|-------|---------------|---------|--------------|
| 01 | S ₁ | 50 | 17.5 | 29 | 58 | B | 20 |
| 02 | S ₂ | 50 | 17.5 | 21.5 | 43 | C | 30 |
| 03 | S ₃ | 50 | 17.5 | 34.5 | 69 | A | 40 |
| 04 | S ₄ | 50 | 17.5 | 32 | 64 | A | 40 |
| 05 | S ₅ | 50 | 17.5 | 23 | 46 | C | 30 |
| 06 | S ₆ | 50 | 17.5 | 27 | 54 | B | 20 |
| 07 | S ₇ | 50 | 17.5 | 33 | 66 | A | 40 |
| 08 | S ₈ | 50 | 17.5 | 19 | 38 | D | 10 |
| 09 | S ₉ | 50 | 17.5 | 32 | 64 | A | 40 |
| 10 | S ₁₀ | 50 | 17.5 | 24.5 | 49 | C | 30 |
| Total | | | | 275.5 | Average Score | | 27.5 |

(NB: In table-6, the highest score ranging from 60 to 70 % is ranked 'A', the second highest score from 50 to 59 % is ranked 'B', the rank 'C' is allotted to the score ranging from 40 to 49 %. Those who secured the score from 35 to 39 % are ranked 'D' which is the lowest score obtained in the post test.)

A close observation of the table above reveals the fact that the rank 'A' which ranges from 60 to 70 % of the full marks is the highest score obtained by forty percent of the students. Rank 'D' which ranges the scoring from 35 to 39 % signified the lowest score obtained by ten percent of the population. As the table shows, 27.5 is the average score and 60 % of the students are above the average score.

In comparison to the score in the pre-test, the post-test score shows some development in the retention and knowing the meaning aspect of the vocabulary items in the population from controlled group. In the progress-test, the score was distributed around the average score of 22 and sixty percent of the population scored above the average score. However, in post-test the scores

are distributed around the average score 26.9. The highest score ranged from 60 to 70 % and 35 to 39 % as the lowest score. The average score in the post-test is slightly higher than that of progress-test.

3.2 Item-wise Analysis and Interpretation of the Test Results

After the analysis and interpretation of the test results of the individual scores obtained on the pre, progress and post tests respectively I tried to do the same with the item-wise analysis and interpretation of the test results.

3.2.1 Pre-test

I set only 10 MC items for the pre-test for the treatment group of population without taking any vocabulary items from their text-book. Rather the items were set to elicit the ideas concerning what general technique they are used to being taught in their previous classes especially while learning English as a second language.

3.2.1.1 Item-wise Responses in the Pre-test

The following table shows item-wise correct and incorrect responses from the treatment group and their percentage in the pre-test.

**Table No. 7: Item-wise Responses in the Pre-test
(Treatment Group)**

| SN | Item | No. of Items | Correct Responses | Correct Responses in % | Incorrect Responses | Incorrect Responses in % | Total Responses |
|----|------|--------------|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 01 | MC | 10 | 149 | 74.5 | 51 | 25.5 | 178 |

We can see in the table on the above table, the distribution of responses indicates that the learner's previous experiences and tendency of the technique used in teaching vocabulary was not so satisfactory.

3.2.1.1 Item-wise Responses in the Pre-test

The following table shows item-wise correct and incorrect responses from the treatment group and their percentage in the pre-test.

**Table No. 8: Item-wise Responses in the Pre-test
(Controlled Group)**

| S N | Item | No. of Items | Correct Responses | Correct Response in % | Incorrect Responses | Incorrect Response in % | Total Responses |
|--------|------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 01 | MC | 10 | 142 | 71 | 58 | 29 | 188 |

The above table shows the items were responded scoring almost equal marks by the population of treatment group. However, this distribution of responses indicates that the learner's previous experiences and tendency of the technique used in teaching vocabulary was not so satisfactory.

3.2.2 Progress Test

The progress test contained nine different categories and sixty-three items. They were matching, single word, sentence making, phonetic transcription, word-formation, sequencing on the basis of understanding, filling gaps, rate of retention and finally uttering the words with correct pronunciation basing on the teacher's model. Each item was assigned 1.0 mark except 10 sequencing of words on the basis of their difficulty level weighing only 0.5 marks each, summing up to 50 marks. The table that follows shows the item-wise correct and incorrect responses from the treatment group.

3.2.2.1 Item-wise Responses in the Progress Test

The table on the next page shows item-wise correct and incorrect responses I got from the treatment group. It clearly shows the tendency of the students' responses towards particular items.

**Table No. 9: Item-wise Responses in the Progress Test
(Treatment Group)**

| S. N | Items | No of Item | Correct Responses | C. R. in % | Incorrect Responses | Inc. R. in % | Total Responses |
|-------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Pronunciation | 6 | 12 | 7.2 | 35 | 21 | 47 |
| 2 | Filling Blanks | 5 | 28 | 56 | 20 | 21 | 48 |
| 3 | Matching | 5 | 30 | 60 | 17 | 34 | 47 |
| 4 | Transcription | 5 | 18 | 36 | 30 | 60 | 48 |
| 5 | Single words | 2 | 11 | 55 | 8 | 16 | 19 |
| 6 | Sentence Making | 5 | 22 | 44 | 24 | 48 | 46 |
| 7 | Word-formation | 5 | 19 | 38 | 23 | 46 | 42 |
| 8 | Rate of retention | 10 | 86 | 86 | 8 | 8 | 94 |
| 9 | Difficulty Level | 20 | 178 | 89 | 19 | 9.5 | 197 |
| Total | | 63 | 404 | 471.2 0 | 184 | 264 | 588 |

The table above shows the item no.9 has the greatest number of correct responses. In comparison to other items the students were found more motivated to sorting the words as they come across in the context. On the contrary, the item no. 1 seems most difficult for the students of treatment group. They scored the least of all the items. Only 7.2 percent of the students could respond it correctly. The remaining items were responded satisfactorily.

3.2.2.2 Item-wise Responses in the Progress Test

The table on the next page shows item-wise correct and incorrect responses I got from the controlled group. It clearly shows the tendency of the students' responses towards particular items.

**Table No. 10: Item-wise Responses in the Progress Test
(Controlled Group)**

| S. N | Items | No of Item | Correct Responses | C. R. in % | Incorrect Responses | Inc. R. in % | Total Responses |
|------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Pronunciation | 6 | 4 | 2.4 | 45 | 75 | 49 |
| 2 | Filling Blanks | 5 | 16 | 32 | 32 | 34 | 48 |
| 3 | Matching | 5 | 22 | 44 | 27 | 34 | 49 |
| 4 | Transcription | 5 | 9 | 18 | 39 | 60 | 48 |
| 5 | Single words | 2 | 5 | 50 | 15 | 16 | 20 |
| 6 | Sentence Making | 5 | 16 | 32 | 34 | 48 | 50 |
| 7 | Word-formation | 5 | 11 | 22 | 36 | 46 | 47 |
| 8 | Rate of retention | 10 | 64 | 64 | 35 | 8 | 99 |
| 9 | Difficulty Level | 20 | 165 | 82.5 | 33 | 9.5 | 198 |
| | Total | 63 | 312 | 346.9 0 | 296 | 331 | 608 |

Table – 10 as the above table – 9 shows item 9 i.e. sequencing of the difficulty level of vocabulary items has the greatest number of correct responses. In comparison to other items the students were found more motivated in sorting the difficulty level of words as they come across them in the context. On the contrary the item 1 which is related to pronunciation seems most difficult for the students of treatment group. They scored the least in this category. Only 2.4 % of the students could respond it correctly. The table also shows that each of the items has moderate number of correct responses in the population of the controlled group. In comparison to the score in aggregation, the controlled group has much less scoring than the treatment group.

3.2.3. Post-test

After teaching the vocabulary selected from their textbooks for 27 class days and administering the progress test in the interval of two weeks classes, I administered a post-test. The post-test items were the same as assigned in the progress-test; the items were categorized under nine headings.

3.2.3.1 Item-wise Responses in the Post Test:

The following tables show the item-wise correct and incorrect responses along with their percentage obtained by the population of the treatment group in the post-test.

**Table No. 11: Item-wise Responses in the Post-test
(Treatment Group)**

| S. N | Items | No of Item | Correct Responses | C. R. in % | Incorrect Responses | In. R in % | Total Responses |
|------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Pronunciation | 6 | 55 | 91.6 | 5 | 8.3 | 60 |
| 2 | Filling Blanks | 5 | 50 | 100 | 0 | 00 | 50 |
| 3 | Matching | 5 | 50 | 100 | 0 | 00 | 50 |
| 4 | Transcription | 5 | 46 | 92 | 3 | 6 | 49 |
| 5 | Single words | 2 | 20 | 100 | 0 | 16 | 20 |
| 6 | Sentence Making | 5 | 47 | 94 | 2 | 4 | 49 |
| 7 | Word-formation | 5 | 50 | 100 | 0 | 00 | 50 |
| 8 | Rate of retention | 10 | 100 | 100 | 0 | 00 | 100 |
| 9 | Difficulty Level | 20 | 200 | 100 | 0 | 00 | 200 |
| | Total | 63 | 618 | 877.60 | 10 | 34.30 | 628 |

The above table shows the correct responses of the treatment group are above 91%. Over 60% of the students continued scoring 100%. There was much more improvement in the post test. The percentage of the correct responses was also gone up in the post test. Even in the item 1, their progress was better than satisfactory not to talk about other items.

3.2.3. 2 Item-wise Responses in the Post Test:

The following tables show the item-wise correct and incorrect responses along with their percentage obtained by the population of the controlled group in the post-test.

**Table No. 11: Item-wise Responses in the Post-test
(Controlled Group)**

| SN | Items | No of Item | Correct Responses | C. R. in % | Incorrect Responses | In. R. in % | Total Responses |
|----|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Pronunciation | 6 | 40 | 66.6 | 20 | 33.3 | 60 |
| 2 | Filling Blanks | 5 | 35 | 70 | 15 | 30 | 50 |
| 3 | Matching | 5 | 33 | 66 | 17 | 34 | 50 |
| 4 | Transcription | 5 | 9 | 18 | 40 | 80 | 49 |
| 5 | Single words | 2 | 10 | 50 | 10 | 50 | 20 |
| 6 | Sentence Making | 5 | 34 | 68 | 15 | 30 | 49 |
| 7 | Word-formation | 5 | 26 | 52 | 24 | 48 | 50 |
| 8 | Rate of retention | 10 | 81 | 81 | 19 | 19 | 100 |
| 9 | Difficulty Level | 20 | 185 | 92.5 | 15 | 7.5 | 200 |
| | Total | 63 | 453 | 564.10 | 175 | 131.8 | 628 |

The table above shows the post-test scoring of the controlled group of population. It presents that the item 4 i.e. phonetic transcription has the highest incorrect responses and the same item has the lowest number of correct responses. Item 9 i.e. sequencing the difficulty level has the highest number of correct responses and lowest percentage of incorrect responses. All the items have above 50 % of correct responses. Comparing the item wise correct responses in post-test with that in the progress test, there was all below 50 % except in the items no. 8 and 9 in their progress-test whose scoring were 64 and 83 % respectively. In the post-test they are 66.6 %, 70 %, 66 %, 18 %, 50 %, 68 %, 52 %, 81 %, and 92.5 % respectively. The average scoring of the controlled group of population went up to 62.24 from 38.54 in the progress test.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Findings

The findings of the study have been listed below:

- a. In the pre-test both of the treatment and controlled group showed that they have little idea regarding what aspects of vocabulary is essential to know while learning them.
- b. The comparison of the score of the progress-test with the pre-test result, there was a remarkable progress in the progress test as compared to the population of the treatment group but not satisfactory.
- c. The comparison of score obtained by students in progress-test and post-test supports that the use of flashcards in teaching meanings of content words is not only useful but is an effective technique in developing student's vocabulary retention power.
- d. The students were found more motivated in sorting the difficulty level of words as they come across them in the text. On the contrary, uttering the words seems most difficult for both of the treatment and controlled group as they have scored the least of all.
- e. The students' tendency of performance in specified items in progress-test and post-test was impressive. The teaching of the meanings of content words using flashcards was proved to be far more effective in the case of many test-items, leaving some exceptional cases.
- f. It can be deduced that the population who were taught vocabulary items using flashcards in the classrooms along with relevant exercises has much more advantages over population that is dealt with such vocabulary items in traditional explanatory technique.

4.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study the following recommendations have been made:

- a) The English teachers should use word-cards along with other techniques while teaching content words and their meanings.
- b) Text book writers should develop vocabulary exercises, which require the pair as well as group cooperation to complete them. Vocabulary activities in a textbook should offer more room for pair and group discussion. Moreover, it is better if the major portion of the exercises is allotted to vocabulary practices.
- c) The present study proves that the regular use of flashcards in the classroom is an effective technique in teaching vocabulary, specially the content words. However, its effectiveness in other skills and aspects of language apart from vocabulary can still not be granted. Therefore, more studies focusing on teaching other aspects of language are required by using this technique.
- d) The present study was carried out at a public Higher Secondary School situated in a semi-urban area. The result of this single study is not enough to verdict on the effectiveness of the technique in all situations. Thus, more research in other situations i.e. rural schools and students with different levels should be carried out.
- e) If the classroom is physically barrier for the students to hear the teachers read and the writing on white board, the flashcards presentation can make the situation of barrier free since flashcard is usually hung or attached on the board or front wall of the classroom. It can replace the white/black board and also overcome the dark sides of the white being its substitute. It creates fun environment for learning It can maximally minimize the boring situations.

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APPENDIX-1
Pre-Test Question

Name of the Student:

Grade: XII

Faculty: Education

School: Shanishare H. S. School

(time: 20min.)

Tick the best option:

10*1=10

1. What do you think a Flashcard is?
 - a) it is a picture
 - b) it is a light to flash in the class
 - c) it is a card that is played with
 - d) a word-card used to teach a word
2. What do you do when you see any words you don't know the meaning yourself?
 - a) ask someone
 - b) guess the meaning
 - c) consult a dictionary
 - d) ignore it
3. Do you listen to your teacher's pronunciation carefully as model?
 - a) always
 - b) sometimes
 - c) never
 - d) don't care about the pronunciation
4. What do you think is the best way to learn new words in the text/lesson?
 - a) See the text at home first
 - b) Listening to the teacher
 - c) Don't bother
 - d) Often use a dictionary while reading
5. Do you think it is useful to teach vocabulary before the actual lesson?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Don't know
 - d) It is a must
6. Do you know what flashcards are used for?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Yes but can't tell
 - d) I have no idea what a flashcard is
7. What do you think what one should know when learning a new word?
 - a) Pronunciation, meaning, form, and word grammar
 - b) Pronunciation, meaning in mother language, form, and word grammar
 - c) Pronunciation and its meaning only
 - d) Only meaning

8. Do you practice the words after you hear the model reading?
- a) Always
 - b) Sometimes
 - c) Never
 - d) Don't think reading is important
9. Do you know what content and function words are?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Yes but can't tell
 - d) Never heard before
10. How often do you ask your teacher if you are not sure/can't hear your teacher first time?
- a) Always
 - b) Sometimes
 - c) Never
 - d) Try but feel odd and hesitation

APPENDIX-2

Progress Test Question

Name of the Student:

Grade: XII

Faculty: Management

School: Shanischare H.S. School

(Time: 1:30 hrs)

Tick the best option:

1. Pronounce these words in as much correct pronunciation as possible. 5

degenerate, discrimination, crouch, consent, scrawny

2. Use these words in the sentences of your own: 5

Tranquilizing, famine, rascals, fade, shelter

3. Change the forms of the following words as indicated: 5

nullification (verb), degenerate (noun), tranquilizing (noun),
discrimination (adverb), fade (adjective)

4. Fill in the blanks with the appropriate words given in the box: 5

shelter, pikes, conspiracy, consent, scrawny, unalienable

- a) She had pale, oval face and tall body but.....hands.
- b) Sometimes our English teacher doesn'tto our humble requests.
- c) Have you ever usedto hurt or to kill any things you love?
- d) The judge predicted a punishment against him for his
- e) Finding ain the time of danger will be our sole goal.

5. Match the words in column A against their meanings in Column B: 5

Column A

Column B

a.) fade

a dishonest person

b) dawdle

you can't take away or grab from anybody

c) famine

to become or make something become paler

d) rascals

a lack of food for a long time in a region

e) unalienable

take a long time to do or grow

6. Transcribe these words phonetically: 5

a. dawdle b. ding dong c. fathom d. famine e. unalienable f. conspiracy

7. Write the title of the lesson in the box the following vocabulary items are taken from: 10

| | |
|--|---------------|
| | scrawny |
| | rascals |
| | ade |
| | shelter |
| | unalienable |
| | conspiracy |
| | consented |
| | nullification |
| | famine |
| | degenerate |

8) Which of the twenty words did you find easier to remember and know its meaning? Rate them by giving numbers (1,2,3,4, 5.....) on your priority: 5

| | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scrawny | <input type="checkbox"/> degenerate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> nullification | <input type="checkbox"/> rascals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fade | <input type="checkbox"/> discrimination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> shelter | <input type="checkbox"/> coral |
| <input type="checkbox"/> unalienable | <input type="checkbox"/> conspiracy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dawdle | <input type="checkbox"/> transfigured |
| <input type="checkbox"/> consented | <input type="checkbox"/> pikes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> nymph | <input type="checkbox"/> crouch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> tranquilizing | <input type="checkbox"/> ding dong |
| <input type="checkbox"/> famine | <input type="checkbox"/> fathom |

9. when you are not walking as fast as others are, what do they say you? 1

Answer:.....

10. if your friends are planning to do something to harm you secretly, what is their plan called? 1

Answer:.....

11. Add suitable suffixes and prefixes to the following content word so that they change their word class: 3

a. null-

b. tranquil-

c. transfigure-

d. conspire-

e. discriminate-

f. generate-

APPENDIX-3
Post-Test Question

Name of the Student:

Grade: XII

Faculty: Education/Management

School: Shanischare H.S. School

(Time: 1:30 hrs)

Tick the best option:

1. Pronounce these words in as much correct pronunciation as possible.3

degenerate, discrimination, crouch, consent, scrawny, unalienable

2. Use these words in the sentences of your own: 5

Tranquilizing, famine, rascals, fade, shelter

3. Change the forms of the following words as indicated: 5

nullification (verb), degenerate (noun), tranquilizing (noun),
discrimination (adverb), fade (adj.)

4. Fill in the blanks with the appropriate words given in the box: 5

shelter, pikes, conspiracy, consent, scrawny, unalienable

- a) She had pale, oval face and tall body but.....hands.
- b) Sometimes our English teacher doesn'tto our humble requests.
- c) Have you ever usedto hurt or to kill any things you love?
- d) The judge predicted a punishment against him for his
- e) Finding ain the time of danger will be our sole goal.

5. Match the words in column A against their meanings in Column B: 5

Column A

Column B

a.) fade

a dishonest person

b) dawdle

you can't take away or grab from anybody

c) famine

to become or make something become paler

d) rascals

a lack of food for a long time in a region

e) unalienable

take a long time to do or grow

6. Transcribe these words phonetically: 5

a. dawdle b. ding dong c. fathom d. famine e. unalienable

7. Write the title of the lesson in the box the following vocabulary items are taken from: 10

| | |
|--|---------------|
| | scrawny |
| | rascals |
| | fade |
| | shelter |
| | unalienable |
| | conspiracy |
| | consented |
| | nullification |
| | famine |
| | degenerate |

8) Which of the twenty words did you find easier to remember and know its meaning? Rate them by giving numbers (1,2,3,4, 5.....) on your priority: 5

| | | | |
|--|---------------|--|----------------|
| | Scrawny | | degenerate |
| | nullification | | rascals |
| | fade | | discrimination |
| | shelter | | coral |
| | unalienable | | conspiracy |
| | dawdle | | transfigured |
| | consented | | pikes |
| | nymph | | crouch |
| | tranquilizing | | ding dong |
| | famine | | fathom |

9. when you are not walking as fast as others are, what do they say you? 1
 Answer:.....

10. if your friends are planning to do something to harm you secretly, what is their plan called? 1
 Answer:.....

11. Add suitable suffixes and prefixes to the following content word so that they change their word class as in the example: 5

a. null-

b. tranquil-

c. transfigure-

d. conspire-

e. discriminate-

APPENDIX-4

Lesson Plans Used for Experimental Teaching

Lesson Plan No: 1

(For Controlled Group)

Class- XII

Time: 40 m.

Stream: Education

Date: Aug 31st , 2011

Teaching Items: Vocabulary

Materials: Text-Book, Lecture note,

Warming Up

The teacher begins his class along with the question like 'if they know what our fundamental rights are and if they have ever experienced any situations where and when they are avoided of their rights to entertain.

Activities

- i) The teacher explains the difficult words that he finds difficult or above their level of understanding (if requires, they are presented in their L1) and students try them with correct pronunciation. If required, the teacher helps.
- ii) They go through the text where the words are used in meaningful context. They try to match the meanings explained in plain words or first language synonyms along the passage.
- iii) The teacher goes through the lesson with emphasis on the words.
- iv) The teacher asks intermittently to ensure if the students are attentive and getting on with the passage.

Evaluation

Students are asked to use the following words in the sentences of their own.
degenerate, tranquilizing, nullification, unalienable, discrimination

APPENDIX-5

Lesson Plans Used for Experimental Teaching

Lesson Plan No: 1

(For Treatment Group)

Class- XII

Time: 40 m

Stream: Management

Date: Aug 31st , 2011

Teaching Items: Vocabulary

Materials: Flashcards for the words:

degenerate, tranquilizing, nullification, unalienable, discrimination

Warming Up

The teacher begins his class along with the question like 'if they know what our fundamental rights are and if they have ever experienced any situations where and when they are avoided of their rights to entertain.

Activities

- i) The teacher shows the flashcards and students try them with correct pronunciation. If required, the teacher helps.
- ii) They go through the text where the words are used in meaningful context. They try to match the meanings described in the flashcards along the passage.
- iii) The teacher goes through the lesson with emphasis on the words.
- iv) The teacher asks intermittently to ensure if the students are attentive and getting on with the passage.

Evaluation

Students are asked to use the following words in the sentences of their own.

degenerate, tranquilizing, nullification, unalienable, discrimination

APPENDEX-6

Vocabulary (Content words) Used in the classroom

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Subject: English (compulsory) | | Lesson: Hansel and Gretel | | |
| (story) | | Topic: vocabulary learning | | |
| Grade: XII | | | | |
| Dawdle | /'d dl/ | verb | To take a long time to do something or grow: Don't dawdle, we have little time. | usually with adv/prep |
| Scrawny | /'skr ni/ | Adj. | very thin in a way that is unattractive: the old woman has scrawny hands. | |
| Crouch | /kraut / | verb /noun | To lower one's body close to the ground by bending his leg under him: he crouched down beside her. A crouching position. She dropped to a crouch. | usually with adv/prep |
| Consented | /k n'sentid/ | verb /noun | agreed to give something or give your permission for sth: the teacher consented to our proposal to have a break. | (to sth) |
| Famine | /fæmin/ | noun | A lack of food during long period of time in a region: when there is no rain, we can't grow food and we will have a famine | |

Lesson: The Lamentation of the Old Pensioner (poem)

Topic: vocabulary learning

| | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|---|--|
| Shelter | /' elt (r)/ | verb /noun | 1. to stay in a place that protects one from the weather or danger 2. To give sb/sth a place where they are protected from unpleasant aspects or difficulties of life. The trees sheltered us from the heavy rain. 3. A place or the act of protection from the rain, danger or attack. | (from sb/sth) |
| Transfigured | /trans'fig d/ | verb | To change the appearance of a person or thing: the old man's face transfigured due to old age. | |
| Pikes | /paiks/ | noun | 1. A weapon with a sharp blade on a long wooden handle: he killed the pig with a pike. 2. A large freshwater fish. | |
| Conspiracy | /k n'spir si/ | noun | A secret plan by a group of people to do sth harmful or illegal: a conspiracy to overthrow the govt. | (to do sth) / (against sb / sth) |
| Rascals | /'ra:skl/ | noun | 1. A dishonest person 2. A person, especially a child who shows a lack of respect for other people and enjoys playing tricks on them. | |

Lesson: I Have a Dream (essay)

Topic: vocabulary

| | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|---|--------------|
| Discrimination | /diskrimi'nei n/ | noun | 1. The practice of treating sb or a particular group in society less fairly than others 2. The ability to judge what is good, true, etc. 3. The ability to recognize a difference between one thing and another; a difference that is recognized. | (against sb) |
| Unalienable | /ʌneiliənəble/ | Adj. | That cannot be taken away or grabbed from others i.e. human rights | |
| Tranquilizing | /'trækw laidzi / | Adj. | Making a person/animal calm or unconscious by giving some drug: a fast-acting tranquilizing drug. | |
| Degenerate | /di'dzein reit/ | verb/ | to become worse by becoming weaker or lower in quality: the march degenerated into a riot. | (into sth) |
| Nullification | /nʌlifi'keɪfɪn/ | noun | 1. Making sth lose its effect or power 2. The act of making sth such as an agreement or order lose its legal force or effect | |

Lesson: Full Fathom Five Thy Father Lies (Poem)

Topic: Vocabulary

| | | | | |
|-----------|----------|----------|---|--------------|
| Fathom | /'fæd m/ | Noun/v | A unit of measuring the depth of water; equal to 6 feet. 2. To understand or find an explanation for sth: we couldn't fathom out what the man could possibly mean. | sb/sth (out) |
| Coral | /'k r l/ | Noun/adj | A hard substance that is red, white in color, and that forms on the bottom of the sea from the bones of very small creatures. 2. A creature that produces coral. 3. Pink or red in color like coral | |
| Fade | /feɪd/ | verb | To become or make something become paler or less bright: the color faded in the sun. 2. To disappear gradually: her smile faded away. | away |
| Nymph | /nimf/ | noun | A spirit of nature in the form of a young woman that lives in rivers, woods etc. 2. A young insect that has a similar form to the adult. | |
| Ding-dong | /'di d / | noun | Used to represent the sound made by a bell | onomatopoeia |

APPENDEX-7

Model Flashcards

Vocabulary (Content words) Flashcards Used in the classroom

Discrimination

/diskrimi'nei n/ n.
the practice of
treating somebody or
a particular group in
society less fairly
than others

Tranquilizing

/tr kw laidzi / adj.
making a person or animal
calm or unconscious by
giving some drug.

Transfigured

/trans'fig :d/ v.
to change the
appearance of a
person or thing.

APPENDEX-8

Population from treatment group

(Management Stream)

| S.N. | Roll No. | Symbol Used | Students' Name |
|------|----------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1 | 54 | S ₁ | Arjun Guragain |
| 2 | 19 | S ₂ | Hari Karki |
| 3 | 63 | S ₃ | Indra Giri |
| 4 | 2 | S ₄ | Pawan Mishra |
| 5 | 51 | S ₅ | Prakash Karki |
| 6 | 13 | S ₆ | Anisha Rai |
| 7 | 33 | S ₇ | Jhuma Niroula |
| 8 | 6 | S ₈ | Laxmi Puri |
| 9 | 11 | S ₉ | Manju Mishra |
| 10 | 19 | S ₁₀ | Yasoda Dhungel |
| | | | |

Population from controlled group

(Education Stream)

| S.N. | Roll No. | Symbol Used | Students' Name |
|------|----------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 7 | S ₁ | Abhisek Magar |
| 2 | 32 | S ₂ | Aindra Sambahamfe |
| 3 | 5 | S ₃ | Binesh Chandra Ekten |
| 4 | 16 | S ₄ | Dipesh Gautam |
| 5 | 10 | S ₅ | Tikaram Giri |
| 6 | 72 | S ₆ | Alisha Nepal |
| 7 | 109 | S ₇ | Binita Karki |
| 8 | 87 | S ₈ | Deepa Khanal |
| 9 | 42 | S ₉ | Khasam Rijal |
| 10 | 65 | S ₁₀ | Sangita Limbu |