

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

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1.2 Background

There has been a tremendous increase in the number of the students who are enrolled in the higher educational institutions in Sudan in the last two decades. Apparently, this enormous increase in enrollment is not accompanied by 'modern' teaching techniques of getting everybody on board i.e. the deeply-seated traditional modes of teaching are still dominating the educational scene without getting most of students (if not all) engaged in various classroom's activities. Not too long ago, and up to the present date, most teachers whether in the primary schools or higher institutions of learning hold the view of poor performance of students to a lack of motivation and 'indifference'. Hence, teaching is viewed as transmission/ reception activity, and perhaps the role of the teacher is 'knowledge passer'. All crucial decisions as regards to the 'teaching' process emanate from the teacher.

In the traditional classroom culture a difference is clearly made between a teacher who dominates the whole scene (she/he acts as the only source of knowledge), and only higher performers who always sit in the front seats do most tasks while the others feel that they are neglected and as a result turn to do other things that are entirely far from what goes in the class. Interestingly, the type of pedagogy where the learners are given the role of 'passive-receivers' is named 'Banking Education' by the prominent emancipator educator Freire (1961) writes:

In the banking conception, it is the educator who knows and the pupils who are "thought", it is the educator who speaks and the pupils who quietly listen, it is

the educator who makes and prescribes his choice and the pupils who follow his prescription, it is the educator who chooses the content of the program; the pupils' ideas on the program are never heard, and they have to get used to it (p. 14).

In Sudanese context, assumingly, traditional modes of teaching are still dominant because of many reasons, such as teachers do feel secure with 'traditional' ways of teaching, large number of students or enormous class size, teachers are not acquainted with the new techniques of learner-centeredness, and classroom reality sometimes does not help a lot in doing certain activities that contain elements of learner-based 'teaching just to mention a few. All in all, the last few decades have witnessed a heated debate over 'traditional teaching' versus 'learner-based' teaching. Most English language class teachers are working towards creating stress-reduced environment where learners can engage actively and collaboratively in the learning process. Of course, anxiety can be lessened if learners are engaged collaboratively in doing tasks/ activities and the teacher acts as a facilitator of the whole learning process. Scrivener (2010) determines some crucial elements of 'traditional teaching':

Transmitting' knowledge to the class- with occasional questions to or from the learners. After these explanations, the students will often do some practice exercises to test whether they have understood what they have been told. Throughout the lesson, the teacher keeps control of the subject matter, makes decisions about what work is needed and orchestrates what the students do. In this classroom, the teacher probably does most of the talking and is by far the most active person. (p. 11).

Most English language teachers put much emphasis on the importance of involving students in the learning process and the communicative nature of the material being taught. For the students to use the language effectively in the real-world situations, they need to have plenty of chance to practice it in a

context that functions as a catalyst, allowing them communicate their needs and desires. Factually, the communicative approach to language learning entails all ways of language use. As Chomsky (1965) pointed out that:

"We thus make a fundamental distinction between competence (the speaker- hearer's knowledge of language), and performance, the actual use of language in concrete situations" (Chomsky, p. 4).

The main aim of learning a language is to be used in real-life situations and not memorizing the rules of how English language works. Most of English language teachers in Sudan focus on the explanation of grammar rules and rules of good pronunciation rather than giving the students an opportunity to practice and express themselves using the rules.

Hymes, as a sociolinguist, was concerned with the social and cultural knowledge which speakers need in order to understand linguistic forms. His view, therefore, encompassed not only knowledge but also ability to put the knowledge into use in communication, and for the reason other terms thought to be more effective in describing what it means to know and to be able to use the language knowledge have developed (Hedge 2000).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study investigates the problem of not involving the students actively in the learning process when teaching English language in Higher Education Institutions in Sudan. This study aims at finding out to what extent are the 'Learner- based' modes of learning prevalent and effective in higher education institutions in Sudan. It also investigates to what extent learners are involved in the whole learning process.

1.3 Research questions

The present study within the context of 'teaching' and learning will be concerned with the following questions:

1. To what extent do the 'learning' modes in higher education institutions in Sudan exhibit any form (s) of learner-centeredness?
2. Are the learners in higher education intuitions in Sudan involved in the whole learning process?
3. To what extent are learners given opportunities to do activities themselves?

1.4 Objectives of the Research

1. To find out if the 'learning modes' in higher education in Sudan are learner-centered or not.
2. To scrutinize the various types of learner-based teaching in the classroom reality.
3. To find out if the learning process is a two-dimensional, i.e. knowledge is negotiated between the teacher and the students.
4. To see if the learners are viewed as active participants the learning process.
5. To identify what role(s) teachers play in the classroom, i.e. controller, facilitator and monitor etc.

1.5 Hypotheses

1. It is hypothesized that the learning mode in higher education institutions in Sudan do not exhibit forms of learner-centeredness.
2. Students are not involved effectively in the whole learning process.
3. Learners are not given enough chances to do the activities.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of this research stems from the fact that Ahfad University for Women has embarked on a process of restructuring in different ways. One of the essential arenas of restructuring is the move towards ' learner-centeredness' in teaching.

Most importantly, the new approaches in ' teaching', a foreign language in particular, put an immense emphasis on the involvement of learners in the whole learning process as important stakeholders and not just as passive receivers of the knowledge.

This study will help a lot in finding out to what extent the higher education institutions in Sudan, especially Ahfad University for Women, use the student- focused modes of learning, and to what extent Ahfad University for Women staff work in conformity with the move towards ' learner- based' teaching as stipulated in the restructuring process. Also, this research will be of paramount importance for those who would like to know about the status of the Sudanese higher education in a globalized environment of business, such as professionals in the world of academia, businesses in its various forms, and any interested stakeholder to mention just a few.

1.7 Limitation of the study

This research only concerns itself with the issue of ' learner-based' teaching in the higher education institutions in Sudan. It will only try to investigate to what extent ' student-centered ' modes are utilized efficiently and effectively, and to what level learners are involved in the whole learning process, in what ways (techniques) which allow learners to be involved actively in the learning process. This study took place at Ahfad School of Languages in 2017 up to finalizing the different stages in it.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This section aims at reviewing the literature that supports the main theories, precepts, and approaches in the realm of 'Learner-centeredness'. Therefore, books, articles, key contributions and studies are reviewed because they do represent an essential component for this study.

The organizational scheme is grounded upon concepts and key themes as far as the notion of Learner-centeredness as a learning approach is concerned. This chapter ends with pinpointing the main gaps in the literature being reviewed and it provides a summary of the whole chapter.

2.2 Overview of definitions

According to Leo (2007), in student-centered class learners do not rely on their teacher all the time, waiting for instructions to be given, correction and praise. Instead learners listen to each other's voice and respond actively. They value everybody's contributions, help each other and do a variety of things, such as working in groups, in pairs, and as a whole class. The teacher's role is viewed as somebody who helps students to learn, she's considered to be one of the participants and not someone who dominates the whole scene. In a learner-centered class, at different times, learners can do a variety of tasks: they can work individually and jointly, they can work in groups sharing their ideas and experiences, make comments to improve their pair's works and comparing and discussing their answers.

By the same token, as Weimer (2002) points out that in learner-centered teaching, students are encouraged to assume the responsibility of their own

learning. Crucially, teachers should do less talking, i.e. they must lessen their time of speaking and instead they can ask questions and help students to learn.

Learner-centered teaching (LCT) and student-centered teaching (SCT) are used interchangeably. Student-centered teaching is grounded upon basic principles that can be summarized as follows:

The learning responsibility lies in students themselves.

Engagement and participation are necessary for learning.

The teacher's role is viewed as a facilitator.

The learner's image of herself/himself is different because of the learning experience. In short, student-centered learning is about helping students to discover their own learning styles, to understand their motivation and to acquire effective study skills that will be valuable throughout their lives.

Similarly, Edglossary (2014) defines learner-centered teaching as follows: The term student-centered learning refers to a number of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic-support strategies that are meant to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students and groups of students (student-centered learning, 2014). To attain this goal, educational institutions, teachers, guidance counselors, and other educational specialists may employ a wide variety of educational methods, from modifying assignments and instructional strategies in the classroom to completely redesigning the ways in which students are grouped and taught in a learning situation.

Additionally, Sparrow (2000) gives the following definition of Student-centered teaching: Gibbs (1992) offered a useful definition of student-centered learning. He stated that student-centered learning, "gives students greater autonomy and control over choice of subject matter, learning methods and pace of study" (As cited in Gibbs 1992, p. 23). This view highlighted three core characteristics of student-centered learning by promoting the idea that students should have more input into:

What is learned?

How it is learned, and when it is learned.

Similarly, Leo in (2007) emphasizes that learners can work at various times, they may be working alone, into groups, or they can pair and share in a student-centered class in order to attain or accomplish the following tasks:

learners can work alone to prepare ideas, taking notes before a discussion, accomplishing a listening task, doing a short written assignment, or working on grammar or vocabulary exercises.

In a learner-centered class, students work in pairs or groups to compare and discuss their answers, or reading and responding to each one's written assignments and propose possible improvements, learners can work collaboratively in discussions or role plays, views, sharing their ideas and experiences, in a student-centered class, learners can interact with the teacher and the whole class, asking questions or brainstorm to get ideas.

All in all, when learners are working together in English, they can talk more, share experiences and ideas, take part actively when doing tasks, are more involved, they feel less threatened and anxious, use the language in hand

meaningfully and realistically, and they enjoy using English communicatively.

The intrinsic notion of a student-centered approach is that the learner is placed in the heart of the whole learning process; she/he is the focal point of the process. A student –centered approach aims at empowering learners to realize their full potential by working with their teachers and embarking on the learning process in a way that will be beneficial to all the stakeholders. A student-centered classroom ensures that the learners are responsible of their own learning; they should participate actively in order to make the learning experience meaningful. By definition, it's based on the assumption that student's passivity does not improve or support learning and what enhances learning is involving students actively in the learning process to become independent learners (European Higher Education, 2010).

In the same vein, Weimer (2002) pinpoints the focus of the learner-centered approach to teaching and the learner should be the most important stakeholder in the whole learning process:

Being learner-centered focuses attention squarely on learning: what the student is learning, how the student is learning, and the conditions under which the student is learning, whether the student is retaining and applying the learning and how current learning positions the student for future learning.

Similarly, Iowa's brief which is meant to provide a clearer understanding of student-centered classrooms to its educators emphasizes the importance of involving students in the learning process in order to discover their own knowledge. In a student-centered classroom, learners are supposed to

collaborate and cooperate with others, they engage in experiential learning process which is authentic, holistic, and challenging. Students are empowered to utilize their prior knowledge to construct new learning. A student-centered approach to teaching encourages learners to reflect on their own learning, share their experiences and ideas with their peers, and, of course, apply what they have learnt to real-life and authentic experiences. Students will never be fully engaged unless they will be the main focus in the whole learning process. A student-centered classroom is characterized by certain attributes that can be summarized as follows: learning is constructed, metacognition, learning is shared between educator and student in partnership, learning is viewed as a collaborative process, and meaningful assessment is obtained in real-world contexts.

2.3 The Emergence of a Student –Centered Learning:

Following the above mentioned definitions, it is natural now to move on to trace the theories that led to the emergence SCL and how does it come into being.

Constructivism, in education, is considered to be the main pillar of a student-centered learning. It is deemed to be a paradigm shift in the field of teaching and learning. Constructivism in the realm of education and learning tries to give an explanation to the question: how human learning takes place, how knowledge is constructed and what role social milieu plays in the process of constructing it.

According to Lam (2011) learner-centered approach dates back to the Socratic Learning Method (SLM) which is considered to be constructivist in nature.

He writes:

“The Socratic Learning Method (SLM) is a constructivist learning approach consisting of four key steps: eliciting relevant preconceptions, clarifying preconceptions, testing one’s own hypotheses or encountered propositions, and deciding whether to accept hypotheses or propositions (p.2).”

The importance of the Socratic Learning Method *lies* in the fact that it allows learners to evaluate their deeply-seated views in the light of the new information.

Socrates’s streets dialogues are considered to be learning through inquiry; Socrates goes to streets and asks his interlocutors a question and he never gives answers immediately.

Lam in (2011) believes that Socratic Learning Method is deemed to be an inquiry-based learning because it is systematic and has four defined component steps that naturally lead to certain types of questions .

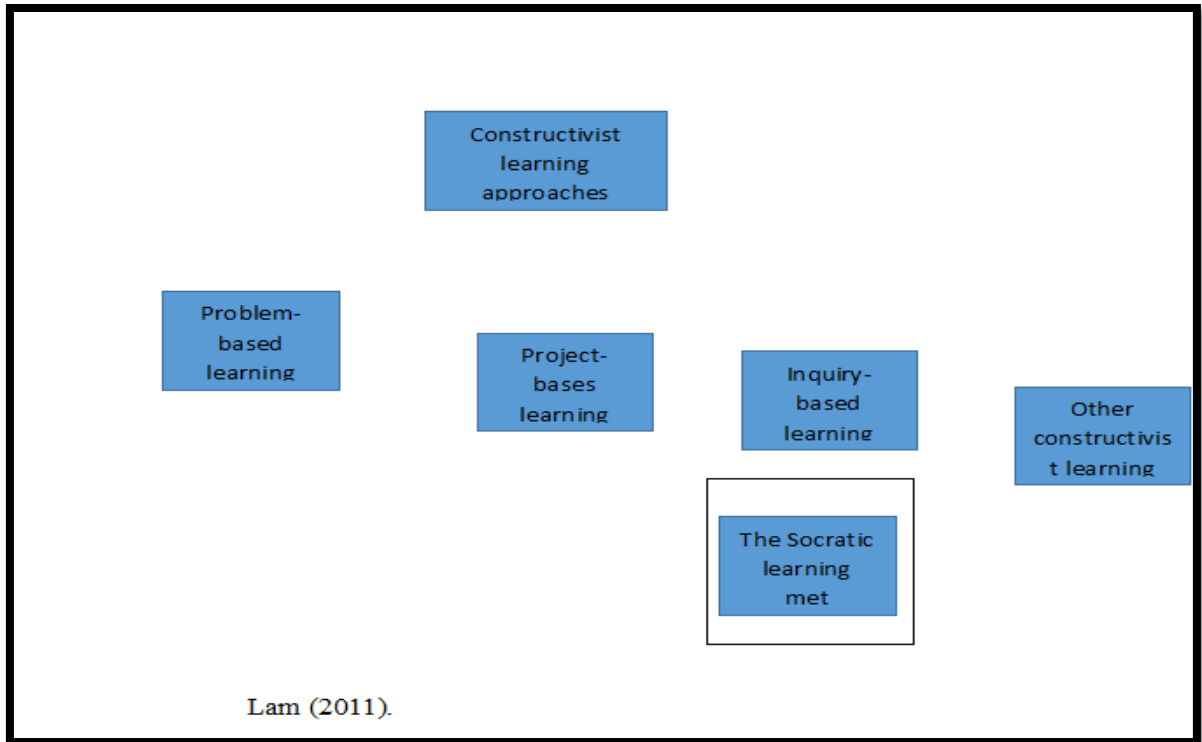


Figure (2.1) Instructionist vs. Constructionist

2.4 Instructionist vs. Constructionist Views on Teaching

The Instructionist approach to teaching is a traditional model of teaching that has been dominating the educational for a long time. It holds the view that learners should be guided and given direct instructions rather than having them explore things their own. It underpins John Locke's idea of Tabula Rasa, the view that the human mind is born into this world as a blank slate void of inborn ideas and only gains knowledge through senses and experiences. Driven by this view, the main responsibility of educators is to fill students' mind with knowledge and information under the Instructionist approach.

Whereas the constructivists, of course, doubt that human minds start out as blank slates and argue that learning entails the integration of new information

with old beliefs. Constructivists hold the view that learners come into formal education with prior knowledge, skills and beliefs that essentially influence what they notice about the environment and how they interpret it. Consequently, constructivist teachers' responsibility does not end at just giving learners new information through direct instructions, but they need to pay attention to and resolve the misconceptions of the learners and facilitate the learning process .

2.5 The Socratic Learning Method

The Socratic Learning Method is deemed to be a constructivist in nature with strong emphasis on the role of preconceptions in learning. It's beneficial in learning contexts in which the learner needs to evaluate an assumption or a proposition contradictory to one's preconception, or when one is to generate one's own hypothesis given new information. For example, Socratic Learning Method takes place in Plato's dialogue Meno; Meno asks Socrates if virtue is taught, acquired by practice, or is it something men are born with. Meno's question implies his preconceptions toward what virtue is and its three possible sources: nature, practice, and teaching. Socrates's, in return, encourages him to clarify what does he (Meno) think of virtue by asking to define it concisely. Meno starts giving some acts that he thinks they incarnate virtue; Socrates clarifies to Meno his own misconception that virtuous acts are the same as the essence of virtue itself. At the end of the day, Meno could not reach a consensus with Socrates on the essence of virtue throughout the inquiry. Socrates thinks that inquiry is a tool of introspection and a way to examine our internal ideas, deeply-held views, and preconceptions.

In Lam's view, the Socratic Learning Method consists of four steps: elicit, clarify, test, and decide. For learners to apply the Socratic Method, they

will firstly embark on an inquiry when encountered with a proposition which is in contradiction with their preconceptions. Learners utilize their preconceptions to interpret the new information; questions are asked to elicit their preconceptions. Clarifying questions are asked when learners become aware of their preconceptions. After fully eliciting and clarifying learners' preconceptions, learners will construct hypotheses grounded upon their preconceptions. Then these propositions will be tested by further fact-check, counter-arguments, critical questions, and counter examples, etc. Based on the critical evaluation of the hypotheses, learners will re-assess their opinions and decide whether to accept or reject their propositions as well as preconceptions.

Similarly, Brown & Palincsar (1984) conducted a study that tried to help children with reading comprehension difficulties. The called Reciprocal Teaching of Comprehension- Fostering and Comprehension Monitoring Activities; it looks similar to the Socratic Learning Method because in both of them the role of the teacher is viewed as a facilitator rather than a direct instructor. In order to help students with reading comprehension difficulties, Brown & Palincsar developed a learning method which is called Reciprocal Teaching; it consists of four key steps: summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting. The main aim of these steps is to achieve the following goals:

- Understanding the reading comprehension text explicitly and implicitly;
- Activating the students' schemata i.e. their knowledge about the world;
- Drawing students' attention in order to concentrate on the most important points in the text rather than the trivia;
- Fully engaging the learners in the process of the reading comprehension text and critically evaluating the text;

- Testing students' abilities on making inferences, interpretations, predictions, and conclusions.

2.6 Constructive perspective to learning

According to Taber (2011), the constructivist perspective on the nature of learning can be viewed as part of a long tradition in educational thought, but in its modern version has its basis how people make sense of their experience. It might be understood in terms of a drastic change as far as meaning is concerned in relation to what is found in the environment. A conventional, commonsense, way of thinking about this is represented in figure 1. This assumes that the learner comes to knowledge by recognizing the meaning of what is found in the environment. Therefore, the object in the environment, such as a door, a verse from a poem etc. is assumed to have some inherent meaning, which the learner has the ability to identify, and consequently adds to his/her store of knowledge about the world. Perception is about identifying the inherent meaning of what is experienced.

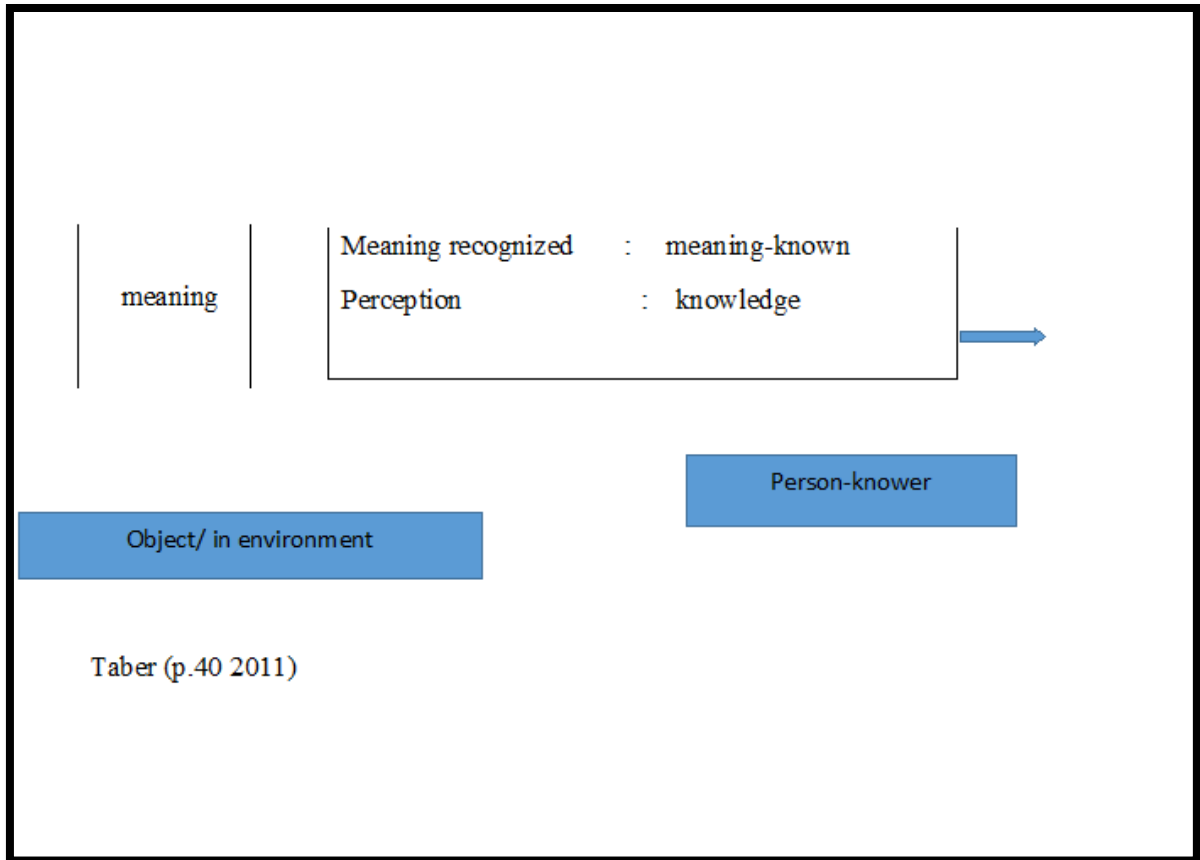


Figure (2.2) traditional view, Taber (p.40 2011)

A traditional view of how we come to knowledge.

This perspective of learning does make sense in many situations. Indeed, a door has an inherent meaning, at least in the sense that it is created with a specific function in mind. By the same token, the teacher tells the class that ‘London is the capital of England’, the utterance is motivated with the purpose of communicating a specific meaning, and the role of the pupils is to identify the meaning if they are to acquire the knowledge that is represented in the teacher’s words. In all societies, people knowledge is acquired via what is available in the environment. So, the main objective of education becomes ‘reproduction’ of this knowledge. The commonsense view of how schooling works is grounded upon a folk model of learning as based on knowledge

transfer, or more precisely knowledge copying from one mind to another (figure 2).

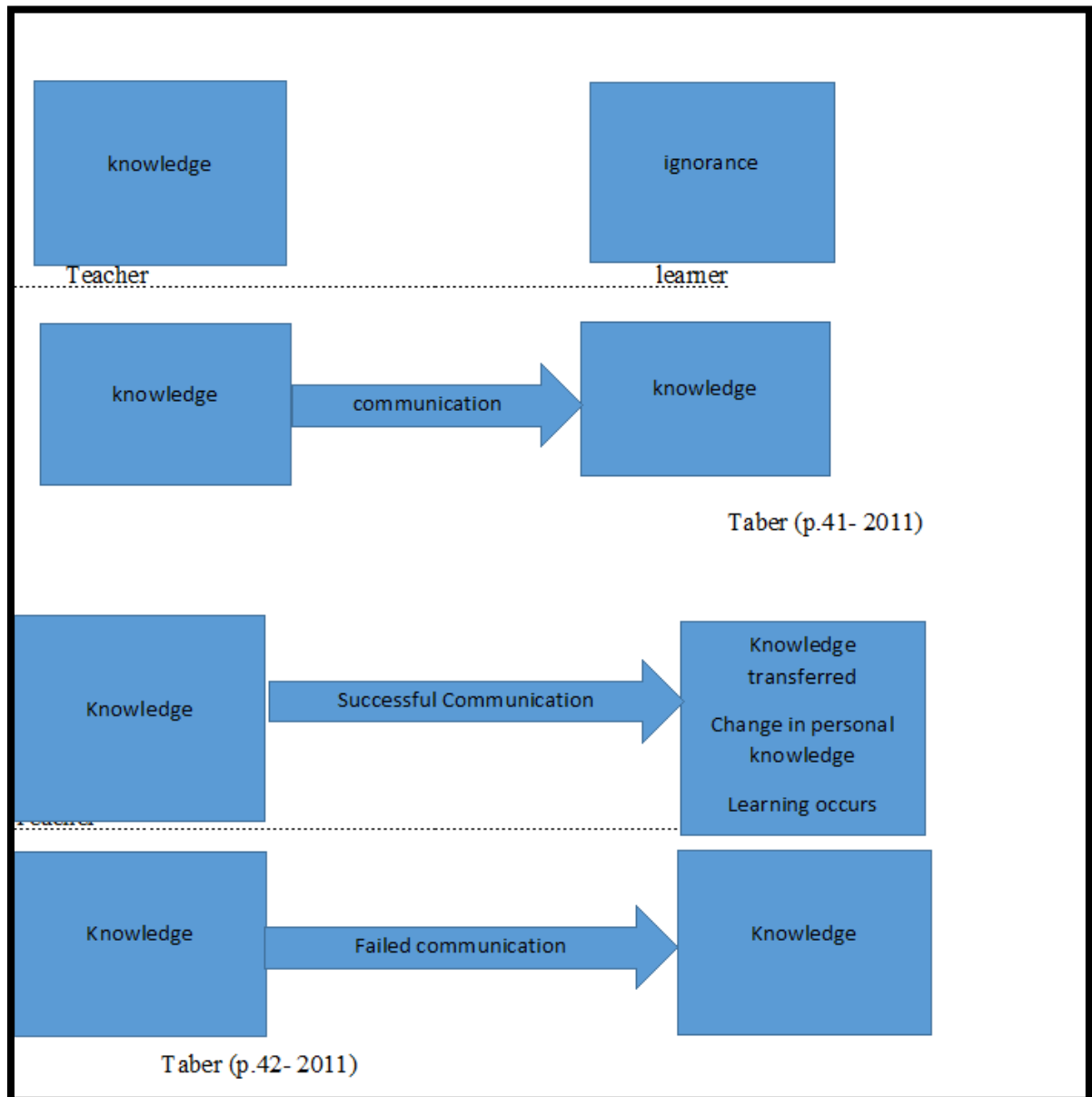


Figure (2.3) the folk model

Figure 1 the folk model of teaching is that somehow the teacher's knowledge is copied into the mind of the learner.

2.7 Personal Meaning-Making

The nature of human recognition- that learners actively make sense of our experiences in accordance with the existing of internal analytical resources- assists in making our thinking flexible, such as making sense of a design of chair never seen before, but alleviates against teaching being a binary process where an intended meaning is either communicated unchanged or not at all.

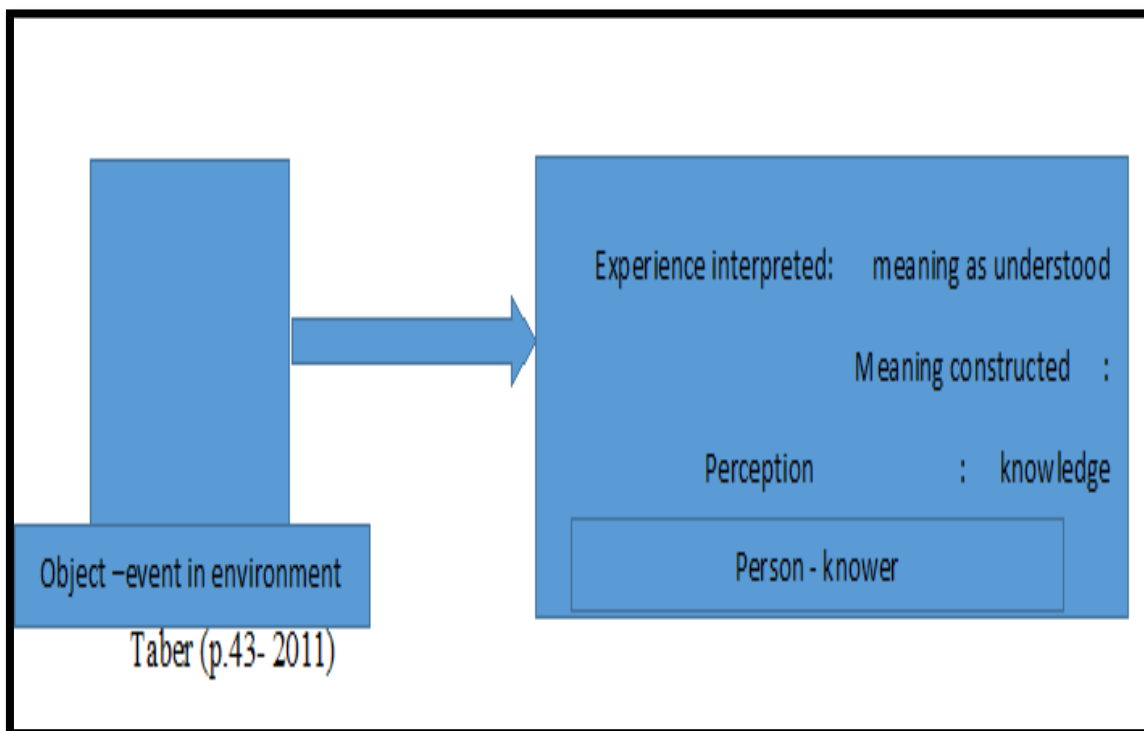


Figure (2.4) Knowledge construction

Knowledge is constructed by interpreting new experiences in their light of existing conceptual frameworks.

Figure 2 does not describe the general process, at least when what we mean by knowledge entails more than learning by imitation. In some situations,

learners grasp meaning which is far away from what the curriculum developers, the text authors, or the classroom teachers intend to communicate. If things were as easy as figure 2 showed, then learning processes would be binary: successful or null, as in figure 3.

The constructivist view suggests this due to the fact that the process by which we make interpretation is by experiencing our surroundings or things in the environment. Therefore, the learner has actively constructed what he/she sees or hears in a meaningful way and gives her/his interpretation. That is, all meaningful learning is a process of personal meaning making through that individual's current knowledge and understanding. Consequently, every learner in the classroom will construct a personal version of what is being taught as figure 5 shows.

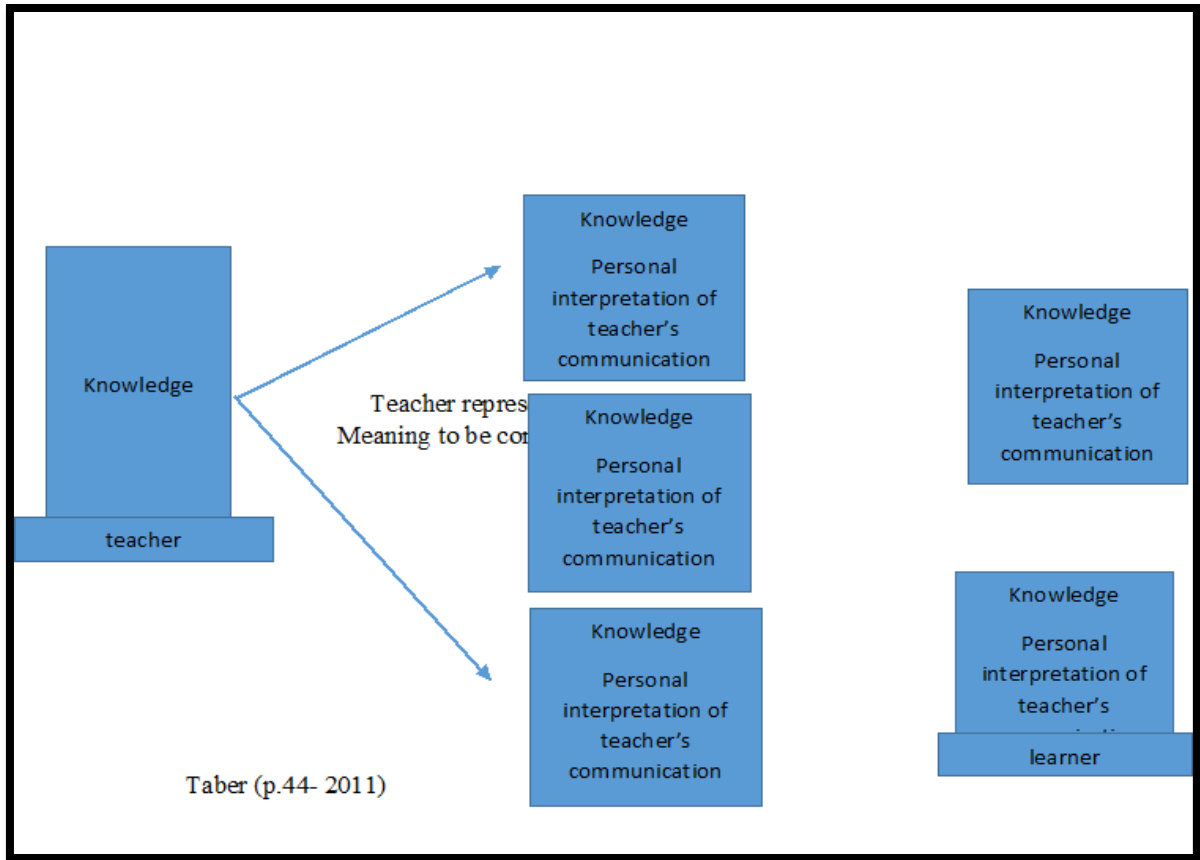


Figure (2.5) learner develops personal knowledge, Taber (p.44-2011)

Each learner develops personal knowledge that is a unique reconstruction of the teacher's knowledge, by interpreting the public representation of the teacher's knowledge through available interpretive resources.

All in all, the key tenet in the constructivist theory of learning is that human learning is constrained by the nature of the cognitive apparatus that, surely, has built-bases; human learning is grounded upon the cognitive resources that are available to any particular individual in order to make sense of the information. In this regard, Taber (2011) writes:

To draw a distinction between the apparatus of human cognition, the 'hardware' if we adopt a familiar metaphor and the resources available to support cognition (the software and data files if we keep with the metaphor) is entirely appropriate. The substrate supporting cognition is the brain, a highly interconnected network of neurons that can act as tiny switches and signal boosters (ibid).

Similarly, Piaget theory of child development (1972) has made a tremendous contribution to the constructivist theory of learning and knowledge; he thinks that cognitive development takes place due to the interaction between the environment and human beings. Taber (2011), pinpoints that Piaget contributed to the viability of a constructivist view of learning by proofing that the individual who comes into the world with no knowledge of calculus, or of the causes of the industrial revolution, may construct such abstract formal knowledge of the world due to that fact that humans beings are genetically predisposed with the potential to construct the apparatus needed for formal thought by a repetitive action on the environment. Indeed, knowledge construction is a personal process; humans are endowed with innate knowledge of how to construct a system of personal about the world.

The key point that stems from this perspective is that teaching is rarely about assisting learners build up knowledge from nothing; the constructivist perspective to teaching assumes that teaching should entail relevant ideas already exist or available to assist learners construct new knowledge; unless learners are guided carefully to activate the already available knowledge, they will not build their new knowledge. Students, of course, have their own ideas about a topic that they have developed spontaneously, or have acquired from various surroundings, for example, family, media, and friends or from

previous learning experiences are not in accordance with the curriculum content. Hence the role of the teacher is to build on the knowledge students have already got and to diagnose student thinking effectively; so they can channel that thinking towards the target knowledge presented in the curricula. When teaching abstract notions, the teacher must help students to make connections with knowledge that could be relevant through using models, metaphors and analogies to mention just a few. A constructivist approach to teaching seeks to guide by supporting the knowledge-construction process.

2.8 Definition(s) of Constructivism

According to Nathan and Sawyer in the book of the Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences (2014), Constructivism posits that learning involves the active creation of mental structures, rather than the passive internalization of information acquired from others or from the environment. Jean Piaget, the originator of constructivism, argued that all learning was mediated by the construction of mental objects that he called schemas, which were essentially Kantian a priori categories (e.g., space, time, causality). Piaget's original articulation focused on how schemas emerge from the interaction and experimentation of the child with the physical world. For Piaget, schemas first emerge as concrete actions and gradually develop into more abstract and conceptual mental entities.

Aminen and Asl. (2015) state that constructivism can be defined on the basis of four principles (citing Fosnot.1989): a. learning is grounded upon what students already know, b. new ideas occur as learners change and adapt their old ideas, c. learning entails inventing new ideas rather than accumulating a number of facts in a mechanic way, d. meaningful learning occurs because students rethink old ideas and coming to new conclusions about new ideas that

in conflict with old ones. Learning in constructivism is viewed to be constructive; the learner builds an internal illustration of knowledge and personal interpretation of experience. This representation is open to modification; its structure and experience play an essential role in grasping new meanings.

Additionally, constructivism is a learning theory that views the learning process to be active and a personal representation of the world (as cited by Christie, 2005). In constructivism, knowledge is constructed from experience and is modified via various experiences. This theory ensures that problem solving and understanding are regarded to be crucial. Collaboration, authentic tasks, experiences, and assessment along with other important factors in this view of learning are considered to be of paramount importance in order to make the learning process meaningful.

Constructivism is deemed to be a fundamental change in the learning process in which students are placed in the action zone i.e. the learners participate actively and are positioned in the center of the educational enterprise. The learning takes place through the learners' involvement and their central role in construction of meaning and knowledge; constructivist learning seeks to promote critical thinking abilities and encourages them to become independent learners.

Essentially, social constructivism, which is a theory of knowledge and communication, emphasizes the role which individuals play in the process of knowledge creation. It ensures that understanding, significance, and meaning are developed in collaboration with other human beings. The main tenets of Social Constructivism as a theory of knowledge can be summarized as follows: (a) the proposition that human beings rationalize their experience by

creating a model of the social world and the way it functions and, (b) the belief in language as the most important system through which humans can construct reality.

It is worth to mention that Social Constructivism values the role of culture and context in understanding what takes place in society and knowledge construction is grounded upon this understanding. Social Constructivism assumes that reality does not exist in advance; instead it is constructed via human activity. Knowledge construction is a human product which bounded by culture and society (ibid).

Jones and Araje (2002) co-authored a paper entitled: The Impact of Constructivism on Education: Language, Discourse, and meaning; they believed that the success of social constructivism is due to the disappointment that educators experienced with behaviorist educational practices; the main tent of behaviorism on which schooling is grounded is that if teachers provided the right stimuli, students would learn and their intended response could be measured via the observations of student behaviors. Behaviorism placed the responsibility for learning directly on the instructors' shoulders. After years of experimenting with behaviorism in a complex classroom reality, teachers felt cheated by a system which placed the guilt for students' failure to learn in their hands.

Constructivism emphasizes the role of the learner being engaged actively in meaning-making. Constructivists argue that knowledge is not passively received; instead it is built up by the cognizing subject. For Constructivists, knowledge isn't something that exists outside the learner. Reality can only be known in a personal subjective way. In order for learning to take place, teachers must elicit students' prior knowledge of the world, and build on these

notions during instruction. For the conceptual change to take place students must be dissatisfied with the current conception; it is this dissatisfaction that leads the learners to consider alternative conceptual views. The role of the teacher in the process of reconceptualization isn't only restricted to only 'telling' the learners because this of little value for students; only meaningful classroom experiences require much more of teachers. Constructivism views learning as an active process shared by the learners and the teachers; bearing in our minds the students' prior knowledge in constructing new concepts.

Language plays an important role in forming learners' conceptual ecology plus as the means of conceptual growth. Constructivism's emphasis is on the role of language in learning, in opposition to behaviorism's concentration on language as stimulus, has changed educators' learning strategies toward the use of language as a tool in learners' meaning-making process.

Indeed, social constructivism lays the emphasis on the role of interaction in an educational setting; and community in general plays an important role in knowledge construction. Social constructivists, Vygotsky as an example, believe in the role of culture and social context in the formation of knowledge and higher mental functions which are considered to be social in nature. Glaserfeld writes:

Knowledge is never acquired passively, because novelty cannot be handled except through assimilation to a cognitive structure the experiencing subject already has. Indeed, the subject does not perceive an experience as novel until it generates a perturbation relative to some expected result. Only at that point the experience may lead to an accommodation and thus to a novel conceptual structure that reestablishes a relative equilibrium. In this context, it is

necessary to emphasize the most frequent source of perturbations for the developing cognitive subject is the interaction with others (Von Glasersfeld, 1989 *ibid*).

Practically speaking, social constructivism influence can be traced in a number of instructional practices as well as curricula design in recent years. These applications of constructivist ideas can be found in schools via the widespread utilization of cooperative and collaborative learning strategies that can be summarized as follows: pair and share, group works, team games, peer-peer tutoring, jigsaw, and peer correction to mention just a few. In each of these, the main focus is on having the learners working together while sharing ideas and challenging each other's perspectives. Modern classrooms are arranged in a certain way that allows students to move around and interact with others and to finish a number of classrooms activities in a more interactive socialized way. Unmovable desks have been changed into flexible ones in order to allow interaction between the learners and it easy to move them when students intend to work in small groups or pairs.

2.9 The Impact of Constructivism as a learning theory on classroom practices

The impact of constructivism as a learning on can be seen on a number of classroom practices in today's modern classroom.

According to Mvududu and Thiel-Burgess (2012), the main tent of constructivism is that learning is active rather than passive; learners do negotiate their understanding grounded upon what they face in the new learning situation. Hence the learning process cannot be seen as the

transmission of knowledge from someone who knows to another who does not. The teacher is not viewed as the one who knows everything i.e. ‘sage on the stage.’ Rather she/he is seen as the guide who provides students with the opportunities to test the level of their understanding at the present moment and to build on the knowledge the learners have.

Teachers must build on the prior knowledge of the learners and provide learning atmospheres that exploit inconsistencies between students’ current understanding and the new experiences in hand. Therefore, if the learners apply their current understandings in new situations because they want to build new knowledge and then teachers must make the learning process effective by engaging students in the learning process and incorporate problems which are important to the students.

Teachers also must encourage group interaction, where the interplay among participants assists individual learners become explicit about their own understanding by comparing it to that of their peers.

Building on the students’ prior knowledge is the fundamental notion is constructivism. Yang (2002) conducted a qualitative study in which he found that new knowledge of one subject can be built while reinforcing previous knowledge from another subject. A constructivist approach to teaching seeks to guide by supporting the knowledge-construction process. This type of schooling requires scaffolding to a learner realize his/her goals. Effective scaffolding provides this assistance in a way that contributes to learning.

Several techniques can be used to implement student-centered approaches in Sudan’s higher education institutions. For example, Krajcik and Shin in the book of the Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences (2014) pointed out

that project-based learning can foster effective learning outcomes, because it permits learners to learn by doing and the application of their ideas in solving problem, which would allow them to be engaged in real-world activities (p. 275). Furthermore, Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is another approach to learning in which students collaborate in comprehending and solving wicked problems. Such approach to learning would help learners to share their ideas and work with their peers to come with solutions to such complex problems (Lu, Bridges, & Hmelo-Silver, 2014).

Mvududu and Thiel-Burgess et al. (2012) investigated the influence of constructivist ideas on the learning of English language by using a collaborative teaching approach. A teacher of English language must encourage and celebrate learners' native languages; she/he must know students' cultural, linguistic, identity and religious background in order to display genuine concern so that students can feel that they are more welcomed, accepted, and secure. The main idea for the learners is to celebrate their own cultural identity; when students feel that they are more welcomed, they are more likely to be successful.

Additionally, Cummins (2005) points out that there are two main notions as far as the success in learning English language is concerned: students must be allowed to incorporate their native language and academic ability from their preceding experiences into their English academic life, and their cultural identity must be affirmed. As students are affirmed, they are more likely to invest their cultural identity into the new learning context and thus they are more likely to achieve success in the world of academia. By doing so, learners will use the resources available in their native language and culture while acquiring academic resources in English. In collaboration with other learners,

students will not only be limited to English language resources instead they will use the resources available in their native culture and language.

Constructivist ideas helped students to acquire reading and writing skills (Meredith 2003); students who study English language as a second language have experiences and backgrounds that can contextualize the information. Students feel that they can succeed when they feel that information is relevant to them. Students' prior knowledge and cultural identity make the educational process relevant to them and the level of understanding deepens .

Similarly, Olusegun (2015) writes an inclusive definition of constructivism as learning theory and its impact on classroom practices:

Constructivism is an approach to teaching and learning based on the premise that cognition ((learning) is the result of “mental construction.” In other words students learn by fitting new information together with what they already know. Constructivists believe that learning is affected by the context in which an idea is taught as well as by students' beliefs and attitudes.

In constructivist classroom, the concentration tends to change from the teacher to the learner. The classroom is no longer a place where the teacher is the person who knows everything and students are perceived as passive receivers of the knowledge. Instead the learners are urged to participate effectively in their own learning process. The teacher's role is perceived as a facilitator, coach, and mediator who assist students in developing their understanding. Knowledge is seen as something as dynamic and changeable view of the world we live in.

The chart beneath illustrates the main differences between the traditional classroom to the constructivist one; the differences in basic assumptions about knowledge, students, and learning Olusegun, 2015 p.68).

Traditional classroom VS Constructivist classroom

Traditional classroom	Constructivist classroom
Curriculum begins with the part of the whole. Emphasizes basic skills.	Curriculum emphasizes big concepts, beginning with the whole and expanding to include the details.
Strict adherence to curriculum is highly valued.	Pursuit of student questions and interest is valued.
Materials are mainly textbooks and workbooks.	Materials include primary sources of material & manipulative materials.
Learning is grounded upon repetition.	Learning is interactive, building on what the student already knows.
Teachers disseminate information to students; students are recipients of knowledge.	Teachers have a dialogue with students, helping students to construct their own knowledge.
Teacher's role is directive, rooted in authority.	Teacher's role is interactive, rooted in negotiation.
Assessment is through testing correct answers.	Assessment involves student works, observation, and points of view, as well as tests. Process is as important as product.
Knowledge is seen as inert.	Knowledge is seen as dynamic, ever changing with our experiences.
Students work mainly alone.	Students work primarily in groups.

Olusegun (2015-p.68)

The main principles of constructivism can be summarized as follows: constructivist teaching is grounded upon recent research about the human and how learning takes place. Caine and Caine (1991) suggest that brain-compatible teaching is based on 12 principles:

1. The brain is a parallel processor. It processes various types of information, including thoughts, emotions, and cultural knowledge. Effective teaching uses a variety of learning strategies.
2. Learning does not only address intellect, but also the entire physiology.
3. The pursuance of meaning is something we are born with; effective teaching recognizes that meaning is unique and personal. The students' understandings are based on their own unique experiences.
4. Effective teaching links isolated ideas and information with global themes and notions.
5. Learning is affected by feelings, emotions, and attitudes.
6. The brain processes parts and wholes at the same time.
7. Learning is affected by culture, environment, and climate.
8. Learning always includes conscious and unconscious processes. Learners need time to process 'how' plus 'what' they have learned.
9. Memory has types: a spatial memory system, and a set of systems for rote learning. Teaching that primarily focuses on rote learning does not promote spatial, experienced learning and can inhibit understanding.
10. Learning by doing is most effective one; students understand and remember best when facts and skills are embedded in natural, spatial memory.

11. Learning can be improved by challenge and threat can inhibit it; the classroom atmosphere must be challenging, but not threatening students.

12. Teaching must be miscellaneous to allow the learners to express preferences because each brain is unique.

The above mentioned principles, of course, have some implications on teaching and learning. The intrinsic notion of constructivism is that learning is an active process. A teacher may impose information, but understanding cannot be, for it must come from within. Constructivists view teacher as a facilitator whose main job is to assist students to become active participants in their own learning and make linkages between prior knowledge, new knowledge, and the processes involved in learning.

Therefore, teachers must: encourage and accept learner autonomy and initiative; utilize a variety of materials, for example, raw data, primary sources, and encourage learners to use them; inquire about students' understanding of concepts before she/he shares those concepts; encourage students to dialogue with each other and with the teacher; encourage the learners to ask questions and in return the teacher responds to the questions positively and accurately; provide time for the learners to construct relationships and create metaphors; creating and maintain a collaborative problem-solving environment; and lastly assess the learners' understanding via application and performance of open-ended activities (Caine and Caine).

2.10 Teacher's role from constructivist perspective

As far as the teacher's role is concerned, the learning-focused approach to teaching reflected the importance of equal relationship between teacher and

student. In many descriptions, it was mentioned that the teacher's role was to motivate the learners to construct knowledge critically; some teachers ensured that the teacher has not got all the answers, but instead, she/he can learn from the students as well.

In the case of content-focused approach to teaching, a more conventional role of the teacher was emphasized in the sense that an authoritative relationship with the students should prevail; the learner's active role in the learning process was not taken into consideration. In these descriptions, the teacher's expertise and their role as the main source of information was reflected and emphasized.

However, the learning-focused approach to teaching, the students' role is considered to be of paramount to the whole learning process; students are considered to be active participants with a capacity to find answers and able to construct knowledge. The learners' responsibility for their own learning was emphasized. While the content-focused approach to teaching proposed that students were seen as less active recipients and listeners.

As far as the interaction is concerned, the learning-focused approach to teaching considered interaction between the teachers and the students and among students was very important. In some descriptions, it was emphasized that knowledge construction happens through the interaction between the teachers and the students and activating teaching methods. In the content-focused approach to teaching, teachers have not got any idea about how to use interactive teaching methods. Moreover, in some descriptions, teachers expressed a fear of using interactive aspects in their teaching. In learning-focused approach to teaching, creating an atmosphere where the learners can

ask questions and give their views is very essential. Building a favorable environment is considered to be very important too.

The study on variation in teachers' descriptions of teaching: broadening the understanding of teaching in higher education relates to the present study in the sense that it compared to approaches to the teaching and learning process; the learning-focused approach to teaching and content-focused approach to teaching.

The former one, learning-focused approach to teaching is what the present study will investigate as well as the investigation arena will the tertiary level of education.

The present study will only be concerned with the modes of learning which are student-based in higher institutions of learning in Sudan and what classroom practices are there that bear student-based modes of learning. Albeit in the study about variation in teachers' descriptions of teaching: broadening the understanding of teaching in higher education clear variation was found between and within the two approaches to teaching; some similarities were found in both of them.

In the same vein, Khuvasanond (2013) conducted a study on the effects of teacher vs. student-centered instructional strategies on the vocabulary learning of six grade Thai students. The main focus of the study is on various techniques for teaching vocabulary to English as foreign language students in Thailand. The main aim of the study was to find the 'best' possible match of instructional technique with selected cultural aspects in Thai 6th grade classroom. The study, conducted with 10 English as a foreign language teachers and 599 English as a foreign language students in Thailand, took the

form of pretest- post-test and questionnaire for the students and interviews for both students and teachers. For the study to determine the effectiveness of the instructional techniques, students were asked to complete a pretest and posttest on vocabulary. In between the pretest and posttest, teachers were assigned with the task of teaching vocabulary lessons to their students in accordance with a prescribed plan according to the instructional technique assigned to each classroom. A questionnaire was designed for the students to fill in to know their feedback about the instructional techniques and cultural factors that affected the learning environment.

The main findings of the study can be summarized as follows: the study used three different instructional techniques in teaching vocabulary to EFL students in Thailand. Jigsaw, Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition, and Teacher-centered (lecture) were used as instructional techniques. As far as the spelling is concerned, the study found that there were no significant differences between students' progress as a function of instructional technique for spelling (jigsaw) and teacher-centered. In terms of cultural elements, the results showed that Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) and Jigsaw are better matched with Thai 6th grade classrooms than the teacher-centered.

With regard to the interviews for both teachers and students, students were asked to provide feedback on the class where the instruction was applied in the experimental period. Students in the class reported 100% positive feedback on the jigsaw technique. 99.33% of the students considered jigsaw as a learning technique to be 'fun'; they stated that working together made the activity to be very funny. 40% of the students stated that they had the opportunity to work as a team and it helped them to improve the quality of their work. One-third of

the students in the jigsaw classroom (33%) indicated that they liked the jigsaw methods more than the methods they used to (teacher lecture) in their regular classroom. They also mentioned that time spent with their peers was enjoyable while getting the task done. They liked the idea of moving around rather than sitting in their desks and staying motionless and just listening to the teacher.

As for Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition technique applied (CIRC), students reported 100% positive feeling. About one-third (34.67) of the students had fun in the class. Twenty (20%) of the students stated that they liked the CIRC as a teaching technique because it was better than the techniques they used where they listened to the teacher passively without being involved actively in the learning process and just memorizing the information from the lectures. The students experienced favorably working in teams and group work. They stated that working with Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition technique (CIRC) allowed them to interact with their peers as a team. Sixteen percent (16%) of the students felt that they understood and learned well with CIRC technique. They also stated that working with other students in the vocabulary was enjoyable and they learned more effectively when they got to discuss with their peers.

On the other hand, 42.85% of the students reported negative feedback; 19.05% neutral feedback; and 38.09% had positive feedback toward teacher -centered instruction. Some students stated that they felt sleepy in the classroom because the teacher was talking most of the time in the classroom and they only were required to be passive and listen to the lecture. Other students felt that they learned best under a teacher-centered instructional technique.

Furthermore, the students had positive feedback toward classroom instruction where cooperative methods, jigsaw and CIRC techniques were used than the teacher-centred instruction technique. It seemed that the students preferred jigsaw technique more than Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition instruction technique. It was clearly evident that the students had negative feedback toward teacher-centered classroom instruction.

As far as the teachers' interviews are concerned regarding the type of the instructional methods they used, all the teachers who participated in the study were taught to use the teacher-centered approaches as the regular instructional technique in their classes. Some teachers were given to teach two out of the three techniques examined in this study while some teachers were assigned to only one technique. Four out of five teachers who taught the vocabulary using jigsaw indicated that they found it was enjoyable and full of fun. One teacher who used the jigsaw technique stated that she did not impressed with it and students did not do well getting into groups and the teacher needed help in managing the activity.

As for the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition technique (CIRC), five teachers who taught with it as instructional technique three out of five teachers their feedback was largely positive. One of the teacher indicated that the method allowed the students to interact with their peers and working together as a team or in a team spirit. In terms of time management, two teachers found difficult. When teachers asked about students' reaction to the jigsaw as an instructional technique, they stated that the students felt excited and enjoyed using this type of technique. However, during doing the task, students were a little confused about they should complete their task. This was solved when their teachers provided more explanation. Some teachers noticed

that girls appeared to be a little bit quieter than boys and seemed shy. Other teachers mentioned that students had confidence in sharing their opinions and ideas when they learned as a whole class.

Fatima and Ahmad (2013), conducted study named Student-centered Learning in a Passive Learning Environment: Students' Perception and Performance. The study attempted to seek students' preference of teaching methods for the Accounting Theory course and to compare students' performance in classes using student-centered learning (SCL) with traditional lecture method (TLM), in a passive learning environment. The Accounting Theory course is the final financial accounting course that requires considerable reading as it is almost completely theoretical. The main objectives of the study can be summarized as follows: to elicit students' views on their preferred teaching methods of the accounting theory course and to test whether advancement towards the student-centered learning approach enhances the students' performance in comparison with the traditional lecture method.

The Accounting Theory course is enrolled by final year students in the Sample University in Malaysia. There were four AT classes in semester 11 in 2005/2006, with a total enrolment of 149 students. Two of these classes were conducted using TLM, and the other two incorporated the SCL approach to teaching. In order to ensure consistency and standardization in all four classes, the TLM and the SCL classes were conducted in the same semester with identical number of class hours. All four classes were given questionnaire in the last semester after the purpose of the questionnaire being explained to the students. The questionnaire consisted of only seven questions excluding demographic questions. Then, the students were required to rank four of their preferred teaching methods for AT course, with 1 being the most preferred.

This was followed by a question on how to make the AT more interesting. A list of similar teaching methods was provided for the students to rank. The questionnaire also contained open-ended questions for the students to choose from in order express their opinions.

The most preferred teaching method for the AT remains TLM, as it ranked number “1” most frequently by about 61 students (56 of the respondents). These results may be expected of the students who have not been introduced to SCL, but not those who have. Group discussions were the second most preferred method, selected by 26 students (24%). Group discussions, tutorials, and presentations were ranked third preferred method. At last, the fourth most preferred method is group assignments which were selected by 18 students (17%). An interesting finding is that since the AT course is offered for the final year students, they could have worked independently, thus surprising to discover that about half of the students still seem to prefer having tutorials.

When the students were asked about the preferred method of instruction, their answer was group discussion. Their second option was more class discussion on current issues related to accounting in order to make classes more interesting.

All in all, the main objectives of this study can be summarized as follows: to elicit the students’ opinions on enhancing the teaching method of Accounting Theory course and to investigate whether students’ performance in classes that incorporated the Student-centered Learning was better than those in traditional lecture method. The main findings suggested that the majority of the students preferred traditional lecture method for the Accounting Theory course. Nevertheless, suggestions have been made to incorporate Student-centered

Learning approaches in order to make the AT course more interesting. Grounded upon the findings of the study, traditional method of lecture should be maintained, however a few Student-centered Learning approaches such as group discussions, and group assignments should be introduced in order to make the learning process active and interactive. The findings suggested that the Malaysian students generally feel secure and are used to passive learning as inferred from the results that they still prefer lectures and want to depend on tutorials. They also seem to be inclined to be less independent as deduced from the fact that even in suggesting Student-centered Learning approaches, they tend to suggest more group based work.

As based on the results, the students are in favor of traditional lecture methods the performance in TLM classes is marginally better than those in SCL which is contrary to the expectations. However, Suliman in (2015) ,wrote an AM thesis entitled: Barriers Facing English Language Teachers in Applying the Learner-Centered Approach- the case of Saudi Aramco Industrial Centre in Dhahran, KSA. The main objectives of the study can be summarized as follows: exploring and identifying problems that hinder the implementation of the Learner-Centered Approach (LCA) in Saudi Aramco English training programs. The study included 23 English language teachers who were selected randomly to respond to a structured questionnaire. Teachers were grouped grounded upon nationality, mother tongue, and their teaching experience.

The questionnaire covered five areas: teachers' training and LCA awareness, teaching materials and teaching aids, learners' language skills and development, administration and logistics, and culture and ideology.

The main problems that the study revealed can be summarized as follows: the teachers were not involved when the decision was taken to adopt LCA teaching plus the fact that the teachers needed an ample time to prepare and design lessons which reflect LCA classroom practices and strategies. As far as the students are concerned, the findings suggested that the learners lacked knowledge and skills that enable them to become independent learners.

1.11 Teacher's role in the context of Learner-centered classroom:

As long as the learner-centered approach to learning places the responsibility of learning on the learners, teachers have certain responsibilities and roles to perform.

Jones et.al (2007) emphasized that in a student-centered approach to learning the role of the teacher is to assist and encourage learners to develop their skills, but without deserting the more conventional role as a source of information, advice, and knowledge. In learner-centered approach to teaching, the teacher and the learners are viewed as a team working together. The main role of the teacher is to ensure that every student in the class benefits and supports each other. At different times in a lesson, the teacher's role may change from teacher-led to student-led and back again. The teachers' responsibility is to help the learners work independently, monitoring them when working together, and giving them feedback afterward. When the learners work together, they will be responsible for their own learning and behavior while the teacher moves around the class to monitor and assist the learners to accomplish their tasks.

At the beginning the learners might be too dependent on the teachers and expect to be helped, corrected, and encouraged all the time. To begin with, the

teacher may put them into groups with less teacher-dependent students, and not pair them up with equally various learners. It may take time before they become more independent.

As the students become more independent and resourceful, they may direct the questions to each or may seek a reference or a dictionary to find the right answer. Students may help one another by using dictionaries in class and looking up words instead of demanding the right word from the teacher. It may be hard for a teacher to answer every question that comes up. A teacher may feel uncomfortable by not answering student's answer but a teacher does not everything; it is a good idea to say I have no idea of the answer. I will find for you the correct answer and let you know next time or may ask the class if someone knows.

By the same token, Weimer et al (2002) believed that critical and feminist pedagogy challenged long-standing assumptions about power, authority, and teachers. The critique is damning, emphasizing that the exercise of power in the classroom often benefits teachers more than it promotes student learning.

Constructivist view encourages students to interact with the content by exploring it, handling it, and relating it to their own experience. Work in educational psychology most obviously shifts the focus from the teacher to the learner. Teachers must do things that address the learning process. The action always features students and what they are doing. If the main objective of teaching is to promote learning, then the role of the teacher is to accomplish that goal changes considerably. Teachers no longer function as exclusive content expert or authoritarian classroom managers. They should lecture less and be much more around classroom than positioning themselves in front of it.

Olusegun et al (2015) identified the main role a teacher can accomplish in constructivist pedagogy which can be summarized as follows: encourages and accepts student autonomy and initiative, utilizes a wide variety of materials, such as raw materials, primary sources, and interactive materials and encourages students to use them, inquires about the learners' understandings of concepts before sharing her/his own understanding of those notions, encourages the learners to engage in dialogue with him/her and with each other, encourages students to ask open-ended questions to each other and seeks elaboration of students' initial responses, engages the learners in experiences that show contradictions to initial understandings and then encourages discussion, allows time for the students to construct ties and relationships and to create metaphors, and finally assesses the students' understanding via application and performance of open-structured tasks.

Scrivener (2010) emphasized that without understanding characteristics of traditional teaching, it is difficult to pinpoint the basic role of the teacher. Traditional teaching is characterized by 'talk and chalk'-to put another way the teacher consumes the class time using the board and explaining things- as if transmitting information to the class with occasional questions from the learners. In this context, the teacher does the most important work as regards to the whole learning process; the teacher does most of the talking and the most active student responds to his/her questions. The main role of the students is to listen and concentrate and, perhaps, take notes. Often the teacher as if by right directs, give orders, rebuke, and criticize, etc.

This 'transmission' view of the role of the teacher is widespread and in many cultures represents the dominant mode of education and learning. The process by which traditional teaching is viewed, sometimes, as 'jug and mug'- the

knowledge is being poured from one receptacle into an empty one. It is often assumed that the teacher is someone who knows everything i.e. ‘ knower’ and has the responsibility of passing knowledge to the students, and that having something explained or demonstrated will definitely lead to learning or learning will take place.

In this context, three kinds of teacher can be identified which can be summarized as follows: the explainer the one who knows the subject matter very well, but have limited knowledge of teaching methodology. This type of teacher mainly depends on ‘explaining’ or ‘lecturing’ as a way of conveying the information to the students. This teacher’s lesson can be very amusing and entertaining, but the students are not involved or challenged. The second type is the involver who knows his/her subject matter very well as well as being very familiar with teaching methodology. She/he knows very well about appropriate teaching and organizational procedures and techniques to help students learn about the subject matter. This type of teacher, of course, involves the students actively in the learning process and puts a great deal of efforts into finding appropriate ways and activities that will take everyone on board, while still retaining clear control over the classroom and what takes place in it. The third kind of teacher is enabler the one who is confident to share control with the learners, or perhaps to hand it over to them completely. Decisions often made in his/her classroom may be shared or negotiated. She/he sees herself/himself as the one who creates favorable conditions for the students to learn or the conditions that enable the students to learn from themselves. Sometimes when the class becomes more automatous, she/he becomes invisible. This kind of teacher not only knows about the subject matter and about methodology, but also has an awareness of how individuals

and groups are thinking and feeling within his/her class. In this context, a teacher responds by planning and methodology in building effective working ties and a good classroom atmosphere where students learn actively.

According to Amineh& Asl et al (2015), the constructivist view of teaching and learning, teachers' main role is to contribute to the learning process through the concepts of scaffolding, cognitive apprenticeship, tutoring, and cooperative learning and learning communities. In a constructivist classroom, teachers create an atmosphere where the learners will be able to question their own and each other's assumptions. Therefore, a constructivist teacher needs to create situations that challenge the assumptions of traditional teaching and learning.

Alzahrani in (2013) identifies the main roles a teacher can perform in the context of social constructivist classroom that can be summarized as follows: the main role of the teacher in social constructivist classroom is to assist students to build their knowledge and to control the existence of students during the learning process in the classroom. A social constructivist teacher primary role is to value learner's reflection and cognitive conflict and encourage peer interaction. The idea of limited role of the teacher is to allow and encourage students to engage in collaborative learning. The teacher's role in collaborative learning classroom is seen as a facilitator who provides opportunities for collaborative work and problem solving. The teacher in a social constructivist classroom should focus students' learning rather than on his/her performance. So the teacher provides rich environment, authentic tasks, experiences, and activities for learning by incorporating chances for collaborative work, problem solving, and facilitates the whole learning process. Collaborative learning activities can engage students' participation,

and interaction, working together toward finalizing a common academic goal, and increasing the level of satisfaction and feeling of connection and community. A teacher should create an environment where students will be responsible for their own learning. Social constructivist teachers allow the learners to interact with various lessons, shift instructional strategies, and alter the content in order to create an interactive learning environment. In a constructivist classroom, learning is viewed as an active process of creating meaning from different experiences and the role of the teacher is looked at a facilitator of the learning. In social constructivism, learning takes place because students make sense of something on their own, with the teacher as a guide and a facilitator along the way.

According to Bain (2004), the most important idea in teaching, for teachers, is that knowledge is constructed and not received passively by the students. Traditional teaching viewed memory as a great storage bin; students store knowledge in it and then later pick out what they need. Some teachers might think that students must learn the material before they think about it; presumably meaning that they should store it somewhere in the memory for later use. Contradictory, the best teachers do not think of the memory that way. Instead, they construct students' sense of reality out of all the sensory input. Students, of course, think, smell, see, hear, taste, feel, and good teachers connect all these sensations to build patterns of the way the world works.

Best teachers must ask questions because questions play an important role in the process of learning and modifying mental models. Questions, indeed, assist students to construct knowledge. For cognitive scientists, questions are crucial that students cannot learn until the right question has been asked. Best teachers successfully stimulate the learners to ask their own questions in order

to lay the foundation for learning. Students learn best when they are asked an important question that they care about answering. If students do not care, they will not try to construct new mental models of reality. They may remember information for a short period, for example, to pass an exam or a test.

The primary role of the teacher is to create an environment where students can be in charge of their own education because people learn naturally while trying to solve problems that concern them. People develop an intrinsic interest that guides their quest for knowledge. The best college and university teachers create a natural critical environment in which embed the skills and information they wish to teach in assignments that students will find interesting and fascinating- authentic tasks that arouse curiosity, challenging the learners to rethink their assumptions and examine their mental models of reality. So, the main role of the teacher is to create a safe secure environment in which the learners can try, receive feedback, and try again. People remember and understand what they have learned by doing and by using their reasoning abilities. Teaching is all about involving students actively in the learning process and creating an environment in which they can learn.

Crucially, best college and university teachers ask themselves big questions, such as if they want their learners to recall, comprehend, memorize, apply, evaluate analyze, or synthesize. Sometimes they concentrate on the types of conversations students should be prepared to enter, and with whom i.e. other students, an educated public, policy makers...etc. The types of questions they should learn to answer without finding refuge in rote memorization. Thus the best teachers develop rich concepts about what it means to get an education; ideas that are profoundly integrated with their convictions about the capacity

of humans to learn, grow, and change. They should have a deep understanding of both the nature of learning and the circumstances in which it is likely to flourish. Teachers should create the natural critical environment and engage students in some higher-order intellectual activity by allowing them to compare, apply, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize, but never only listen and remember. A simple yet profound assumption guides the natural critical learning experience: people tend to learn most effectively when they are trying to solve problems that they find important and beautiful in a challenging yet supportive environment in which students can work collaboratively with other learners.

Moreover, a good teacher is someone who creates a diverse learning experience that responds to students' different learning styles. Sometimes a teacher could offer visual information, for example, pictures, flow charts, time lines, films, etc. They may also allow students to talk things out and interact with each other or to accomplish a task. To get the discussion going, good teachers usually pose a question and ask students to spend a few minutes collecting their ideas on paper or ask them to work individually before talking. She/he asks students to share their thoughts with someone sitting nearby ("think then pair"). A teacher may ask pairs to pair up ("think/pair/square"). Then they bring the whole class together for a full discussion in a form of group presentations or report ("think/pair/square/share"). The main objective is to get everyone involved early and to help students learn, not just to rate and rank their efforts in a form grades so they can become better learners.

2.12 Definition of Reading

Reading can be defined as the active process of decoding a text in order to make meaning. Albeit reading is a receptive skill, it can be made a communicative process if it is done in a certain way.

According to Nunan(1989), reading can be seen as a process of decoding written symbols when someone works from smaller units and moves to longer ones, such words, clauses, and sentences in order to make meaning based on the bottom-up approach in reading a comprehension text. Bottom-up and top-down strategies are considered to be good strategies used in learning to effectively decode a text in order to make meaning.

One of the essential ideas made by the top-down school is the significance of background knowledge to the reading process. The mental structures that store our knowledge are labeled schemata, and the theory of comprehension someone uses to make meaning is called schema theory. Grounded upon the schema theory, reading can be defined as an interactive process between what a reader knows about a certain topic and what the writer of a text writes. The process of reading therefore is not simply applying decoding rules and knowledge about grammar in the text. A good reading process takes place when a reader is able to relate the information in the text to his/her own background knowledge in an effective way. The schema theory is very important for those English language is a second language for them. A reading comprehension text can be decoded meaningfully when the reader has the relevant cultural background.

When students read a text, they must have a purpose for reading. There are many purposes why students read a text that can be summarized as follows: to

gain some information because we curious about the topic, to understand instructions on how to do a specific task e.g. how to apply for a job or how to change a car tire, to understand business letters or to keep in touch with friends by correspondence, and for enjoyment or excitement to mention just a few. Therefore, successful reading requires certain skills or strategies that can be summarized as follows: the use of word attack skills, such as identifying sound/symbol correspondence, someone uses grammatical knowledge to recover meaning such as interpreting non-finite clauses, using skimming and scanning for key information, and identifying functional intention of individual sentences or text segments, such as knowing when the writer defines something that is not being directly signaled by phrases such as ‘Y may be defined as.....’

In the same vain, Harmer (2007) states that reading is deemed to be crucial activity and it has a positive effect on students when they read for academic purposes or for pleasure. Reading increases students’ knowledge of vocabulary and enhances spelling and writing. The benefit of reading a text can be of twofold: it provides models for writing in which students can concentrate on vocabulary, grammar, or punctuation. Teachers can use the reading texts to show the way sentences are constructed, paragraphs, and the whole text. Lastly, good reading texts provide learners with interesting topics; stimulate discussion, and let students’ imagination run free.

There are certain principles to be followed when teaching reading to the students. Students are encouraged to read as much as possible. Teachers should encourage students to read academic and non-academic text. The more the students read the better. Students are supposed to engage reading texts meaningfully and actively. Students should be trained not only to read

text's construction, but they must explore their feelings about it; it is very important to give students the opportunity to express their feelings about the text a part from the number of paragraphs, the way language is used in the text, and the use of language in general. It is a good idea to give students time in order to make prediction. Before students actually read the text, they should be given an opportunity to predict the text's and tell what it is about. Lastly, good teachers should exploit the reading texts to the full. It does not do well for the students when teachers only focus on sentences, words, and ideas etc. In the class, students should not only read the text and drop it and move to something else. Good teachers integrate the reading text into speaking through using the same text in order to transform it into speaking activity. They can use the text for discussion and further tasks, and utilizing the text for a range of activities by bringing it to life.

Reading can be a communicative activity by using Jigsaw reading which works this way: students are asked to read a different part of the text in different groups. For example, students may read the same topic but with different subtopics or themes as in various aspects of behavior such as anger, or different parts of story or event. When students read different parts of their texts, they come together in groups in which each group has a different part of the text and try to work out the whole story or the situation. Jigsaw reading technique gives students a purpose for reading with shared responsibility. It makes students motivated particularly when they know that they are in competition with others. A part from jigsaw technique, there are reading puzzles that involve students in motivating reading tasks. Students may be given texts that been chopped up so that each paragraph is on a different piece of paper. Students' role is to resemble the text. Students also can be given

matching exercises, such as ones where students are asked to match articles with their headlines or relevant pictures. Students can also be asked to read an authentic article from a newspaper and ought to write a letter to the editor of the newspaper.

Students can respond to the texts differently a part from just answering comprehension questions with sentences, such as open-ended questions, multiple choice questions, and finding particular information in the text. Students can prolong an activity by putting facts and figures into tables or diagrams. A teacher may ask students to provide physical description of a character in the text if no physical description is given. By providing a physical description of a character, students will be able to visualize and use their imaginative abilities. A teacher may exploit the text to make higher level thinking and reasoning abilities by allowing students to think of the writer's attitude from the text. Teachers can also get the students involved in genre analysis- where they explore construction of a number of different examples of, say, magazine advertisements in order to work out how they are typically constructed.

On the other hand, Scrivener (2010) believes that reading is receptive skill. Different people have different reading speed. Trying to understand every word in the text might increase vocabulary, but it is not necessary to understand each and every word in the text which a reader comes across. We can use top-down reading that moves from 'big' to 'small', i.e. top-down – from overview to details. Planning reading lesson may take this shape as a route: pre-text in which the teacher makes an introduction and lead-in, e.g. she/he gets students interested in the topic by initial discussion of key themes, makes a direct connection between the topic of the text and students' own

lives and experiences. Students may also make prediction from the extracted information, such as illustration, key words, and headings. The next step is the focus on fast reading for gist (skimming) where students may also put events or illustrations in the correct order. After that students move to tasks that concentrate on fast reading for specific details (scanning) in which students find or look for single items of information in the text. Students also may focus on meaning where they can answer questions about meaning, make use of the information to draw a sketch, and discuss issues. Students also can summarize arguments and compare viewpoints. In the post-text stage, students can follow-on task, e.g. role-play, debate, writing task, and personalization (e.g. 'have you ever had an experience like this one?') As a closing phase, teachers might draw the lesson to a conclusion, tie up loose ends, and review what has been studied and what has been learned.

This study believes that a good way to activate students' prior knowledge is the instructional strategy which is known as K-W-L (Know, Want to know, and Learned), it helps students to elicit their own ideas about the text they will read and it makes them focused on reading purposefully. Reading can be communicative if for instance used KWL in order to make the students fully engaged in reading a comprehension text.

2.13 Vocabulary

Vocabulary is considered to be very important component in English language. It plays an important role in a acquiring a language. Obviously, a limited knowledge of vocabulary impedes successful communication. It must be taught with intentionality and dimensionality i.e. students should exposed to vocabulary items every once and then and in different ways.

According Scrivener et al (2010, p.227)

“Vocabulary typically refers mainly to single words (e.g. dog, green, wash) and sometimes to very tightly linked two-or three-word combinations (e.g. stock market, compact disc, sky blue, go off). The concept of lexis is bigger. It refers to our ‘internal database’ of words and complete ‘ready-made’ fixed/semi-fixed/typical combinations of words that we can recall and use quite quickly without having to construct new phrases and sentences word by word from scratch using our knowledge of grammar.”

According to On Target Strategies to Build Student Vocabularies booklet (2006), vocabulary is essential in reading comprehension in a sense that it helps students in speaking and writing skills. Students get a sense of owning vocabulary when they use it in written and spoken contexts. There are certain strategies that allow students to bring vocabulary to life, such as developing word awareness, developing rich, explicit instruction, assisting students to explore vocabulary by using contextual clues, word parts, and owning a dictionary.

Development of students’ vocabulary can be achieved in a variety of ways, such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Student’s background knowledge and previous experiences are deemed to be important in vocabulary development. It is also important for the students to find connections between words they already know and that ones they do not know.

There are different ways to teach new vocabulary to students which can be summarized as follows:

- Effective vocabulary instruction does not only depend on giving definitions alone; words should be written in a conversational form rather than dictionary format.
- Students are asked to present their knowledge of vocabulary in linguistic and non-linguistic forms. They can draw a picture, symbol, or dramatize the word.
- Effective vocabulary instruction contains gradual shaping of words through comparing and contrasting, classifying, and creating metaphors/ analogies.
- Effective procedure of teaching vocabulary involves word parts (root words, prefixes, suffixes).
- Various types of words require different types of instruction.
- Students should discuss the words are learning through cooperative learning activities.
- Challenging and engaging vocabulary games are important in learning.

When teachers think of teaching new vocabulary, they should use the **STAR** model which works in this way: **SELECT** in which teachers select suitable content words and draw a story or text map. **TEACH** where teachers need to think of the ways they use before, during and post teaching of vocabulary learning. **ACTIVATE** in which teachers think of ways to allow students to relate new words with other words they already know. Teachers may give the students the opportunity to act out words or demonstrate meaning. Teachers should use various activities where students repeatedly hear, read, write, use the target vocabulary. **REVISIT** in which teachers use different activities to

revisit important words. These activities may include, but are not limited to these ones, unit review, games, and vocabulary journals.

2.14 Previous Studies

Garrett (2008) conducted a study entitled: Student –Centered and Teacher-Centered Classroom Management: A case Study of Three Elementary Teachers. The primary objective of the case study was to document the classroom management beliefs and practices of three teachers reputed to implement student-centered instruction and to examine the connection between instructional and managerial approaches. In other words, the study tries to answer the question do teachers who use student-centered instruction also implement student-centered management?

This case study relates to the present research in terms of the implementation of learner-centered approach in real classroom situation. Additionally, the present research, in the context of learner-centeredness, will try to investigate the various roles teachers perform and implement in order to help students to be in the hub of the learning process and to participate effectively in the whole learning process.

The main result of the case study indicated that despite the use of the eclectic approach by the three teachers; but two teachers tended to be more student-centered and one teacher was more teacher-centered as far as classroom management is concerned.

For years, educators’ understanding of classroom management was grounded upon behavioral theories of teaching and learning; the main aim of the classroom management is the use of techniques that bring students’ behavior

under stimulus control. Today, classroom management techniques are based on the constructivist principles of teaching and learning. Constructivist principle concentrates on knowledge creation which is constructed by the students themselves through the teacher's facilitation rather than transmitted directly by the teacher.

Classroom management is a multi-faceted notion that includes the organizational of the physical environment, the establishment of rules and routines, the development of effective linkages and responding to misbehavior. The educator with a highly conventional ways of teaching is likely to be highly controlling, employing punitive measures, highly impersonal connections with the learners, and focuses mainly on maintenance of order. On the contrary, the teacher with a constructivist and humanistic orientation is more likely to maintain a classroom atmosphere in which active interaction and communication are valued, close personal relationships with the learners, reciprocal respect, flexibility of regulations and rules, positive attitudes, plus self-discipline and independence are fostered.

The study was conducted in a suburban elementary school (K-6) serving 615 students with different backgrounds. As for the teachers, the study used principal recommendation and self-report to identify teacher participants. Three interviews were conducted with each teacher as well as classroom observation.

The main results of the study can be summarized as follows: one teacher was much closer to the humanistic or student-centered of classroom management; some of the strategies that can be considered student-centered were involving the students in the creation of the classroom rules. The teacher discussed with

the learners the importance of classroom rules and the class generated the rules together. Also the students had the freedom to move around the classroom in order to finalize a number of classroom tasks with their peers. Also the desks were arranged in a way that fostered relationships among students. Students were also given the change for self-regulation and sense of responsibility by allowing them to solve their own conflicts. In order to empower students with the capacity of solving their own problems, they were being given lessons on resolution. The explained to them that when you are in a mall, you go up the escalator. Conflicts can go up a conflict escalator; so, there are certain ways to keep the conflict from going up the escalator.

The teacher, who used the student-centered approach, incorporated several learner-centered strategies that enhanced students' motivation. For instance, the teacher provided students with chances to exercise autonomy and make choices about the activities they wanted to do within a certain center. Some of the centers involved "read the room," where the learners used long pointers to locate words and practiced reading them, the ABC center, where learners had the time to practice building words using magnetic letters and the listening center , where students listened to a story on tape.

On the other hand, the teacher with teacher-centered approach to learning, although slightly towards student-centered the data from classroom practices and interviews revealed that the class tended to be teacher –centered, for example, the teacher used-shaped" arrangements for students' desks because it promotes a focus on the teacher. He also avoids conflict resolution or peer mediation programs because for him it took much time away from academic learning.

All in all, the study concluded that the three teachers in this study ensured the student-centered instruction, depending mainly on hands-on activities, small group work, projects, and discussion to get every student on board and encouraging active participation of all the students. Two of the teachers were able to create student-centered management through involving the learners in the creation of classroom rules, sharing responsibility in carrying out routine classroom tasks, and providing room for opportunity for choice and autonomy.

In a similar way, Postareff and Ylanne in (2007), conducted a study entitled: Variation in teachers' descriptions of teaching: Broadening the understanding of teaching in higher education. In the study, 71 university teachers from various disciplines were interviewed in order capture the variation in descriptions of teaching. The learning-focused and the content-focused approaches were identified as two broad categories. The study defined teaching approaches as strategies teachers adopt for their teaching, while conceptions of teaching are defined as beliefs teachers have about teaching and which underlie the purpose and the strategies in teaching. Based on the interviews, 17 lecturers in 3 university departments, Kember and Kwan (2000) suggested two broad approaches to teaching: content-centered and learning-centered teaching. The former mainly concentrates on the material or content and the latter focuses on the student. The study defined approaches using one motivation dimension and five strategy dimensions. The motivation dimension separates the approaches based on whether teacher's motivation is an extrinsic or intrinsic part of the teaching role. While the five strategy dimensions concentrate on whether instruction is about giving notes or encouraging students to construct knowledge, the teacher's focus is on the whole class or

individual students. Finally, the source of experience/ knowledge is one's own experience or investing on student's experience.

The study on approaches to teaching and conceptions of teaching applied either quantitative method with large samples or qualitative method (interviews) with a limited number of participants from only a few disciplines. There were 69 teachers from the University of Helsinki and two teachers from the Helsinki School of Economics and Business Administration; the total number of participants being 71. 21 of the participants were male and 50 were female. The teachers were interviewed during the years 2003 and 2004 and took part in the interviews on voluntary basis; the interviews were semi-structured.

The main finding of study can be summarized as follows: only two broad categories emerged from the data when analyzing the variation in the descriptions of teaching. The learning-focused approach, in which the aim of teaching was to enhance students' learning and an emphasis, was placed on continuously improving the teacher's own teaching and the content-focused approach where the purpose of teaching was to transmit knowledge to the learners and repeating conventional and familiar ways of teaching.

The two categories of description were analyzed in detail in order to find the different aspects of teaching. Descriptions which reflected learning-focused approach were analyzed. Ten aspects of teaching were found. It was observed that 10 aspects emerged from interviews when analyzing content-focused approach. As a result, 10 aspects of teaching were identified from both the learning-focused and content-focused approached. The 10 aspects were further grouped under four broader aspects to clarify the findings. These broad

aspects were: teaching process involving planning of teaching, teaching practices, and assessment practices, learning environment including teacher's role; students' role; interaction; and atmosphere; Conception of learning and pedagogical development including development of one's own teaching and pedagogical awareness.

The descriptions of teaching showed that the planning of teaching was an essential aspect of teaching and that there was variation in the way's teachers planned their teaching.

Crucially, in the learning-focused descriptions revealed that taking prior knowledge, needs, and expectations of the learners as the starting point when planning courses; and even making the plan together with the students. Whereas the descriptions regarding the planning of teaching in content-focused approach to teaching showed that some teachers wanted to make an exact plan with no room for extensive modifications during the course. Also, for some teachers, students' opinions were not being considered. In teaching practices in classroom, the learning-focused approach to teaching emphasized the importance of knowledge construction together with the students. In some descriptions, variation of the teaching methods in accordance with various situations was mentioned.

On the contrary, teaching practices in the content-focused approach to teaching revealed that transmission of detailed information to the students is very crucial from the teachers' point of view. The conventional forms of lecturing were favored by the teachers.

The main gaps in the literature being reviewed

Obviously, the student-centered and learner-centered approach to teaching has been used interchangeably to mean that the learners are responsible for their

own learning without articulating the main differences and boundaries between them. For sake of clarity and precision, in this study, the learner-based approach to teaching will only be used to mean specifically a method of instruction in which the learner is in the center of the whole learning process. Indeed, students are involved in the learning process through the use of techniques that put them in the heart of the learning process and not just as passive receivers of knowledge. The learners are also expected to take the responsibility of their own learning by directly being involved in the learning process and by developing social activities like collaboration, meaningful communication, and cooperation.

Furthermore, the way the learners can take the responsibility of their own learning has not been addressed clearly in the literature being reviewed. For a very long time, teachers considered themselves to be the only sage on the stage and the learners have not been empowered to take the responsibility of their own learning. So the conventional teaching methods of English language dominated the educational scene a very long time and that makes it difficult for a smooth transition into learner-centeredness teaching.

There are socio-cultural and philosophical differences between various educational setting across countries and between countries which needed to be taken into consideration. For instance, in Western societies tremendous resources have been invested in order to promote learner-approach to teaching that goes in conformity with their philosophy which values the role of individual and group in knowledge creation and the democratic values of negotiation and sharing responsibility.

The suitability and applicability of student-centered have not been discussed and addressed immensely in different contexts and in various cultural contexts. Of course, the new pedagogy ensures the importance of involving students actively in the whole learning process without clarifying and determining the ways which make the learners active participants rather than passive recipients. The question of the learning environment in which students are responsible for their own learning has not been clarified and identified concisely; what kind of activities and tasks teachers use in order to enable the learners to choose from a variety of choices according to their own needs. Teachers who have been working with the conventional teaching model they need to conceptualize the learning and teaching process in a holistic way in order to cope with the new pedagogy of student-centered approach to teaching.

To keep abreast with the rapidly changing world which is characterized by a globalized working environment and technology, teachers need to rethink the way they have been doing things and they need to enable students, as the main stakeholders, to be critical thinkers and be responsible for their own learning. The real question, for both teachers and students, is what techniques and methods needed to change the notion of knowledge transmission into knowledge construction and teaching as a means to active learning situation.

The Context of the Study

This study was conducted at Ahfad University for Women- School of Languages. Ahfad University for Women is considered to be the only one of its kind in Sudan and the region. It is unique in terms of its philosophy that seeks women's empowerment and emancipation of women. The choice of

School of Languages was done purposefully because English language is the medium of instruction at the university. Furthermore, School of Languages adopts two massive programs of teaching English language; the first one aims at bridging the gaps between students' English language when they were at the secondary school and the level of university English language. The program is called University Preparatory Program (UPP) and the second program is the Freshman year.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The main objective of this chapter is to describe the different methods that were used in the study and how these research tools were utilized to collect the required data in order to reach some results and findings. Fundamentally, it provides full description of the study methodology. It concentrates on the research tools, subjects, validity and reliability, the sample and the procedures for data collection.

According to the University Preparatory Program, Skills in English, the course learning outcomes can be summarized as follows:

- Identify a wide range of texts from academic textbooks and internet articles.
- Read critically.
- Produce coherent and well-structured assignments.
- Locate main ideas in texts.
- Interact with the four skills of the language successfully.
- Present information and descriptions on a wide range of topics.

3.2 Research Methods and Methodology

The methodology used in this research is a combination of both that has been analyzed by SPSS and another data that has qualitative and quantitative simply because it deals with data that has been analyzed based on different themes.

Mixed research methods were used to collect data for this study. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used.

3.3 Population and size

As for the population and size for the classroom observation checklist for teaching vocabulary, ten teachers were being observed in the University Preparatory Program simply because it is the major program at Ahfad University for Women-School of Languages. As far as the classroom observation checklist for teaching reading comprehension is concerned, eight teachers were being observed in a real classroom-situation. Sixty students took part in the questionnaire; thirty of them from the University Preparatory Program and thirty from the Freshman year at Ahfad University for Women. Additionally, eighteen teachers were being interviewed or took part in the interview process.

3.4 Tools of data collection

These tools were used to collect data for this study.

3.4.1 Classroom observation checklist-Reading comprehension

A classroom observation checklist was designed to collect data on how teachers deliver lessons on teaching reading skill in accordance to student-based teaching strategies. The classroom observation checklist consisted of three Likert scales which can be summarized as follows: Time segment in minutes 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50, the number of occurrences in each time 1 2 3 4 5, and lastly percentage of occurrence. It consisted of 17 statements that show the way reading comprehension ought to be delivered according Student-centered approach to teaching. The classroom observation checklist

for observing teachers who teach reading comprehension in the Freshman year; Eight teachers were observed in the Freshman year.

3.4.2 Classroom observation checklist-Vocabulary

A classroom observation checklist was designed to collect data on how teachers deliver lessons on teaching vocabulary as a sub-skill in accordance to student-based teaching strategies. The classroom observation checklist consisted of three Likert scales which can be summarized as follows: Time segment in minutes 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50, the number of occurrences in each time 1 2 3 4 5, and lastly percentage of occurrence. It consisted of 22 statements that show the way vocabulary ought to be delivered according Student-centered approach to teaching.

Observing teachers in real-classroom situations provides essential information about what actually takes place i.e. it gives true. There were two classroom observation checklists. The first one is the classroom observation checklist for reading comprehension skill. There was also information about how English language is taught.

Additionally, before observing teachers in their classes ethical questions were being addressed by the researcher. The researcher abided by the ethical considerations. If there is no need to record information, such as names and telephone numbers it will be taken precisely. Also, there will be no influence to affect the smooth flow of a lesson. Permission for attending classes will be gained from all the relevant parties and being open enough that the participants will know about the time of arrival and leave and openly state the purpose.

3.4.3 The Student's questionnaire

Student's questionnaire was utilized in order to collect data about students' learning style. 60 students were chosen to participate in it 30 from the University Preparatory Program (UPP) and 30 from the Freshman year. Before the questionnaire was distributed to them, it was approved and judged by two professional referees staff members and their remarks and recommendations were beneficial and being taken into consideration. The questionnaire scale was as follows: 1=agree, 2=strongly agree, 3= not sure, 4= disagree, 5= strongly disagree. The data obtained from the student's questionnaire, was statistically analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). 19 statements were included in the questionnaire. The primary objective of the questionnaire was to explore the different ways of preferable learning styles to the students. The questionnaire was piloted and distributed to ten students in order to see how it would go smoothly before being distributed to the target groups. Two areas were identified as the main focus of the student's learning style. Activities which were supposed to be student-based strategies to teaching like the use of games and student-based activities that address different styles of the students and how teachers create stress-free environment for the students to learn.

3.4.4 Teacher's interview

The primary aim of the teachers' questionnaire is to know the opinions of the teachers on the way reading comprehension and vocabulary skills are taught in accordance with student-based approach to teaching English language.

3.5 Piloting of the tools

As for the classroom observation checklists for reading comprehension and vocabulary, they approved by two senior staff members before the researcher went to classes to observe actual teaching in classes. Before observing teachers in classes, the researcher attended 6 lessons to pilot the classroom observation checklists for reading comprehension and vocabulary; three classes in each.

As far as the teachers' interview is concerned, the researcher conducted an interview with six teachers both in reading comprehension and vocabulary to test how the process of interviewing would work in terms of recording teacher's responses and the whole interview process. In the students' questionnaire, it was piloted with a group of ten students before distributing it to the target group.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the tools

To establish the 'trustworthiness' of this study, the researcher used the triangulation of data resources i.e. the tools were used to collect data.

3.6.1 Classroom observation checklist-Reading comprehension

Prolonged engagement and persistent observation of teachers in real classroom-situation were used in order to gain accurate information for this study with the checklist in hand. The classroom observation checklist was judged by two senior members of staff before the teacher went to the class to collect data.

3.6.2 Classroom observation checklist-Vocabulary

Prolonged engagement and persistent observation of teachers in real classroom-situation were used in order to gain accurate information for this study with the checklist in hand. The classroom observation checklist was judged by two senior members of staff before the teacher went to the class to collect data.

3.6.3 Students' questionnaire

The student's questionnaire, were believed to have validity because it aimed at assessing a different area in student-based approach to teaching reading comprehension and vocabulary learning. The student's questionnaire validated and judged by two faculty members who suggested some valuable remarks and the researcher responded to that. They were from Ahfad School of Languages.

3.6.4 Teachers' interview

The teachers were chosen randomly with different teaching experience and knowledge. Before inviting teachers to take part in the interviewing process, certain measures were taken so as to make the process of interviewing systematic, scientific and achieve its purpose.

The researcher got an External audit as strategy of validation for the teacher's interviews. An external audit or consultant examines both the process and product of the account, evaluating their accuracy. The external audit has no relationship with the research. The consultant examines whether or not the findings, interpretations, and the conclusions are supported by the data. Before the interviewing processing, an interview protocol was designed and given to the interviewees. The interviewees read the interview consent form before the beginning of the interview process.

An interview consent form required certain components to be included. For example, the right of those who take part in the interview to withdraw from the interview at any time, confidentiality of the respondents should be protected, the known risks connected with the research, the expected benefits participants gather from participating in the study, and the researcher and participant signature.

3.7 Administering the interview process

For both reading comprehension and vocabulary, the interviews took place at my office at Ahfad School of Languages. Before the takes place, an interview was acquainted with the nature of the interview and its purpose. She/he was given the interview consent form to read it. The interview consent form contains specific elements, such as the right of the interviewee to withdraw from the interview at any time, the main objective of the research and its nature, and the protection of the confidentiality of the respondents. As soon as the interviewee finishes reading the consent form, the interview begins. As the interviewee speaks, the researcher writes notes besides recording in the telephone. In the end, interviewees are thanked for their participation.

3.8 Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, the researcher has described the instruments and the Procedures used in conducting the research. The target population and the selected sample were fully described. The researcher used a triangulation method which consists of classroom observation checklist, student' questionnaire, and teacher's interview. Also, the steps taken for validity, reliability, and strategies for reliability were fully described. The following chapter will be on data analysis, results and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS,
RESULTS &
DISCUSSION

Chapter Four

Data Analysis, Discussion and Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an elaborate examination of students' opinion regarding teaching and learning reading and the awareness of teachers towards the importance of teaching reading in a more communicative way constitutes the main body of this chapter. It also analyzes the information obtained through the classroom observation checklist for reading comprehension and vocabulary and teacher's interview.

4.2 Data Analysis

This section presents the analysis of students' questionnaire.

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.499	0.575	19

4.2.1 Student's questionnaire:

The researcher adopted Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyze the student's questionnaire. The researcher used the Likert scales that contained five items: 1 (agree), 2 (strongly agree), 3(not sure), 4 (disagree), 5 (strongly disagree). From the analysis menu, descriptive statistics was chosen

and frequencies analysis was utilized. Thus, the meant results were showed in different tables in the analysis section of the student’s questionnaire. The value number of the frequency is (0.05) in order to judge the correlation reliability statistics Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items is (0.499).

I feel excited when the teacher tells a joke or story at the beginning of the lesson.

Table (4.1) feeling excited

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	28	46.7
Strongly agree	29	48.3
Not sure	3	5.0
Total	60	100.0

According to the results shown in the above table, 95% from the entire population of the students who participated in this study believe that they feel excited when the teacher tells a joke or story at the beginning of the lesson. Whereas, 5% of them are not sure whether telling a joke or story at the beginning of the lesson makes them more excited to learn or not. Moreover, none of the students disagrees with the fact that telling a joke or story before beginning the new lesson arouses the learners’ interest and sometimes works as a lead-in to the new lesson. Consequently, in a communicative classroom, telling a joke or story reduces anxiety among learners and makes them feel relaxed and excited.

I like to learn by moving

Table (4.2) Learning by moving

Responses	Frequency	Percent
1.00	16	26.7
2.00	23	38.3
3.00	9	15.0
4.00	11	18.3
5.00	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

As shown in the table above, 65% from the entire population of students who took part in this study agree that learning by moving around the class is likeable, whereas, 20% of them confirm that moving around the class as a way of learning is not desirable for them. Moreover, 15% of the students are not sure about such matter. That is to say, students come to classes with different ways of learning, but most of them like the idea of moving around as a way of learning; simply because they are kinesthetic type of learners. Precisely, learners prefer moving around the class performing various types of tasks, such as working in pairs to complete a dialogue between two speakers in speaking lessons.

I learn new vocabulary when the teacher uses games.

Table (4.3) Using of games

	Frequency	Percent
1.00	23	38.3
2.00	30	50.0
3.00	4	6.7
4.00	3	5.0
Total	60	100.0

Based on the results presented in the above table, 88.3% of the students agree that they learn new vocabulary better when the teacher uses games in explaining them, while, 5% of them disagree with the notion of learning new vocabulary via games. Furthermore, 6.7% of the students are not certain whether using games can help learners learn new vocabulary fast or not. Clearly, learning new vocabulary through games makes the whole learning process enjoyable, energetic, and full of life for young learners in particular.

I like to work in pairs and groups.

Table (4.4) Pairs and groups

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	15	25.0
	2.00	36	60.0
	3.00	3	5.0
	4.00	3	5.0
	5.00	3	5.0
	Total	60	100.0

According to the results displayed in the above table, it is clear that the great majority of the students which represents 85% like working in pairs and groups more than talking to the teacher. On the other hand, 10% of them are in disagreement with the idea of working in pairs and groups. In addition to that, 5% of the students have not decided yet whether they like group and pair work or not. This may lead us to the fact that when students work in pairs or groups, they feel relaxed and share information and experiences.

I get bored when the teacher talks a lot.

Table (4.5) Getting bored

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	13	21.7
	2.00	27	45.0
	3.00	13	21.7
	4.00	5	8.3
	5.00	2	3.3
	Total	60	100.0

The above table shows that the biggest number of the students which represents 66.7% get bored when the teacher talks a lot as they prefer learner-centered approach, while, the small minority of the students which represents 11.6% do not get bored when the teacher talks a lot because they like the idea of teacher-centered approach. Moreover, 21% of the students are not sure whether they get bored when the teacher talks a lot in the class or not. It can be inferred that students prefer either to be involved in the lesson, allowed to work with their partners or work in groups than staying dormant by listening to the teacher's talk.

I learn a lot when I feel learning is my own responsibility.

Table (4.6) learning is my responsibility

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	13	21.7
	2.00	27	45.0
	3.00	13	21.7
	4.00	5	8.3
	5.00	2	3.3
	Total	60	100.0

As shown in the above table and diagram, 66.7% from the entire population of the students who participated in this study agree that they learn a lot when they feel learning is their own responsibility, while, 11.6% of them disagree with the above statement. Moreover, 21.7% of the students are not sure whether knowing that learning is one's own responsibility makes them feel better and learn a lot or not. Furthermore, students' responsibility occurs when they take an active role in their learning by recognizing that they are accountable for their academic success.

I feel better when the teacher encourages and praises me.

Table (4.7) Encourage &praise

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	20	33.3
	2.00	34	56.7
	3.00	2	3.3
	4.00	4	6.7
	Total	60	100.0

According to the statistics shown in the above table and diagram, 90% of the students assure that they feel better when the teacher encourages and praises them. On the other hand, a small minority of students which represents 3.3% disagree that words of encouragement and praises given by teachers make students feel better. Furthermore, 6.7% of the students are not certain about such matter. So, this is a statistically significant result and leads us to the conclusion that what makes learners feel better and participate in classroom activities throughout the lesson are the plain words of encouragement and praises given by teachers.

I enjoy learning when the teacher uses different activities.

Table (4.8) Different activities

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	14	23.3
	2.00	43	71.7
	3.00	2	3.3
	4.00	1	1.7
	Total	60	100.0

95% from the entire population of students who took part in this study agree that they enjoy learning when the teacher uses different activities, while, 1.7% of them disagree. In addition, 3.3% of the students have not decided yet whether using different activities in one lesson makes the learning process more enjoyable or not. This hesitation may lead to their poor contribution in classroom activities that are assigned regularly by their teachers.

In the classroom, my teacher makes me feel valued.

Table (4.9) feeling valued

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	18	30.0
	2.00	23	38.3
	3.00	17	28.3
	5.00	1	1.7
	9.00	1	1.7
	Total	60	100.0

The results displayed in the above table demonstrate that 68.3% from the entire population of students agree that their teachers make them feel valued by engaging them in classroom activities, whereas, 1.7% of them disagree with the above statement. Moreover, 28.3% of the students are not sure if their teachers make them feel valued or not. So, this is a statistically significant result and

leads us to the point that if not all, most of the students do like the idea of being valued by their teachers

I like sharing ideas with my classmates.

Table (4.10) Sharing ideas

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	19	31.7
	2.00	32	53.3
	3.00	6	10.0
	4.00	2	3.3
	5.00	1	1.7
	Total	60	100.0

According to the results presented in the above table, the great majority of the students which represents 85% like sharing ideas with their classmates, while, 5% of them disagree with the concept of sharing ideas with their peers. In addition, 10% of the students have not decided yet because they do not know the importance of sharing ideas with their classmates. Accordingly, sharing ideas and information in the classroom help students work cooperatively and expose them to each other’s expertise and insights.

I get bored when the teacher spends a lot of time explaining things

Table (4.11) Explaining things

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	14	23.3
	2.00	28	46.7
	3.00	11	18.3
	4.00	5	8.3
	5.00	2	3.3
	Total	60	100.0

As teacher time talking should be less than student time talking in a real classroom environment, it is obvious that 70% from the entire population of the

students who participated in this study agree that they get bored when the teacher spends a lot of time explaining things, while, 11.6% of them like the idea of talking too much by teachers. Furthermore, 18.3% of the students are not sure whether spending too much time on explaining things by their teachers makes them get bored or not. This might be partially attributed to their poor judgment towards their own things.

I feel better when teachers respect my ideas and suggestions.

Table (4.12) Ideas & suggestions

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	17	28.3
	2.00	35	58.3
	3.00	7	11.7
	4.00	1	1.7
	Total	60	100.0

According to the results shown in the above table and diagram, 86.6% of the students confirm that they feel better when teachers respect their ideas and suggestions in the classroom, whereas, a small minority of them which represents 1.7% disagree with this notion. This disagreement might be attributed to their poor contribution in classroom activities. Moreover, 11.7% of the students are not sure whether respecting their ideas and suggestions by teachers make them feel better and participate continuously or not.

My teacher checks to make sure whether I understand what s/he is teaching or not.

Table (4.13) Checking understanding

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	20	33.3
	2.00	27	45.0
	3.00	9	15.0
	4.00	3	5.0
	5.00	1	1.7
	Total	60	100.0

As shown in the above table and the diagram, 78.3% of the students confirm that their teachers check to make sure whether they understand what she/he is teaching or not, While, 6.7% of them disagree with this statement. The large number of teachers who check for understanding could be due to a systematic form-focused instruction, practice or thorough training given by their institutions throughout their teaching period. In addition to that, 15% of the students are not certain whether their teacher's checkout for understanding or not.

I enjoy reading when the teacher teaches us the reading strategies directly.

Table (4.14) Reading strategies

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	19	31.7
	2.00	30	50.0
	3.00	5	8.3
	4.00	4	6.7
	5.00	2	3.3
	Total	60	100.0

81.7% from the entire population of students who participated in this study assure that they enjoy reading when the teacher teaches them the reading strategies before they begin reading. On the other hand, 10% of the students disagree with the fact that teaching reading strategies before beginning reading makes reading more enjoyable. This poor judgment may happen as a result of being taught by inexperienced teachers who do not give reading strategies the same weight as others when teaching and practicing reading. Moreover, 8.3% of the students are not certain whether learning reading strategies facilitates the process of reading or not.

I enjoy learning new words when the teacher uses them in different sentences.

Table (4.15) Different sentences

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	19	31.7
	2.00	34	56.7
	3.00	5	8.3
	22.00	1	1.7
	Total	59	98.3
Missing	System	1	1.7
Total		60	100.0

As shown in the above table, all of the students who took part in this study except 7 agree that they enjoy learning new words when the teacher uses them in different sentences, whereas, 1.7% of them disagree with the above statement. Furthermore, 8.3% of the students have not decided yet whether learning new words through context makes learning more enjoyable or not.

I don't feel better when I only listen to the teacher.

Table (4.16) Listening to the teacher

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	12	20.0
	2.00	27	45.0
	3.00	11	18.3
	4.00	7	11.7
	5.00	2	3.3
	Total	59	98.3
Missing	System	1	1.7
Total		60	100.0

The results illustrated in the table above indicate that 65% of the students agree that they do not feel better when they only listen to their teacher in the class, while, 15% of them disagree with the above-mentioned statement as they are passive learners. In addition, 18.3% of the students who participated in this study are not sure whether listening to the teacher who dominates everything in the classroom by not giving a single chance for learners to say what they have in their minds makes them feel better or not.

I learn a lot when the teacher involves me in the learning process.

Table (4.17) Involvement

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	20	33.3
	2.00	27	45.0
	3.00	10	16.7
	4.00	2	3.3
	Total	59	98.3
Missing	System	1	1.7
Total		60	100.0

According to the statistics shown in the above table, 78.3% of the students strongly agree that they learn a lot when the teacher involves them in the learning process as active learners, whereas, 3.3% of them disagree with the fact that involving learners in the stages of the lesson helps them learn a lot. Moreover, 16.7% of the students are not sure whether involving them in the learning process makes them learn a lot or not. That is to say, engaging students in the learning process increases their attention and focus, motivates them to practice higher-level of critical thinking skills and promotes meaningful learning experiences.

I get bored when I have not said anything for a long period of time.

Table (4.18) Saying nothing

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	15	25.0
	2.00	37	61.7
	3.00	4	6.7
	4.00	2	3.3
	5.00	1	1.7
	Total	59	98.3
Missing	System	1	1.7
Total		60	100.0

The above table indicates that (86.7%) from the entire population of students who participated in this study agree that they get bored if they do not say anything for a long period of time, while, 5% of them disagree with the fact mentioned above. The large number of those who agree with the necessity of involving learners in classroom activities might be attributed to their teachers' familiarity with the importance of students' participations. Moreover, 6.7% of the students are still hesitant and they have not decided yet.

I enjoy learning when I discover things myself.

Table (4.19) Discovering things

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	12	20.0
	2.00	43	71.7
	3.00	3	5.0
	4.00	1	1.7
	Total	59	98.3
Missing	System	1	1.7
Total		60	100.0

Based on the results displayed in the above table, a very large number of students which represents (91.7%) confirm that they enjoy learning more when they discover things by themselves, whereas, 1.7% of them disagree with that. Furthermore, 6.6% of the students are not sure whether discovering things by themselves in the classroom makes learning more enjoyable or not. Consequently, teachers are advised to encourage their own students to discover things by themselves and build on what they already now by relating new ideas with existing ones.

Results and discussion

Based on the information shown in the above tables, one may safely conclude that the great majority of the students think that they feel excited when the teacher tells a joke or story at the beginning of the lesson. Telling a joke or story at the start of the lesson makes learners feel excited and arouses their interest. According to Scrivener (2010), it is good to prepare the class for the lesson and a good lead-in should include one of the following things: showing/drawing a picture which is related to the topic, writing up a sentence then elicit reactions, telling an anecdote that has something to do with the

lesson, and playing the ‘devil advocate’, such as a teacher might say: ‘I think that smoking is good for our health.’

According to the information in the tables, a large number of the students stated that they want to move around when doing an activity. Different students have different learning styles, such as visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic. Those who learn by moving around are considered to be kinesthetic learners whose learning style depends largely on moving around. In student-based classroom, interaction takes place when students are seated in a way that makes them interact with each other. In Sudanese classrooms, the teacher always stands in front of the class and therefore the traditional pattern of interaction is usually being the teacher and some of high-performers who usually sit in front rows. It is of paramount importance for the teachers to make some seating arrangements, such as putting students into groups or pairs so as to interact with each other.

Regarding the use of games and different activities when teaching vocabulary, the great majority of the students agree that using games and activities are very useful because they make the learning process vivid and full of fun. Using games to teach vocabulary is deemed to be essential because it makes the learning process student-based and full of fun. It also makes the process of learning vocabulary exciting and fearless. Teaching vocabulary via games breaks the boredom. Games and activities are available online and there is a book called *Five-Minute Activities* which is written by Penny Ur and Andrew Wright; the book contains 100 games. So, teachers are advised to use such games.

Grounded upon the statistical information, one may safely conclude that most of the students get bored when the teacher talks a lot. In a traditional classroom, teacher is viewed as the main source of information. Traditional classroom is

characterized by 'talk and chalk'- it is sometimes based on the assumption that the teacher is considered to be the 'knower' and the students' role is to receive information only. In student-based classroom, the teacher's role is to facilitate the learning process through designing activities that allow the learners to interact with each other. A distinction is made between a traditional classrooms and student-based classrooms. In traditional classrooms, the teacher stands in front of the class and uses 'talk and chalk' format and gives explanations, while, in student-based classrooms the teacher moves around the class helping students to accomplish a task.

Regarding respecting students' ideas and making them feel valued, the great majority of the respondents agree that they feel much better when the teacher value them. Scrivener (2010) stated that one of the greatest attribute of teachers is respecting students' suggestions and making them feel valued. The non-judgmental behavior of the teacher helps to create positive effective learning environment. A good teacher is someone who possesses three important qualities: respect, empathy, and authenticity. If a teacher has these three important attributes, he can create a positive atmosphere in the classroom and the communication between him and his students becomes deep and open. When students feel that their ideas are respected and being valued by the teacher, they will take risk to learn. Having said all that, teachers should find ways to create positive atmosphere for the learning to take place.

On the basis of the statistical information showed in the above tables, it is evident that the great majority of the students agree that being involved in the lesson is crucial for them. In a learner-based classroom, engaging and involving students are the most important things for a successful lesson. According to Leo (2007), learners can be engaged in a variety of ways in

student-based classroom. Students can work at various times, they may work alone, in groups, or they can pair and share in order to accomplish the following tasks: learners can work alone to prepare ideas, taking notes before a discussion, accomplishing certain task, doing a short written assignment, or working on grammar or vocabulary exercises or respond to each one's written assignment and propose possible improvements.

Finally, the great majority of the students agree that discovering things by themselves is the best way to learn things. According to Scrivener (2010,p.20), the experiential learning cycle involves five steps as follows: doing something; recalling what happened; reflecting on that; drawing conclusions from the reflection; and using those conclusions to inform and prepare for future practical experience.

The prominent feature in student-based classroom is to let students do things themselves rather than listening to the teacher immensely giving long explanations on how things work. When students are given the opportunity to work together and discover things, they can talk more, share ideas and experiences, take part actively to do tasks, feel less threatened or anxious, and enjoy the learning process.

The main purpose of this section is to analyze and present teachers' responses to the interviewing process on teaching reading skill and vocabulary as a sub skill. The analysis of the interview is grounded upon different themes or categories.

4.2.2 Vocabulary classroom observation checklist

This section presents data collected from classroom observation checklist A (Vocabulary) for the University Preparatory Program (UPP). Checklist A basically will focus on using vocabulary teaching.

Teacher begins the lesson by activating students’ prior knowledge.

Table (4.20) Prior knowledge

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	7	87.5
	No	1	12.5
	Total	8	100.0

Based on the results table above, 87.5% from the sample of this study begin their new lesson by activating student’s prior knowledge. Whereas, 12.5% of them do not do that due to their personal experiences which show improper use of teaching techniques it comes to teaching vocabulary for EFL learners. Moreover, EFL learners are an incredibly heterogeneous groups that have a wide range of languages, previous learning experiences, and prior knowledge. It is vital that prior knowledge is activated with the learners because they might be gaps in their knowledge and this would bridge the gaps that they might have. Thus, activating student’s prior knowledge is crucial because its helps students to make connections to the new information access their schema and understand better.

Teacher teaches new words/phrases directly and explicitly through a variety of instructional strategies.

Table (4.21) Instructional strategies

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	5	62.5
	No	3	37.5
	Total	8	100.0

As shown in the table above, 62.5% from the whole population of teachers teach new words or phrases directly and explicitly through a variety of instructional strategies that suit their learners’ level of understanding. While,

37.5% of them do not use different ways or instructional strategies when explaining new words for their students. Furthermore, practicing vocabulary is strongly connected to applying vocabulary to student's real life events and learners will acquire vocabulary easily if they practice it by associating words with events from their daily life. Therefore, it is the teacher's job to use different instructional strategies to teach new words explicitly and connect them with the student's real life events to make the lesson enjoyable, useful, and understandable.

Teacher gives form of the words and drills pronunciation.

Table (4.22) Drills pronunciation

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	4	50.0
	No	4	50.0
	Total	8	100.0

The results illustrated in the table above indicate that only 50% from the entire population of the teachers who took part in this study give the form of the words before they practice chorusing with their students. So the students can the spelling before the sound. This might be ascribed to their good teaching experience or good training that they have had throughout their career. In contrast, 50% of the teachers do not give the form of the new words before the sound.

Teacher engages students in games/activities to develop words awareness.

Table (4.23) words awareness

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	1	12.5
	No	7	87.5
	Total	8	100.0

Only 12.5% from the entire population of the teachers who participated in this study engage their students in games/activities to practice using the new words that they have just learned whereas, 87.5% of them do not engage their students in classroom activities which might be attributed to their poor teaching experience or less attention towards the modern ways of teaching.

Teacher uses words in different contexts.

Table (4.24) Different contexts

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	4	50.0
	No	4	50.0
	Total	8	100.0

According to the statistics shown in the above table, only 50% from the entire population of teachers who took part in this study use new words in different contexts for the purpose of helping learners to know different meanings of the words. Whereas, 50% of them do not teach new words in different contexts. Furthermore, students usually feel bored in vocabulary lessons because they have not changed their learning habits, such as writing words on a paper, try to learn by heart or learning passively throughout the teacher’s long explanations. Vocabulary in different contexts helps students communicate ideas effectively and smoothly.

Teacher encourages students to use newly-acquired vocabulary inside and outside the classroom.

Table (4.25) Use vocabulary

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	2	25.0
	No	6	75.0
	Total	8	100.0

Based on the results presented in the above table, only a small minority from the entire population of teachers who participated in this study encourage their students to use newly-acquired vocabulary inside and outside the classroom. Whereas, 75% of them do not do that. The large number of those who do not encourage their students frequently to use newly-acquired vocabulary inside and outside the classroom might be ascribed to their poor teaching experience or their less attention towards academic issues into account.

Teacher begins a new lesson by recycling previously-taught vocabulary through student-based activities.

Table (4.26) Recycling vocabulary

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	3	37.5
	No	5	62.5
	Total	8	100.0

According to the statistics shown in the above table, 37.5% from the entire population of teachers who took part in this study begin their new lessons by recycling previously taught vocabulary through student-based activities. On the other hand, 62.5% of the teachers do not encourage or support the idea of beginning a new lesson by recycling previously taught vocabulary via student-based activities. In addition, as far as the necessity of beginning a new lesson with a previously taught vocabulary is concerned, teachers need to attract the students' attention towards the importance of dealing with such technique to create a positive learning environment.

Teacher helps students to understand word meaning by examining surrounding meaning and clues.

Table (4.27) Surrounding meaning

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	2	25.0
	No	6	75.0
	Total	8	100.0

Based on the results presented in the above table, 25% from the entire population of teachers who participated in this study confirm that they help students to understand word meaning by examining surrounding meaning and giving clues while, 75% of them do not do that.

Teacher gives figurative meaning of words.

Table (4.28) Figurative meaning

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	1	12.5
	No	7	87.5
	Total	8	100.0

The results displayed in the above table indicate that 12.5% from the whole population of the teachers who took part in this study assert that they give figurative meaning of words to their students when they teach lexical items. Whereas, 87.5% of them do not do that. This may lead to their poor contribution towards teaching vocabulary regularly, or they lack the techniques of teaching vocabulary in a more communicative and effective way.

Teacher teaches affixes, synonyms, and antonyms etc.

Table (4.29) Affixes, synonyms, & antonyms

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	6	75.0
	No	2	25.0
	Total	8	100.0

According to the results shown in the above table, 75% from the entire population of teachers who participated in this study assure that they teach affixes, synonyms, and antonyms to their students when teaching vocabulary items, While, 25% of them do not do that.

Teacher gives students opportunity for practice by allowing them to use words in various contexts.

Table (4.30) words in various contexts

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	3	37.5
	No	5	62.5
	Total	8	100.0

According to the results displayed in the above table, it is clear that only 37.5% from the whole population of teachers who took part in this study give their students an opportunity to use words in various contexts, whereas, 62.5% of them do not give their students an opportunity to do that.

Teacher personalizes the learning experience by relating it to student’s life.

Table (4.31) Personalizing learning

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	4	50.0
	No	4	50.0
	Total	8	100.0

Based on the results illustrated in the above table, only 50% from the entire population of teachers who participated in this study do like personalizing the learning experience by relating it to student’s life. While, 50% of them do not do that. Moreover, personalizing the learning experience by relating it to student’s life allows students to be fully engaged in the learning process and gives them an opportunity to relate their knowledge about the world with the new information being presented. As relating new information to what students already know is concerned, some teachers are not aware of such technique of teaching as it poses a great difficulty for them, particularly when dealing with teaching vocabulary.

Teacher paces the lesson to maintain attention.

Table (4.32) Maintaining attention

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	6	75.0
	No	2	25.0
	Total	8	100.0

The above table shows that the majority of the teachers which represent (75%) adopt the idea of pacing the lesson in a smooth way to maintain attention. On the other hand, 25 % from the whole population of teachers who participated in this study do not pace the lesson to maintain attention.

Teacher uses Graphic Organizers to increase student’s knowledge of vocabulary.

Table (4.33) Graphic organizers

		Frequency	Percent
	No	8	100.0

All of the teachers who took part in this study do not use Graphic Organizers to increase student’s knowledge of vocabulary. This might be ascribed to their poor teaching experience when it comes to teaching vocabulary. In addition to helping students their thinking and writing process, Graphic Organizers can act as instructional tools. So, teachers should use Graphic Organizers to illustrate students’ knowledge about a topic or section of a text showing areas for improvement because Graphic Organizers can be extremely helpful for both students and teachers. It simplifies the teaching and the learning process by making it enjoyable and interactive for everyone.

Teacher creates an opportunity to paraphrase the definition of a new word.

Table (4.34) Paraphrasing definition

		Frequency	Percent
	No	8	100.0

The results illustrated in the table above indicate that all of the teachers who took part in the study do not give their students opportunities to paraphrase the definition of a new word. This may show the teacher’s preferences for not paying attention towards importance of using paraphrasing technique in an effective way to learn new words appropriately and accurately.

Teacher helps students to connect new vocabulary with those they are already familiar with.

Table (4.35) Familiar vocabulary

		Frequency	Percent
	No	8	100.0

According to the statistics shown in the above table, all of the teachers who participated in this study prove that they do not help their students to connect the new vocabulary with those they are already familiar with. Therefore, teachers should bear in mind the fact that new learning is constructed on prior knowledge. The more we understand about what students already think, and the more we help them engage their prior understandings, the more likely are to learn well and the less likely they are to misinterpret the material in our courses.

Teacher provides student-friendly definition.

Table (4.36) Friendly definition

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	1	14.3
	No	6	85.7
	Total	7	100.0

Only 14.3% from the entire population of teachers who participated in this study provide student-friendly definition, whereas, 85.7% of them do not do that.

Teacher offers opportunity for active involvement.

Table (4.37) active involvement

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	5	71.4
	No	2	28.6
	Total	7	100.0

According to the statistics shown in the above table, 71.4% from the whole population of teachers who participated in this study offer opportunities for active involvement. On the other hand, 28.6% of them do not do that. Therefore, having active involvement depends on how much the teachers are aware of the use of many activities in lesson to engage students in fully in the learning process.

Teacher allows students to look for definition in a dictionary.

Table (4.38) Dictionary definition

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	3	42.9
	No	4	57.1
	Total	7	100.0

Based on the results presented in the above table, 42.9% from the entire population of teachers who took part in this study allow their students to look for word definitions in a dictionary while they are presenting their new lessons. Whereas 57.1% of them do not allow their students to look up a word in a dictionary.

Teacher uses different types of instructions for different words, such as comparing, contrasting, creating metaphors, and analogies.

Table (4.39) Comparing & contrasting

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	2	28.6
	No	5	71.4
	Total	7	100.0

The results displayed in the above table indicate that only 28.6% from the entire population of teachers who took part in this study use different types of instructions with different words, such as comparing, contrasting, creating metaphors, and making analogies, While 71.4% of them do not use different types of instructions.

Teacher reviews new vocabulary at the end of the lesson.

Table (4.40) End of the lesson

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	3	42.9
	No	4	57.1
	Total	7	100.0

According to the results shown in the above table, only 42.9% from the entire population of teachers who took part in this study review new vocabulary at the end of the lesson, whereas, 57.1% of them do not do that. Those who do not review new vocabulary at the end of the lesson rely heavily on their poor teaching experience. Furthermore, teachers should end a lesson by using student-based games/activities so as to allow students remember the new vocabulary items.

Results and discussion

Regarding the use of games and different activities when teaching vocabulary, the great majority of the teachers at the University Preparatory Program (UPP), do not use games and activities to teach vocabulary. Using games to teach vocabulary is deemed to be essential because it makes the learning process student-based and full of fun. It makes the learning process of vocabulary exciting and fearless. Teaching vocabulary via games breaks boredom. Games and activities are available online and there is a book called Five-Minute

Activities which is written Penny Ur and Andrew Wright; the book contains 100 games.

The results in the tables above showed that small minority of the teachers activated students' background knowledge when teaching vocabulary. Schema theory asserts that we are affected by our previous experiences, emotions, and knowledge. Teachers should activate students' background knowledge in order to allow the students participate actively in the learning process and to find connections between the new information and the one that students already know.

Grounded upon, the statistical information in the above tables, small minority of the teachers do not encourage students to use vocabulary inside and outside the classroom. Exposing students to different words and encouraging them to use it various contexts, increases the chance of moving the new-acquired vocabulary into long-term memory. Vocabulary learning entails that students should be fully engaged in the learning process through use of different games and activities.

Considering understanding the word meaning by examining surrounding meaning and clues, the majority of the teachers do not examined meaning through surrounding clues. It is very useful for the students to know meaning via looking at what comes before and after a word. Examine the meaning through what surrounds the word gives students contextual clues about the meaning and the way it is structured. Teachers can give students contextual clues, such as root word and affix, contrast, example or illustration, and grammatical information.

As far as the figurative meaning is concerned, the great majority of the teachers do not give the students the figurative meaning of words. It is important when teaching new words for the teachers to go beyond the dictionary meaning of a word. Use of metaphors and similes adds a new experience to learners. Use of metaphors also creates a vivid imagery into student's mind. It also makes the meaning vivid and dramatic.

It has been remarkably noticed that none of the teachers used Graphic Organizers to increase students' knowledge of vocabulary. Vocabulary Graphic Organizers are tools that help students to visualize and represent information. A graphic organizer may contain information about a word in a form one circle in the middle and many circles around it. The circles contain information, such as definition, picture, student's own definition, synonym, antonym, prefix, suffix, and part of speech. There are many printable Graphic Organizers on the internet where teachers can use them in their classes.

The simple statistics tell us that none of the teachers provided students with an opportunity to paraphrase words. Paraphrasing is an important tool students should master because it enhances students speaking and writing skills. It is essential for teachers to provide students with chances to paraphrase the newly-acquired vocabulary. When students repeat or say the definition of a word in their own language, they will enhance their communicative, writing skills, and give student-friendly definition of a word using their own language without changing the meaning of the original word.

As far as connecting the new vocabulary with those the students already familiar with is concerned, none of the teachers tried to teach the new vocabulary with the one that students already are familiar with. Connecting the

new vocabulary with those students already familiar with assists learners in understanding the new words by integrating it with what they already know. One of the effective strategies of learning a new word is by integrating it with the one that the learner is familiar with.

Seeking to understand the use of the dictionary in the classroom, the statistics as shown in the above table, most of the teachers did not allow students to use the dictionary inside the classroom. Use of dictionaries inside the classroom helps students to become autonomous and self-sufficient learners. For student-based teaching proponents, helping learners to become independent learners is the ultimate goal.

The statistical information provides evidence that most of the teachers do not use different instructions to give definitions for words. Using differentiated instructional techniques to teach vocabulary to give word definitions help students enjoy the learning process and feel motivated. Differentiated instructional techniques deepen students' knowledge of vocabulary and make the learning exciting.

Finally, most of the teachers do not review the newly-taught vocabulary at the end of the lesson. Reviewing the vocabulary at end of the class is essential in a sense that it helps students remember the most important words in the lesson. It's also important because it works as a good wrap up or closure in a lesson plan. At the end of the lesson, teachers must make sure that the students can use the newly-acquired vocabulary in new contexts meaningfully and effectively. A teacher can use different games at the end of the lesson to make sure that the students understood the most important words in the lesson, such hot seating that works this way: the class is divided into two groups. Each group chooses

one student to represent it; the student in each group faces the group without looking on the board and very close to it. The teacher writes a word on the board from the lesson and each group tries to give a definition for the word to its representative without saying the word on the board. The group representative tries to shout the word; the one who says the word corrected will be given a tick till the teacher finishes the word and decides who the winning team at the end is.

4.2.3. Reading comprehension

This section presents data collected from classroom observation checklist B for teaching reading comprehension in the Freshman year.

Teacher begins the lesson by a warm-up activity that involves all the students.

Table (4.41) A warm-up activity

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	9	90.0
No	1	10.0
Total	10	100.0

The results illustrated in the table above indicate that all of the teachers who took part in this study except one begin their lessons with a warm-up activity that involves all of the students in the class. This may show the teachers' preferences for paying attention towards the use of warm-up activity in an effective way in order to involve all of the students in the lesson being presented. Moreover, they can establish good learning ideas in the mind of their students so as to know how to begin learning new lessons more effectively. In addition, most of the teachers confirm that the necessity of warm-up activity in

teaching reading lessons is like the role played by the glue when two broken parts of glasses need to be reunited. Interestingly, it is sometimes challenging to know whether the brilliant ideas that are in the minds of teachers can be transformed to the students or not. That is to say, the use of warm-up activity is deemed to be crucial in preparing the students for a new lesson and it lessens the level of anxiety among anxious students.

Teacher tells stories and show pictures to their students as a lead-in activity in the new lesson.

Table (4.42) A lead-in activity

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	1	10.0
	No	9	90.0
	Total	10	100.0

90% from the entire population of teachers who took part in this study neither tell stories nor show pictures to their students as a lead-in activity in the beginning of a new lesson. This may lead to their poor contribution and experience towards teaching reading skill. In contrast, 10% of the teachers tell stories and show pictures to their students as a lead-in activity. So, this is a statistically significant result and leads us to the conclusion that what makes a lesson not interesting and connected is the lack of teachers' experience in using energizers such as telling stories and showing pictures. Consequently, telling a short story or showing a picture at the beginning of a new lesson as a lead-in ignites students' interest and attracts their attention towards the most important parts of the lesson.

Teachers activate students' prior knowledge.

Table (4.43) Prior knowledge

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	3	30.0
	No	7	70.0
	Total	10	100.0

According to the statistics shown in the above table, 70% from the entire population of teachers who participated in this study do not activate students' prior knowledge, whereas, 30% of them do activate their students' prior knowledge. Therefore, activating students' prior knowledge depends on how much the teachers are aware of the reading techniques and their usage. Furthermore, the existence of meaning required by the task to be conveyed to the students and the arrangements of ideas in a logical order in any given lesson are highly advisable or recommended by most of the EFL teachers.

Teachers ask students to look at illustrations, pictures, tables, and graphs in the text and do pre-reading activity.

Table (4.44) Looking at illustrations

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	5	50.0
	No	5	50.0
	Total	10	100.0

The above table indicates that only 50% from the entire population of teachers who took part in this study adopt the idea of asking students to look at illustrations, pictures, tables and graphs that are accompanied with the text and do pre-reading activity. The number of users indicated above might be attributed to the teachers' familiarities with these elements that are frequently used in, if not all, most of the reading lessons. Probably, they are considered as

very simple and useful elements that are often excessively used by EFL teachers.

Teachers teach the reading comprehension strategies explicitly.

Table (4.45) Reading strategies

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	3	30.0
	No	7	70.0
	Total	10	100.0

Based on the results presented in the above table, most of the teachers who took part in this study do not teach the reading comprehension strategies explicitly to their students. This might be attributed to their poor experience regarding teaching reading strategies explicitly. While, 30% of the teachers do like the idea of teaching reading strategies explicitly to engage as many learners as possible in the lesson being learnt.

Teachers pre-teach important vocabulary that the text contains to help students understand the text.

Table (4.46) Pre-teaching of vocabulary

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	1	10.0
	No	9	90.0
	Total	10	100.0

According to the results shown in the above table, the majority of the teachers which represents 90% do not pre-teach the important vocabulary that the text contains to help students understand the text better, whereas, 10% of them do like the idea of pre-teaching important vocabulary for the sake of helping learners to get the main idea of the text under study. This may lead us to the

point that most of the teachers do not know their students' reading performance and weaknesses and they admit that their learners' knowledge of reading is restricted due to their ignorance in taking academic issues into consideration when it comes to reading, mainly, reading comprehension. That is to say, teaching unfamiliar words for students before they begin reading the passage does help a lot in understanding the main idea.

Teachers provide feedback during and after task completion.

Table (4.47) providing feedback

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	9	90.0
	No	1	10.0
	Total	10	100.0

The results displayed in the above table demonstrate that 90% from the whole population of teachers who participated in this study provide feedback during and after task completion, whereas, 10% of them do not do that. Those who do not provide feedback during and after task completion depend heavily on their poor teaching experience.

Teachers provide students with enough time to decode the text.

Table (4.48) Decoding the text

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	5	50.0
	No	5	50.0
	Total	10	100.0

According to the results shown in the above table, only 50% from the entire population of teachers who participated in this study give their students enough time to decode a written text, while, 50% of them do not provide sufficient time for their students.

Teachers elicit answers from students to allow them participate actively and minimize their talk.

Table (4.49) Minimizing talk

		Frequency	Percent
	1.00	6	60.0
	2.00	4	40.0
	Total	10	100.0

As shown in the above table, only 60% from the whole population of teachers who took part in this study confirm that they elicit answers from their students for the purpose of allowing them to participate actively and minimizing teacher time talk, whereas, 40% of them either use it incorrectly or overuse it. The large number of correctly used of eliciting technique (60%) could be due to systematic form-focused instruction, training, practice or feedback on teaching techniques in one of the training workshops that they have had throughout their career. Therefore, teachers are advised to elicit ideas from their students rather than just packing them up with information.

Teachers use graded and everyday language.

Table (4.50) Graded language

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	4	40.0
	No	6	60.0
	Total	10	100.0

The above table shows that only 40% from the entire population of teachers who participated in this study use graded and everyday language correctly as they are well trained by their institutions, while, the large majority of the teachers which represents (60%) use it in an inappropriate way that changes the intended message or the ideas need to be conveyed. That is to say, some

teachers lack the ability to use graded and everyday language appropriately and accurately.

Teachers use different types of teaching activities

Table (4.51) Different activities

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	4	40.0
	No	6	60.0
	Total	10	100.0

According to the table above, the results show that only 40% from the whole number of teachers who participated in this study use different types of teaching activities, such as, whole-class activities, pair work and group work activities, whereas, 60% of them do not use these activities when they come to teach. This may happen as a result of depending on their personal experience which shows the absence use of different activities.

Teachers use positive and encouraging techniques to build rapport through acknowledging, honoring, and praising.

Table (4.52) Building rapport

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	5	50.0
	No	5	50.0
	Total	10	100.0

50% from the entire population of teachers who took part in this study use positive and encouraging techniques to build rapport through acknowledging, honoring and praising, whereas, 50% of them do not use them. So, this is a statistically significant result and leads us to the conclusion that building

rapport through acknowledging, honoring and praising in EFL classrooms helps learners carry out given activities more smoothly and understand much better.

Teachers allow students to read aloud.

Table (4.53) Reading aloud

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	3	30.0
	No	7	70.0
	Total	10	100.0

The above table indicates that only 30% from the entire population of teachers who participated in this study allow their students to practice loud reading in reading comprehension lessons, whereas, 70% of them do not encourage loud reading. This might be attributed to the teachers’ familiarity with the clear instructions that were practiced and learned in early stages.

Teachers relate the information in the text to the students’ life.

Table (4.54) Relating information

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	3	30.0
	No	7	70.0
	Total	10	100.0

The results displayed in the above table indicate that only 30% from the entire population of teachers who took part in this study relate the information in the text to their students’ life, while, 70% of them do not do that. The high percentage of those who do not cope with the technique of relating the information in the text to the students’ life might be attributed to their poor contribution towards teaching reading comprehension courses regularly, or they

lack the ability of applying proper and accurate teaching reading techniques in Sudanese EFL classrooms.

Teachers give students enough time to retell the main idea of the text by paraphrasing and personalizing ideas

Table (4.55) Retelling the main idea

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	6	60.0
	No	4	40.0
	Total	10	100.0

According to the results shown in the table above,60% of the teachers confirm that giving students enough time to retell the main idea of the text by paraphrasing and personalizing ideas should be done by every teacher who teaches reading because it is an effective way for developing learners’ critical thinking abilities. While, 40% of the teachers do not give their students enough time to retell what they have studied.

Teachers encourage students to use higher-order thinking abilities.

Table (4.56) Higher-order thinking abilities

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	3	30.0
	No	7	70.0
	Total	10	100.0

Only 30% from the entire population of teachers who took part in this study assert that encouraging students to use higher-order thinking abilities is very advisable in teaching reading. Moreover, using these abilities learners can develop their reading performance gradually and be autonomous. In contrast, 70% of the teachers do not encourage their students to use higher-order thinking

abilities. That is to say, using higher-order thinking abilities is considered to be one of the most important skills in the 21st century that should be used by every EFL teacher.

Teachers use jigsaw to teach reading comprehension texts.

Table (4.57) Jigsaw reading

		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	5	50.0
	No	5	50.0
	Total	10	100.0

According to the results shown in the above table, it is clear that only 50% from the population of teachers who participated in this study use jigsaw when it comes to teaching reading comprehension texts, whereas, 50% of them do not use it; those who do not use jigsaw technique while teaching may depend on their poor experience regarding teaching reading in a more communicative and meaningful way. Therefore, using jigsaw in teaching reading helps learners build comprehension, encourages cooperative learning among students and helps improve problem-solving skills.

Results and discussion

Grounded upon the statistical information shown on the different tables above, we can firmly deduce that the great majority of the teachers working at School of Languages, the Freshman Year- Academic Reading, do not pay attention to the use of lead-in when teaching reading comprehension. Lead-in is deemed to be very important when beginning a class; it motivates the students and arouses their curiosity.

Lead-in also creates a communicative situation between the students and the information that will be presented. A good lead-in is considered to be a key

factor for successful teaching. It creates conducive atmosphere. A good lead-in makes communication between teachers and learners run smoothly.

Additionally, most of the teachers do not activate students' prior knowledge. Social constructivism which is considered to be the main philosophy behind student-based approach to teaching emphasizes the importance of activating students' prior knowledge in order for the learning to take place. Yang in 2002 conducted a qualitative study in which he found that new knowledge of one subject can be built while reinforcing previous knowledge from another subject.

For constructivists, of course, learning entails the integration of new information with old beliefs. Constructivists hold the view that students come into classes and formal education with prior knowledge, skills and beliefs that essentially influence what they notice about environment and how they interpret it. Consequently, constructivist teacher's role is not only given learners new information through direct instruction, but they need to pay attention to and resolve the misconceptions and facilitate the learning process.

Regarding the importance of teaching reading strategies explicitly, it can also be seen that the majority of the teachers at Ahfad University for Women do not teach reading strategies explicitly, such as top-bottom approaches, visualizing, skimming and scanning, and summarizing etc. Teaching of reading strategies stems from the fact that they help students read various academic texts easily and make connections between different information in the text. Seven reading strategies are considered to be essential for students when reading a text. They are activating, inferring, monitoring, clarifying, questioning, searching-selecting, summarizing, and visualizing-organizing.

The statistical information gained from the above tables showed that the great majority of the teachers at School of Languages have not given attention to the importance of teaching reading strategies explicitly. Reading strategies assist learners to become good readers and being able to make sense of what they read.

The results displayed those teachers at School of Languages when teaching reading comprehension do not use jigsaw reading activity. Jigsaw reading activities help students to work cooperatively in order to accomplish a certain task by using critical thinking and social skills. Jigsaw reading activity also helps students to improve listening, communicative skills, and problem-solving abilities. If jigsaw reading is used effectively and meaningfully, it helps students to be independent learners.

Grounded upon the statistical information shown in the tables, most of the teachers at Ahfad University for Women when teaching reading comprehension texts they do not pre-teach the most important words in the texts. In order for the students to comprehend the text, teachers should pre-teach the most important vocabulary that the text contains. Pre-teaching of essential vocabulary increases students' chances of understanding comprehension texts. Teaching the important vocabulary before students embark on reading the text along with social skills, it increases students' opportunities of comprehending the text and their speaking skill.

Pre-teaching of vocabulary before the learners are given the chance to communicate with the text, it is important for them to be pre-taught the most important vocabulary in order to make the learning process fun and exciting. If students know the key vocabulary in the text, they will be at ease because they

were being empowered by pre-teaching of the vocabulary. Students feel confident when the essential vocabulary in the text is pre-taught.

As shown in the statistics, (40%) of the teachers have not used the eliciting technique when teaching. Eliciting is a technique which is used in order to get the students actively produce the speech or answers instead of giving them the answers. Schema theory asserts that teachers should activate students' prior knowledge. Eliciting as a teaching technique is meant to develop a learner-centered classroom and allowing students to participate in the lesson actively and efficiently. Teachers can elicit words, answers, feelings, and memories.

As far as the graded language is concerned, the majority of the teachers do not use every day graded language when giving instructions to the students in particular. According to Scrivener (2010), when teachers give instructions to students they need to bear in their minds certain things, such as before a teacher goes to the classes she/he should drill the way of giving instructions, giving instructions in clear simple language, teachers should demonstrate the instructions if possible, and finally teachers should not assume that the students will understand the instructions automatically. Teachers should ask one student to tell the class in simple language what exactly the class will do.

Regarding the use of different types of teaching activities, such as a whole-class activities, pair and group activities, and individual activities, it can be also seen that the majority of the teachers do not use various instructional activities in order to make the students fully engaged in the lesson. Use of classroom activities increases classroom interaction. It is recommended that in some part(s) of the lesson, students should listen to each other's voice rather than the teacher in order to work cooperatively to accomplish a certain task. For teachers

to produce student-based classroom, they need to ask questions rather than giving explanations. Teachers should increase student time talk (STT). Seating should be arranged in a way that allows students to talk to each other, such as circles and horseshoes rather than parallel row. As a matter of fact some of the seating at Ahfad University for Women is fixed. Leo in (2007) emphasizes that learners can work at various times, they may be working alone, into groups, or they can pair and share in a student-centered class in order to attain or accomplish the following tasks:

learners can work alone to prepare ideas, taking notes before a discussion, accomplishing a listening task, doing a short written assignment, working on a grammar or vocabulary exercises. In a learner-centered class, students work in pairs or groups to compare and discuss their answers, or reading and responding to each one's written assignments and propose possible improvements. Learners can work collaboratively in discussions or role plays, views, sharing their ideas and experiences. In a student-centered class, learners can interact with the teacher and the whole class, asking questions or brainstorm to get ideas.

Considering the teaching technique of relating information in the text to student's life, the great majority of the teachers did not do it. Schema theory asserts that we are affected by our previous experiences, emotions, and knowledge. Students can make connections between the text they read and their background knowledge or their knowledge about the world. When students use their background to read a text, they are fully engaged in reading the text. Making connections between the text and background knowledge gives students a purpose for reading and makes them motivated. A good way to activate students' prior knowledge is the instructional strategy which is known as K-W-L (Know, Want to know, and Learned), it helps students to elicit their own

ideas about the text they will read and it makes them focused on reading purposefully.

Finally, most of the teachers do not encourage students to use higher-order deductive reasoning involving prediction as shown in the statistical information in the text. Higher-order thinking skills are meant to encourage learners to think beyond memorizing facts and information in the text. There are certain strategies that are utilized to train students how to use higher-order thinking, such as questioning, connecting concepts, inferring, and use of Graphic Organizers.

4.2.4. Teachers' views on teaching reading skill

This section presents teacher's responses in the interview for the way the reading comprehension and vocabulary ought to be taught. It begins with teacher's responses on how reading comprehension ought to be taught in the freshman year.

Introducing yourself to the students in first class

On the basis of interviews of 8 teachers who teach academic reading and writing, different ideas can be identified as far as how teachers introduce themselves when they meet their students for the first time. Seven out of the eight teachers who were being interviewed stated that they stand in front of the class when the students are seated and start introducing themselves by saying their names, academic degrees, certificates, and other academic achievements and then give students a chance introducing their names.

“At first, when I enter the class, it is for me to introduce myself which is a teaching strategy. Then I ask them to introduce themselves

because socially is important for people to know each other. Sometimes, I do not introduce myself because I want them to ask me about my name in order to build confidence in themselves.” (Teacher 1)

“The most important thing for any teacher who wants to teach a new class is to introduce himself and then students introduce themselves. In my view, there are many ways for a teacher to introduce himself. For example, I can introduce myself directly to them. I tell my name, education, career, experience. I can make it an active exercise through checking spelling when they write their names.” (Teacher 2)

“I always introduce myself to the students when I meet them for the first time at the end of the class. I always tell my students my name, experience, where I was born, and my academic degrees. At end, I ask students to introduce themselves.” (Teacher 3)

“When I go to teach a new class, I introduce myself by telling my students about my name, what am I teaching, how long does it take to finish the course and its objectives, and I will give them some information about the course policies and regulations. At the end, I allow students to introduce themselves.” (Teacher 4)

According to Scrivener (2010), there are certain tips and activities teachers can do while they are waiting their students for the first class. Teachers can talk to the students as they come into the class. Teachers should not keep themselves busy while they are waiting for the students to come because this builds distance between you and your students. On the contrary, a teacher needs to think of the start of the lesson when the first student arrives in the

class. A teacher can chat with the students as they enter the room and also can sit with them to make them feel calm.

There are certain 'getting to know' activities and games for a teacher to know students' names. Getting to know activities are important particularly at the first class because the teacher achieves certain aims at end of the first class. A teacher will learn students' name, she/he will learn some personal information about each student, and a teacher will know something about students' individual characters. As for the students, every individual student will speak to a number of other students, she/he will take part in involving activities, students will start to find ways of working cooperatively with others, students will use some English, and they also get some information about the course.

One of the many ways of allowing students to each other is to ask students to stand up. The teacher says 'go' and the students mingle and shake hands with every student in the class as quickly as they can. Students will have a short conversation where they ask each other's name and where they come from. When each student finishes her/him goes to the next person until you say 'hello' to everyone. Another ice breaker could be find some who.....Another interesting getting to know you activity(GTKY) is student interview in which a teacher writes some questions on the board, such as what is your?, where were you born? What is your favorite sport game? The teacher asks the students to write the questions and the students move around to interview each other and write down their answers. At the end, each student is asked give the information about the person he/she interviewed.

All in all, most of the eight teachers who were interviewed stated that they introduce themselves by standing in front of the class and tell the students information about their names, degrees, where they come from, and their academic achievements. In a traditional classroom, the teacher always sits in front of the class. There is much unnecessary talk when a teacher introduces himself/herself for the students at the first encounter.

“When I meet the students for the first time, I tell them my name, my title whether I am a doctor, lecturer or a professor. I will tell them next about the importance of English language, the way I teach them, and then I will check their writing by looking at the way their names. Also I have to simplify the modality of my teaching.” (Teacher 7)

Getting to activities create stress-free environment for learning. It also makes the teacher feel relaxed and comfortable when she/he meets the students for the first time. In student-based classes, teachers should find different games and activities that allow students to work together instead of standing in front of the class and give unnecessary talk to the students.

Activities for getting students involved and reading more communicative

In the interview, teachers were asked about the different ways and activities that they use in order to allow students to participate actively in a reading comprehension text. Most of the teachers were not able to specify and name clearly the different ways and activities that make students participate actively in a reading comprehension text class.

“There are certain strategies I can use. The first one is called instructional strategy that depends on focused-instructional impeded and incidental

structures. Most of them need to read aloud. When you come across a new word you may let them to discuss it and find its meaning.

"They may use software dictionary and sometimes we need to label an illustration after I give them synonyms. Sometimes I use miming if possible, I use word mapping to write the content of the words and let students to bring any word that have a relationship with it. For example, the word education students can think of teacher, school and so forth." (Teacher 1)

Ideally, reading comprehension text can be made communicative if it is done into stages. The first stage is the pre-reading stage where students can do lots of activities. For instance, a teacher who is teaching a text about leadership can show a picture of any world's leader and the students to give him some information about the person in the picture. It is essential for the teachers to activate student's schemata or prior knowledge before students read the text in depth. In the pre-reading activity, students can predict what will the text be about and can propose some words and phrases that the text contains. At this stage, students also are asked to look at the illustrations, tables, and diagrams that the text contains because it gives some clues about the idea of the text.

A good way to get students interested in the text and to make reading comprehension more communicative is by using K.W.L which an instructional strategy that leads students through a text. K.W.L stands for (Know, Want to know, and Learned) and it aims at eliciting student's prior knowledge about the text, it sets a purpose for reading, and it also assists students in monitoring their comprehension.

A teacher draws a sketch on the board and put the students into group and each must have its own sketch with three columns:

K	W	L

At this stage, students are allowed to write words and phrases that have a relationship with topic in hand.

By exploiting the above mentioned instructional strategy for teaching a reading comprehension, students will work cooperatively to come with new ideas via activating prior knowledge.

“Students are adults and can be involved in our lessons. Students can predict what the lesson will cover. Students can write questions. A teacher can read the text and the students listen to him. A teacher gives them time to think about the text. Students focus on topic sentences in different topic sentences. To make more communicative, the students at the end they get the main idea from each paragraph and the teacher going to conclude what he wants from the text.”
(Teacher 2)

Another teacher stated that students can be engaged in a reading comprehension through the use of different instructional strategies, but without naming these strategies.

“In order to encourage them to communicate, students should work in groups and pairs and you give a touch to each group or pair in order if there some mistakes. This is a very good communicative approach.”
(Teacher 7)

Additionally, one more teacher described the process of making the reading comprehension text more communicative is by giving the students a chance to look for a word in the text and guess its meaning. Another one is allowing students to make some reflection about the text, but without specifying when to allow them to do some reflections; it is in pre-reading stage, during the reading stage, or is it at post-reading stage.

“I tell them jokes; I connect it with something which is fun. It is good to divide the students into group. Last time, I read the text for them; then the students read silently. At last, I asked to answer the questions into group. Then I gave them model answers. Student-centered approach is the most appropriate one for them and it is easy for them and for me.” (Teacher 8)

Dealing with the new words in a reading comprehension texts

It is not necessary for the students to understand every word that the text contains, but it is important for teachers to teach the students the words in the text that allow them to read smoothly. Students should not worry about each word in the text. There are certain instructional strategies teachers can use to deal with new words that the text contains. One way is by the teacher prepares in advance the new words that might be new to the students. Students are divided into groups in order to find the word or phrase that the

teacher gives definition to. The teacher specifies where the word is by specifying the paragraph and gives the definition. The group that finds the word says bingo and shouts out the word and gives the spelling. At the end, the teacher drills the pronunciation and decides who the winning team is.

“I have to explain the important new words for my students and classify them into verb, noun, adjective, and adverb or what is called parts of speech. Students underline the new words for them and I give them the definitions in Arabic language.” (Teacher 7)

There are many other instructional strategies teachers can use in order to give definitions of new words instead of giving definitions in student’s native language. One instructional strategy is by inferencing or using contextual clues to guide the students to understand a meaning of new word. Guessing a word from the context is deemed to be the most helpful strategy to deal with new words in the text.

Deduction is another instructional strategy which used most widely by trained teachers to teach students new words in the text.

“First, I write them on the board. I do it a lot and ask students about parts of speech of these words, if there some prefixes and suffixes. Then we get back to the text find the words in the text to identify the meaning. Sometimes I give hints, and that is all.” (Teacher 3)

It is essential for teachers to pre-teach key words and phrases that the text contains order help them understand the text at end. Matching is another instructional strategy teachers use to pre-teach new words. Students are asked to match each word with its designated picture or meaning. Teachers can also use gestures to pre-teach new words in a vocabulary. Using real

things or realia is great in pre-teaching new words before students read a text in depth.

“Students do not need to understand every word in the text. I keep telling them that it is not necessary for them to understand each and every word in the text. I really rely on the context for the students to understand meaning of new words. Students can also underline a word to check its meaning in a dictionary. I also rely on real things or realia when giving meaning to new words when I teach a reading comprehension text.” (Teacher 6)

“The very important thing for the students is to work in groups and pairs so as find new vocabulary in a reading comprehension text.” (Teacher7)

The mentioned scenario is given by a teacher in order to deal with new words in a reading comprehension text. Importantly, you cannot ask the students to work in groups or pairs without explaining to them what task will be performed what is aim of getting into groups and pairs.

“It is important to explain the new vocabulary; you let the students find the new vocabulary. We should get the new vocabulary and write it on the board. We have to define them and classify according to the parts of speech. We have find know meanings even into Arabic; Why? Because students are not going to forget.” (Teacher7)

Finally, there are different instructional strategies teachers can use to deal with new words and phrases that the text contains, for example, looking for contextual clues, inferencing, and word guessing games, hot seat, and word association.

Putting Students into groups to perform certain activities

It is not always easy for the teachers to put students into groups to perform a certain activities particularly when the class is big. Putting students into group is a very important component of classroom management and running an activity smoothly.

In interviews, a teacher when asked the techniques of putting students into groups or pairs stated that.

“Grouping students depends on the nature of the activity. Students can work into groups or pairs or big groups.” (Teacher 2)

It is true to say that the nature of the task determines whether students will work in groups or in pairs. Basically, we teachers should decide whether students can work into groups or pairs. There are certain tools and techniques teachers use to put students into groups or pairs. Firstly, the teachers must make the process of giving instructions to students very clear and straightforward. The simplest way is giving a number like 1, 2, and 3. The next student starts again repeat the same number 1, 2, and 3. In the end, all ones, twos, and threes will sit together. Importantly, before the students move around the teacher should make his instructions is understood by everyone in the class. The teacher can make sure if they understand the aim of the task or not by allowing one student to explain the task again. For the teacher to minimize her talk, she can use gestures. For instance, stand up, five minutes, etc.

“The group should be of different levels, I know my students very well. I choose them randomly. I divide them from the start of the semester.

Some students prefer to sit with their friends. If it is a small class, I give them numbers. There are different techniques.” (Teacher 3).

Only two of the eight teachers who were interviewed on putting students into groups to perform a certain activity, were able to state categorically and clearly how to put students into groups. For example, students can form a line then the teacher divides the line into pairs or groups. Teachers also can use alphabetical order- students form a line in alphabetical order based on their first/given name; the teacher forms pairs and groups accordingly.

Activities to end a reading comprehension text

“At the end of a reading comprehension text, I recap the most important vocabulary. I give them extension. Students are given homework to do.”(Teacher 4)

“Sometimes I ask them questions. I ask them to summarize. Sometimes ask them do a five-minutes assignment; sometimes ask them to write something about the text.” (Teacher 2)

“I always finalize a reading comprehension text by reviewing new vocabulary.” (Teacher 7)

“To end a reading comprehension text, I check students’ understanding of the text by asking them some questions and if there are no questions from them I end my class.” (Teacher 8)

“When I finish a reading comprehension text, I check the important things in it. I revise vocabulary and ask the students to summarize the main ideas in the text. (Teacher 3)

When ending a reading comprehension text, teachers are supposed to do different activities at end, such as relating the text to student's personal life, summarizing, clarifying, higher-order deductive reasoning, questioning, and visualizing. Teachers also can have work on the vocabulary through graphic organizers, synonyms, antonyms, and connotative and denotative meanings.

Teachers' understanding of student-centered approach to teaching English language.

In the interviews, only 2 of the 8 teachers have an idea of the student-centered approach to teaching English language. Six of the teachers stated that they do not have an exact idea about the student-centered approach to teaching English language.

"I do not have idea about it." (Teachers 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7)

In the interviews, two of teachers do not have a concise meaning of the student-centered approach to teaching English language.

"To my understanding, it is about the syllabus and the teacher himself because sometimes the syllabus level is above the student's ability. So, teachers should simplify it to get it to their level." (Teacher 2)

"It is a helpful approach to teaching English language and it allows the students to understand the lesson. It is based on them and the teacher is a facilitator in the class. A teacher checks the students' work when they work in a group." (Teacher 8)

Clearly, none of teachers who were interviewed mentioned the jigsaw reading strategy what is part of student-based teaching because it is

grounded on cooperative learning. Jigsaw reading allows students to work in groups where each group reads different part of the text; groups exchange information with other groups and complete a task. Jigsaw as a tool integrates the four skills as the students listen or read a text and speak and listen to other students to reconstruct the information. Also none of the teachers mentioned skimming and scanning as a reading strategies students need to use to get information in the text and ,of course, the other approaches students need to know in order to make process of understanding a reading comprehension text easy.

4.2.4 Teachers' views on teaching vocabulary skill

Introducing yourself to the students in first class

“The first I do is to tell them about myself; I am a married, then I ask them to tell me about their name. Then I tell about the book. They are also asked to look at the book to see if there is a missing page or a picture or something like that.” (Teacher 1)

“First, I mention name, my university, specialization, and may age, what I will teach, and my way of teaching or procedure.” (Teacher 2)

“First I greet them to break the ice, and then I introduce myself. After that I give them a background about the university or the college.” (Teacher 3)

“Firstly, I usually ask them about personal things, such as if them took their breakfast, how they spent their night; there is any problem with transportation. Slowly we going to focus on the lecture itself by kind of pointing out the main idea and what we going to have; And usually ask them to the page they looking at it right now and just

going ahead skimming and just get familiar with what they are going to have. What is the hell is this? Is it something they can digest it? Just to have an idea. (Teacher 4)

“For the first time when I meet my students, I ask them about their names, what course I teach and then I introduce myself.” (Teacher 5)

On the basis of the interviews, ten of the teachers who were interviewed did no mention any student-based teaching activities to introduce their names for the students when they meet them for the first time. Unnecessary talk is given if a teacher at the beginning of the class asks students about what they ate last time, problems in transportation when they come to the university etc. Even if a teacher talks to the students about his/her academic achievements, students will not get anything from this unnecessary talk.

One of the many ways of allowing students to each other is to ask students to stand up. The teacher says ‘go’ and the students mingle and shake hands with every student in the class as quickly as they can. Students will have a short conversation where they ask each other’s name and where they come from. When each student finishes her/him goes to the next person until you say ‘hello’ to everyone. Another ice breaker could be find some who.....Another interesting getting to know you activity(GTKY) is student interview in which a teacher writes some questions on the board, such as what is your?, where were you born? What is your favorite sport game? The teacher asks the students to write the questions and the students move around to interview each other and write down their answers. At the end, each student is asked give the information about the person he/she interviewed.

Introducing new vocabulary items

In the interviews, most of the teachers could not label specifically student-based activities and games that are used to introduce new vocabulary items. Only few teachers named realia or the use of real things to introduce new vocabulary items to the students.

“First of all, I don’t prefer that my students to detect the meaning by giving the meaning in a sentence.” (Teacher 1)

“There are many ways, such as explaining word meanings, drawing on the board, synonyms, and antonyms. Anyway, these are my ways.” (Teacher 2)

“I can use realia, pictures, and definitions; if they did not realize the word I can use translation sometimes. Then I can give parts of speech.” (Teacher 3)

“I usually write in big letters. Then I go over them one by one to give their parts of speech. I will give definitions and demonstration of words. To speak to honestly I give translation in their language at the end. (Teacher 4)

“I usually use realia, visual aids, getting the meaning from the context, and at end I can ask them to a dictionary.” (Teacher 5)

“I use flash cards when I introduce new vocabulary. Students should practice the words. I also draw words if possible and stress the pronunciation and at the end students can mini-dictionary.” (Teacher 6)

“For me, when I teach vocabulary for the first time, I use gestures, nodding, or sign without giving the meaning directly.” (Teacher 7)

“When I teach new vocabulary, I use real objects, pictures and things that make learning of new words easy for them. I also give definitions and opposites.” (Teacher 8)

“For new words, it depends on the nature of the vocabulary. I mean is it vocabulary enlargement or something else. Anyway, I usually use examples, giving parts of speech, and sometimes I use sentences to show meaning of words. (Teacher 8)

“I use (TTT) in order not to talk a lot. I use technology and modern devices to give words meaning. Students then can check meaning in their dictionaries. I also give examples and real things in the environment.” (Teacher 10)

It is good to use flashcards, pictures, and real objects, but there are other many student-based activities, such as Pictionary, hot seating which is a game that runs this way: the teacher prepares the definitions of the words she intends to teach. The teacher divides the class into different groups. Each group have student hot seated; faces the group and without looking at the board. A teacher writes the word on the board; each group tries to give a definition to its representative without saying the word on the board. The hot seated student who shouts out the word first, will be given a tick. In the end, the teacher decides who the winning team is; it is preferably done at the end of the learned vocabulary.

When finishing presenting a vocabulary items, students can work with Letter Scramble in which a teacher scrambled recently words. Students are asked to

work into groups to unscramble the words on their paper. A good way of introducing vocabulary items is Word Bingo in which a teacher makes bingo sheets with a 4 by 4 grid and adds words to each square. Students are given their papers. They are asked to mark the correct word when you call it out. The first student finishes marking the entire page wins. Graphic Organizers are very useful when working with vocabulary. There is word association recitation in which at the end the teacher erases all the words in the circle and asks the students to remember the erased items. Semantic map also is a great idea in which a teacher chooses a word and writes it on the board and asks the students to think of words and phrases that come to their minds when they see that word. This activity is so essential because it activates student's prior knowledge. At the end of the activity students can put the words into categories while they work into groups.

4.2.4 Teachers' Views on Vocabulary

On the basis of the interviews, teachers were asked about their understanding of the word vocabulary. Only one teacher was able to give the concise meaning of the word vocabulary.

“The word vocabulary is lexicon or words or all the words that a learner knows whether he uses or not.” (Teacher 9)

“The word vocabulary is diction. If students have vocabulary, they work well in the productive skills. Vocabulary helps students to read and speak. Students suffer if they lack vocabulary.” (Teacher 10)

“For me, vocabulary means words that students do not know.” (Teacher 8)

“Vocabulary is the quantity or words students have.” (Teacher 7)

“Vocabulary is a tool to understand and read. Vocabulary can be positive or negative when I use a word this positive and it is practical vocabulary. Vocabulary is something huge.” (Teacher 6)

“Vocabulary means words that are given to the students as new items and students know meaning. Vocabulary is words students get to increase their vocabulary bank.” (Teacher 5)

“Vocabulary is just we know something. Something we need to know and we use when daily to speak.” (Teacher 4)

According to Scrivener et al (2010), the word vocabulary basically refers to single words. The notion of lexis is somehow bigger. It refers to a learner’s ‘database’ of words and complete ‘ready-made’ fixed/semi fixed typical combinations of words which we can remember and use quickly without having to build new phrases and sentences word by word from scratch using our knowledge of grammar. This includes collocations like blonde hair and traffic jam. There are also longer combinations, such as someone you can talk to, I’d rather not say, and on-the-spot decisions.

Ways to deal with newly-acquired vocabulary

There are different activities and games that teachers can utilize to deal with newly-acquired vocabulary. According to Ur & Wright et al (1992) in Five – Minute Activities resource book, there are 100 activities which teachers can use to introduce and revise vocabulary. For example, picture dictation, spelling bee, hot seat, if I had a million dollars, and jumbled sentences etc. Teachers also can ask students to make their own mini-dictionary, classify

the newly-acquired words, prepare worksheets and match definitions. Importantly, teachers should encourage students to be autonomous in learning vocabulary through giving them some words that are chosen carefully in order for the students to look up in a dictionary. When a teacher begins a new lesson, she/he should revise last time's lesson through the use of student-based activities.

In the interviews, most of teachers suggested some ways of dealing with newly-acquired vocabulary, but no student-based activities and games were given to deal with newly-acquired vocabulary items. Some of the interviewed teachers proposed that students should read a lot and watch movies to acquire new vocabulary, but just telling students to do that might not be lucrative.

“Look, by listening. Students should to listen to a movie; you know the articulation of a word and when the word starts and ends; by listening is the mechanism of mind works. Making rules and if you match the rules of the rules of a given language your sentence is correct.”
(Teacher 1)

“I think the best way for students is to read stories, anything they have faced, books, advertisements, and any academic works.” (Teacher 2)

“Firstly, I tell them to put the words in sentences. I encourage them to use them in sentences, give opposites, parts of speech, and match pictures with words.” (Teacher 3)

“I usually give them daily vocabulary; something that they will practice. I teach those synonyms, antonyms, and idiomatic language that they may use often.” (Teacher 4)

“We can help them to find ways to understand the newly-acquired words by finding something strange about may be that helps them to understand quickly, and associate words with different things.” (Teacher 5)

“I help students to use their mini-dictionaries. All types of activities are good like flash cards, and using the new words practically in sentences.” (Teacher 6)

“Just by reading books; any students reads the book she is interested in like science. I use written songs and I discuss them with my students. (Teacher 7)

“I always encourage my students to use words in sentences. I ask them to use it in a dialogue.” (Teacher 8)

“I avoid talking about new words as difficult ones; we cannot say that because it a negative connotation. I allow them to use words in a topic they like or have an interest in it” (Teacher 9)

“There are many activities, such as role playing, playing with a ball. Sometimes students ask each other about the words. Sometimes I do a little game. I can use a picture, material, and games.” (Teacher 10)

Different instructional techniques for different words

Different words and vocabulary items require various ways of introducing them and enforcement after being taught to the students. Semantic map is a good way to introduce and recycle vocabulary items. Sematic mapping can be used at the beginning in order to activate student’s prior knowledge. As a

post-vocabulary introduction, semantic mapping can be utilized as a tool to enhance students' understanding through adding new concepts to it. Word wizard is also a type of cooperative learning where the teacher divides the class into two or three groups and instructs one student in the group to be responsible for learning 4 or 5 words. Each "word wizard" writes the definition in her/his own words as well as draws an illustration of the word. In the end, the word wizard goes back to his/her group and teaches their classmates what they have learned. Teachers can use word wizard as a tool for revising vocabulary items students have just learned.

In the interviews, the teachers came up with the following ideas of using different instructional strategies to teach vocabulary items and reinforce after being learned by the students.

"First, it is good to teach vocabulary in different ways, such as I divide the class into two groups and one group asks and the other responds to it." (Teacher 1)

"I use games as a technique and other different ones like matching, crosswords, and pictures. Also I use songs because language is something living." (Teacher 2)

"I tell students to work in pairs and exchange roles. I give students cards with words and ask them to work together on the words. Sometimes I call the word three times and repeat it. Sometimes I give the definition of a word on the board." (Teacher 3)

"I do not use games, but I give examples, synonyms, antonyms, and idioms." (Teacher 4)

“I like using games. I give students more time for practice. Students should use words in real life and read more texts.” (Teacher 5)

“I use different types of activities like miming, competition, and drawing if a word like happy I can just draw smiling face.” (Teacher 6)

“When teaching vocabulary I use songs which I write myself. In addition, I use puzzles, songs, descriptions, and games.” (Teacher 7)

“In using different instructions, I use games, crosswords, things in the environment, putting a word in a sentence, and also use a game which is called I spy with my little eye. I also make competition where one group wins.” (Teacher 8)

“Teaching of vocabulary it depends on the levels of the students. I give definitions, drawings, a tree vocabulary, role play, and vocabulary enlargement.” (Teacher 9)

“We use different ways in teaching different words in order not to make the learning process boring. We can use grammar translation method, communicative method, and we must vary our teaching.” (Teacher 10)

Vocabulary enlargement and enrichment

There are different tools and activities teachers can use to increase and enlarge student’s vocabulary. It is not enough to ask students to write novels academic books in order to enrich and enlarge their vocabulary. I always end my class by various activities that aim increasing and enriching student’s

knowledge of vocabulary. For instance, proverbs in which I write a well-known proverb on the board. Students will try to guess the meaning of the proverb and if they failed to get the meaning I will tell them its meaning. At end, students compare the proverb meaning from their own culture. Another good way of increasing student's vocabulary is by piling a word; it is good to use it at the end of vocabulary presentation. It is good to use in reviewing adjectives. The idea is that the first student says I am smart Ali, and the next student repeats the first adjective and adds another one, such as I am smart intelligent John till every finishes.

Graphic organizers are very useful in to enlarge, brainstorm, and review vocabulary. The teacher writes a word in the middle of a circle and asks students to think of words and phrases that relate to it. For example, the word family in which students might come with words and phrases, such as family tree, siblings, son, father and mother, ties, foster parents, mother-in law, and father-in law etc. Teachers also can use prefixes and suffixes to enrich and enlarge student's knowledge of vocabulary. Students can work in pairs or in small groups after being given some prefixes and suffixes by the teachers. The teachers can suggest pre, post, un as prefixes and able, ify, er, as suffixes and gives the students sufficient time to work out some word with these prefixes as much as they could. Students also are given dictionaries at the end of the class to find new words and their meanings.

In the interviews, the teachers came up with the following ideas on how *to enlarge and increase student's knowledge of vocabulary*.

“Listening to songs because they like it; the lyrics of songs in English language is just ordinary sentences that will help the listeners or students.” (Teacher 1)

“Besides their academic books related to vocabulary, I allow them do it themselves.”

(Teacher 2)

“I ask the students to write synonyms and antonyms” (Teacher 3)

“I allow the students to use words into sentences, they are also told to use synonyms and idioms in order to increase vocabulary.” (Teacher 4)

“I ask students to read more books, and practice to apply words in real life. I also ask students to read more texts.” (Teacher 5)

“I always ask students to make their own mini-dictionaries and count the words they learned every time I meet them.” (Teacher 6)

“I tell the students to read interesting books for them. If they are interested in science books, I will ask them to read it.” (Teacher 7)

“There are many activities I use to enlarge students’ vocabulary, such as using words in sentences.” (Teacher 8)

“I use varieties of activities. The subjects and topics students like, I allow them to read in order to increase their knowledge of vocabulary.” (Teacher 9)

“We use different activities. For example, students will work in groups and pairs to use words that familiar to them. I also encourage

them to read in literature or science. I can give them assignments in order to increase their vocabulary.” (Teacher 10)

Teachers’ knowledge about Student-based approach to teaching English language

In the interviews, most of the 10 teachers do not have an exact idea about the student-centered approach to teaching English language. Three of the teachers stated that they do not have an exact idea about the student-centered approach to teaching English language. Albeit some of teachers have idea about the student-based approach to teaching English language, they cannot precisely tell what it means in the context of English language teaching.

“Student-based –I do not know. I think they are ways used in their schools or systems of education.” (Teacher 1)

“Frankly speaking, I do not know.” (Teacher 2)

“I cannot remember.” (Teacher 3)

“It is about getting students interested in the class.” (Teacher 4)

“Students-based approach to teaching English language is creating colorful situations through using practical ways and adjusting approaches to students to produce correct things.”

(Teacher 5)

“Students-based approach to teaching English language means designing lessons and I put my students together. It begins from

students and ends with them. My TTT is less than STT. I create activities that involve the students.” (Teacher 6)

“No answer.” (Teacher 7)

“As I know, it depends on what students know previously. The new information is based on the old one.” (Teacher 8)

“I do not have any idea at all.” (Teacher 9)

“Student-based approach to teaching English language is about new ways of teaching. Uses of lots activities in the class are good. Do not repeat activities. You use direct method. Always get students interested because of their age. (Teacher 10)

Results and discussion

As far as the teaching of reading comprehension is concerned, we can easily deduce, on the basis of the interviews, that teachers give unnecessary talk from the start of when they introduce themselves. There are certain getting to know you (GTKY) activities as mentioned earlier teachers can use to avoid talking much about unnecessary things students will not be interested in.

Teaching reading comprehension can be done into three stages: pre-reading stage where the teacher allows the students to look at the title of the text and tries to give them an opportunity to make prediction about will the text be about. Ideally at this stage, a teacher raises a picture, if possible, to ignite student’s interest in the lesson because it says a picture is a worth thousand words. The teacher also activates students’ prior knowledge or schemata in order to make reading comprehension more communicative and to find a

fine thread between student's knowledge and the knowledge in the text which will be given as new information. In the pre-reading stage, teachers did teach important vocabulary that the text contains in accordance with the student-based activities. A teacher can prepare definitions of important words in the text and do it with the students in a form of bingo game. She/he reads the definition and tells where the students can find the word; any student finds the word says bingo. The teacher puts the word on the board and drills pronunciation.

It is important for students know reading strategies and the purpose of reading. None of the teachers interviewed teach directly the reading strategies for the students. Additionally, cooperative reading was not used by the teachers in during reading stage. Jigsaw reading is an essential reading strategy in which the teacher divides the text in different parts; every group of students is given a part of the text to read. At the end, the groups meet together to share their ideas.

In the post-reading stage, teachers only allows students to answer questions, give summary for some of the teachers, and give assignments for the students do as a homework. In the post-reading stage, teacher can exploit the text in a variety of ways. One way is relating the text student's personal life. Teachers can ask the students to summarize the main points that the text contains in their own language. The important vocabulary in the text can be revised through the use of student-based games and activities for vocabulary. Also the teachers can use deductive high-order thinking abilities, and deductive reasoning to work in the text. Reading also can be integrated with speaking, listening, and writing skills.

Lastly, on the basis of the interviews, most of the teachers do not have an idea about student-based approach to teaching English language. Knowing about student-based approach to teaching English language, enables teachers to design student-based activities to their classes.

As far the teaching of vocabulary is concerned, teachers give much unnecessary talk about their academic accomplishments and ask questions that might not be of interest to the class or the students. A good way to begin a class is by activating students' prior knowledge through giving the students an opportunity to think of the title of the lesson or holding up a picture in order to ignite students' interest in the lesson.

A part from realia, context, synonyms, antonyms, flashcards, there are other ways of introducing and revising a new vocabulary items. Teachers do not use games and student-based activities to introduce a new vocabulary item. Teachers can use Pictionary, hot seat, graphic organizers, word bingo, semantic mapping, and other student-based activities and games to introduce and new vocabulary items.

Nine of out of the ten teachers interviewed, do not have an exact idea of what vocabulary is. Vocabulary is not only words; the notion of lexis is somehow bigger. It refers to a learner's 'database' of words and complete 'ready-made' fixed/semi fixed typical combinations of words which we can remember and use quickly without having to build new phrases and sentences word by word from scratch using our knowledge of grammar. This includes collocations like blonde hair and traffic jam. There are also longer combinations, such as someone you can talk to, I'd rather not say, and on-the-spot decisions.

Enlarging and enriching students' knowledge of vocabulary cannot be achieved by just telling students to read academic books or watching news on TV. There are games and student-based activities to enlarge and enrich student's knowledge of vocabulary, such graphic organizers and semantic mapping. Also prefixes and suffixes, proverbs, and word of the day.

In the interviews, most of teachers suggested some ways of dealing with newly-acquired vocabulary, but no student-based activities and games were given to deal with newly-acquired vocabulary items. Also teachers need to look for student-based activities and games to introduce different words. Different words entail various instructional strategies to deal with it. For example, root analysis, personalized lists, encouraging autonomy in learning vocabulary, and other student-base games and activities.

Finally, on the basis of the interviews, most of the teachers do not have an idea about student-based approach to teaching English language. Knowing about student-based approach to teaching English language, enables teachers to design student-based activities to their classes.

4.3 Testing of Hypotheses

Grounded upon the results of data analysis, as far as the first hypothesis is concerned, which states, it's hypothesed that the learning modes in Higher Education institutions in Sudan do not exhibit forms of learner-centeredness. The results showed that this hypothesis is true according to the classroom observation checklist. So, the first hypothesis was confirmed and accepted.

The second hypothesis states that it is a summed that students are not involved effectively in whole learning process. According to the results obtained from the classroom observation checklist for teaching vocabulary

the students were not involved actively and effectively in learning new vocabulary items. Moreover, the analysis of the teacher's interviews disclosed that students are engaged in lessons. Thus, the second hypothesis was approved.

As for the third hypothesis, which says, it is hypothesized that learners in higher education intuitions in Sudan are not given enough chances to do things themselves. The results obtained from the classroom observation checklist for teaching reading disclosed that teachers did not use jigsaw reading strategy as a cooperative learning tool to allow students do things themselves. Additionally, the classroom observation checklist for teaching vocabulary has proven that students were not given the opportunity to do things themselves. Therefore, the third hypothesis was confirmed.

4.4 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher has analyzed that data which was collected through the three methods of data collection. Namely, the classroom observation checklist for reading comprehension, classroom observation checklist for vocabulary, student's questionnaire, and teacher's interview.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION AND
SUGGESTIONS FOR
FURTHER STUDIES

Chapter Five

Conclusion, Recommendations, and suggestions for Further Studies

5.1 Summary of the Study

The aim of the present study, within the context of English language teaching and learning, is to investigate if reading comprehension skill and vocabulary as a sub-skill are taught in accordance with Student-based approach to teaching English language or not. The case study of the UPP and the Freshman at School of Languages at Ahfad University for Women. The study utilized three tools to collect data that can be summarized as follows: the classroom observation checklists, the students' questionnaire, and teachers' interviews. The study also tried to answer these questions: to what extent do the 'learning' modes in higher education institutions in Sudan exhibit any form(s) of learner-centeredness, are the learners in higher education institutions in Sudan involved in the whole learning process, and to what extent are learners given opportunities to do activities themselves.

5.2 Findings

Accordingly, the main findings of this study are as follows:

1. As far as the vocabulary is concerned, teachers don't use games and activities to develop word awareness.
2. Teachers do not activate students' cognitive knowledge when they introduce new vocabulary items.
3. Teachers do not help students to understand word meaning by examining surrounding meaning and clues.
4. Figurative meaning of words is not given by teachers to the students.

5. Graphic Organizers are not used by the teachers to increase student's knowledge of vocabulary.
6. Students are not assisted by the teachers to connect new vocabulary with those they are already familiar with.
7. Teachers do not use different types of instructions for different words, such as comparing, contrasting, creating metaphors, and analogies.
8. As far as the reading is concerned, students' prior knowledge is not activated.
9. Reading comprehension strategies are not taught explicitly, such as top-bottom approaches, visualizing, skimming and scanning, and summarizing etc.
10. Teachers do not pre-teach important vocabulary through student-based activities that the text contains to help the students understand the text.
11. Most of the teachers do not use different types of teaching activities, such as whole-class activities, pair & group activities, and individual activities.
12. Small minority of the teachers relate the information in the text to the students' life.
13. The majority of the teachers do not encourage students to use higher-order deductive reasoning involving prediction.
14. Most teachers do not use the jigsaw reading technique to teach reading comprehension texts.
15. As with regards to the student's questionnaire, the great majority of the students enjoy the use of games and activities in reading comprehension texts.
16. Students prefer working in pairs and groups rather than talking to the teacher.
17. The students like sharing ideas with their classmates.

18. Higher-order deductive reasoning skills are not used by the teachers when finalizing a reading comprehension text.

19. Teachers do not have a concise idea about student-based approach to teaching English language.

5.3 Recommendations

Grounded upon the findings illustrated above, the present study provides some recommendations for teachers of English language. The main recommendations can be summarized as follows:

A workshop should be run for the teachers who teach reading comprehension and vocabulary.

1. Use of games and activities such as Getting to Know You (GTKY) to create stress-free environment when meeting the students for the first time.
2. Jigsaw reading strategy is as an essential tool in getting students to work cooperatively in reading comprehension texts.
3. Pre-teaching of important words via student-based activities will give the students a chance to read the reading comprehension easily.
4. Activating students' prior knowledge is deemed to be important because it allows students to be involved in the lesson and it also gives them the opportunity to make connection between the previous and the new one.
5. Relating the learning experience with student's personal life is crucial.
6. Teachers should encourage students to use higher-order deductive reasoning involving prediction is deemed to be important.

7. Use different types of teaching activities, such as whole-class activities, pair & group activities, and individual activities is very important.
8. Teaching of reading comprehension strategies explicitly is essential for the students to understand a reading comprehension, such as top-bottom approaches, visualizing, skimming and scanning, and summarizing etc.
9. Graphic organizers are crucial for the students to acquire and increase their knowledge of vocabulary.
10. Use of different instructional strategies makes the learning process enjoyable and student-based.
11. Teachers should reduce their TTT (teacher talking time) through the use of student-based activities in order to engage students in lessons.
12. Teachers should be aware of the fact that vocabulary is not only words but lexicon is more comprehensive.
13. Figurative meaning should be given besides the direct meaning of words.

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

This study is somehow quite limited. To make the study more generalizable, the researcher would suggest:

1. Teaching listening and speaking skills through student-centered approach to teaching English language.
2. Investigate student-based teaching in basic education in Sudan.
3. Investigate the role of the teacher in student-based classes.

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List of Appendixes

Consent form

Dear participant,

The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to partake in the present research or not. Please make sure that your participation is voluntary and you have the right to participate or withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the interviewer.

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether English language is taught in accordance with student-based approach to teaching or not in Sudanese higher institutions of education- Ahfad School of Languages was chosen as a case-study.

Do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study either before participating or during the time that you are participating. We would be happy to share our findings with you after the research is completed. However, your personal information will not be associated with the research findings in any way, and only the researcher will know your identity as a participant.

Please give your consent with full knowledge of the nature and purpose of the procedures.

30/9/2019

Interview protocol

Teaching reading comprehension texts:

- ✓ Tell me about the different ways of introducing yourself to the students when you meet them for the first time.
- ✓ Describe various ways and activities to get students involved in your lessons.
- ✓ Tell me about the different activities that you use to make teaching reading comprehension more communicative.
- ✓ Tell me about the ways you deal with important vocabulary in a reading comprehension texts.
- ✓ Describe the activities you design to help students participate actively in your lessons.
- ✓ Describe various ways to put students into groups in order to accomplish certain activities.
- ✓ Tell me about the things you do when you finish teaching a reading comprehension text.
- ✓ Tell me about student-based approach to teaching English language.

Interview protocol:

Interview questions for teaching vocabulary items

- ❖ Tell me about the different ways of introducing yourself to the students when you meet them for the first time.
- ❖ Describe various activities you use to introduce vocabulary items in the class.
- ❖ Tell about your understanding of the word vocabulary.
- ❖ Describe the different ways you use to encourage students to use newly-acquired vocabulary.
- ❖ Tell me about the activities/games you use to help students understand the meaning of words easily.
- ❖ Describe the activities you use to increase student's knowledge of vocabulary.
- ❖ Tell me about the various activities or games you use in order to allow students to be engaged actively in the process of acquiring new vocabulary items.
- ❖ Describe the different instructions that you use in teaching different words.
- ❖ Tell me about the student-based approach to teaching English language.

Classroom observation checklist- Reading comprehension

Date:

No. of students:

Lesson/topic:

Time:

#		Time segment in	No.	of	Percentage
		minutes	occurrence	in	of
		5 -10 -15- 20- 25	each time		
		30 -35 -40- 45 -50	1 - 2 -3 -4 - 5		
1	Teacher begins the lesson by a warm-up activity that involves all the students.				
2	Teacher tells story/ shows a picture to the students as a lead-in to the new lesson				
3	Teacher activates students' prior knowledge.				
4	Teacher asks students to look at the illustrations, pictures, tables, and graphs in the text and do pre-reading activities.				
5	Teacher teaches students reading comprehension strategies explicitly, such top-bottom approaches, visualizing, skimming and scanning, and summarizing etc.				
6	Teacher pre-teaches important vocabulary that the text contains to help students understand the text.				
7	Teacher provides feedback during and after task completion.				
8	Teacher provides students with enough time to decode the text.				
9	Teacher elicits answers from the students to allow students participate actively and minimizes his/her time talk.				

10	Teacher uses graded and everyday language.			
11	Teacher uses different types of teaching activities, such as whole-class activities, pair& group activities, and individual activities.			
12	Teacher uses positive and encouraging techniques to build rapport through acknowledging, honoring, and praising.			
13	Teacher allows students to read aloud.			
14	Teacher relates the information in the text to the student's life.			
15	Teacher provides students with enough time to retell the main idea(s) in the text through paraphrasing and personalizing ideas.			
16	Teacher encourages students to use higher- order deductive reasoning involving prediction.			
17	The teacher uses the jigsaw reading technique to teach reading comprehension texts.			

Classroom observation checklist- Vocabulary

Date:

Number of students:

.....

Lesson /topic:

Time:

#		Time segment in	No.	of	Percentage	of
		minutes	occurrence	in	occurrence	
		5 -10 - 20 -25 -30	each time			
		35-40 -45- 50	1 - 2- 3 -4 - 5			
1	Teacher begins the lesson by activating students' prior knowledge.					
2	Teacher teaches new words/phrases directly and explicitly through a variety of instructional strategies.					
3	Teacher gives form of the words and drills pronunciation.					
4	Teacher engages students in games/activities to develop word awareness.					
5	Teacher activates students' cognitive knowledge.					
6	Teacher uses words in different contexts.					
7	Teacher encourages students to use newly-acquired vocabulary inside and outside the classroom.					
8	Teacher begins a new lesson by recycling previously-taught vocabulary through student-based activities.					
9	Teacher helps students to understand word meaning by examining surrounding meaning and clues.					
10	Teacher gives figurative meaning of words.					
11	Teacher teaches affixes, synonyms, and antonyms. etc.					
12	Teacher gives students opportunity					

	for practice by allowing them to use words in various contexts.			
13	Teacher personalizes the learning experience by relating it to the student's life.			
14	Teacher paces the lesson to maintain attention.			
15	Teacher uses Graphic Organizers to increase students' knowledge of vocabulary.			
16	Teacher creates an opportunity to paraphrase the definition of a new word.			
17	Teacher helps students to connect new vocabulary with those they are already familiar with.			
18	Teacher provides student-friendly definition.			
19	Teacher offers opportunity for active involvement.			
20	Teacher allows students to look for definition in a dictionary.			
21	Teacher uses different types of instructions for different words, such as comparing, contrasting, creating metaphors, and analogies.			
22	Teacher reviews new vocabulary at the end of the lesson.			