

## IMPROVING EFL VOCABULARY THROUGH STORIES AT PRIMARY LEVEL IN DISTRICT SAHIWAL

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### Abstract

*Vocabulary is the most important thing to learn a foreign language. Stories perform a decent role in improving vocabulary. This research paper investigates how stories help young EFL learners to improve their vocabulary at primary level. In the study, 30 Taimor Public school Sahiwal learners are examined for 1 month. 30 students are divided into two groups, experimental group and control group. Pretest has taken before experiment. Almost both groups are unable to perform well in EFL vocabulary. Data from posttest indicates big improvement after experiment. In posttest performance of experimental group is very better as compared to control group. Experimental group shows very good result after experiment. Findings show that young EFL learners remembered many words instead of completely forgetting. Storytelling method has helped learners to improve their vocabulary.*

### Keywords

Vocabulary, Improvement, Stories Learning, Young EFL

### Introduction

Improving vocabulary through stories is good technique. Young learners have not more interest in study. If they are provided a good and suitable environment according to their choice, the learners are able to learn with Interest. Nowadays, it has been noted that other formal ways of education at primary level are not much fruitful for young EFL learners. First and most important thing to learn a foreign language is vocabulary. Storytelling is a very good technique to increase the vocabulary of young EFL learners.

Zhu (2019) says that young learners need to give special attention to vocabulary. Because improving vocabulary at starting stage is good for them in future for further educational experience. Children learn the foreign language more easily at early stage. If young EFL learners have grip on vocabulary, this is excellent for their educational experience. Basically, children are a good in native language but they feel problem in learning a foreign language. To develop interest of learning in young EFL learners, stories perform a vital role. Storytelling increases the learning experience and learners are able to own new words from them. Young EFL learners able to save more words into their minds.

Inal and Cakir (2014) state that vocabulary is more important than grammar. You can learn something without grammar but without vocabulary nothing can be learned. In recent time, there is a trend to acquire second language. For better communication grip on English language is essential. Researchers advocates that storytelling is very good way to improve vocabulary.

Laser (1993) says that stories improve young EFL learners experience in learning a foreign language. He believes that use of stories encourages the learners to draw their own conclusion about story and they are able to know about culture of country. Moreover, Zahra (2015) says that short stories are very helpful in classroom. EFL learners are able to learn the second language with more interest.

If one story is repeated again and again, learners can generate some new words automatically. Stories provide dual benefit to learners first is learning and second is to know about world. Researchers and professionals state that to attain impressive skill in language, vocabulary is the basic thing for young EFL learners. In all educational institutions of Pakistan English is the compulsory course. For better understanding and complete control on language, vocabulary is must from beginning stage. At primary level young learners can improve EFL vocabulary through stories. Retelling of stories increases the vocabulary.

### **Statement**

Many students face problems in learning foreign language at primary level education. For learning a language, a young EFL learner should have grip on vocabulary. Because, vocabulary is key to learn a foreign language. Young EFL learners need to improve their vocabulary through stories at primary level.

### **Research Questions**

This paper covers the following questions

1. How can stories help in improving EFL vocabulary?
2. How can primary school learners learn a foreign language easily?

### **Significance of Research**

This research paper is very important for students. Young EFL learners suffer from vocabulary issue. This research paper covers an easy method of improving vocabulary at early stage. Paper has great importance for Taimor Public School children to improve their vocabulary in suitable and joy full environment.

Vocabulary can be improved through pictures, dictionary, news paper reading but most easy and effective way to improve EFL vocabulary is storytelling. Now, English has become a universal language, it is essential to understand this as second language. That's why experiment has performed on primary school children. So, they can improve their vocabulary through stories and understand the language. Horny (2000) says that vocabulary is helpful to understand and to express ideas and feelings. He focuses on one thing that for impressive communication grip on vocabulary is must.

According to Blachowicz and Fisher (2004), stories are base of increasing vocabulary. Stories help the learners to recognize words and make new phrases and sentences own its own. Stories introduce new words and learners are able to know about culture and society.

Wilkin (1983) says tutors have to find a method of teaching which is suitable for the learners and which can motivate them and can develop Interest of developing vocabulary between them. In this paper, one of the suitable methods has been chosen. Which is storytelling. Storytelling method helps the young EFL learners of Taimor Public School to develop their vocabulary at beginning stage.

### **Literature Review**

Kirsch (2012) says vocabulary is the efficient and good way to learn a language for young EFL learners. In his research, she has examined the children of class 5 (age 9 -11). She has selected total six children. Two of them are good in mathematics, two are high achievers and

remaining two have average background. One of them child was born in London and others belongs to other areas. Her project consists of 5 weeks and findings prove that storytelling events enhance the learning ability and children are able to remember many words after experiment.

Kalantari and Hashemian (2016) say that storytelling method increase the ability of understanding vocabulary in students. They are able to recognize words and can explain what they listen through stories. Young EFL learners have been provided a good environment. That's why, they have performed so well. Storytelling produced ability to explain what they want to say. Teachers need to increase the confidence level of young students.

Ismawati and sutarsyah (2007) say that vocabulary perform a basic role in communication. Storytelling is very effective method; learners are able to memories a large number of words and can remember words for long time into their minds. Both researchers come to point that, there is a big improvement of vocabulary in children after storytelling method. They argue that stories are an easy way to improve vocabulary at primary level.

Kurniawan (2014) says that application of storytelling method on young EFL learners is very productive to develop foreign language vocabulary. He has done same experiment on young learners of Bunga Mayang School. The results prove that storytelling is the best way to develop EFL vocabulary. According to Willis (2001) children acquire language unconsciously. Teachers need to create an environment which should help in language acquisition. Storytelling is good for improving Listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Furthermore, stories provide a enjoying environment to learn.

Brewster (2002) says children love to listen stories because these are according to their choice. Storytelling at begging level of education develops interest of learning between learners. Listening story has many positive benefits. Brewster says story telling enrich the experience of learning a foreign language. Learners can recall their previous knowledge and add some new words into their sentences. Moreover, he says that teachers need to develop Interest between learners. Storytelling increases the vocabulary.

Cleik (2003) says that use of pictures can be a good method to develop EFL vocabulary in learners. There are many ways to improve vocabulary such as, drawing, flashcards, and use of gestures and action is also valuable when you are telling story to young EFL learners. He focuses on one thing that (90%) words can be entered into learner's minds through stories and pictures.

Richards (2006) says storytelling is mode of better communication in English classroom and it develops vocabulary. EFL learners pick the new word easily and leaning foreign language becomes easy in classroom. Richards has also used digital screen which is very helpful to learners in language acquisition and Learners understand the words deeply.

Slatterly and Wills (2001) say that teachers need to create a environment which should help the young learners in language acquisition. Storytelling is good for improving listening, reading, writing and speaking skills. Moreover, storytelling provides a very enjoyable environment to learn.

Krashen (1981) says young EFL students can learn faster through stories. Just need to have natural environment and special attention. Krashen (2011) says storytelling Is an attractive process. Vocabulary is the most important element in EFL learning. Post test shows great improvement in experimental group.

### Research methodology

Stories are good and very useful way to Improve EFL vocabulary. For learning a foreign language such as English, grip on vocabulary is essential. This paper assesses how Taimor public school Sahiwal learners improve their EFL vocabulary through stories. In this

experiment 30 young EFL learners of class 4 (age 9 to 11) are examined for 30 days. students are divided into two groups 1st control group and second experimental group. Each group has 15 members. There is equal number of students in both groups who are high achievers in their past educational career.

**Table No. 1**

Experimental Group	Control Group	Previous Educational Record
Ali	Saad	Outstanding
Hamza	Talha	Excellent
Fahad	Fiza	Very good
Arham Kamran	Mustqeen Ahsan	Average
Zubair	Aahd	Low
Other		Satisfying

As mentioned in the table that, student's past academic career is not same. Some of them are position holders in all classes and most students have average academic record. Before study, pretest has taken from both groups. For purpose of study, entertaining environment provided to experimental group. While, control group is allowed to study through traditional method. The story syllabus is same for both groups. Work has started on regular basis. In one week one short story is provided to EFL learners.

Experimental group watch the stories on digital screen and listen them. while control group just listen the same story by routine method.

### **Theoretical framework**

Many researchers have performed different ways to develop EFL vocabulary in the world like; through pictures, use of dictionary and stories. But, storytelling, listing or watching on digital screen is very useful technique. Children like to learn in enjoyable condition.

Ameer (2014) says it is difficult for young EFL learners to learn a foreign language. He says if playful and joyful environment is provided to young EFL learners, they can learn a foreign Language more easily. He has performed his experiment on of Al- Imams Ali Primary School. He has provided enjoying environment instead of conventional methods of teaching. To improve vocabulary, he has used digital stories. 30 students of class three (age 7-9) are examining for three weeks. School children are divided into two groups, experimental and control group. Before experiment, pretest has taken from both groups. Total two same lessons are provided to both. Control group read the lessons according to traditional method while, experimental group watch and listen the same lessons on digital screen. After three weeks post test has taken, which shows great improvement in experimental group. Control group (30 to 40%) while experimental group (65 to 75%). Findings indicates that if students are provided a enjoyable environment, it is good source to develop EFL vocabulary in young learners.

### **Data collection**

There are 30 young EFL learners in the study which are equally divided into two groups. Before experiment of improving EFL vocabulary through stories, pretest has been taken from both groups. Pretest includes multiple choice questions. These questions are only 20 simple textbook questions and learners are slightly familiar from these questions already.

**Table No.2**

#### **Result of pretest**

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Group	N	Mean
Experimental	15	11.1
Control	15	10.7

As shown in the table No.2, almost performance of both groups is not satisfying because children are unable to get good marks. But as usual high achievers of both groups have performed well. But their performance is also not appreciable in vocabulary test. In 4 weeks experiment, after each week one story has provided to learners. The names of stories are given in the following table.

**Table No.3**

Weak No.	Name of story	No. of repetitions
1	The Lion And Mouse	3
2	The Magic Tree	4
3	The Lazy Horse	3
4	Thirsty Crow	3

Table No.3 shows the names of stories which are used during experiment to improve vocabulary. Experimental group watch and listen the story on screen. While control group read it with traditional way and same method used for next three weeks. After 30 days experiment, post test has taken from both groups again.

The results of post test are wonderful. There is a big gap between pretty test and post test. Experimental group performed so well as compared to control group.

**Table No. 4**

**Results of Posttest**

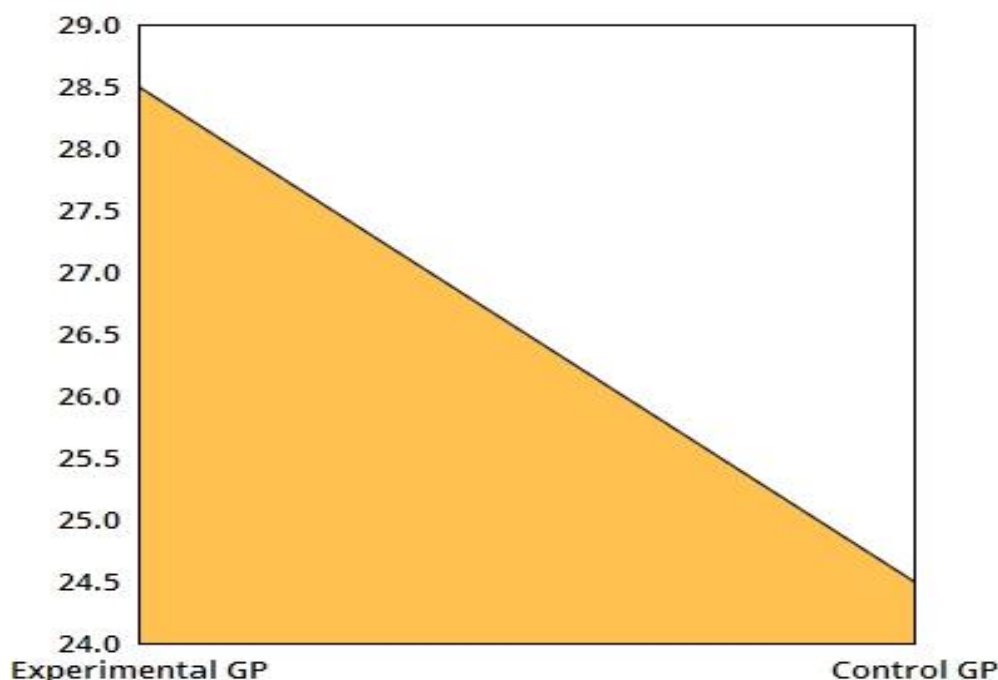
Group	No.of students	Mean
Experimental Group	15	28.5
Control Group	15	24.5

Post test consists of thirty numbers paper. Each question has one mark. As shown in the above table No.4, in post test mean score is very good than control group. Even Average participants of experimental group performed really well than high achievers of control group.

**Graph No.1**



**Difference in result of both groups**



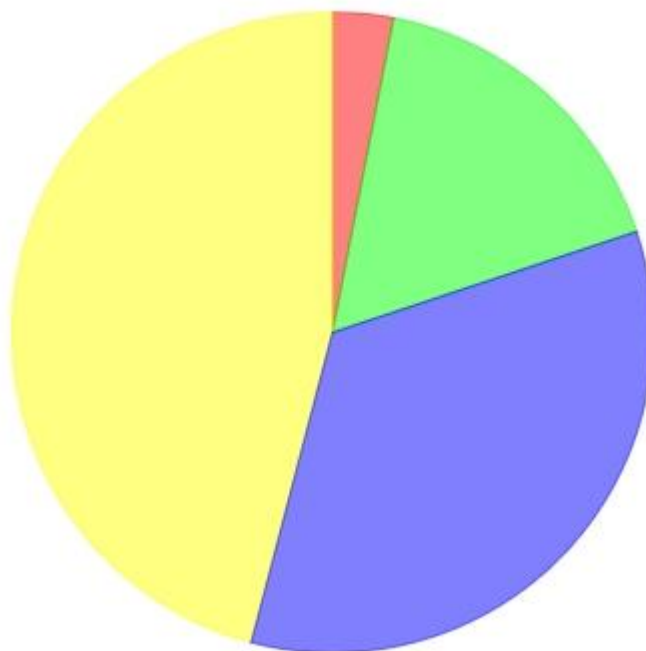
As graph No.1 indicates a big difference in results of control and experimental group. The average of experimental group is 28.5 marks out of 30. While, control group has 24.5% average in same test. So, result showing the positive impacts of using stories to improve vocabulary. Students of experimental group are dominating on control group.

### **Data Analysis**

After 30 days of experiment, post test has been taken from EFL vocabulary learners. It has been noticed that storytelling has been successful to develop EFL vocabulary. The post test taken from experimental and control group show that performance of experimental group is very good than control group. Moreover, stories provide an entertaining environment of learning as Pardede, (2011) says that storytelling is mode of self enjoyment and interesting tool to develop vocabulary. He has also performed the storytelling method in his experiment. The findings indicates that experimental group is able to remember so many words. When post test has been taken before experiment the results are equal of both groups. Then during experiment same stories provided to both groups. But the difference method of learning for experimental and control group. In first week experimental group listen the story and watch the same story” The lion and Cow” on digital device. The story recalled and replayed three times, and for next three weeks same method has used. A mini assessment has taken from children. In the quiz there are questions related to story. Like; (Circle the name of animal which is shown in the picture). All the children done well. Some of them scored 100% grades, and for next three weeks same type of quizzes have been conducted. The results of quizzes are shown in the following pie chart.

### **Graph No.2**

#### **Weakly progress report**

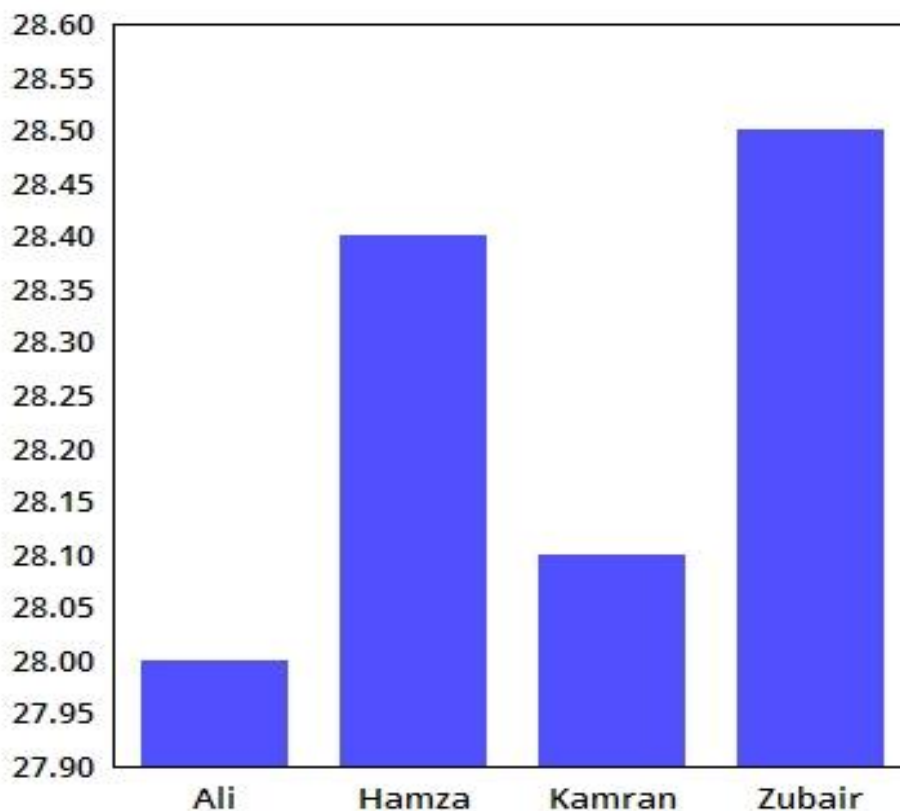


The above pie graph No.2 showing the weakly performance of EFL learners. The pink color shows progress of students in first weak, green part represents their performance during second weak, purple color shows third weak performance and the big yellow part covers the final weak progress among children. As graph indicates that, there is positive progress in learners after every weak.

Finally, after teaching four stories (one each week) post test has conducted. This test covers all type of questions regarding vocabulary. It has been noticed that average students showed outstanding performance. Retelling of stories has also positive impacts on learners.

### Graph No.3

#### Performance of students in experiment



Graph No.3 indicates the performance of students which have average or low educational background except Ali. In the post test of 30 marks. All of them performed better than higher achievers of control group. The change in positive performance is only due to change of learning method. Graph proves that low level students can perform well, just need to change method of teaching.

### Findings

Research proves there is a big difference between experimental and control group. To develop EFL vocabulary, there no any more way from stories. Environment plays very important role in learning. Effects of environment can be seen in this research. The performance of experimental group is better just due to environment and new ways of improving vocabulary. Students are able to identify the words and save them for long time. The undertaken experiment is very helpful to increase the vocabulary of English. The storytelling approach covers all the aspects of learning foreign language especially vocabulary. It has been noticed that conventional methods of learning words are less fruitful as compared to storytelling. To develop interest of learning in young EFL learners, storytelling is the suitable method. To get better results from learners, teachers need to create entertaining environment in EFL classroom and by storytelling a low-level child can learn and improve the vocabulary easily.

### Conclusion

Storytelling is easy technique to develop EFL vocabulary at primary level education. English is the compulsory subject and an global language. So, grip on English language is need of



time. To learn a language vocabulary has been considered very important element and to improve vocabulary, storytelling is a good method in enjoying condition. If children have provided entertaining environment they learn and acquire the knowledge easily. Research proves the long gap between control group and experimental group. The low-level participants get good marks in post test. In future research has great significance because the method used in this hypothesis is so easy and successful yet. Young EFL learners of Taimor Public School adopted many new words through stories. Children are able to remember most of new words into their minds instead of completely forgetting. By storytelling method students are able to add new words own its own and make some phrases. Vocabulary is more important than grammar. For increasing vocabulary stories are the best choice. Teachers need to perform same method in EFL classrooms to develop vocabulary of foreign language.

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