

Explicit instructional techniques used in teaching vocabulary through reading

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Abstract

The objective of this action research is to find out the instructional techniques used in class to teach vocabulary items that are encountered in reading passages. A combination of both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods was used. Primary data were collected through self-observation and attentive classroom observation supported by record keeping in the form of note taking. First, a checklist of techniques for direct vocabulary instruction reflecting the researcher's own teaching was made. This checklist was based on the sample checklist of 'Techniques for Direct Vocabulary Instruction' published in Grabe & Stoller, 2002. The data were analyzed to find out the trends in the use of certain vocabulary-teaching techniques and to understand why certain approaches had been preferred over certain others by the teacher. The explicit vocabulary teaching techniques that had been used are analysis of word parts, anecdotes or stories highlighting word meaning, definitions, dictionary consultation, discussing of word meaning, games, illustrations /drawings on the blackboard, synonyms/antonyms and translation. The data very clearly show that the vocabulary-teaching technique that is used mostly, with a total of 76, is giving dictionary definitions to students. The techniques that are under-used are games and analysis of word parts.

Keywords: Teaching Vocabulary, Instructional Techniques, Teaching Reading, Action Research, Self-observation