RESEARCH ARTICLE

REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF TEXTUAL GLOSSES ON VOCABULARY LEARNING

Fatima Mohamed Ali Hamed

English Department, Faculty of Languages
Sudan University of Science and Technology

ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the role of textual glosses on English vocabulary learning as second language. It used experimental, descriptive and analytical method. The study sample included (80) university students who were randomly divided into three groups: L1 group, L2 group and non-gloss group. All groups were subjected to pre-test and post- test. Following statistical analysis, 64% of students have failed and 36% participants have passed. This indicates that the participants have real difficulties related to unfamiliar words. The researcher recommends that syllabus designers and material developers as well as English teachers and instructors to consider textual glosses while designing or teaching.

تهدف الدراسة الي معرفة دور المسارد المعجمية علي تعلم المفردات اللغوية الانجليزية كلغة ثانية. استخدم الدراسة المنهج التجريبي الوصفي التحليلي. اشتملت عينة الدراسة علي عدد (80) طالبا وطالبة والذين تم تقسيمهم بطريقة عشوائية الي ثلاث مجموعات: المجموعة الاولي تلقت شرح الكلمات الجديدة باللغة العربية بينما تلقت المجموعة الثانية شرحا باللغة الانجليزية بينما المجموعة اما الثالثة لم تتلقي اي من الطرقتين. خضعت كل المجموعات الي اختبار قبلي وبعدي. وتوصل الباحث الي ان   64نسبة النجاح بلغت 36% % بينما بلغت نسبة الرسوب 64% بعد اجراء التحليل مما يشير الي ان المشاركين يواجهون صعوبة حقيقة فيما يتعلق بالكلمات الغير مالوفة. يوصي الاباحث مصممي و منقحي المناهج ومعلمي وموجهي اللغة الانجليزية ان يضعوا في الاعتبار المسارد المعجمية اثناء عملية تصميم المناهج او التدريس.

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary knowledge is considered the key ingredient in successful reading. The direct link between vocabulary and reading has been made in L2 research in that vocabulary enhances reading comprehension and reading in turn increase vocabulary knowledge. It was reported that L2 learners are often reluctant to read (Day & Bamford,(1998) because they regard reading as an unpleasant and painful process to the extent that the lack of reading leads to the lack of vocabulary that is a big problem for L2 learners. Furthermore, it is necessary for EFL learners to read without using dictionary to enjoy reading and to overcome feeling of frustration by unknown words. It is mentioned that one of the major factors in unsuccessful reading can be a lack of noticing. In his Noticing Theary, Schmidt (1995) emphasizes that conscious   attention is necessary for learning and noticing is generally the first stage of learning. It is highly possible that during reading, the readers fail to notice unknown words learning will not occur.

Numerous researches (e.g; Yoshii, 2006; Nation, 2002) referred to glossing as one of the most effective tools for increasing noticing that enhances vocabulary learning among EFL learners. Nation (2002 pp.174-175) defines gloss as "a brief definition or synonym of unknown words provided in text in L1 or L2. According to Paribakht and wesche (1999), Parry (1997), and Watanabe (1997), glossing is necessary since the problems raised from extensive reading. Glosses are considered as a very useful tools which facilitate reading in a foreign language (Watanabe,1997). Using the gloss is easier and minimizes the interrupts of reading flow compared to using dictionary that is time-consuming and interrupts the process (Ko, 2005; Nation, 2002).

A number of researchers investigated the effects of glosses on vocabulary learning (Poole, 2011; Yee, 2010; Fang, 2009; Lage 2008, Yoshii, 2006; Loucky, 2005: Watanabe,1997). As there is no doubt about the advantages of glossing for incidental vocabulary learning, research questions shifted from gloss effect to gloss type. The comparison of the studies on the effects of L1 gloss and L2 gloss brought inconsistent results, some revealed no differences between two types (e.g; Chen , 2002; Jacobs, 1994;) and others reported the advantages of one gloss type over the other gloss type (Xu, 2010; Yee, 2010 Cheng & Good, 2009, Lu et al. (2005, as cited in Hong, 2010) in vocabulary learning. As it was mentioned earlier, there is no consistency in the results of studies pertinent to L1 and L2 glosses, and the effect of different textual glosses on vocabulary learning still remains as an open question that needs further investigation. Accordingly, the researcher intends to address this issue in the present study.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The researcher has focused on the theory of Schmidt (1995) Noticing Hypothesis. According to Schmidt "noticing" is the subjective correlate of what psychologist call "attention". He stressed that intentional attention is necessary in successful learning. Accordingly, in this study the researcher provided textual gloss (L1 glosses and L2glosses)in order to take the EFL learners' attention to unknown words and facilitate their vocabulary learning.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

Definition of Glosses: A gloss is a brief marginal definition of meaning of words or wording in a text. It may be in the language of the text or in the learner's language if that is different. According to, (Lomicka.1998.p,41) "the theory of glossing dates to Middle Ages when students struggling with a foreign text ,usually Latin ,produced them as they moved along during the reading process. They are typically located in side or bottom margins of a page, and most often supplied for unfamiliar words, which may help to timid continual dictionary consultation that may hinder and interrupt the L2 reading comprehension process". However, this learner oriented technique was soon a adopted by teachers and pedagogues so that they could present a short definition or note for unknown words to facilitate the reading comprehension process for L2 learners. The issue of glossing by no means medieval phenomena now. Nation (1990) define glossing as "a method of providing the definition / explanation of unfamiliar word or concept while students are reading for comprehension"(p.44).   (Leloup and Pontrio.2000.p,7) refer to the current status of glossing as the case that appear when reader clicks on the glossed vocabulary take various forms some are text explanations only generally using a combination of target language and English language words other are pictorial representation of meaning of the word or phrase .Glosses generally means information on important words via definition or synonyms (Nation, 2001, Richgeles & Matega, 1984)

Types of glosses

There are different types of glosses used in vocabulary learning such as placing the glosses in the margin of the text or at the bottom of a written text ,There might be different types of verbal information such as L1glossing (translation in nation language), L2 glossing (definition synonym or antonym), L1 multiple choice glossing (where learners are asked to select the best translation from a set of alternatives),L2 dictionary definition ,use of sentence contexts (which illustrate how the target word is used in a silences designed to provide coleus to its meaning),cultural notes ,question or references and so on .

Some studies have shown that students prefer to have glosses in their L2 language reading materials. Other studies find that even L1 glosses enabled students to comprehend more easily while reading. Also some shown that there is no different between using L1 or L2 glosses.

Only the second language (L2) gloss condition significantly affected students' reading comprehension. However, think-aloud protocols revealed that both types of glosses made their reading smoother and faster than who read without glosses (Moyng, 2005).

There are different types of glosses used in reading materials such as placing the glosses in the margin or at the bottom of a written text. Also there might be different types of verbal information such as L1glossing (translation in the native language). L 2 glossing (definition , synonym or antonym).

According to Zari and Hasani ,(2011) there are different categorization of glossing based on form, position and language.

Fatima Mohamed Ali Hamed

A number of researches had investigated the role of textual glosses on vocabulary learning. The type of glosses had been investigated as well, Azari, (2015) investigated the textual glosses on lexical development of EFL learners, the study revealed that beneficial for those who are interested in applying the related psychological application of learning theories specially in vocabulary, teaching of reading, and the development of reading material in EFL/ ESL contexts. Attempts to compare the role of L1, and L2 glosses have brought mixed results, some indicating no differences between the two types and other suggesting the advantage of one glosses type over other type (Chen, 2002, jab cabs et al; 1994 Miy as Akko, 2002) Jacobs et al (1992) for instance compared L1, with L2 glosses with 85 English – speaking participant who were studying Spanish as a second language text with 613 words. They read a Spanish text with 613 words under three conditions; (1) L1 English gloss; (2) L2 (Spanish) gloss; and (3) No gloss. After reading the text with 32 words or phrases glosses or phrases glossed and presented in bold face. The participants received two vocabulary tests unexpectedly: one immediately after the reading and the other   four weeks later .The results of immediate test showed that glosses condition (either L1 or L2) were better than no glosses; however, the result did not indicate any significant difference between L1 and L2, but the questionnaire revealed that the participants preferred L2 glosses to L1 glosses.

QUESTION OF THE STUDY

To what extent do EFL learners prefer to use glosses whether in L1 or L2?

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

EFL learners prefer to use glosses whether in L1 or L2.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The type of methodology to be used in this study is experimental and analytical methodology. The participants of this study are 80 students of Sudan University of Science and Technology. They are placed to take their test , after they were divided into three group (L1 glosses group, L2 glosses group and non glosses group). The results of this study will analyze using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS

Table (2.) the frequency and percentage distribution of the students according to section (1)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Failure	55	63.3
Success	25	36.7
Total	80	100

from the above table No.(2) and figure No (1) it's shown that there are as many as (55) students in the study's sample with percentage (63.2 %)   have managed to produce the wrong answer in section number 1 (*Choose the meaning of underlined words or phrases from the given four alternatives*) . There are (25) persons with percentage(36.7) have success
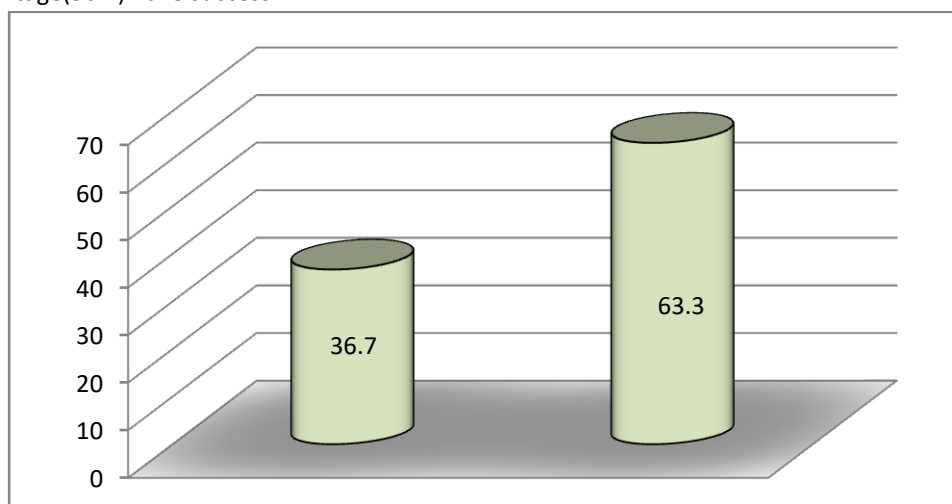

This result indicates that learners without having any aid or device to help them explore the meaning in a reading text can hardly get along reading comprehension. The first question is a short reading text which is

intended to test the students' abilities in understanding without reference to any resource of clarification such as dictionaries.

Table (3.) the frequency and percentage distribution of the students according to section (2)

Valid	Frequency	Percentage
Success	50	63.3
Failure	30	36.7
Total	80	100

from the above table No.(3) and figure No (2) its shown that there are (50) students in the study's sample with percentage (63.3%) are success the test in section number 2 *(Choose the words below that best complete the sentences in the text:)* There are (30) persons with percentage (36.7 %) are failures.
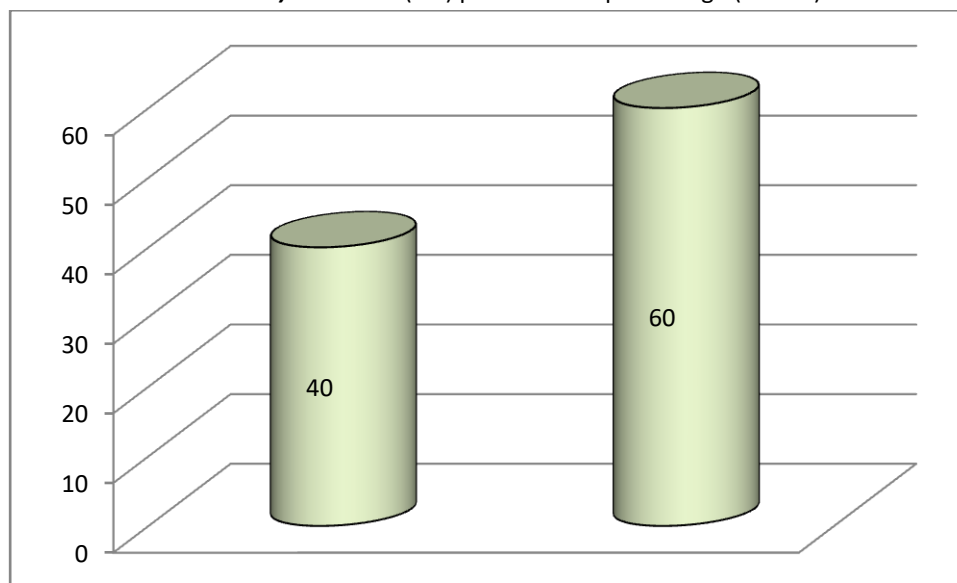

This question is on vocabulary where the result demonstrates quite clearly that students have very poor vocabulary and without resorting to a dictionary their word choice and understanding can barely be successful.

Table (4) the frequency and percentage distribution of the students according to **section (3)**

Valid	Frequency	Percentage
Success	46	64
Failure	34	36
Total	80	100

from the above table No.(4) and figure No (3) its shown that there are (46) students in the study's sample with percentage (46.0%) are success the test in section number 2 *(Choose the words below that best complete the sentences in the text)* .There are (34) persons with percentage (36.0 %) are failure
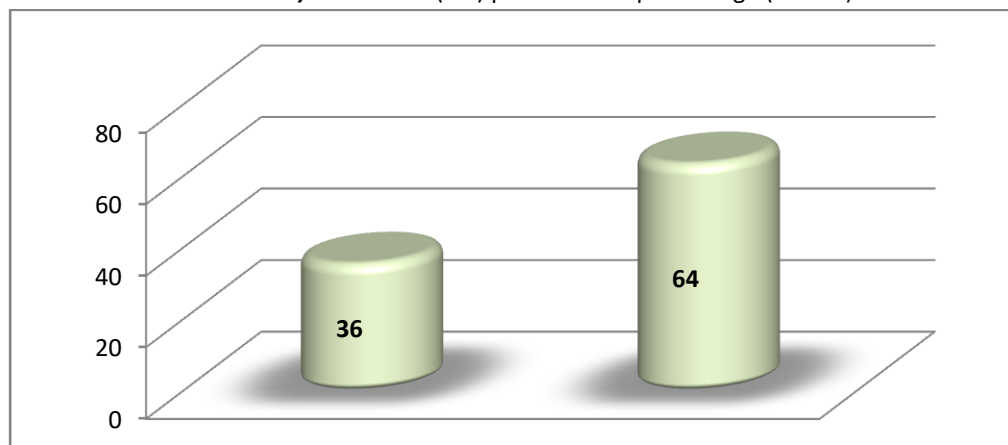
The result is comparatively better than the preceding ones as this is one of the questions which the students have practiced quite often and have had good training on doing it. It is a multiple-choice type of question.

Fatima Mohamed Ali Hamed

Table (5) one sample T-TEST for the questions of the study

Sections	N	mean	SD	t-value	DF	p-value
1	80	3.6	0.2	14.5	79	0.002
2	80	2.7	1.81	17.1	79	0.001
3	80	3.4	2.44	7.17	79	0.012
For all	80	6.33	4.03	15.50	79	0.032

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the section No (1) was (14.5) which is greater than the tabulated value of T – TEST at the degree of freedom (79) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (2.34). this indicates that, there is statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents . this mean that our hypothesis is accepted .

The determination value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the section No (2) was (17.1) which is greater than the tabulated value of T – TEST at the degree of freedom (79) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (2.34). this indicates that, there is statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents . this mean that our hypothesis is accepted .

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the section No (3) was (7.17) which is greater than the tabulated value of T – TEST at the degree of freedom (79) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (2.34). this indicates that, there is statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents . this mean that our hypothesis is accepted .

DISCUTION

In this study, glosses were incorporated into a text to raise EFL learners' matching option and thereby to improve their vocabulary learning and retention. There are several factors that can account for this effectiveness: One possibility that the use of glosses arouses learners' noticing to unfamiliar words (Schmidt, 1992). Glosses successfully draw learners' attention and create an ideal word learning condition of consciousness raising and input- enhancement (Hee Ko, 2012; Lin & Huang 2008; Pishghadam and Ghahri, 2011). In this study, the review of related studies revealed that textual glosses are effective tools in L2 vocabulary learning, but which kind of textual glosses are useful is still an open question. The researchers can review the studies on the effects of other gloss types on vocabulary learning.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the results of the study sport the use of L2 glosses and that teachers, materials developers, and text designers can take advantage of them particularly when the goal is to promote incidental vocabulary learning through reading

REFERCES

Azari,F. (2012) , *Review of effects of textual glosses on incide*ntal vocabulary learning International Journal of innovative Idea, 12 (2), 13-24.

Chen, H. (2002). *Investigating the effects of L1 and L2 glosses on foreign language reading comprehension and vocabulary retention. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Computer-Assisted Language Instruction Consortium, Davis, CA.*

Cheng Y,. & Good. R.L. (2009). *L1 glosses: Effects on EFL learners" reading comprehension and vocabulary retention. Reading in a Foreign Language, 21(2),119-142. ISSN 15374.*

Day, R. R. and Bamford, J. (1998*) Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [9.4]*

Fang, S. (2009*), Chinese gloss or English gloss: Which is more effective on incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading? Retrieved at 12 January 2012 from htt:// www. Essays.se/essay/a2eca 18 b e 6/*

Hee Ko (2012). Glossing and second language vocabulary learning. TESOL Quarterly, 46, 56-79.

Hong, X (2010*), Review of effects of glosses on incidental vocabulary learning and reading comprehension. Chinese Journal of Applied.*

Fatima Mohamed Ali Hamed

Jacobs, G. M., Dufo, P., & Hong, F. C.(1994*). L1 and L2 vocabulary glosses in L2 reading passages: Their effectiveness for increasing comprehension and vocabulary knowledge. Journal of research in Reading,17(1), 19-28.*

Ko, M. H. (2005*). Glosses, comprehension, and strategy use. Reading in a Foreign Language, 17 (2), 125-143.*

Lomicka, L. L. (1998). *To gloss or not to gloss: An investigation of reading comprehension online. Language learning and Technology, 1 (2), 41-50TESOL, Inc.*

Loucky, J. P. (2005*), Combining the benefits of electronic and on line dictionaries with CALL web sites to produce effective enjoyable vocabulary and language learning lessons. Computer-Assisted language learning, 18 (5), 389-416 Hienle.*

Nation, I. S. P. (2002*). Learning vocabulary in another language. The Cambridge Applied Linguistic Series. Cambridge University Press.*

Parry, K. (1997*). Vocabulary and comprehension: Tow portraits. In Coady & Huckin 1997: 54-68.* Parry, K. (1997*). Vocabulary and comprehension: Tow portraits. In Coady & Huckin 1997: 54-68.*

Paribakht, T. S, & Wesehe,M. (1999), *"Incidental" vocabulary acquisition through reading : An interceptive study. Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 21(2), 203-220.*

Pishghadam   and Ghahri   (2011) The impact of glossing on incidental vocabulary learning:A comparative study. Iranian *EFL Journal, 7. 8-29.*

Poole, R (2011), Concordance- based glosses for facilitating semantization and enhancing productive knowledge of academic vocabulary. Unpublished Master Thesis. The University of Alabama Tusaloosa, Alabama.

Schmidt, R. (1995*).* Consciousness and foreign language learning: A tutorial on the role of attention and awareness. In R. Schmidt (Ed.), *Attention and awareness in foreign language teaching and learning (Technical Report No. 9) (pp. 1-64). Honolulu: University of Hawaii at Manoa*.

XU, X (2012), The effects of glosses on incidental vocabulary acquisition in reading School of Foreign Language. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 1 (2), 117-120.*

Yee, S. W.(2010) *Short- term and long-term retention of now word: Investigating the role of L1 glosses in vocabulary learning among Hong Kong ESL learners* Unpublished Master Dissertation The University of Hong Kong.

Yoshii, M. (2006). L1 and L2 glosses: Their effects on incidental vocabulary learning and Technology*, 3 (10), 85-101.*