

## The Usefulness of Reading English Newspaper on Vocabulary Knowledge at Primary Level Students of Bangladesh

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### ABSTRACT

*This study looks at the impact of English newspapers on Bangladeshi primary school pupils' vocabulary knowledge. The researchers used a non-equivalent control group design in a quasi-experimental study approach. This study enlisted the participation of 44 Year 5 pupils. These participants were from the same age range and English proficiency level as the control intact group and experimental intact group at a primary school in a rural setting in Mujibnagar, Bangladesh. The data was gathered using a pre- and post-testing trial. The information was analysed using descriptive statistics and SPSS software. According to the results of the study, using an English newspaper as part of a lesson helped Year 5 children enhance their vocabulary. They also have favourite reading genres and favourable feelings about reading the newspaper. The researchers provide several recommendations for further study and preparation in the area of using newspapers to help ESL students enhance their vocabulary knowledge.*

**Keywords:** ESL Students, Reading, Newspaper, Vocabulary Knowledge

### INTRODUCTION

Many people use English as their primary language all across the world. According to Marpaung (2017), English is the key to the global currencies of technology and business. They use English for a variety of purposes, including commerce, trade, education, and travel. "The English language requires four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as a big vocabulary; nonetheless, the number of words in any language cannot be calculated" (Marpaung & Sinaga, 2019). Learning English nowadays opens many doors, including landing a good job at a large multi-national company both inside and outside of one's own country, negotiating a business deal with another company, receiving a fully funded scholarship from a reputable university, or simply travelling around the world. Learning English in a country where it is not a native language presents a person with a number of opportunities, according to Pandey and Pandey (2014). "Vocabulary objects are essential for all parts of the English language, including hearing, speaking, reading, and writing" (Nation, 2011). The development of a vocabulary is one of the most crucial aspects of learning English. Every day, tens of thousands of words are said. To

speaking in English, one must have a large vocabulary; consequently, it is vital to improve and grow one's vocabulary. Without a sufficient vocabulary, it is impossible to interact with others, express ideas or views, absorb fundamental information, or listen to instructions. There would be no language without vocabulary, according to Rosyidah and Giyoto (2018). Actually, vocabulary is the foundation for learning English and is one of the components of language; there is no language without vocabulary. To increase their English skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing, students must have a vocabulary.

According to Viera, vocabulary knowledge is considered as a crucial tool for obtaining any language talents; it also aids in the understanding of written and spoken materials (2018). "Learning vocabulary is tough for students, especially Bangladeshi students who use English as a second language. According to Mthethwa, "using a combination of text, sound, graphics, video, or animation to teach vocabulary is becoming a key aspect of instructional practise in language acquisition" (2018). It will make vocabulary study more pleasant for students. However, it is common knowledge in Bangladesh that students read

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books mostly for national exams rather than for personal pleasure or to learn more (Sultana, 2018; Rimi, 2019; Mustafa, 2018). Kids lack vocabulary knowledge as a consequence of their lack of exposure to reading materials and their lack of interest in reading for pleasure (Ali & Razali, 2019). Furthermore, the Bangladesh English language curriculum, according to Sultana (2018), does not match the needs of elementary school students. To remedy these issues, Bangladeshi students must begin reading at a young age, preferably in primary school, so that their vocabulary expands and they may excel in their primary studies well into their tertiary studies. Studying and using realistic resources in class is one strategy to assist English language students prepare for real life (Tamo, 2009). Newspapers may help pupils learn new words, and there are a range of topics that appeal to teenagers and children. Furthermore, including newspaper articles into everyday lessons has a significant impact on both teaching and learning. In Bangladesh, like in other Asian countries, access to contemporary forms of media, such as online news, is becoming increasingly popular. However, in certain cases in Bangladesh, access to these online resources may be restricted. Furthermore, limiting pupils' capacity to study from genuine sources such as newspapers by concentrating only on digital text and online media (Mohamad Jamrus & Razali, 2019). Newspapers are widely used because, in contrast to other resources such

as magazines, books, and even digital texts, they are easily available. As a consequence, the purpose of this research is to evaluate how effective it is for Bangladeshi ESL students to use English newspapers to increase their vocabulary.

### NEWSPAPER AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Educators are concerned about their students' lack of enthusiasm in learning new terms and are attempting to provide techniques and tools to encourage them to do so. Textbooks are widely utilised in classrooms because they cater to specific language needs and the gradual development of language ability (Wang, et al, 2011). "One technique for helping English language students prepare for real life is to study and use actual materials in class" (Tamo, 2009). Gilmore's (2011) study sought to determine how practical tools may aid Japanese learners in improving their communicative English abilities. Sixty-two second-year English major university students were assigned at random to one of two groups: the control group, which received textbook input, or the experimental group, which received authentic input such as films, documentaries, reality shows, TV comedies, songs, novels, and newspaper articles. In this research, figure 1 shows how the newspaper is used as a real resource to increase vocabulary skills.



Figure1. Advantages of Newspaper

In his study, Afrin (2016) revealed that Bangladeshi primary school students struggled to grasp topics from their English textbook. Furthermore, the researcher discovered in his investigation that elementary school children can only comprehend basic text with simple word structures. Learners' ability to participate fully in class and complete long-term tasks or activities is directly hampered by a lack of

vocabulary knowledge. As a consequence, an efficient method of investigating this subject is urgently needed. "One of the most essential tools available to both educators and students is newspapers" (Valva, 2009). Newspapers, according to Valva, may be used as a motivating medium to inspire and excite students to engage in reading and organised activities. As a consequence, printed media, such as

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newspapers, serve as an important teaching and learning tool for both teachers and students. It aids teachers in leading activities that incorporate content that is relevant to today's lifestyle and expectations. The biggest motives for young people to read, according to Shen (2006), were information and entertainment. Periodicals and newspapers are their preferred reading materials, according to the results of the poll. According to Ahmmed (2016), the newspaper also functions as a textbook, containing the most up-to-date information on both local and global topics. Students will be able to increase their knowledge while also strengthening their English language abilities as a consequence of this. "Learning language in context is vital," it is evident, and newspapers seem to be a wonderful resource for this (Shoari & Aidinlou, 2015). Reading English newspapers allows pupils to enhance their vocabulary and learn to read a section fast while absorbing the text's main points (Ahmmed, 2016). The use of newspapers as an additional resource material in the teaching and learning of English has risen in recent years (Pandey, 2019). Newspapers may help you enhance your English language skills (Wolswinkel, 2008). "English courses may be interesting when teachers and students discuss the daily news that is published in newspapers,"

according to a research by Afzal and Harun (2013). Reading news articles, according to them, may help students grasp how the writer conveys their opinions and manipulates the word knowledge.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to see whether reading English newspapers enhances the vocabulary knowledge of primary school students. In this case, the study employed quasi-experimental research, which comprised a pre-and post-test technique as well as treatment to increase their vocabulary knowledge. The research was conducted at a rural primary school in Meherpur, Bangladesh. The researchers chose one classroom of 44 Year 5 ESL children, aged 11 years old, for this quasi-experimental investigation. In this research, there were 44 students who joined in the experiment. Out of these 44 students, 22 students were categorized as traditional method participants, and 22 students were categorized as treatment group participants in the teaching and learning vocabulary process by using authentic materials taken from English newspapers. In order to determine the research sample and size, Figure 1 illustrates the sampling procedure.

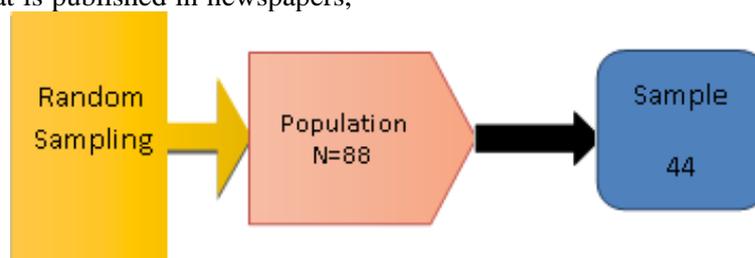


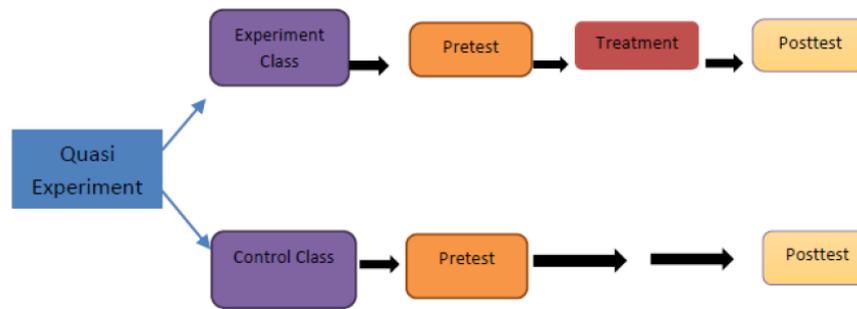
Figure 2. Research Sampling Procedure

This class was divided into two groups: control and experimental, with each receiving a pre-test. The experimental group was subsequently given the intervention and it was implemented. At the completion of the study, both groups were given a post-test to assess whether the experimental group had changed as a result of the intervention.

For both the control and experimental groups, each participant's total score was determined. Both the control and experimental groups accomplished this stage. Inferential statistics, such as paired samples, provide one example. Because it involves repeated assessments of related samples, the T-test was utilised in this study. To compare and obtain the mean value between the before and after testing, this version

of the T-Test was employed. The data from the post-intervention questionnaire was coded and tallied in the meanwhile. The raw data were tallied and analysed using descriptive analysis. To assess the students' reading preferences and attitudes about the use of newspapers in reading, a descriptive analysis was used to obtain the mean and standard deviation (Galti, 2018). The goal of this quantitative research is to determine students' preferences for newspaper topics as well as their views on leisure reading, particularly the use of newspapers to increase vocabulary knowledge. The quasi-experiment approach was utilised in this work, using a non-equivalent pretest-posttest control group design. The pretest and posttest study design is shown in Figure 2.

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**Figure2.** *Quasi-experiment with non-equivalent pretest-posttest control group design*

### RESULTS

#### Effectiveness of Newspaper in Improving ESL Students' Vocabulary Knowledge

Findings of Newspaper's Effectiveness in Improving ESL Students' Vocabulary. To analyse any differences in scores with and without the use of newspaper application, it is required to assess the possible difference between the results of pre- and post-vocabulary exams. To discover any statistical divergence, paired t-tests were employed to assess mean of score differences between two groups. After the students were given the treatment, the paired t-test was utilised to compare the results of the

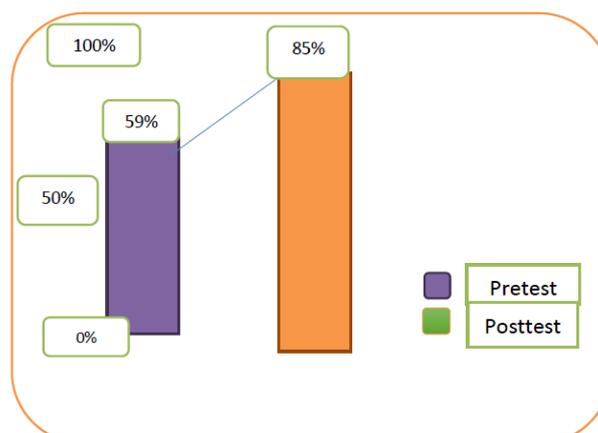
**Table2.** *Results of paired T-test for the differences of the pre-test and post-test for the experimental and control group*

Score	Pre-test (n=22)		Post-test (n=22)		T-test	Sig. 2-tailed
	M	SD	M	SD	t	p
Control	16.81	2.10	17.48	2.94	- 2.710	0.001
Experimental	15.92	2.96	18.39	2.41	- 12.978	< 0.000

In this study, the researchers revealed that the two groups had different variances, with a p value of 0.001 for the control group and 0.000 for the experimental group. This clearly shows that the control and experimental groups' vocabulary test scores differ considerably. As a consequence, including an English newspaper into the classroom helps students enhance their vocabulary. This is because kids learnt new

control and experimental groups. For this comparison, the vocabulary scores of both groups were compared in their pre- and post-tests. Table 2 reveals that students who utilised both an English textbook and were exposed to newspaper stories following the intervention scored better on tests than the control group (students who only used an English textbook). This is due to the fact that the experimental group's mean (M) value for the pre-test was 15.92, while the mean value for the post-test was 18.39. The significant differences show that children's vocabularies are improved by reading an English newspaper.

terminology via classroom activities and news articles, which they may use in their writing and daily discussions. Nonetheless, the researchers conclude that utilising an English newspaper as an intervention technique improves vocabulary knowledge in the experimental group. Figure 3 shows how the students' vocabulary achievement has improved:



**Figure3.** *The Improvement of the Students' Vocabulary Achievement*

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The result of this research showed that the use of newspapers as an authentic material resulted in the improvement of students' activeness and vocabularies. The pretest results of the students were less than 60. After posttest, the students got scores 85%. showed that the use of the authentic materials in the vocabulary teaching and learning process was successful to improve the number of students' vocabularies.

### DISCUSSION

It has been proved that the inclusion of English newspapers to the classroom considerably increased the experimental group's vocabulary knowledge. The use of English newspapers had a positive effect on the students' vocabulary level, as evidenced by the post-test scores. The paired t test used to compare the pre-test and post-test for both groups revealed that the use of English newspapers had a positive effect on the students' vocabulary level. Because of their exposure to the English newspaper, these children now have another way to learn and absorb the new concepts in the newspaper stories. Students' vocabulary post-test scores improved after the intervention (mean=18.39), demonstrating that the use of English newspapers aided students in acquiring new words using the scaffolding strategy. The experimental group's mean score increased from 15.92 to 18.39, demonstrating that reading English newspapers enhanced their vocabulary significantly.

Both the conventional and treatment groups in the grade 5 ESL class exhibited some improvement in vocabulary acquisition at the time of the quantitative test during the newspaper utility test period. Traditional groups from each class, who had just proceeded with their typical classroom and textbook study as before, showed less progress in test results than those who were given the job of using the newspaper. Indeed, the treatment groups' test performance gain was declared significant in the t-test analysis, indicating its benefit to learners, even those who demonstrated just rudimentary support for the programme.

Furthermore, the students' enthusiasm for utilising the newspaper as part of the lesson is crucial. During the intervention phase, the mean value clearly reveals that the students prefer to read the newspaper's "latest gadget and technology" section. Because of their age, the pupils want to learn more about the newest device so that they may share it with their

classmates. After that, there are sections for "movie and entertainment news," "Sudoku and riddles," and "Comic." All of these subjects and sections provide news on their present 21st-century surroundings and hobbies. As a result, in order to make the use of newspapers in the classroom more realistic, the types of news stories that are appropriate for the students' age groups and interests must be examined. Following that, the students' perceptions show that the instructor plays an important role in motivating them to read newspapers. With the mean value, instructors should include compelling lessons that require pupils to read the newspaper. Furthermore, kids around the age of twelve are more likely to read newspapers as a pleasure and to learn more. This suggests that Year 5 is an appropriate grade level for instructors to encourage children to read the newspaper by incorporating it into their lessons. According to Wolswinkel (2008), kids who have been exposed to newspapers as a reading material from childhood would develop a habit of reading them. As a result, the researcher argues that all of these elements must be taken into account in order to make the usage of English newspapers in the classroom more convenient.

In this sense, the usage of an English newspaper in the classroom may provide a platform for students to learn vocabulary, particularly when the instructor is present. This is because, as the intervention session progresses, students are more likely to engage with their classmates in order to finish the assignment than they were at the start. The instructor also leads the pupils to become more interested in the activity by cooperating with their colleagues, using Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding. When compared to using a textbook, where students rely on the instructor to supply the answer or solution, newspapers provide students the ability to study on their own with little supervision from the teacher. Furthermore, the newspaper's content appeals to their age group due to the incorporation of current trends and news. When opposed to a textbook, this makes it simpler for pupils to connect with the content in the newspaper.

"Using an English newspaper in the classroom encourages kids to build abilities that will help them become self-coordinated students," according to Olson and Prath (2000). This is because the instructor was able to add a subject that the kids were interested in depending on

their age group by guiding them to read newspapers as part of their lesson and encouraging them to read them outside of the classroom during the early phases of the intervention. The study's findings suggest that rather than relying just on textbooks or workbooks, or even just digital and online resources, a mix of educational techniques should be used. In language teaching and learning, the sort of instructional materials used is crucial. To teach vocabulary, teachers should utilise a range of techniques and resources (Shoari & Aidinlou, 2015; Mohamad Jamrus & Razali, 2019). As a consequence, the researchers provide a few suggestions for how to use English newspapers efficiently to assist ESL students enhance their English language vocabulary, as well as a few ideas for future research initiatives.

### 6.0 The Study's Limitations

This study is primarily concerned with the usage of newspapers to improve the vocabulary knowledge of elementary school children. As a result, it ignores alternative reading resources that might assist pupils increase their language skills and breadth of information. Furthermore, the participants are restricted to Bangladeshi primary school kids in a school context. As a result, in terms of boosting vocabulary level knowledge, this study does not include secondary school or other levels of education. Apart from the time limitation, the research could not have had a greater number of participants since only Year 5 children were used as volunteers owing to their English ability level. In educational research, it is strongly recommended that all of the research groups included in the study be taught by the same instructor in order to minimise risks to validity (Creswell, 2013). However, this is frequently beyond of the researcher's control, and it is influenced by variables such as school scheduling and administrative choices (Tan, 2016). As a result, two English language teachers were brought in to help. To ensure that the research's integrity was kept, the two English language teachers were well-informed and well-trained in the study's procedures and protocols, particularly in collecting data and ensuring that the study was done ethically. As a result, the results from this very small sample from one school in one area in Bangladesh may not be representative of pupils' vocabulary levels elsewhere. However, as a first inquiry, this work is still noteworthy, and it is anticipated

that it will lead to future comparable studies on a larger scale.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers believe it is vital to employ a range of teaching materials rather than relying just on the usage of textbooks. In language teaching and learning, the sort of instructional materials used is crucial. "To teach vocabulary, educators should employ a range of strategies and materials" (Shoari & Aidinlou, 2015; Jamrus & Razali, 2019). As a consequence, the researchers provide a few suggestions for how to use English newspapers efficiently to assist ESL students increase their English language vocabulary, as well as a few ideas for future research initiatives. More significantly, the results and conclusions of this research provide light on how English newspapers might be used to teach children vocabulary. The use of English newspapers should be made a part of English language education and the primary school curriculum to engage teachers and students in an engaging vocabulary lesson. The newspaper might be utilised as part of a lesson that compliments the textbook curriculum, given the nature of Bangladeshi education and the frequent usage of textbooks in classrooms. Teachers may arrange courses around the most recent and current events to keep students' interest.

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