EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES OF TEACHING VOCABULARY IN THE ESL CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this scientific article lies in the suggestion of effective methods in teaching vocabulary to college students. Teaching vocabulary and at the same time learning a new vocabulary may seem dull and very technical both for the teachers and students when they are given the checklist and the list of words with translation. The students may lose their interest in learning the certain language if the words are not utilised in any type of speech. Thus this project paper will suggest some practical ideas in order to enhance the vocabulary skill without putting pressure on bare learning by heart the words, but on the contrary making the learners to get motivated to learn more new topics subconsciously and time by time mixing them up with earlier learnt words both in oral and written speeches.

Key words: vocabulary, learners, ESL students, ESL vocabulary, vocabulary learning, exercises, lack of vocabulary, effective strategies, teaching vocabulary, various activities.

INTRODUCTION

In the ESL context, vocabulary not only supports the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but also mediates between ESL students and content-area classes in that these students often find that lack of vocabulary
knowledge is an obstacle to learning. Therefore, it follows that ESL vocabulary teaching and learning are often emphasized. In a similar fashion, if ESL teachers are attuned to effective strategies for teaching vocabulary, they could facilitate students’ proficiency in the four skills. A review of the literature on ESL vocabulary shows that whereas most studies have focused on effective teaching and learning, lacking are studies that provide Read noted that in studies on L2 vocabulary learning, a distinction had long been made between incidental and intentional learning, with the main focus on the former, especially exploring the extent to which students can learn vocabulary items incidentally while engaging in other language-learning activities. Furthermore, to augment incidental vocabulary-learning in the ESL classroom, it would be effective for teachers to provide students with target vocabulary items through tasks, as well as to ask them to read only the texts that include the target words. For example, students can read and retell text generatively, that is, in their own words. Also, in order to learn unknown words while reading a text, students can access a dictionary with various look-up options such as pictorial and verbal cues.

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

With regard to vocabulary retention, Hulstijn demonstrated that target vocabulary items were retained significantly longer when their meanings were correctly inferred than when explained by their synonyms. Joe argued that the retention of unfamiliar words was significantly facilitated when students engaged in a text-based task that demanded a higher level of generatively. Similarly, Hulstijn and Laufer demonstrated that EFL students who participated in a composition task could retain target words better than those engaged in a reading comprehension or fill-in task, which suggests that students who were involved in higher levels of vocabulary production-processing remembered target words better than those who were not [2.16]. Plass, Chun, Mayer, and Leutner stated that students remembered unknown words better when provided with both pictorial and
written annotations than when provided with only one kind or no annotation [6.98-100].

Considerable research has recently been conducted into the effectiveness of vocabulary teaching and learning through various activities or tasks. Lee and Muncie showed that a post-reading composition task helped ESL students improve the productive use of higher-level target vocabulary. Newton pointed out that students made more vocabulary gains when engaging in communicative tasks that demanded interactions than when negotiating word meanings explicitly. Wesche and Paribakht demonstrated that students learned vocabulary more effectively when they engaged in text-based vocabulary exercises in addition to reading a text than when they read multiple texts without exercises, because in the latter case, they could learn not only target words, but also their lexical features [5.73-74]. Further, Folse suggested that how frequently student retrieved unfamiliar words influenced their retention more than how deeply they were involved in processing them, which demonstrates that students could improve their retention of new target words more while engaging in multiple fill-in-the blank exercises than while writing one original sentence with each target word. Finally, Nassaji suggested that ESL students might groove ineffectively for lexical inferences about word meanings from context, so that teachers should provide them with a chance to identify and define exact meanings for unknown words [1.208]. Although a considerable number of studies on L2 vocabulary teaching and learning are available, lacking are examples of how teachers can apply the various research findings of scholars to their own teaching materials. In order not only to bridge the gap between theory and practice, but also to provide a springboard for ESL teachers’ design of vocabulary teaching materials, I have developed various activities and tasks for vocabulary teaching and learning that apply effective strategies drawn from others’ research findings to an authentic Web text, as follows (text drawn from the NASAWeb site; the five underlined words are the target vocabulary items).
The term *vocabulary* has a range of meanings. For example, some teachers use the term to mean *sight-word vocabularies*, referring to students’ immediate recognition of words in print; other teachers refer to words students understand as their *meaning vocabularies*. Still other teachers use the term to mean *listening vocabularies*, or students’ understanding of words that they hear in the spoken language. Content teachers use the term *academic vocabulary* to refer to content-specific words. Within this section, we use the term *vocabulary* to refer to students’ understanding of oral and print words. Vocabularies include conceptual knowledge of words that goes well beyond a simple dictionary definition. Students’ vocabulary knowledge is a building process that occurs over time as they make connections to other words, learn examples and non examples of the word and related words, and use the word accurately within the context of the sentence.

Why is vocabulary development such an important aspect of a student’s academic life? Think about the relationship of vocabulary to overall literacy development.

**RESULT**

A number of studies have shown that vocabulary size in young children is a strong predictor for success in later grades: The larger the children’s vocabularies in the primary grades, the greater their academic achievement in the upper grades. The National Reading Panel analyzed scientific studies that led them to conclude that readers’ vocabulary is strongly related to their understanding of text. The NRP explained that when students are taught key words before reading text, they have greater comprehension than students who do not receive such instruction. Clearly, the preponderance of such evidence led the NRP to emphasize vocabulary instruction as an essential element of the literacy program.

Also there are some ways for teaching vocabulary to marketing faculty students.

Marketing Vocabulary for English Learners: This marketing vocabulary page provides a core vocabulary reference sheet to help out with English for
Special Purposes courses, or for those English learners who want to improve vocabulary related to marketing.

Teachers are often not equipped with the exact English terminology required in specific trade sectors. For this reason, core vocabulary sheets go a long way in helping teachers provide adequate materials for students with English for Specific Purposes needs.

Notice that this list includes many collocations - words that usually go together. These collocations are often a combination of an adjective + noun. Here are some examples:

*Quality management* - We're looking to hire quality management for our marketing firm. *Socio-economic factors* - There are a number of socio-economic factors that we need to take into consideration.

*Customer satisfaction* - Customer satisfaction is our number one priority. *Potential market* - The potential market for our products is enormous.

Also, note that most of these expressions relate to different expressions related to a particular term.

*Market segmentation* - The market segmentation in Korea is very pronounced. *Market share* - If this advertising campaign is successful, we'll increase our market share.

*Market size* - The market size is somewhere between ten and twenty million. *Market survey* - Let's put out a market survey to begin our research. *Market test* - The market test was successful, so let's move ahead with the campaign.

Finally, remember that many if not most of these terms and phrases are compound nouns. Compound nouns are made up of a combination of two nouns.
Display material - Our display material was taken from a recent survey.

Product manager - The product manager is coming to the meeting next Wednesday.

Sales analysis - Let's include a sales analysis to check on the trends.

CONCLUSION

The ESL teacher can assist the academic language development of ELLs more effectively by providing them with the main topics of the curriculum, the content specific vocabulary and sentence structures related to what they learn in class. When teachers provide content specific vocabulary, ELLs have the opportunity to practice the new academic language through reading, writing and listening to it.

As much as I am aware of the fact that academic English vocabulary is generally difficult to understand for the average ELL, I would advise the teachers not to simplify the curriculum.

The article assignment defines immensely to my academic knowledge, skills and awareness. As a teacher, I have become profoundly aware of the various effective teaching strategies, in the English for Academic Purposes classroom. These ways have their advantages and disadvantages and it is my responsibility as an English teacher to implement vocabulary-teaching strategies that will expedite the learning process of my learners. I am aware that the level proficiency of the class determines how the teacher will implement specific teaching strategies. I have learned that in order for ELLs to communicate more effectively within their immediate communities they must have a certain level of vocabulary. I think it my responsibility as an English teacher to provide my learners with the necessary vocabulary that will enable my learners to become independent and productive members within their own communities. Kinsella states that vocabulary is the single, strongest predictor of academic success of ELLs. Also, I have become
aware of the fact that language is an organic entity, which constantly changes. As an English teacher I must be abreast of the latest developments within my field in order to stay relevant and effective in the English classroom. I will have to reconsider the way I had taught English in the past, evaluate my past teaching strategies and implement more effective new strategies that I have learned and observed in various English for Academic Purposes classrooms. I am going to share my skills and knowledge with my new colleagues and staff members. I am excited to go back and implement these new skills and knowledge in my classroom and observe the results. I have become aware of the fact that language is an organic entity, which constantly changes. As an English teacher I must be abreast of the latest developments within my field in order to stay relevant and effective in the English classroom. I will have to reconsider the way I had taught English in the past, evaluate my past teaching strategies and implement more effective new strategies that I have learned and observed in various English for Academic Purposes classrooms. I decide to share my skills and knowledge with my new colleagues and staff members. I am excited to go back and implement these new skills and knowledge in my classroom and observe the results. With the assistance of the Ministry of Education, I intend to have workshops for primary school English teachers on vocabulary teaching strategies.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


