

USING EFFECTIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

Research about learning strategies has focused on language learning and teaching in order to provide insights for developing effective vocabulary teaching and learning. Although vocabulary has been attributed less importance than the four skills in language teaching, interest in its role in language learning has grown rapidly in recent years because learning a foreign language is basically a matter of learning the vocabulary of that language. In a foreign language learning context, it cannot be denied that vocabulary is an element of great importance and thus emphasized to a great extent.

KEYWORDS: method, vocabulary, Semantic Mapping technique, vocabulary strategy, materials.

INTRODUCTION

Having been interested in the field of lexicology, I have always been concerned on training students to learn and store new vocabulary effectively. There are two reasons that make me write this article, the first one is the absolute absence of vocabulary instructions in our own curriculum and the second one is the failure to leave a specific classroom time devoted directly to learning and training vocabulary. In this matter, my article will focus on maintaining the vocabulary notebook which has been a very well-known practice to us, but indeed it has remained as a “good advice” doing nothing to put seriously in the practical order. Communication is the basis of human talk. People communicate verbally, in written forms or using body language. Comprehending a partner’s speech is a crucial element of communication. Dialogues are the examples of a comprehended communication. If one part misses the overall idea of the context, it spoils smooth conversation and causes misunderstanding. Being able to listen and understand someone’s speech is important in language learning. Because the learners use different ways of communication during and beyond the class. Having a good vocabulary is the essential part of communication. As, learners listen each other and they comprehend differently. A receiver with good vocabulary basis, can understand 80-100% of the information carried by a speaker. Thus, a student who has basic, essential vocabulary skill can understand a teacher and his/her group mates during EFL classes. When this importance of vocabulary learning is taken into consideration, we cannot skip the role of learning strategies in vocabulary learning and teaching. Another benefit of using strategies could be that, once this ability is gained, students may transfer them to other language skills. Through the cultivation of vocabulary, learners are allowed to one more channel of communication and can benefit from one more important source of input [5]. If vocabulary is improved, it may provide usable data in improving language skills and can accelerate language learning. To be self-sufficient, learners must know how to learn. So, the aim here is to encourage self sufficiency by helping learners recognize situations where they could use these vocabulary learning strategies and become aware of these strategies that are particularly suitable for them and use them effectively. For that reason, it would be useful to determine their strategies and raise their awareness of these vocabulary learning strategies in order to make them not only more prepared for learning but also more analytic about their strategies they make use of. So, vocabulary learning strategies are recognized as a way to empower students to take control of and responsibility for their vocabulary learning.

There are several general principles for effective vocabulary teaching in intermediate classes, which are useable for any method. Teaching vocabulary for intermediate is not an easy task, because students need more attention that their enthusiasm in learning. Chall suggests that there are some principles of helping the students to learn vocabulary:

1. Teachers can model how to use techniques and draw learner’s attention explicitly to aspects of technique use. For example, teachers can show how to find clues to the meaning of a new word in a picture or in other words in the same sentence.

2. Teachers can teach the sub-skills needed to make use of techniques. For example: to use dictionary efficiently requires knowledge of alphabetical order and lots of practice with it.
3. Classroom tasks can include structured opportunities for using techniques. For example: when reading a story, teachers can explicitly encourage prediction of the meanings of new words.
4. Independent technique use can be rehearsed in classrooms. For example, children can be helped to prepare lists of words that they want to learn from a lesson, can be shown ways of learning from lists and later can be put in pairs to test each other.
5. Intermediate level can be helped to reflect on the learning process through evaluating their achievements. For example, at the end of a lesson they can be asked how many new words they have learnt, and which words they need to learn more about. Through regular self-evaluation, children can come to understand more about what they are learning and how [5, p.p. 56-89].

Second or foreign language teachers have faced this kind of questions several times. They have classes with different ages, levels, interests and backgrounds and according to them, keeping the new vocabulary in mind for long-term is an important problem for learners. Teachers of second or foreign language present new vocabulary items during lessons and at this stage there is no problem. What are waiting for them in the later steps includes difficulties in remembering the words taught in previous lessons and related with this problem there are difficulties in producing sentences and lack of communication. The importance of the acquisition of vocabulary cannot be neglected for learning second language. Since the time is limited at schools, vocabulary items must be given to the students as in an effective and practical way as possible. Vocabulary learning strategies may help students learn and remember words in learning a foreign language. By using Semantic Mapping technique for different vocabulary items, students can increase their abilities on vocabulary learning. It is important for teachers of foreign language to learn if this method can help them. The purpose of this experimental study is to see which of the two methods, using Semantic Mapping Technique or Traditional Technique, is more effective in helping students' retention of vocabulary in long term memory. By this way, students will be able to learn the required words in a short time, and minimum lack of retention and recognition will be obtained. This study also aims to learn more about learner's vocabulary learning strategy preferences and to find out vocabulary learning strategies available for learning vocabulary. It also aims at identifying to determine whether there is a relationship between their beliefs and strategy preferences. It explores who are interested strategy choice and use. This study plays an important role in vocabulary learning because it explores a range of vocabulary learning strategies those students prefer to use and consider effective. These may, of course, be the strategies they already use, but learners ought to have the opportunity to learn about alternatives that allow them to make their own choices about vocabulary strategy use. The benefit of such a study is that it takes the learner as an individual with previous experiences and beliefs and can accommodate information both for learners and teachers about using vocabulary learning strategies in vocabulary learning [1, 12]. Based on the techniques above, the I can conclude that teaching vocabulary can be presented through many ways. The teachers can use different techniques based on the necessities and level of the learners. In addition, in the teaching of vocabulary teacher must have expertise using basic stages by vocabulary teaching techniques that can attract the attention of students to know the material well. Before using the techniques in teaching vocabulary teacher must first check techniques whether they are suitable to use or not , because by using a technique more suited to the material that will be presented, can improve learners' curiosity and enthusiasm in learning. Moreover, it is necessary to teach it to children in a way that enables them to learn the vocabulary they need to communicate with others. So, the second section provides a theoretical discussion with a description of Semantic Mapping Technique and the most common applications of Semantic Mapping Technique as a vocabulary strategy while the third section outlines the methods and materials used, and the following section presents the findings, and the final chapter concludes the paper.

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