

THE EFFECTIVE WAYS OF TEACHING VOCABULARY

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ANNOTATION

In this article it is given the effective ways of teaching vocabulary. The purpose is to clarify the effectiveness of teaching vocabulary through context and presenting the unknown word with its form, usage and meaning and, to prove the effectiveness of vocabulary teaching ways through a statistical study. The article could be useful for the teachers and students who are interested in this topic.

Keywords: interactive approaches, teaching vocabulary, form, meaning, usage, effective strategies, extensive reading, contextual meaning, heterogenic classroom, robust vocabularies.

INTRODUCTION

The following presented article is an analysis of teaching vocabulary to intermediate level students. Vocabulary can affect comprehension, however the most effective method of teaching vocabulary to intermediate level learners has not been determined yet. Many types of vocabulary instruction can have a positive effect on comprehension, particularly when these methods rely on multiple exposures to a word and interactive approaches.

Vocabulary is one of the important aspects of language teaching. There are many quotations of famous linguists which support this idea. For example, "Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed." (D. Wilkins). Hence teachers should be aware of how to present vocabulary effectively in order to help students to develop their vocabulary. There are so many words, so little time. When choosing which words deserve special instructional time, we don't have to do it alone. One of the biggest mistakes that the teachers make in vocabulary instruction is selecting all the words for the students and not giving them a say in the matter. All in all choosing the effective ways of teaching is very important in developing intermediate level learners' vocabulary.

Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings. As Steven Stahl puts it, "Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world." Vocabulary knowledge is not something that can ever be fully mastered, it is something that expands and deepens over the course of a lifetime. Instruction in vocabulary involves far more than looking up words in a dictionary and using the words in a sentence. Vocabulary is acquired incidentally through indirect exposure to words and intentionally through explicit instruction in specific words and word-learning strategies. According to Michael Graves, there are four components of an effective vocabulary program:

1. wide or extensive independent reading to expand word knowledge
2. instruction in specific words to enhance comprehension of texts containing those words
3. instruction in independent word-learning strategies

4. word consciousness and word-play activities to motivate and enhance learning.

Another linguist Paul Nation presents the other form of vocabulary teaching strategies and techniques. He aims at showing the teachers' ways which can evaluate their own vocabulary programs from teaching and learning perspectives. He proposes the following four training strategies:

- a) Guessing from context
- b) Using word cards
- c) Using word parts
- d) Using a dictionary

On the base of above mentioned the other four divisions of vocabulary should be planned:

1. Meaning focused input – reading and listening- learners need to focus on understanding and enjoyment. There should be no more than one unknown word in every 50 running words. Extensive reading, listening to stories, listening to lectures, talking part in conversation, and reading for study purposes.
2. Meaning focused output – speaking and writing –push learners to use vocabulary, but do not overload them. Get them to focus their attention on giving prepared talks, discussing and writing about what has been read, taking part in conversation, doing ranking, problem-solving, role-play, retelling, and split information activities.
3. Language-focused learning – deliberately learn new words and study more about previously encountered vocabulary, and teachers should pay special attention to vocabulary and vocabulary strategies. Make sure students get intensive reading practice, always getting feedback on their speaking and writing progress, learning and practicing strategies, and doing vocabulary exercises. Strategies include: guessing from context, using word cards, using word parts, and using a dictionary.
4. Fluency development – students become more proficient with words they already know. There should be no unknown vocabulary. Speed reading deals with extensive reading of easy material, the 4/3/2 activity, linked skill activities, when discussion leads to reading which leads to writing, repeated listening and repeated reading, and 10 minutes writing.

Also, a lot of linguists who worked in this sphere suggested some useful strategies that can be used in effective teaching. For instance, Diane August and her colleagues implies several strategies that appear to be especially valuable for building the vocabularies of English language learners (ELL), especially intermediate level learners. These strategies include taking advantage of students' native language if the language shares cognates with English, teaching the meaning of basic words, and providing enough review and reinforcement. According to the first strategy students can draw on their cognate knowledge as a means of figuring out unfamiliar words in English. A second instructional strategy for ELLs is learning the meanings of basic words. A third instructional strategy that ELLs particularly benefit from is review and reinforcement. These methods include read-aloud, teacher-directed activities, listening to audiotapes, activities to extend word use outside of the classroom.

According to Richard Frost's point of view the effective way to present vocabulary involves what need to be taught about a word. He divided into three groups that are form, meaning and usage. Form is divided into spoken form, written form and word part. First, spoken form concerns with pronunciation. It is the initial stages of language learning for teacher to insist on a fair amount of pronunciation practice of new words to help learners acquire the correct stress pattern of syllabus. Second, written form concerns with spelling. Teacher should clarify the pronunciation before showing the written form. Finally, word parts concern with part of speech of word. Students need to know part of speech of the vocabulary such as it is verb, noun or adjective in order to use it effectively. In addition, students have to study about the affixes (the prefixes and suffixes) because it may indicate about the meaning. For example, 'superman' super means above or beyond and man mean human being. This is particularly useful for a higher level.

In teaching vocabulary, teachers need to look at two aspects of meaning in order to make students understand better in learning vocabulary of the English language. The first concerns the link between meaning and the world to which words refer. The second involves the sense relations that exist among words. First, if a word has reference to an object, action or event in the physical world, this can be described as denotative meaning. In contrast, connotative meaning relates to the attitudes and emotions of a language user in selecting a vocabulary and the influence of these on the listener or reader's interpretation of the word. Second, this aspect of meaning involves the sense relations that exist among words. These relations can be found into syntagmatic relation, which is about the relations between words in sentence, and paradigmatic relations, which is about complex relations with other words in the language in a network of meaning.

Teacher has to teach the usage of vocabulary about the situation when the word is used or is not used. Teacher has to describe that it is formal, neutral or informal word. Moreover, it is used in speaking or in writing. Then, teacher has to describe the words which have the same collocations as an L1 word of similar meaning in order to prevent mistakes in usage. For example, you describe thing 'in great detail' not 'in a big deal.'

Contextual vocabulary instruction includes teaching students to use the context, or words appearing directly before and after, of a sentence to determine a word's meaning. Two types of contextual methods of vocabulary instruction are pedagogical and natural. Each method focuses on teaching students to use context to determine meaning. The first contextual method is called the pedagogical or instructional method. Teachers and/or authors of basal reading series write sentences specifically to teach the meaning of the vocabulary words within context. This contextual method is called the pedagogical or instructional method. One example of an instructional context sentence appears in work by Herman and Dole. "Mastodons became extinct years ago when the last one died". Students can use the information from the sentence to determine the definition of the word extinct.

Language teachers should be innovative and proficient in the application of methodologies pertaining to teaching vocabulary items in a classroom situation. The followings are the main methodologies for teaching vocabulary items in an English language classroom.

Careful listening to the words may be a good option in teaching vocabulary items in a heterogenic classroom. "Let the students hear the word in isolation and in a sentence. If the

sounds of the word have been mastered, the students will hear it correctly with two or three repetitions." (Robert Lado). Slow pronunciation without distortion will help. Breaking the word into parts and building up to the whole word will also be helpful.

Pronouncing the word enables the students to remember it longer and identify it more readily when they hear or see it.

The teacher should try to get the meaning to the class without using translation. This is not preferable on the ground that translation may or may not provide the meaning of the word accurately and precisely. It is advocated as it enables the class to go without grasping the meaning of a word that they have learned to pronounce rather than to depend upon the translation.

It is offered by scientists a framework for successful vocabulary programs that supports effective teaching and students' development of word knowledge. The foundation of this instructional program includes a four-part approach to developing robust vocabularies:

1. Provide rich and varied language experiences,
2. Teach individual words,
3. Teach word-learning strategies, and
4. Foster word consciousness.

To conclude, it has been looked through different authors' views about teaching vocabulary in this article and found out that choosing the effective ways of teaching is very important in developing learners' vocabulary. Moreover, the teachers' roles are great in equipping the learners with strategies necessary to expand their vocabulary knowledge.

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