ISSN No. 0974-035X

An indexed refereed & peer-reviewed journal of higher education

Towards Excellence

UGC-HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
Gujarat University, Ahmedabad-380009, Gujarat, India

TECHNIQUES TO ENHANCE VOCABULARY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Pansy Evangeline Victor

Abstract

Language is undoubtedly the most valuable single possession of the human race. In the present era, the English language plays a pivotal role in all fields. It is a house of knowledge contributing adequate information to the fields of literature, science, and technologies. There is an emergence of various developments internationally which stands today as a magnet drawing attention of the people around the world. The language has given a vivid picture of the world situations.

Today, the core of the education system is to guide students to master the English language. The teachers need to teach English as it imparts knowledge for different purposes. Acquiring a second language is challenging and artistic and appreciated today as it is the best for higher education. The objective of the article is to make the students understand the element of vocabulary through the formulated techniques discussed in the article. It focuses on the seven strategies implicated to enhance vocabulary for the second language learners. Second language teachers play pivotal role in exhibiting the significance of vocabulary to the second language learners. The article attempts to provide an outline to the facets of vocabulary used in the process of acquiring second language, teaching second language and testing the level of vocabulary.

Keywords: English Language Teaching, Second Language Teaching, Vocabulary, Techniques, Communication.

Introduction

"English is the most widely spoken language in the world. It is the mother tongue of more than 320 million people and another 200 million use it as their second language (Bura 4)".

The human world has made an effort to learn second languages from the time before Romans. The period of this 2000 years has introduced different approaches towards learning a second language where each approach played a unique role in acquiring the language. During the past when the Roman students learned Greek words, they were shaped to be proficient in alphabets and then progressing to words and syllables. During the medieval period when students were taught Latin, they focused on the study of grammar. teaching vocabulary has introduced sufficient methodologies to help the learners to uplift their way of understanding. Preceding such methodologies, teaching language faced drastic changes and introduced the Grammar-Translation method, where the language was practiced through teaching language and translation. The Direct Method looked forward to gaining mastery through oral skills. The Reading Method helped the student to gain knowledge of many vocabularies through the method of reading. Communicative Language Teaching ensured better communication, to speak fluently and accurately. The Audiolingualism method was the non-verbal method that shaped their language through listening. None of the methods are akin to learn vocabulary except The Reading Method.

The dawn of the twentieth century surpassed the above methods. The researchers were thinking of various approaches to enhance the knowledge of vocabulary through easy and understandable methods. The initial step was to focus on the substantial vocabulary and distinguish under the heading 'Meanings'. This step is successful even today for the students as the words are limited and easy to commit to memory. To date, there are numerous techniques to expertise in the mechanism of learning vocabulary. The article centralizes around seven techniques which are subjective and experimental.

These methods would lead the second language learners to progress satisfactorily. They are the teaching methods to

- To construct and to convey an outlook to the world of vocabulary.
- To synchronize the 'seen' and 'unseen' vocabulary.
- Encounter several words with one word.
- Practical tests to acquire vocabulary.
- Enhance vocabulary through images..
- Teaching through quality techniques.
- To instigate self-governing strategies.

1.1 To construct and to convey an outlook to the world of vocabulary

Students are taught to construct using basic words. The simple questions jotted down here shows how the five words of asking questions take us to the world of learning vocabulary. All sentences are linked to these questions. Sentences carry vocabularies according to the situation. There are words easy to understand, recognise and keep registered in the mind. Contrarily, there are difficult words which we know not the meaning and about their usage.

eg. a) To Construct sentences in the mind with one word WH- questions WHy, WHere, WHat, WHen and 'How' apart from WH questions.

Why - Why are you unhappy?

Where- Where is the book?

What- What is the time?

When - When is the wedding? and

How - How was the day?

b) Uncommon vocabularies

e.g Agriculture- Irrigation, Farming, Cultivation, Horticulture, Agribusiness.

Medicine- Neurologist, Pediatrician, Gynecologist, Physiotherapist, etc.

1.2 To synchronise the 'seen' and 'unseen' vocabulary.

There are two ways of looking at words, words that portray something we can see with our naked eye and words which speak about the character, personality, and mannerism. Such words can be discussed and written down in separate columns and the conjointment of words can be discussed. This activity can make the students improve their progress in learning vocabulary. The below examples portray the meaning of two literary terms Connotation and Denotation.

a) Connotative words (emotional connection) is considered as 'unseen'

e.g Peace, Proud, Aroma, Smart, Soft, etc.

b) Dennotative words (literal meaning as in dictionaries) are considered as 'seen'.

eg. House, Student, Coffee, Boy, Dolls, etc

c) Connectivity of both words

e.g) ---House of peace.

---The student is proud.

--- The aroma of coffee.

---Boys are smart.

--- Dolls are soft.

d) Some words carry both connotative and denotative meanings.

e.g) Bright- Reflecting light (Denotative)

smart, intelligent (Connotative)

1.3 To encounter several words with one word.

English is an interesting language as it has vocabularies with the same pronunciation but of different spelling with different meanings. It can manipulate with words while engrossed in the field of writing and speaking. One word is a root for many vocabularies. The teacher can discuss such words in the class to enhance vocabulary.

a) Same pronunciation with different spellings and meanings

e.g) by-buy, flower-flour, see-sea, eye-I, no-know, night-knight.

b) Number of words with one word having the same meaning.

e.g Cold- chill, winter, frozen, snowy, shivery etc.

c) To be informed of the specific vocabularies of all fields.

Example

Flowchart 1:

e.g Literature - Poetry, Prose, Novel, Fiction, Drama, Plays.

Engineering- Marine Engineering, Aeronautical Engineering, Mechanical

Engineering etc.

1.4 Practical tests to acquire vocabulary

Example

Flowchart 2

Practical tests are a process to improve and test the so far cultivated vocabularies through the activities examined in the class. The three tests such as the Achievement test, the Diagnostic test, and the Placement test are conducted. The Achievement Test is conducted to identify whether the student has learnt the words thoroughly which were discussed in the class. The purpose of the Diagnostic test is to find out the students' difficulty and get it rectified by giving special attention. The placement test is to distinguish and place students according to their level.

1.5 Enhance vocabulary through images

Example

Fig.1.Mother and child from <http://clipart-library.com>

The potentiality and capability of the second language students can be brought out in the classroom through images. This activity is for the students to progress to the next level of acquiring vocabulary. It can be given as personal or collective activity in the class. The above image of the mother and child

would overflow with words as it is close to the heart. Impressive images kindle the mind of the students to explore words within and write effectively.

1.6 Teaching through quality techniques

Example

Flowchart 3

Learning vocabulary seems challenging by using the three techniques: Audio-visual communication, Non-verbal communication, and verbal communication. They seem to be toilsome for the students as it is pushing them to a higher level. Keen listening and absorption are required in the technique of audio-visual communication. Documentaries, movie clippings, and stories are the possible ways to keep the students focused. Non-verbal communication comprises of writing real and imaginary stories, comprehensions, multiple-choice questions focusing on vocabulary, and Hints-developing. This technique centralizes around acquiring vocabulary through writing. Story-telling, Enacting scenes and plays, giving open topics for discussion are the verbal communication activities that will enable them to move a step forward with enjoyment. These techniques make them confident and prepare them to face the world.

1.7 To instigate self-governing strategies

Example

Flowchart 4

The self-governing is a choice open to oneself. After undergoing the above processes, the student would have gained adequate knowledge of vocabularies. So far the teachers were governing the students, now the responsibility to govern oneself and to learn more and more vocabularies pertains to the interest of the students. The four skills Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing is the major strategies to be considered. According to one's skill of learning and registering words, one can find minor strategies that will help oneself grow for a better tomorrow. Self-governing minor strategies under the wide roof of the four language skills would sharpen one's knowledge and power of retaining words. Encountering personally with words every moment and every hour ensures one to master over language.

Acquiring vocabulary occupies a higher level in learning a language. The aim of acquiring vocabulary can be effective and successive when the techniques are understood and implemented. In the travel of life, words can be learnt incidentally or learning through techniques.

Conclusion

English Language Teaching (ELT) comprises mastery over four skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing (LSRW). The objectives of the article to make the students understand the language, to teach to learn, speak, read and write effortlessly. It provokes the students to take risks to learn and add more vocabularies to the seat of one's mind. Peter Elbow says in one of his books that "It's hard to learn well unless you are willing to take risks"(Elbow 41). Learning vocabulary effectively nourishes and paves the way to construct words verbally and to produce words in modes of writing. The paper

concludes that Vocabulary acquisition is a cumulative process and it requires a systematic way of learning. The article suggests the students to get hold of responsibility for learning their own vocabulary by using the strategies so that they can use it effectively and appropriately. .

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Pansy Evangeline Victor
Research scholar in English,
St Joseph's College of Arts and Science for Women
Hosur, Tamil Nadu
Ph: 9789796238