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VOCABULARY TEACHING IN THE EFL CLASS ROOM: SOME METHODS TO  
ACCELERATE LEARNER'S KNOWLEDGE BY FACILITATOR'S OBSERVATION

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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary acquisition in EFL class is a hard and demanding process and most of the language learners want to learn appropriate and effective vocabulary method from the instructors. Vocabulary teaching is one of the most significant ways in which facilitator can improve student's proficiency in the language. It also a challenging task for the teachers as well. The English language learner who has limited vocabulary finds difficult to express language spontaneously and accurately. In the Language teaching classes the greatest tool we can give students for learning effectively and accurately is a large, rich vocabulary and the skills for using those words. In addition to the vital importance of vocabulary for success in life, a large vocabulary is more specifically predictive and reflective of high level reading achievement. In this article, I review the research methods to develop the vocabulary knowledge to communicate well and discuss challenges and strategies in designing effective vocabulary instruction for ESL learners. The article discusses important issues determining which words to teach, how the learners can gain the vocabulary in their knowledge and working with the limited time that is typically available for direct instruction in vocabulary.

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Literature Review

Researchers have identified vocabulary that occurs very frequently and recommended that English-language teachers give it priority in their classroom practices. Coady (1997) believed a group of 2,000 to 3,000 high-frequency words should be studied until they become sight words. This is also the range of the colloquial language for listening and speaking (Nation, 2005). Specifically there is a Dolch word list which contains 220 sight words (Jesness, 2004). The General Service List of English Words (GSL) contains 2,000 high-frequency words and covers 87% of a general text. It also provides information about the relative frequency of the meanings of each entry (Schmitt, 2000). Out of these words are 270 function words which carry grammatical meaning and account for about 44% of words in a general text (Macaro, 2003). Other basic words that ELLs need to know later on can be found in the Academic Word List by Cox-head (2000) and the University Word List by Xue and Nation (1984). The former consists of 570 words and accounts for about 10% of words in academic texts; and the latter, 800 words, about 8%.

You might think that vocabulary is simply words. It does, however, delve a little deeper than that. In order to develop your word knowledge, you need to be aware of some of the different types of vocabulary (see Figure 1)

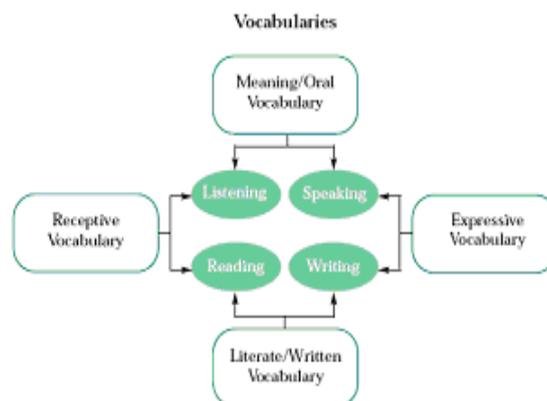


Figure.1: (Taken from Pikulski and Templeton (2004, p.2).)

Expressive vocabulary consists of words that we use when we speak or write. Receptive vocabulary, on the other hand, refers to words we confront when we listen or read (Allen, 2006). Most often, we require our expressive vocabulary knowledge to be far greater than our receptive vocabulary. With receptive vocabulary, we are receiving information and don't require as much understanding. That is, you can often comprehend the gist of what another person is saying without understanding every word in a sentence or conversation. This is especially true because we understand a spoken message with non-verbal language and context clues.

Both listening and speaking is referred to as oral vocabulary, whilst reading and writing denotes literate vocabulary (Pikulski and Templeton, 2004). Apart from word meanings, oral vocabulary particularly relies upon correct pronunciation. Confusion and misunderstanding can result when words are pronounced incorrectly. Hearing a word said wrongly, or listening to a word that is not spoken the way it is spelt, is often one of the largest issues for the non-English speaker.

When pondering the question of 'how to improve my vocabulary', consider simply listening. Although certainly not the most effective method of developing vocabulary, research has demonstrated that listening does build vocabulary – even when the learner hears only a small number of new words (Cohen, 2008).

#### **Purpose of vocabulary learning**

Vocabulary is commonly defined as all the words known and used by a particular person. Unfortunately, this definition does not take into account a range of issues involved in *knowing* a word.

There are some suggestions and conclusions drawn from the studies related to vocabulary acquisition such as keeping a notebook, regularly reviewing and using vocabulary items in context. In all areas it is very important to develop learners speaking, reading/listening and writing vocabulary to acquire language proficiency. One of the reasons that students do not read well is that they do not have enough vocabulary to read. So Enriching and developing pupil vocabularies should be a major goal in each academic discipline.

#### **The following are reasons for teachers guiding learners to possess a rich vocabulary**

- 1) Learners can express subject matter and ideas with more clearly and accurately.
- 2) A person can show his proficiency in the workplace by having a quality vocabulary.
- 3) Individuals seemingly have more prestige if their listening, speaking, reading, and writing vocabularies are adequately developed,
- 4) Learner can read enthusiastically if he/she has developed vocabulary
- 5) A person can develop his /her personality in the society and has better opportunity to succeed in professional life.
- 6) Conversations carried on with other persons require a rich vocabulary. There needs to be an appropriate number of words used that carry intended meanings,
- 7) Variety in selecting words to convey accurate meanings is necessary in speaking and writing, the outgoes of the language arts.

- 8) Use of diverse terms and concepts in speaking and writing adds variety to quality communication. Vocabulary development becomes a tool to take in, such as listening and reading, as well as provide communication to others within the framework of speaking and writing.

The first major distinction that must be made when evaluating word knowledge is whether the knowledge is productive (also called active) or receptive (also called passive) and even within those opposing categories, there is oftentimes no clear distinction. Words that are generally understood when heard or read or seen constitute a person's receptive vocabulary. These words may range from well-known to barely known. In most cases, a person's receptive vocabulary is the larger of the two. For example, although a young child may not yet be able to speak, write, or sign, he or she may be able to follow simple commands and appear to understand a good portion of the language to which he or she is exposed. In this case, the child's receptive vocabulary is likely tens, if not hundreds of words but his or her active vocabulary is zero. When that child learns to speak or sign, however, the child's active vocabulary begins to increase. It is possible for the productive vocabulary to be larger than the receptive vocabulary, for example in a second-language learner who has learned words through study rather than exposure, and can produce them, but has difficulty recognizing them in conversation.

Productive vocabulary, therefore, generally refers to words which can be produced within an appropriate context and match the intended meaning of the speaker or signer. As with receptive vocabulary, however, there are many degrees at which a particular word may be considered part of an active vocabulary. Knowing how to pronounce, sign, or write a word does not necessarily mean that the word has been used correctly or accurately reflect the intended message of the utterance, but it does reflect a minimal amount of productive knowledge.

### Methodology

The study is based on both primary and secondary data, like-

1. The researcher has closely observed English language Teaching (ELT) classrooms, discussed with teachers, students and educationists who shared their frank opinions regarding this issue.
2. Books and modern websites have extensively been used.
3. Moreover, existing ELT syllabuses of different universities have been analyzed.
4. Thereafter, the information has been analyzed to assess the present vocabulary teaching in various situations and to find out techniques and strategies to overcome the problems.

The Vocabulary Levels Tests and the questionnaire were administered to students in a large introductory lecture on English language six weeks after the beginning of the summer semester. A total of 132 students participated in the test. The tests of 25 of the students were not included in the present analysis because they did not attend classes, or were not in their first university semester.

### Questionnaire Data

An analysis of the questionnaire data reveals that many students do not seem to be properly equipped for university study in English, nor do they seem to be good language learners. More than half of the students appear to take little interest in the English language, its literatures and its people.

Questions	1	2	3	4
<i>Do you Speak English with others? (1 = none, 2 = partner, 3 = friends, 4 = family)</i>	52%	23%	21%	4%
<i>How much is your Speaking time ?(1 = none, 2 = 1, 3 = 6, 4 = 6+ hours/week)</i>	78%	10%	12%	10%
<i>Whom do you contact in Writing ?(1 = none, 2 = partner, 3 = friends, 4 = family)</i>	68%	6%	18%	8%
<i>Non-fiction (1 = none, 2 = 2, 3 = 5, 4 = 5+ per year)</i>	71%	15%	8%	6%
<i>How many Fiction s have you read ?(1 = none, 2 = 2, 3 = 5, 4 = 5+ per year)</i>	26%	24%	35%	15%
<i>How many Scholarly articles do you read? (1 = none, 2 = 2, 3 = 5, 4 = 5+ per year)</i>	65%	17%	11%	7%

How frequent do read English Newspapers ?(1 = none, 2 = monthly, 3 = weekly, 4 = daily)	54%	42%	2%	2%
How frequent do you watch English movie with subtitle? (1 = none, 2 = monthly, 3 = weekly, 4 = daily)	46%	51%	2%	1%
How frequent do you watch English TV News ?(1 = none, 2 = monthly, 3 = weekly, 4 = daily)	21%	59%	16%	4%
How many times do you use Internet ?(1 = none, 2 = monthly, 3 = weekly, 4 = daily)	53%	10%	27%	10%
How do you study Vocabulary? (1 = none, 2 = mark, 3 = lists, 4 = flash cards)	41%	39%	20%	10%

#### Some techniques for vocabulary development:

- 1) Facilitators can select relevant and functional materials for the students to develop vocabulary. The relevant and functional material means the materials they can apply in their practical life. Certainly, pupils should be able to use what has been learned. Learning should not be for its own sake but rather be for personal use and application in society. Important vocabulary terms should be acquired by pupils.
- 2) Teacher can give adequate time and effort in choosing materials that what people need to learn. Vocabulary development means which must be learned in depth not from learner's stress. Objectives concerning to vocabulary development need to stress securing the interests of pupils in ongoing lessons and units of study. Methods of developing and maintaining pupil interest in learning must be emphasized. If pupils do not reveal interest in learning, they will not achieve as optimally as possible
- 3) Teacher can create collaborative learning environment so that they can speak and listen others and use oral communication with each others with opportunities to achieve in vocabulary development. So sharing materials in group work and discussing harmoniously they can achieve individual vocabulary development.
- 4) Teacher can provide learning atmosphere that is full of learning purpose. Purposeful learning has as a goal that pupils perceive the values inherent in vocabulary activities. If these values are lacking, the teacher should stress other vocabulary development lessons for learners.
- 5) There should be meaningful learning activities in the classroom. Otherwise there will be chances to memorize the concepts only for lack of meaning. Use cannot be made of a new vocabulary term unless understanding of prerequisites in vocabulary terms is prevalent. With prerequisites, background information is needed to attach meaning to vocabulary terms being studied.
- 6) Facilitator should provide an atmosphere of learning that emphasizes the concept of providing individual differences. In the classroom all the candidates are not same level. There are pupils who learn more rapidly than others while some pupils take more time to learn the same content as written in the statement of objectives .So teacher has to give support to teach facilitating opportunities for individual learner.
- 7) There should be worthwhile activities in the classroom so that each learner achievement is optimal as possible. Pupils should not be labeled as being fast, average, or slow learners. Rather all should be accepted and develop feelings of belonging in the group (Ediger, 1997).
- 8) Teacher can choose story books and can read aloud to keep attention of the learners. In every class he or she can read aloud using proper stress, pitch and every word should be pronounced clearly and accurately.
- 9) 9)Teacher can create an atmosphere in group discussion activities .By discussing with each other the learners enjoy materials being a good listener, valuing the thinking of others. Thus the processes of being a member of a discussion group need to be emphasized continuously in vocabulary development.
- 10) There should have some listening classes as information achieved from a listening tape can guide people to answer related questions contained at the centre and this knowledge might assist learners to understand better what will be read from a basal or library book.

- 11) In the EFL classroom Learning sessions are either teacher-centered or learner-centered. In a teacher-centered session, teachers teach needed vocabulary for a particular passage and provide learners with various skill-building activities that focus on vocabulary development and reading comprehension. In a learner-centered session, learners identify needed vocabulary for a particular passage, and engage themselves in learning vocabulary and understanding the passage
- 12) 12) Teacher can teach students word base that is learning words related to a particular word. Teacher can provide materials which are related to vocabulary list and asks them to write in every class. For example-Three more words can be learned from individual-individuality. Individualize, individually.
- 13) Some useful Various activities can help with vocabulary retention: listening to songs or recordings of the passages that learners have read, watching a short movie with subtitles, Reading English newspaper ,going over words that learners have learned before starting on a new passage can help learners a lot .
- 14) Facilitator can provide some Follow-up activities for both vocabulary recycling and reading comprehension. Some examples are answering questions about a part of the book or the whole book, writing summaries, and giving simple oral presentation on what has been read so far.

### CONCLUSION

The article names activities that support vocabulary acquisition in a learner's second language, including learning words in meaningful contexts, having multiple encounters, learning spelling, learning about words rather than learning lists of words, receiving instruction in multiple meanings, learning how to use context clues, and recognizing and learning cognates. It is important to both to teach vocabulary intentionally and explicitly. Teacher can create an environment that fosters a great deal of incidental learning. Teacher must help students develop strategies for independent word learning and support them becoming aware of when and how to implement these strategies in self-selected situation. The most valuable kinds of assessment, of course, are those that help both students and teachers. Students benefit from consistent feedback about their progress since it allows them to set goals and to maintain motivation. Teachers benefit from knowing what is working so that class time can be spent on tasks that appropriately challenge students. Effective vocabulary can be achieved by importance of a language- and word-rich environment, incidental learning of vocabulary, intentional teaching of specific vocabulary, active learner engagement, and helping students develop personal word-learning strategies.

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