

Vocabulary Learning Through Media

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Abstract

English language learners in Engineering institutions believe that vocabulary learning is difficult and complicated. At the institution level, the learners are forced to become autonomous and make some efforts to acquire vocabulary outside and inside the class room simply by getting exposure to the target language. The autonomous learner plays a pivotal role in developing and enhancing the vocabulary. The aim of this paper is to explore learners “response towards media technology in general and its impact in improving the patterns of individual English words in particular. It also helps the learners and teachers to improve the impact of internet, movies and help the teachers in improving learners” vocabulary skills.

Keywords: multimedia, technology, vocabulary learning, impact of internet

Introduction

Vocabulary learning is dominant in language acquisition, whether the language is a second or a foreign language and it is crucial to the learners’ overall language acquisition.

Language acquisition is not a passive learning, whereas it is an active process where the learners have to continuously acquire the vocabulary of the target language. Several studies proved that the first language and second language have indicated that vocabulary knowledge is one of the best predictors of reading ability and the capability to obtain innovative details from the text.

Vocabulary Learning

According to Milton, the term “word” presumably for ease and convenience, when we are really referring to some very specialist definitions of the term, such as types, tokens, lemmas and word families . Krashen holds the opinion that there are great causes for devoting consideration to vocabulary. The vocabulary appears to be an indicator of language ability because learners regularly make use of dictionary rather than a grammar book.

Vocabulary stands out as the primary factor in forming the ground for the development of other skills among the three dimensions of language, which are vocabulary, grammar and phonology. Vocabulary seems to be a simple and familiar concept to understand clearly, however, it is really hard to give it an exact definition. One definition of vocabulary is hard to find. Many definitions exist to define vocabulary as each definition carries one characteristic or more of vocabulary. But there is not one definition of vocabulary that sums up all the characteristics of vocabulary. Different dictionaries define vocabulary differently even though some definitions share the same characteristic as the other. In the popular and more precise way, Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary Online has applied a meaning of vocabulary as follow:

1. All the words that a person knows or uses.
2. All the words in a particular language.
3. The words that people use when they are talking about a particular subject.
4. A list of words with their meanings especially in a book for learning a foreign language

Wilkins also suggested that “without grammar, very little can be conveyed” “without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed”.

If the learners acquire much vocabulary, it helps the learners to speak more and to influence other people as well. Secondly, more number of words is required for being highly competent in the second language. According to Nation, learning vocabulary is the most crucial process in the progress of advancing the learners’ knowledge. In other words it can be expressed as the manner in which the learners begin to have command over a second language.

Relationship between vocabulary knowledge and media

According to the study conducted by Jackson et. al (2006), it has been found that students, who used the internet more, got higher scores and grades. According to the research carried out by Krashen, the internet changes the interaction between learners“ and teachers. In this aspect there is less interaction between the teacher and the learner and makes learning more student-centered. This type of learning helps the learners improve their vocabulary by viewing and listening to dialogues in the films. The advantages of using films in the language classroom are many. Films improve the ability to understand the spoken language in many different contexts. Learners unconsciously absorb language and sentence pattern when they view the films. They also get an awareness of the new culture, comprehend and learn new accents that can improve their pronunciation. Movies can be useful while teaching vocabulary. If the aim of the teachers is to provide learners with communicative competence, it is quite interesting to hear them pick up phrases, vocabulary exercises to learn new words; using exercises like Prefixes, Suffixes and compound words, close test and so on, to improve one’s level of vocabulary knowledge.

Learning through News channels and Newspapers

With the recent development of electronic and print media, the programmes and the contents of news channels and papers have become affluent, dramatic and the news channel, paper language at the same time has become more up-to-the-minute, lively and realistic. Some news channels, papers are easy to watch, read, and easy to use. The committed learners can plan exercises to build up the following skills...

Good speaking.	Grammar skills.
Listening.	Vocabulary.
Reading comprehension.	Map/chart reading skills.
Critical thinking skills.	Geography skills.
Writing skills.	Social study skills.

The English News channels and papers contain a wide range of information like stories,

business news, sports news, special stories, columns, reviews, notices, advertisements, editorials, entertainment schedules and so on. A learner can easily pick up the programme, reading material(s) of his/her interest.

Following are the main ingredients of the English News channels and papers:

The English channels like BBC, CNNIBN and NDTV maintain guidelines for procedures to be taken for breaking news. With domestic news, the correspondent first records a "generic minute" summary and then priority is to report on the channels. A word is shown briefly onscreen to direct a viewer's attention to the breaking news. BBC One and BBC News have replaced the individual breakfast news programmes that had been run by both channels. An hourly business update is included during the weekday schedule from the Corresponding channels.

LSRW Activities Through the Use of English Channels and The Hindu Newspapers

The newspapers are also a great source for English teachers, professionals. They can be used as teaching materials to develop learners' language skills. They can be used effectively with a wide range of learner levels from Elementary to the professional courses. The learners should be careful to organize a certain activity using them with the help of the facilitator.

At the Basic Level:

Ask the learners to speak in English by translating the sentence /phrase in their mother tongue

Make the learners to read aloud a few news items from the page of their interest and ask them to write them down.

Make the learner to do some role-play activities like those they (news presenters) are presenting, while watching the news channel, paying a lot of attention.

At the transitional Level:

Advise the learners to focus on their (Presenters') pronunciation while watching news and while reading newspaper, circle words that they do not comprehend; and ask learners to figure out the

meaning from the situation and explore the definition in the dictionary.

Try to understand their intonation and while they speak follow such intonation, accent and pronunciation; cut out headlines from various articles and match headlines with stories. Ask the learners to analyze advertisements. Learners may report their findings by expressing their opinions by writing a paragraph.

At the higher Level:

Form groups for discussion on any topic.

Ask the learners to follow a news item over a period of time and discuss the events that occur as a native speaker would do.

Encourage the learners to understand / read an article, then discuss the problem's cause and effects.

Media inspire language, and students talk in spite of interests, that otherwise may hold them back. Even the shyest students often find the necessity to express their feelings about the media they used to see/read. Beyond generating the desire to speak, media also provide a basis for conversation in a highly charged viewing experience that students share with each other. Movies, news channels and newspaper can rouse views and opinions and create discussion-like debate; group discussions can thus be part of useful assignments, including a talk on the favourite character discussing an alternate ending.

Conclusion

At the end, an important aspect to be remembered is the frequency in using the movies, as it is supposed to bring variety to the class and be an element of surprise to motivate the students in the teaching learning process. With regard to the use of media in the classroom, the role of the teacher is often misconceived. But the fact is that the teacher plays an eminent role in promoting active learning. Hence the teacher still remains central in all teaching programmes taken up with the aid of media.

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