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## WORD IS THE WINDOW ON COMMUNICATION



\* P. Dasharatham

\* PhD Scholar, Kakatiya University, Warangal, Andhra Pradesh

### INTRODUCTION

Advances in information technology, international communication, scientific knowledge, the economical, political changes and application of audio-visual aids have transformed the earth into a global village. People of various cultures and nationalities can now meet, interact, trade and socialize with utmost ease with the possession of English language in abundance to enlighten their minds by the mutual share of information. Now a days English language acquisition is mandatory worldwide, because it is the language of technology, science, business, internet, and so on. To the store of language, the very foundation is a word. Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings. It is a fundamental device in language acquisition and helps one to express oneself amazingly. It is a tool to understand the intricacies of language and respond to unimpaired communication. A sound knowledge of vocabulary will open a window to the effective communication which helps to new vistas of knowledge.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF WORD-KNOWLEDGE

Words constitute the élan vital of language. A speech or a written passage, however, short or large is essentially a group of sentences and a sentence, in turn, is a group of words. A rich stock of words thus becomes quite logically an essential prerequisite of language ability development. But vocabulary is disregarded by the learners earlier; however, it has been given greater importance worldwide. Horwitz (1999) using her beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) found that with respect to vocabulary learn-

ing, all groups of EFL students agreed that the important part of learning a language was learning vocabulary. Wilkins (1972:111) emphasizes, "Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". Cook's (1991:37) conclusion is consistent with Wilkins in his saying that grammar provides the overall patterns, vocabulary and the material to put in the patters. One cannot speak, understand, read or write in a global language without knowing required and sufficient amount of words. Vocabulary learning is at the heart of mastering a foreign language (Rubin & Thompson 1994:79).

Vocabulary is an essential part of language learning. Although for many years, it was a neglected area of serious linguistic research (Meara1980). Since 1980s, the field of vocabulary studies has no longer languished as the neglected "Cinderella" of applied linguistics. The importance of vocabulary in the ESL learning process has been widely recognized and well established. Many researchers (Ahmed 1998; Nakamura 2000; Oxford 1990; Schmitt 1997) have identified a number of specific strategies for learning vocabulary. In India the changes in teaching of English language are mainly discovered in professional institutions, where the language is being taught in language laboratories using software solutions, as the objective of teaching the language today is to enhance communicative competence among students. Methods of teaching English are also altered and new strategies which have more emphasis on teaching vocabulary have come into existence. All competitive examinations at present make a direct test of vocabulary

under items like synonym, antonym, sentence completion and cloze test analogy. Besides comprehension and sentence arrangement, it is required indirectly a competent understanding of words, their meaning, nuances and usage for language acquisition to make effective communication. As Steven Stahl (2005) asserts: '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 one's lifetime. Vocabulary development is an essential for a student to become an efficient communicator. By learning new words in terms of meaning and use, the student can strengthen his/her comprehension ability, and consequently, become a potential speaker and a writer.

#### LEARNING FEASIBILITY OF VOCABULARY

One cannot deny that a large part of vocabulary can be learnt when the learners are in the community of efficient handlers of language. Students may exhibit vocabulary development when communicating informally with others outside the classroom and formally within the classroom setting. 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 (2000), there are four components of an effective vocabulary program: "Wide or extensive independent reading to expand word knowledge. " Instruction in specific words to enhance comprehension of texts containing those words. " Instruction in independent word-learning strategies. " Word consciousness and word-play activities to motivate and enhance learning.

A strong vocabulary will increase speaking skills, which come in handy when speaking to others. Judicious use of vocabulary creates a very pleasant effect on one's associates. The ability to converse with others with ease not only improves the confidence but earns the respect of others also. Confidence, respect, ability, and effective communication skills are essential keys to success in today's world. The role of vo-

cabulary is considerable in the process of the improvement of these skills. Activities and tasks play crucial role in vocabulary acquisition.

#### CLT IN VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Activities or tasks are suggestible as language learning tools. CLT is a modern method to develop language acquisition through activities in an interactive mode. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to the teaching of a second or foreign languages, that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language. It is also referred to as "communicative approach to the teaching of second languages" or simply the "Communicative Approach". Vocabulary acquisition through CLT is a suitable and is accepted as an appropriate method. Language is used for communication. For this reason, CLT makes use of communication to teach languages. traditional Language Teaching (TLT) places a lot of emphasis on grammar rules and verb conjugations, CLT emphasizes real-life situations and communication in context (Galloway, 1993). So teachers can focus the teaching of the second language vocabulary in the classroom in such a way that students can communicate consciously, taking into an account of their real experiences. Role play: Students are assigned to play the roles. The teacher can assign the roles or ask the students to create a situation and play a role. It can be done in the following way:

Aim: To introduce the students the word 'stomach ache.' Situation: A patient visits a doctor with a complaint. One student acts as a doctor and another as a patient. Student-1(patient): Good morning, doctor. Student-2 (doctor): Good morning. What is your problem? Student-1 does not know how to voice out his/her complaint. The teacher should help the student at this time by telling the word. Student-2 (patient): I am suffering from a stomach ache' Students learn new words this way. If other two students are asked to play the same roles, students remember the word "stomach ache.'

#### VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES

It is not possible for teachers to provide specific tasks or activities for all the new words their students come across or difficult vocabulary from the prescribed texts. Therefore, students should be encouraged to

predict the meaning of words with help of the context that are new to them. To witness the effect of vocabulary acquisition, it is always a wise practice to involve the learners in reading activities. The language instructors should see that there is a need to develop effective word-learning strategies. Word-learning strategies include: " how to use dictionaries and other reference aids to learn word meanings and to deepen the knowledge of word meanings; " how to use information about word parts to figure out the meanings of words in text; " how to use context clues to determine word meanings; " Word consciousness in communication.

### **I VOCABULARY EXPLOSION IN MULTIPLE CONTEXTS**

One principle of effective vocabulary learning is to provide multiple exposures to a word's meaning. There is great improvement in vocabulary when students encounter words often. According to Stahl (2005), students probably have to see a word more than once to place it firmly in their long-term memories. This does not mean mere repetition or drill of the word, but meeting the word in different and multiple contexts. In other words, it is important that vocabulary activities provide students with opportunities to encounter words repeatedly in more than one context so that students learn how a particular word alters in shape in different situations, and therefore its grammatical function also. For example: 1. Be polite in your speech. 2. I like your politeness. 3. He spoke politely. In sentence-1 the word 'polite' is an adjective, in sentence-2 it is a noun and in sentence- 3 it is an adverb. The student learns that the three words are used in three different sentence structures. Constant exposure to reading helps the students to learn these significant things unconsciously.

### **INTENTIONAL VOCABULARY TEACHING**

To develop vocabulary intentionally, students should be explicitly taught both specific words and word-learning strategies. To deepen students' knowledge of word meanings, specific word instruction should be robust (Beck et al., 2002). Seeing vocabulary in rich contexts provided by authentic texts, rather than in isolated vocabulary drills, produces intense vocabulary learning (National Reading Panel, 2000). Such instruction often does not begin with a defini-

tion, for the ability to give a definition is often the result of knowing what the word means. Rich and robust vocabulary instruction goes beyond definitional knowledge; it gets students actively engaged in using and thinking about word meanings and in creating relationships among words. Explicit instruction in word-learning strategies gives students tools for determining independently the meanings of unfamiliar words that have not been explicitly introduced in class. For example, students may not know the word 'panoply.' When they read a sentence in which the word 'panoply' is used as: Mr. Smith has good panoply of books, because he loves to read books. Students can guess the meaning of the new word 'panoply' as collection with the help of the context and the way it is used. In word-learning strategy reading is prominent. It introduces the students to new vocabulary by developing their prediction ability.

### **FACTORS IN VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT**

Word-learning strategies include dictionary use, morphemic analysis, and contextual analysis. Students must learn how to use dictionaries, glossaries, and thesauruses to broaden their knowledge of words. Dictionary use teaches students about multiple word meanings, as well as the importance of choosing the appropriate definition to fit the particular context. Morphemic analysis is the process of deriving a word's meaning by analyzing its meaningful parts, or morphemes. Such word parts include root words, prefixes, and suffixes. Contextual analysis involves inferring the meaning of an unfamiliar word by scrutinizing the text surrounding it. Instruction in contextual analysis generally involves teaching students to employ both generic and specific types of context clues.

### **WORD CONSCIOUSNESS**

A more general way to help students develop vocabulary is by fostering word consciousness. Word consciousness is not an isolated component of vocabulary instruction; it needs to be taken into account each and every day (Scott and Nagy, 2004). It can be developed at all times and in several ways: through encouraging adept diction, through word play, and through research on word origins or histories. According to Graves (2000), "If we can get students interested in playing with words and language, then we are

at least halfway to the goal of creating the sort of word-conscious students who will make words a lifetime interest."

### INCIDENTAL VOCABULARY LEARNING

The scientific research on vocabulary instruction reveals that most vocabulary is acquired incidentally through indirect exposure to words. Students can acquire vocabulary incidentally by engaging in rich oral-language experiences at home. Reading volume is very important in terms of long-term vocabulary development (Cunningham and Stanovich, 1998). Kamil and Hiebert (2005) reason that extensive reading gives students repeated or multiple exposures to words and it is also one of the means by which students see vocabulary in rich contexts. Cunningham (2005) recommends providing structured read-aloud and discussion sessions and extending independent reading experiences outside school hours to encourage vocabulary growth in students. It is often assumed that when students do not learn new vocabulary words, they simply need to practice the words. Research has shown, however, that it is often the case that students simply do not understand the instructional task involved (National Reading Panel, 2000), it is by rather focusing on the words themselves. Teachers should be certain that students fully understand the instructional tasks (Schwartz and Raphael, 1985). The restructuring of learning materials or strategies in various ways often can lead to increased vocabulary acquisition, especially for low-achieving or at-risk students (National Reading Panel,

2000). According to Kamil (2004), "Once students know what is expected of them in a vocabulary task, they often learn rapidly." An incident in vocabulary learning provides the facility to guess the meaning of the word or nearest meaning of the word as per the situation. In communication either oral or writing some new words meaning can be guessed to understand the situation. The scientific research on vocabulary instruction reveals that most vocabulary is learned indirectly, and some of it directly. Indirect vocabulary learning refers to students' learning vocabulary when they hear and see words through conversations with adults, through being read to, and through reading on their own. Direct vocabulary learning refers to students learning vocabulary through explicit instruction in both individual words and word-learning strategies. Direct vocabulary instruction aids in reading comprehension.

### CONCLUSION

The role of vocabulary in global language and its effective use in communication for all the fields is very significant. In second language situation where English is largely used for communication, it is inevitable for language teachers to implement strategies and techniques which would aid the students with vocabulary improvement to make communication more attractive. Teachers should take care that students learn largely through reading. Reading activities ought to be implemented in learning centers to allow the students have good store of vocabulary.

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