



## GREAT IMPROVEMENT IN TEACHING VOCABULARY

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### Abstract

In this article we can see that many searches bring to one way- the combined way of teaching, the need for more occasions for repeated word use that will help pupils expand their awareness and knowledge of vocabulary which exists in the classroom all day long. Word knowledge is built through planned and spontaneous opportunities to study and use words in meaningful situations

**Keywords:** vocabulary, teaching, learning, dictionary, method, active and passive

### Introduction

The goal of the study was to find out which methods are the best to use in the classroom to help the students to learn the words better and remember for a long time, to find out which methods to use to teach students to be more effective[1].

“Vocabulary was an area which was arguably neglected in foreign language teaching for a number of years, but it now seems very much back on the agenda”, states Paul Nation in his book “Teaching and Learning Vocabulary” (2001). What he said would, perhaps, be particularly challenging for anyone who included among his or her basic belief use of the maximum amount of authentic language (even for those at the early stages of language learning), or an entirely inductive approach to vocabulary learning. In his book he mostly concentrated on the frequency of the words in language use, looked at the technical words appearance in language, words in different word families[5]. And to learn the words, however, he suggested with the help of developing learner’s awareness of strategies such as knowledge of common prefixes and suffixes, and intelligent guessing from the context. But as he states, understanding of a word acquired from meeting it in context in extensive reading is ‘fragile knowledge’, and may not be internalized long term if there are no further encounters with it; but it is still useful. The materials were the materials which researcher collected from different sources: exercises from the curriculum book, handouts with different activities, English- English dictionaries, definition dictionaries, gapped sentences, cards, Articles from newspapers, from magazines and questionnaires, tests and quizzes. The materials were represented in different ways, which were later evaluated to see method’s effectiveness, served as the data for analyzing[6].





- ✓ English-English and definition dictionaries were used in order to make student look for the definitions of the words. Different activities were done using dictionaries.

The researcher decided to make the subjects to look for the definitions of the words themselves in the classroom, and explain each other the words, so the students would feel some responsibility in front of other student. Students also would understand the words better while explain the others and while listening to the explanation from others.

- ✓ Handouts with different activities were constructed by the researcher to implement the new words, to represent the new words to students in more interesting way. Moreover, to help them to learn words with the help of different activities, to give new words in different contexts.
- ✓ Gapped sentences were given in order to check the learned vocabulary, to see if the students could use them in the sentences and could fit the words in the sentences according their meaning[7].
- ✓ Cards were used to introduce, teach and check learned vocabulary, to see if they new the definition, could the words in the sentences and in speech.
- ✓ Articles from newspaper and magazines were taken in order to give and represent the new words with authentic materials. Magazines students read with more interest than they do the course book.
- ✓ The questionnaires were used in order to interview experienced teachers and students. Researcher questioned teachers in order to find out the methods they used in the classroom to teach their students, to find out which methods they found most effective and to use them. Researcher questioned the students to find out which methods students liked and found as more effective, to try those methods to see their effectiveness[8].
- ✓ Tests and quizzes were taken in order to check their ongoing learning process, and leaning progress- achievement tests and quizzes (progress and final).

The equipments used in the study were the blackboard, chalk, markers, paper sheets, posters, photos from magazines and tape-recorders.

Blackboard was used in order to write the words, drawing pictures, explaining words and making different activities. Chalk and makers were used in order to write on the board, markers to write on the paper and posters. Photos from magazines were used to present the new vocabulary or to check the learned words. Tape recorders were used to check the listening of the students and be able to recognize the words being





learned, or to make different activities to present the new vocabulary and to check the students[9].

In his another work, Paul Nation (Heinle & Heinle 1990) states that language learners are faced on a daily basis with the task of acquiring, and retaining, new vocabulary. One of the main tasks of a language teacher, then, is to help students develop a sufficiently large vocabulary. Nevertheless, some language teachers ignore this fundamental fact (assuming that the vocabulary will take care of itself through repeated exposure and classroom activities), however, developing a principled and systematic approach to teaching, as well as learning, vocabulary, can be a valuable use of class time[14]. And he notes that learners remember the words when they have manipulated them in different ways, so variety is essential for vocabulary teaching, and they should meet them in a variety of contexts at about 5-16 different times. In his opinion it is more effective, when learners of English as a second language, learn by having to translate or to give equivalent word from his native language for the new words that defining them. Other researcher which agree with his opinion Stahl (2005) says that students have to see words more that once to place them in their long term memory, but "This does not mean mere repetition or drill of the word," but seeing the word in different and multiple contexts[15]. In other words, it is important that vocabulary instruction provides students with opportunities to encounter words repeatedly and in more than one context." To their opinion contradicts the work of other researchers, as they claim that "Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world" (Steven Stahl 2005). And as Linda Diamond and Linda Gutlohn (2006) state that vocabulary knowledge cannot be fully mastered, as vocabulary 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 the National Reading Panel (2000), explicit instruction of vocabulary is highly effective[16]. To develop vocabulary intentionally, students should be explicitly taught both specific words and word-learning strategies. Seeing vocabulary in rich contexts provided by authentic texts, rather than in isolated vocabulary drills, produces strong vocabulary learning. Such instruction often does not begin with a definition, 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[23]. And as Paul Nation





and Stahl they agree that one principle of effective vocabulary learning is to provide multiple exposures to a word's meaning[22]. There is great improvement in vocabulary when students encounter vocabulary words often. Another interesting opinion gave Scott and Nagy (2004) in their study, that a more general way to help a student to develop and learn vocabulary is by fostering word consciousness, an awareness of an interest in words[17]. And that s it not isolated component of vocabulary instruction; but that it should be taken into account every day. They suggest developing vocabulary at all times in several ways: through encouraging skillful pronunciation, through word plays, and through word 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[18]."

Not only by learning words in different ways we can enrich vocabulary, and Kamil and Heibert(2005) advise practicing extensive reading, as reading gives students repeated or multiple exposures to words and 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/university hours to encourage vocabulary growth in students. Richard Wakely's (2003) research suggests that extensive reading leads to good vocabulary gains, though this knowledge needs to be activated in productive exercises. He says that the teacher can help students to become autonomous learners by teaching strategies that can be helpful to learn better, and give appropriate and motivating materials[19].

The dependent variable of the study was the vocabulary knowledge of the students got from the teaching way. The independent variables were the methods which were used to teach the students[21]. The control variables were some of the students with the experience living in the English speaking community. The study was made in order to see the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable: to identify which methods better help students to learn and remember new words better[10]. The extraneous variables could be the motivation of the students, the wish to work in groups, individually, in groups or in combination with other groups. One more variable could be the environment, as most of the students complained about the small rooms and uncomfortable placement of the desks.

The "subject expectancy" and the "researcher expectancy" were to be avoided in order not to skew the results of the study and not to influence the validity of the study. The researcher was like a simple substitute for the teacher, so one could recognize her research plans[24]. The validity of the research could skew also the measures used in





the study such as practice effect and reactivity effect. The practice effect could be easily avoided by designing different kind of tests to test different methods and on different topics, as it checked vocabulary[11]. Checking was not done only by the help of tests and quizzes or questionnaires, but also as the review lessons and oral tests. Researcher prepared pieces of paper with questions, to which students had to answer orally, cards for which they had to make sentences. Handouts with groups of words were given which were to be used to make a short story, working in groups[20]. Researcher tried to include different samples of tests not only particular way, to give different types of learners to represent their knowledge in appropriate for them way, and in different settings (individual, pair and group works). Nevertheless, at the beginning of the study, the researcher had questionnaire which had a reactivity effect, it asked about their opinion about the subject itself and about the methods of teaching. But it was in order to get information about the learning preferences of the subjects, and to see which methods work better for them. Later the reactivity effect was excluded[12].

## Conclusion

All the data collected from subjects were grouped to the level of the students and according the different groups being studied. The researcher counted the methods, according to the number of times the subjects reported in questionnaires to use that particular method, or reported of the method to be effective. Then the next analysis were done by testing particular sections from the vocabulary book, which were taught with different methods- to see which method helped the most to learn the words[13]. Tests were also made in different settings by giving various types of activities to do individually, in pairs or groups. At last the researcher collected all the data into one to elicit the mostly used and most useful and effective method to teach vocabulary, and put them into the percentage scale (the number of students by the number of answers reported on a particular method). According to the percentage got by the methods in the scale researcher found the most useful method.

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