



The Importance of Learning Vocabulary for Young Learners

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Abstract

Because the meanings of new words are frequently highlighted, whether in books or in classes, vocabulary learning is an essential component of foreign language learning. It is also important to language teaching and crucial to a language learner, especially for young learners. In this article, I outline significant data on the effectiveness of vocabulary while also discussing various interesting approaches employed by English teachers when teaching English to young learners, as well as my own personal perspective on these concerns.

Keywords: *Vocabulary*

Introduction

Vocabulary is one of the elements in the knowledge area of language. It has an excellent role for everyone who learns a language, especially English, or for learners acquiring a language (Cameron, 2001). Vocabulary development also can develop the acquisition of the language itself.

The Importance of Vocabulary

Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the four basic abilities of the language. Everyone who wants to master a language, whether L1 or L2, appears to have to focus on these four talents. But, in addition to these abilities, there are three additional aspects to language: vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. The importance of vocabulary in English language instruction cannot be overstated.

Vocabulary is central to English language teaching because without enough vocabulary mastered, students will have difficulties understanding others or expressing their ideas. As Wilkins (1972) states, "Without grammar, very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed." This paper also experienced difficulties in delivering a message if we know about mastering the vocabulary. Foreigners still understand the context of the message unless the vocabulary is mentioned clearly, even with an ungrammatical sentence.

Students often recognize the importance of vocabulary to their language learning without their conscious thought. Schmitt (2010) noted that "learners carry around dictionaries and not grammar books."

Vocabulary instruction helps learners in comprehending and communicating in English. "Language is exceedingly difficult to put into words," Voltaire is reputed to have stated. I believe that most English language students would agree; however, acquiring vocabulary also helps learners in mastering English for their specific reasons.

Learning Vocabulary as a Young Learner

According to Brown et al. (2008) and Mins (2008), the vocabulary obtained via reading is limited and inefficient. Although paying conscious attention and observing are usually the initial stages in learning, it's conceivable that learners will miss the unknown words while reading. As a result, reading-based incidental vocabulary development is not always successful. Bowels (2004) suggests using gloss to improve the effectiveness of incidental learning because it helps to direct learners' attention to particular words.

There are four tasks for vocabulary learning. They are repetition, focus on meaning and form, engagement, interaction, and interaction and negotiation.

The first is repetition. Repeated exposure to target words is of great importance for vocabulary learning. Because there is so much to learn about a single word, students must encounter it numerous times in order to gather the necessary knowledge. According to Webb (2007), at least one piece of word knowledge is gained; hence, a normal student should encounter a word 8 to 10 times in order to get full word knowledge. The intervals between the repeats are worth highlighting here. Nation (2001) mentions research and reports on memory "most forgetting occurs immediately after encountering new information. The older the piece of knowledge, the more slowly it will be forgotten. This suggests that the first several encounters should be close together, with later encounters spaced farther apart".

The next one is about meaning and form. Learners should be given the opportunity to concentrate on both form and meaning. The four strands concept was developed by Nation (2008), which proposes a balance between form and meaning by concentrating on meaning-focused intake, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency development. Nation argues that learners need opportunities to focus on these four strands while creating a word and focusing on its form and meaning.

The third is engagement. When students reflect on words and how they are used, they analyze the words carefully. This is referred to as engagement in technical terms. When students pay close attention to a task and are required to modify it, they learn or do the activity more successfully, which is also true for word learning. "Learners who used target words in a writing assignment recalled them better than those who just saw them in a reading exercise, partially because they needed to comprehend a linguistic feature of the term to complete the task and were required to seek for the information" according to Stirling (2003).

The last one is interaction and negotiation. Interaction and negotiation are other good exercise for vocabulary teaching. Word learning is a result of exposure, attention, time, and manipulation, as stated in the preceding paragraphs. Exposure, attention, time, and manipulation may all be used effectively in oral conversation and negotiation. Learners often acquire the words that are regularly used in interaction, according to Zimmerman (1997), and the words that learners encounter exclusively on worksheets do not improve.

Teaching Vocabulary to Young Learners with Game

Teaching vocabulary to young learners is different from teaching to adults. In her book, Susan (1997) says, ".....then by trying to understand better how children learn we will have more understanding on how to teach them". Paul Fletcher and Michael Garman (1986) say, "Children learn a new language from what they hear, and they use their ability to imitate a sound of a word from the adult."

Learners learn a new word by listening to people say and trying to practice it. They try to understand the meaning of a word by producing the same sound as what they heard from an adult.

To teach vocabulary to young learners, the teachers have to learn first about how to teach young learners and decide how to teach them.

Hadfield (1998) says A game is an enjoyable activity with rules, a goal, and an element of competition. There are two types of games: cooperative games, in which players or teams work together to achieve a shared goal, and competitive games, in which players or teams compete to be the first to attain the objective. Games are activities that youngsters participate in naturally and universally. The joy has a timeless quality to it. To play a game is to enjoy competing against other players, either alone or in groups. They don't think about the language they're using when they're playing games.

Andrew Wright et al. (1997) stated that there are at least 13 types of games, they are:

a. Picture Games.

The usage of pictures is crucial in this case. In general, they involve comparing and contrasting pictures, considering differences and similarities, as well as examining probable connections between pictures, such as narrative sequences and describing essential features. It is anticipated that someone may be able to recognize them or represent them in a comparable way.

b. Psychology of Games.

It includes a number of games that may all contribute to a deeper understanding of how the human mind and senses act. This is a topic that everyone is interested in, and there are many different points of view and experiences. It promotes focus and the use of words.

c. Magic Tricks.

Magic tricks may occasionally be used to illustrate language in a succinct and memorable way. This is fantastic from the standpoint of language learning. Magic constantly draws attention and elicits responses.

d. Caring and Sharing Games.

This game requires and encourages others' trust and interest. Overcoming a learner's shyness or unwillingness to communicate personal sentiments and experiences with other classmates can be tough. As a consequence, their learning difficulties will be revealed following a conversation with their peers.

e. Card and Board Games.

Adaptations of various well-known and well-bred card and board games were included in these games. These games include snakes and ladders. A map game (search) is provided, as well as a gift game adaption (present, and rewards and punishments).

f. Story Games.

Story games, by their very nature, give an opportunity for students to talk and write for extended periods of time rather than engaging in brief dialogues. Certain faults must be corrected, and the errors

must be noted or remembered throughout the narrative telling. Students should interrupt during the tale-telling process in order to lengthen the story.

g. Sound Games.

Sound effects can create in the listener's mind an impression of people, places, and action. There is a demand for the listeners to contribute through imagination. This inevitably leads to individual interpretations, and individual interpretations lead to a need to exchange points of view and to express opinions and ideas.

h. Word Games.

These games are initially focused on the word rather than the sentence, such as spelling game, meaning game, and words for the sentence-making game. However, learners are required in many cases to go beyond the initial focus and to communicate in full sentences, some time to pursue ideas and argue at some length. The aim of this game is to make students be able to identify words covering their spelling and meaning.

i. True /False Games.

This is one of the great families of games. Essentially, someone makes a statement that is either true or false. The game is to decide which the correct one is.

j. Memory Games.

Essentially, these games challenge the player's ability to remember. Surprisingly, perhaps, this simple basic challenge can lead to many games and variations. The inevitable subject differentiates between what players remember in the discussion, in which opinions and information are exchanged.

k. Question and Answer Games.

Question and answer games are designed for context in which the learners want to ask questions in order to find something out. An example of a question and answer game is a general knowledge quiz.

l. Guessing and Speculating Games.

Essentially, in guessing and speculating games, someone knows something, and the other must find out what it is. They are all based on simple ideas. It is possible to play many of them by making short unconnected guesses. Played in this way, the games are useful for the less sophisticated learner and /or learners whose English is limited.

m. Miscellaneous games

These games consist of a fortuneteller game, what is his pocket game, and predicaments that mostly invite students' intuitions.

Conclusion

Teachers must be patient in discovering fresh and engaging ways to teach vocabulary to young learners via games so that kids like learning. Games can assist young learners in efficiently learning their language. As previously said, there are several games that may be utilized to teach vocabulary. When planning or selecting a game, the teacher should think about time and materials. The use of games will assist young learners in absorbing the lesson while having fun, allowing them to quickly recall all of the languages.

Despite the fact that games are quite popular among young students, they should not be utilized unnecessarily. They should be selected based on the level, interest, and context of the learners. It must

also be concerned with the topic and vocabulary offered. Any game can be useful if it is suited to the topic and overseen by a knowledgeable and professional teacher.

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