

## TEACHING VOCABULARY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE: EFFECTIVE METHODOLOGIES

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### **Rezumat**

*Vocabularul este primul și cel mai important pas în studierea unei limbi străine. Studierea unei limbi străine poate fi interactivă și interesantă prin introducerea unor exerciții de vocabular. Acest articol este o încercare de a studia și explora diferite metode care pot fi încorporate în predarea vocabularului la lecții.*

Vocabulary is the first and foremost important step in language acquisition. In a classroom where students are not finding themselves comfortable with second language, language learning can be made interactive and interesting with the introduction of appropriate vocabulary exercises. This paper is an attempt to study and explore the various methodologies that can be incorporated in the teaching of vocabulary items in a language classroom.

Robert Lado talked about patterns of difficulty in vocabulary teaching. He highlighted key issues related to words, the native language factor and about patterns. He even analyzed Spanish, French and Mexican patterns of difficulty in their respective vocabulary items. He stated that while dealing with vocabulary one should take into account three important aspects of words - their form, their meaning and their distribution - and one should consider various kinds of classes of words in the function of the language. He said that the forms, meaning distribution and classification of words are different in different languages. He revealed that these differences might lead to vocabulary problems. Visnja Pavicic dealt with a way to improve students' abilities to explore, store and usage of vocabulary items. He determined the role of vocabulary teaching and how a teacher could help their learners. He laid emphasis on self-initiated independent learning with strategies, in which formal practices, functional practices and memorizing could be included. He said that the teacher should create activities and tasks to help students to build their vocabulary and develop strategies to learn the vocabulary on their own [2, p.118].

It is noteworthy to mention here that vocabulary items are imparted mostly by translation: either a list of words with their translation at the beginning of the lesson or the translation of the content having new words or glossaries at the very end. This is an erroneous practice as it leads to a state of confusion for the learners. On the teaching skills of vocabulary items, Frisby commented that "While the teacher is not, himself, concerned with the actual selection of vocabulary for text book purposes since practically all the books we use are based on limited vocabularies, it is important that teacher should know the principles, which underlie vocabulary selection". Thus it signifies that a language teacher should be innovative and proficient in the application of methodologies pertaining to teaching vocabulary items in a classroom situation. Following are the main methodologies for teaching vocabulary items in an English language classroom:

- **Listening Carefully.**
- **Pronouncing the word.**
- **Methods of Grasping the Meaning.**

**Key Strategies in teaching vocabulary:** Some of the key strategies to unfold the information and meaning of a new word to a class are as follows:

➤ **definitions** - in the target language may be very handy if they are expressed in terms that are better known or more easily guessed than the word that is defined. In this direction teachers and students can refer to authentic and reliable dictionaries;

➤ **the self defining context** - the context makes the situation clear, and this in turn illuminates the meaning of the new word. This practice saves time and develops an intensive reading habit and better understanding.

- **antonyms;**
- **synonyms;**
- **dramatization** - This method can win the favour of the students as learners like dramatizations and can easily learn through them. Many situations can be dramatized or demonstrated;

➤ **Pictures and Drawings;**

➤ **Series, Scales and Systems** - The meaning of words such as the months of the year, the days of the week, the parts of the day, etc. that form part of well-known series can be made clear by placing them in their natural order in the series.

➤ **Parts of Words;**

➤ **Illustrative Sentences.**

Specific techniques or special combinations of the above techniques may be applicable for particular groups of words. It has been seen that the words that are similar in form and meaning to the first language are easy to understand and comprehend. They should be taught for listening and reading rather than for speaking and writing. Words of normal difficulty are best taught in contextual realms, such as food, clothing, sports, work, and so on. There are advantages to using a connected context illustrating the words that are to be taught. Additional words can be taught as alternatives to those chosen in the connected context. Practice can be controlled in varying situations by changing a key word or phrase. Some words and sets of words are especially difficult to understand. They have to be taught as special problems with the strategy determined by the particular problem in each case [3, p. 36].

An efficient language teacher can use selected vocabulary activities or can use integrated activities. All this depends upon ability and level of understanding and interest of the learners. There is no sure fire remedy or method to enhance vocabulary in a day or two. A student's vocabulary bank can be enriched on a gradual basis and one should always show keen interest and enthusiasm in finding, learning and understanding new words.

### **Bibliography**

1. Frisby, AW., Teaching English, The English Language Book Society and Longmans Green and Co.,1957, p.98.
2. Robert, Lado, Language Teaching: A Scientific Approach, McGraw Hill, New York, 1964, p.121.
3. Robert, Lado, Patterns of difficulty in vocabulary, International Journal Language Learning, 1955, 6, p.23-41.