



SUITABILITY OF MNEMONIC TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING ENGLISH VOCABULARY AT PRIMARY LEVEL

N. Merlin Malar* & Dr. K. Gireesh Kumar**

* M.Ed. Scholar, N.V.K.S.D College of Education, Attoor,
Kanniyakumari, Tamilnadu

** Assistant Professor, N.V.K.S.D College of Education, Attoor, Kanniyakumari, Tamilnadu

Cite This Article: N. Merlin Malar & Dr. K. Gireesh Kumar, "Suitability of Mnemonic Technique in Teaching English Vocabulary at Primary Level", International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research in Arts and Humanities, Volume 5, Issue 1, Page Number 22-25, 2020.

Abstract:

Mnemonic techniques are mental aids that help to remember distinctive sorts of items and information. It is an instructional strategy designed to help students improve the memory of important information. Teachers may adopt mnemonics strategies in teaching for enhancing memory of complex words or ideas and promote better retention of learned materials among students. The present study is intended to find out the suitability of mnemonic technique in teaching English vocabulary at primary level. The investigator collected data from a sample size of fifty primary school English language teachers working in self-financing schools of Kanniyakumari district. Simple random sampling technique was adopted. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the English teachers in the primary level were not aware of mnemonic technique and they require special training in teaching through mnemonic technique.

Key Words: Mnemonic Techniques, Long-Term Memory, Vocabulary, Teaching and Learning & Conventional Method.

Introduction:

Language is one of the most essential means of communication between the society and individuals. English language has been considered to be the first global language. In today's modern world, English language has become part and parcel of every existing field. India is one of the country where English is considered as an official language. English language is a part of primary education and it is taught as the second language in Indian education system. Teaching English as a second language has become necessary in all countries that don't use English as a first language. It is known that English language is considered by many people to be one of the important languages all over the world.

Teaching English language at primary level is a challenging task in our educational system, because vocabulary plays a crucial role in English language. Vocabulary can be taught either directly through explicit instruction or indirectly through implicit instruction such as reading and discussion. Teaching English vocabulary in primary school is naturally much different from teaching the vocabulary in other levels of education, such as secondary and higher secondary level. In Indian Educational System teachers are often using the conventional method to teach the English vocabulary. In the present context, the scenario of teaching English is totally different from which the conventional method that is not considered effective for teaching English vocabulary.

Teaching vocabulary involves innovative strategy and techniques for organizing information in a way that makes more likely to remember. Mnemonic is one of the techniques to enhance the vocabulary and help one to become mastery in vocabulary. Mnemonics help learners to minimize the load on working memory in order not to lose what they learn previously. It is one of the most powerful keyword method used to increase the vocabulary learning. Mnemonics instruction is a way that helps a student to remember new information more effectively and easily. It involves linking the unfamiliar content information with familiar already known information through the use of visual pictures or letters and word combinations.

Need and Significance of the Study:

Teaching is a continuous and systematic process. English has been teaching as a second language in India. English as a second language in our country, teaching vocabulary is a herculean task. It represents one of the major challenges that faced by English language teachers. Most of the students in India have difficulties in communicating with English language because of their limited vocabulary skill. The teachers also face difficulty in drilling of new vocabulary for students by that the students cannot memorize the new vocabulary easily.

The English teachers have to play many roles in the classroom. One side, the teachers have to focus on teaching lesson, another side they have to complete the syllabus within given time and analyze the learning outcome of the students in the classroom. Apart from that, infrastructure and learning resource are most essential for teaching English vocabulary in the classroom. Teaching English vocabulary is not an easy task, it requires the teachers to have ability to use different methods, approaches and instructional aids. Majority of the English teachers are not aware of appropriate techniques of teaching vocabulary in the classroom. Techniques of vocabulary teaching used at primary school level contribute a lot for students' language skill. In order to overcome these challenges the teachers should use effective strategy in teaching English like, mnemonic technique that enhances vocabulary.

Mnemonics are strategies that can be modified to fit a variety of learning content. This technique enhances memory of complex words and ideas that promote better retention of materials to be learned. It can be used to improve memory and learning because it capitalizes on brain's enhanced ability to encode, store and retrieve certain type of information. Mnemonic techniques are often viewed as useful in helping teachers to teach vocabulary, and thereby reducing stress. Teachers may provide more opportunities to the struggling learners to grasp the concepts by using mnemonic instruction to learn, retain and recall of information. The importance of vocabulary teaching is recognized by English teachers in the present context. Further, this technique of instruction may be used across subject areas where new vocabulary, technical terms and formula are learned.

A large number of research studies has explored on the effectiveness of using mnemonics technique for students at various levels. Fasih, Parimaandand Shahnava, Siros I. A. (2011) pointed out mnemonic instruction improved the retention content vocabulary learning for students. Azmi, Mohd, (2016) claimed the students got a higher score in doing the exercise by using mnemonic techniques compared to conventional way of teaching English vocabulary. Mnemonic techniques would help to enhance English vocabulary and applicable for other subject teaching and learning. The present study looks at the perspectives of primary school English language teachers regarding the usage and suitability of mnemonic technique in teaching English vocabulary.

Statement of the Problem:

The area selected for the study is entitled as "Suitability of Mnemonic Technique in Teaching English Vocabulary at Primary Level."

Objectives of the Study:

The objectives framed for the present study are as follows:

- To find out the usage of mnemonic techniques for teaching English vocabulary at primary level.
- To find out the reason for not using mnemonic techniques for teaching English vocabulary at primary level.
- To identify the practical difficulties likely to be encountered in teaching English vocabulary at primary level while using mnemonic techniques.

Method Adopted:

Survey method was adopted for the present study using simple random sampling technique.

Sample for the Study:

The sample size consisted of fifty primary school English language teachers from various self-financing schools of Kanniyakumari district.

Tools Used:

Questionnaire prepared by the investigators on various aspect of using mnemonic technique and administered to the primary school English teachers.

Statistical Techniques Used:

The statistical technique used for the analysis and interpretation of the collected data is Percentage analysis.

Results:

Usage of Mnemonic Techniques for Teaching English Vocabulary at Primary Level:

Table 1: Usage of Mnemonic Techniques for Teaching English Vocabulary

Aspect	Response	Response in Percentage
Usage of Mnemonic Techniques	Yes	6%
	No	94%

It is evident from the Table that only 6% of primary English teachers reported that they are using mnemonic techniques for teaching English vocabulary and vast majority of teachers (94%) reported that they are not using mnemonic techniques for teaching English vocabulary.

Reason for Not Using Mnemonic Techniques for Teaching English Vocabulary at Primary Level:

Table 2: Reasons for Not Using Mnemonic Techniques for Teaching English Vocabulary

S.No	Reasons for Not Using	Percentage
1	Lack of awareness about mnemonic techniques	62.2%
2	Lack of interest in mnemonic techniques	26%
3	Lack of practice in adopting mnemonic techniques	71.1 %
4	Lack of training in teaching through mnemonic techniques	77%
5	Difficulty in preparing mnemonic techniques design for teaching	57%

It is evident from the Table that 62.2% of the primary school English teachers reported that lack of awareness about mnemonic techniques is one of the main reasons for not using mnemonic techniques in teaching English vocabulary. It is followed by lack of interest in teaching with mnemonic techniques (26%), lack of practice in adopting mnemonic techniques (71.1%), lack of training in teaching through mnemonic techniques (77%) and difficulty in preparing mnemonic techniques for teaching English vocabulary (57%).

Practical Difficulties Likely to be Encountered in Teaching English Vocabulary at Primary Level While Using Mnemonic Techniques:

Table 3: Practical Difficulties Encountered by Teachers While Using Mnemonic Techniques

S.No	Practical Difficulties	Percentage
1	Inadequate knowledge about mnemonic techniques	62.2%
2	Lack of confidence in teaching mnemonic techniques	64.4%
3	Overcrowded classroom	53.3%
4	Overloaded syllabus	71.1%
5	Lack of reference materials	60%
6	Time consuming in teaching	75%
7	Rigid time table	71.1%
8	Lack of suitable models on mnemonic techniques	73.3%

It is evident from the Table that 62.2% of primary school English teachers reported that inadequate knowledge about mnemonic techniques is one of the major difficulties encountered in teaching English vocabulary. It is followed by lack of confidence in mnemonic techniques (64.4%), overcrowded classroom (53.3%), overloaded syllabus (71.1%), lack of reference materials (60%), time consuming in teaching (75%), rigid time table (71.1%) and lack of suitable models on mnemonic techniques for teaching English vocabulary (73.3%).

The findings regarding the practical difficulties highlight the need for making necessary arrangement to overcome the suggested practical difficulties by arranging orientation programme, workshop and other faculty development programme for the teachers.

Educational Implications:

The educational implications related the study is given as follows

- Mnemonic techniques are to be implemented in the school curriculum by that the students will get enough opportunities to use their imaginative, creative and intellectual powers.
- Mnemonic techniques may be expanded across the curriculum at all levels of education for the students with different abilities.
- Preparation of software packages on different topics in English and other subjects through mnemonic technique of learning may be more helpful for teachers and students.
- Provide essential teaching aids to the schools for teaching English language to capture the attention of the learners and acquiring skills of language.
- The teachers could be oriented the recent teaching techniques to teach English language to the students in an innovative way.

Conclusion:

Mnemonic techniques are a powerful way to learn large amounts of vocabulary, but are not used widely in education today. The result highlights the fact that the teachers should be encouraged and motivated to teach English vocabulary using mnemonic techniques by providing proper orientation and training on the feasibility of mnemonic technique instruction. By using mnemonic techniques instruction, the students may be able to enhance more skills on language vocabularies. Hence the teachers of English should be aware of using mnemonic technique in improving the students' vocabulary skills and as a variation in teaching English vocabulary.

References:

1. Al-Zahrani, Mona. (2011). "The Effectiveness of Keyword-based Instruction in Enhancing English Vocabulary Achievement and Retention of Intermediate Stage Pupils with Different Working Memory Capacities." Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED521065.pdf>
2. Anjaneyulu, Thotapally. (2015). "Problems Faced By Teachers in Teaching English Language in Government Schools in Telangana State." *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research* Volume (2), Issue (3), Page No (225). Retrieved from www.researchpublish.com.
3. Azmi, Mohd. L. A (2016). "A Case Study on the Effect of Mnemonics on English vocabulary." *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, Volume (5), Issue (7) Page No (178-184). Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v5n.7p.178>.
4. Fasih, Parima and Shahnavaz, Siros I. A. (2018). "The Effects of Mnemonic Vocabulary Instruction on Content Vocabulary Learning of Students." *Journal of Language and Education*. Volume (4), Issue (1), Page No (42-62). Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/2b62/32b77aa190774bc8d99b16722e71c25d054.pdf>.
5. Lubin, Jacquelin, Polloway. E.A. (2016). "Mnemonic instruction in science and social studies for students with learning problems: A review." *Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal*. 14(2).
6. Putnam, Adam, L. (2015). "Mnemonics in education: Current research and applications." *American Psychological Association*, Volume (1) Issue (2), Page No (130-139). Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281426153_Mnemonics_in_education_Current_research_and_applications.

7. Strakova, Zuzana. (2015). "Challenges of Teaching English at Primary Level." *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Volume (174), Page No (2436-2443). Retrieved from www.researchgate.net/publication/274373006_Challenges_of_Teaching_English_at_Primary_Level.