

Implementation of Theories into Practice and Strategies Considering Compatibility in Teaching Vocabulary at the Secondary School Level

Tushar Sinha

Student, The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, Telangana, India

ABSTRACT

Various aspects are known regarding the impact of vocabulary teaching on word knowledge, word association, word family, reading comprehension, different kinds of reading, cognitive and psychological factors of learners. But the implementation of theoretical knowledge and the impact of applied theory-based knowledge on teachers' and the students' cooperation towards developing a rich repertoire of vocabulary has not been properly investigated. The goal of this study is to analyze the diverse vocabulary learning strategies, effective teaching style, and the implementation of theoretical knowledge at the secondary school level. This paper will follow up on analytical studies that investigate the content and context-embedded learning and the instructions through theories for getting the authentic proof of the students' achievement in vocabulary learning. This study will also suggest some guidelines to follow to facilitate the students effectively. This paper will focus on analyzing various strategies in terms of teaching and learning vocabulary, especially at the secondary school level.

KEYWORDS: Language items (vocabulary), instruction, implementation of theories, content and context-embedded learning, Digital mode of instruction, Internal mechanism of word-processing, Dictionary training and multifaceted instruction, multiple pragmatic strategies of teaching and learning vocabulary, vocabulary developmental hypotheses

INTRODUCTION

A rich vocabulary can drive the way to be a successful reader. Vocabulary size is an important fact in this regard that guides a learner in time of reading. An enriched repertoire of vocabulary enables the readers to understand the semantic level and helps them to get access to the cognitive facts to analyze a single word from multiple angles. Comprehending the multiple associations of words help students in terms of understanding the contents, reading-comprehension. The vast word knowledge also assists them in catching up with every input while listening. Such as a learner with large vocabularies able to outperform with vast phonological awareness. Vocabulary knowledge grows the cognitive development to a level where the learners can easily isolate and manipulate different words into smaller units which we refer to as word-mapping. This paper focuses more on secondary school learners' ability and performance of vocabulary, which will reveal that students with large vocabularies tend to read more and more expertly than the students of elementary level.

Most of the children learn their first vocabularies from their parents. Parents-children conversations, peer-interactions, reading-story books are some of the media of developing vocabularies in the beginning period of learning. Researches have proved that vocabulary knowledge assists in building the literacy skill, reading skill, letter-sound knowledge, semantic-cognitive development, morphological and phonological awareness. When formal reading instruction

begins in the case of L2 learning, if the learners don't have enough vocabulary knowledge in the target language, will surely suffer a lot in comprehending the texts. Vocabulary knowledge constitutes the figure which can be considered as an integral component for reading and comprehending a language.

At the secondary school level, students face plenty of problems understanding new vocabularies. Because they are not very used to implementing their existing knowledge frequently. One vital reason can be a lack of proper instruction and only being dependent on glossary learning. Glossary learning is not insignificant but it is an imperfect way of learning vocabulary. It enriches the passive list of vocabulary items but does not instruct its active usage. Learners cannot use the passive list for any productive purpose. These high school learners face multiple challenges comprehending standard texts where the standard of frequency words is a little bit more complex than the elementary level. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) of the US (2014), almost 40% of the middle-stage students of high school face great difficulty understanding the text because they lacked vocabulary knowledge. To counteract, word association, word-family, multifaceted instruction, usage of morphological knowledge, and context clues should be taught. In the following sections, vocabulary development

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through reading comprehension along with its theoretical consequences will be discussed.

Vocabulary instruction at the secondary school:

In this section, we will focus on several findings on teaching vocabulary. From the result of several studies based on competency of high school students, it is clear and proved that maximum students face multiple complexities regarding understanding semantic facts and in comprehending texts because of the lacking of proper guidance regarding learning strategy and also, they have poor knowledge of theories behind effective vocabulary learning. In elementary school, most of these students don't receive a rich and appropriate guideline, so that, they suffer a lot even in reading simple comprehension passages.

According to 'Research to Practice' (Baumann and Kame'enui 2004), teachers should focus on some vital areas to facilitate effective vocabulary instructions in the classroom:

- Skillfully helping the students to use their existing vocabulary knowledge to learn new words.
- Concentration on learning independent and specific words to enhance the ability to comprehend texts.
- Focusing on varied strategies to grow the interest level of the learners.
- Research always suggests that self-reading and extensive reading help learners broadening their vocabulary boundary. Teachers need to create a supportive atmosphere to inspire them in reading more and more of their own.

These components help students learning academic and specialized vocabulary to build up background knowledge, develop comprehensibility, providing supports in time of reading and writing, develop a conceptual framework, helps in the cognitive development of words-learning, helps understanding words and concepts.

There are lots of theories and techniques which help to boost up the learners' active repertoire. According to Saussure's work, language is made up of signs and each sign has two aspects. 1. The signifier and 2. The signified. The signifier refers to the letters that make up the shape and sound of a word, for example, 'd-o-g' with its correct pronunciation. The signified indicates the mental concept that we have in our minds when we see or hear this word. For example, while we see this word, immediately we start imagining a four-legged animal, often kept as a pet.

According to Hairrell, Rupley, and Simmons' ideas, there are three key strategies for the developmental factors of elementary and secondary school learners regarding vocabulary learning. These are given below:

1. Understanding the context to guess the meaning of the unknown words.
2. Try to understand the meaning.
3. Practicing drills to internalize language items.

Besides these strategies, 'academic or non-academic-text reading, extensive reading, and incidental learning' broaden vocabulary boundary.

The theories of Teaching and learning vocabulary:

These theories are identified by the ILA (International Literacy Association). Some detailed information about each theory is provided below:

Social constructivism or sociocultural theory:

Sociocultural theory is familiar with its Vygotskian perspectives, ZPD (zone of proximal development),

scaffolding, psychological aspects, and inner speech. ZPD points to the zone that deals with what learners can do or not. Learners can reach the level of critical thinking stage with the help of scaffolding. Scaffolding virtually helps learners in a daily-life conversation as an instant supportive tool. This is the process of learning vocabulary, where the learners act practically. Here, social interaction is a key source in terms of attempt, practice, and scaffolded support.

Schema or the psycholinguistic theory:

This theory illustrates the cognitive approach which fosters the learners acquiring new vocabulary items with conceptual realization and various mental processes like encoding, rearranging, and restring information. The psycholinguistic theory prefers more on the individuals' effort on making predictions in time of reading texts. Learners' background knowledge deals with their conceptual abilities to reach a comprehensive level.

Dual-coding theory:

There are two mental systems or codes, which help in processing linguistic outputs. The verbal code helps in generating language and the nonverbal code expresses in referring to nonlinguistic objects. In other words, gestures can be termed as non-verbal codes. When both codes get connected, cognition occurs automatically. Vocabulary practices emphasize the concreteness and imagery of words, such as the use of diverse modalities or the extraction of mental images are rooted in DCT.

Motivation theory:

Motivation plays a vital role to make learners engage with the texts they read. They can only be able to grow their interest when they feel curious about the content and the subject matter. Teachers should believe in their reading abilities by providing autonomy in case of choosing reading materials. Otherwise, teachers should provide interesting texts. Giving compliments can help to raise motivation and interest. For doing so, teachers may offer external rewards for the little success of the students. The main intention is to enhance students' interest. Word-learning games and technology-based activities are some of the vital methods which also help to foster word-learning.

Digital mode of instruction:

At the secondary school level, numerous experiments have been conducted on computer-mediated instruction in the second language (L2) vocabulary instruction and so many positive effects have come up which influence the students to build up vocabulary. Electronic flashcards, digital word games, annotations, learning through visual contents are proved as the best way of teaching vocabulary. These types of digital mediums help in learning through multiple exposures of words in different contexts and also help students entering into the vast sources of a digital medium of learning.

"The integration of sound, pictures, animations, and videos plays an important role in vocabulary acquisition (Chun & Plass, 1996; Chun & Payne, 2004)." When the words are represented with images, learning fosters more quickly and possesses a shape into the learners' brain. "The combination of a text and its' visual is more effective in teaching vocabulary than the simple definitions of words alone (Akbulut, 2007; Nikolova, 2002; Jones & Plass, 2002)." Multimedia learning influences students with great interest and it helps comparatively less capable students for remembering the word structure, phonological structure,

and semantic features especially in time of reading and analyzing an L2 text. It promotes learning and helps to decode the semantic complexity with automatic L2-L1 translation.

Practical strategic findings:

If we talk about learning a second language, then vocabulary is the key component to achieve a level of the target language. Vocabulary can be considered with an example of a train. Vocabulary is as many compartments of a train and the train itself is considered as a language. Vocabulary is the crucial pre-requirements in written and oral communication and a vehicle for fluent reading. Wilkins (1972: 11) uncovers the significance of vocabulary learning and uses it in a very straightforward statement as "with grammar very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed."

There are lots of theories that work behind the various techniques and strategic implementation in the field of teaching vocabulary. Students preparing academic study might do with nearly 600-word families covering various disciplines while students aiming to pass their first-level examination should understand at least 5000 words, half receptive and half productive.

Teachers may help in choosing interesting and attractive texts. They can arrange enormous practice activities in the classroom. Students should practice the given language input until they become able to recall and use it automatically. As, language is a complex system and vocabulary is the key component of it, proper guided instruction is needed in the field of teaching and learning vocabulary.

Word Processing mechanism inside the learners' brain and practical techniques of the teachers:

Memorization techniques and meaningful tasks:

The recently applied methodologies have experienced so many fruitful outcomes and put importance on the need for meaningful activities in the classroom for certain reasons: for realism, for authenticity, for satisfying the need of engaging learners in activities. And, these activities will assist them to be more self-reliant and also help them to store information in LTM (long-term memory).

The keyword technique /imagery:

The ability to produce mental images leads to the keyword technique. Sometimes there are some associated words are found with the keywords which are pronounced and spelled similarly in the MT (mother tongue). If the images are very much content-specific, learners can easily recall the associated words for them. But, the research could not consider this idea prominent than other techniques (Gairns and Redman, 1986: 92).

Rote learning:

It involves the process of reinforcement or repetition. Allowing the learners to write down the items more than once, which facilitates speed learning. Because it is proved that repetitive actions help to remember permanently. Repetitive exposure of language items helps in producing mental images for the words. The value of rote learning is connected with storing information into the LTM. This is the way of going into the deepest of a language item and producing a visual effect by practicing it again and again besides mapping a new semantic network with the translation of the language items, especially, when it is the case in FL (foreign language) words learning.

Recycling:

Because of irregular practice, memory traces automatically fade away slowly. The instructors should create an environment where the learners can practice the learned knowledge. This process will help the teacher to justify and recycle the learners' achievement and progress. Monitoring over the learners' performance in the classroom should properly be done to check whether a load of practice is bearable to the learners or not. It is very important to represent new inputs only after measuring the progress of the learners.

Labeling:

The form of written storage also provides inbuilt revision which helps in labeling objects. Positive encouragement always helps to develop the students' attitude towards learning. As they learn new items, they can write them in phonemic script onto labels which they can stick on the respective objects in their home. Every time he or she will open his door, wardrobe, and get in touch with the necessary daily objects, they will see the label giving them the visualization of the language items. The same technique of labeling can be practiced in the classroom also.

Teaching vocabulary in context:

Harmer (2007: 229) explains that learners need to see the words in context to understand how they are used there. The best way for them may be to read texts or listen to audio and to see those language items in action. A major reason for using texts in class for intensive reading and listening is to provide them new input.

Techniques that can be implied in teaching vocabulary at the secondary level:

Visual technique: This technique is based upon employing materials such as,

1. Realia: real objects, tickets, advertisements, forms, brochures, etc.
2. Flashcards, posters, maps, puppets, charts, diagrams, pictograms (Tanner and Green, 1998: 27), (drawing the words for representing their meaning), etc.
3. Movies, videos, TV programs.
4. Facial expression and body language: We know that communication is realized through three main channels; verbal (7%), voice tonality (38%), and body language (55%). These varieties of expressions should be presented by the teachers for the advancement of the learners.
5. Crosswords, puzzles, card games, board games, scrabble- information-gap crosswords puzzle (Harmer 2007: 233). Mime/demonstration (Ellis and Tomlinson 1980: 85-86), acting out. Items: a hat, a cap, a cardigan, a pair of shoes, a pair of shorts, a jacket.
6. Computer-based technology: the internet is the key to vast sources where we can easily go for seeking the meaning of information and the additional details about a fact. Teachers need to influence learners using digital sources again and again. The study through the digital medium has been described in detail in the earlier section of this paper.
7. Audio soundtracks, plays, radio programs, videos are interesting sources.

8. Verbal technique: Definition of a word is inadequate to flourish and reveal to convey the meaning. Providing contextual information and word association is necessary to teach a word.

Example (Ellis and Tomlinson, 1980: 85-87) including a method:

Method:

Teaching Items: optimistic, pessimistic.

To introduce the new vocabulary, the teacher needs to walk into the classroom and says, "Oh! the world is a terrible place, everybody is evil and corrupt, and there are selfishness and misery everywhere. I know you are all going to fail in the exams, and then I will lose my job. He looks out of the window and says, it's going to rain and I have got to walk home today, and then go to a boring meeting five kilometers away. I feel so miserable that I think I will go home now and go to bed." Then he leaves the classroom and immediately come back and start saying the opposite things of what he already had said in the classroom. Now, he says that, "the world is a glorious place with its rich natural beauty, I am happy that you are going to pass the exams...." He continues using the opposite key words of his past sayings. Then the teacher writes on the board 'pessimistic and optimistic' and says that, "when I first came into the room today, I felt very unhappy and thought everything bad was going to happen. I felt pessimistic and he points to the words on the board, when I returned, I felt cheerful and thought good things were going to happen, I was optimistic and he again points out the word optimistic written on the board." The main theme of this lesson is to provide the situation along with the possible emotions and attitudes towards them and then asking the students to use the words in multiple contexts to include the words in the permanent repertoire.

Dictionary training:

Dictionary training and approaching words in context are the most useful strategies. The dictionary also provides spelling and pronunciation. Learning 2000 words are considered crucially important for academic survival. There are many kinds of language registers. Such as medical, technical, academic, and many more. The learners should know about the various kind of linguistic registers to identify the language items easily. We already have an idea about the low-frequency and high-frequency words. Howatt (1984) says, "The vocabulary control movement was to use systematic criteria to select the most useful words for language learning which had come with a successful result. There was a general service list (GSL) of English words that followed several criteria on words. These are given below:

1. Word frequency
2. Structural value (all structural words included)
3. Universality (words likely to offend locally excluded)
4. Subject range (no specialist items)
5. Definition words (for dictionary-making, etc.)
6. Word-building capacity Style ("colloquial" or slang words excluded)." (p. 254)

Michael West is the best-known scholar to harness the idea of frequency to second language learning. He was the precursor and active persona in introducing the mode of promoting reading skills through vocabulary management.

The classic list of the high-frequency words in GSL, containing 2,000 words families which is very crucial to be

known for the high school learners. As we are mainly thinking of the appropriate instruction to teach vocabulary effectively at the high school level, all the strategies in teaching should be interesting and informative. At least, they should acquire a high-frequency word list for quenching their academic needs.

Multifaceted instruction:

There are multi-word items, which the students should know. There are varieties of compound words or lexical chunks. Different phrasal words are good examples of multi-word items. Affixes also help words to form new compound words. For example: 'word' is a single word. But, when the word 'list' comes after the word 'word' then, it (wordlist) becomes a compound word. It is called affixation. Compounding: noun + noun (door-cleaner), adjective + noun (soft-spot), verb + noun (push-table), particle + noun (off-day, on-desk).

Instructing in both elementary and high school levels are almost the same but the level of complexity and the potentiality of learning are different aspects. The high school students already have an experience of learning words and they have come up with various skills and strategies along with the experience of different learning activities. So logically, they are more advanced learners compared to elementary school children. They can broaden their vocabulary knowledge area utilizing their existing knowledge. It is called generative word knowledge which means the existing vocabulary knowledge. It helps to learn new items (words). In-depth knowledge of language items promotes learning new words along with their diverse features. Effective word learning and generative word knowledge enrich cognitive intelligence which helps learners in distinguishing relevant and irrelevant concepts in the context.

Teaching word relations:

Words are signifiers in meaning production. It is very important to understand the relationship between words and their meaning. The meaning of the words always evolves and changes over time within groups of users. It is useful to draw on sense relationships when teaching new meanings to learners. For example, when we will teach 'eagle' it needs to be drawn its category for teaching the relevant words like 'high'. It is helpful to explain with referents of its opposite is low. If the word 'dangerous' is taught, then, a synonym like 'risk' also needs to be taught. We need to try making a portray of the relationship between words.

There is variety in word relationships. Such as synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, homophones, homographs, metaphors. Synonyms are very useful for students to learn new vocabulary items as well. Especially while teaching the meaning of the word then giving examples with its synonyms enrich the learners' vocabulary and also help them to understand the relationship between words. For example, 'start and begin', 'worried and concerned'.

Antonyms present the opposite relationship between words. When we will teach 'high' then the antonym word 'low' should also be taught. We can give them sentences like 'the bag was very heavy/light, the taste of the milkshake is bitter/sweet' to teach them the opposite connection between words.

Homophones and homographs don't have any semantic relationship. these two terms are used to refer to the

relationship between words which are more a matter of coincidence. Homophones are words like bare-bear, cellar-seller, knew-new, hear-hare, know-no, hear-here, bail-bale. Instructors should introduce the phonetic transcriptions of these words to the learners for better understanding.

In two recent studies (Baumann, Edwards, Boland, Olejnik, & Kame'enui, 2003; Baumann, Edwards, Font, Tereshinski, Kame'enui, & Olejnik, 2002), it is explored that how effective is teaching to middle-grade students by using root words, prefixes, and suffixes for deriving the word meanings. While conducting the researches, they also taught students to scrutinize the text in sentences and paragraphs around unfamiliar words to infer their meaning.

Metaphor is also a very common aspect in all forms of language, not just in literature. 'Buy time, lose time, waste time, bring to under control' are some of the most useable metaphors. Metaphors are used for providing the symbolic meaning of words. It always gives a strong visual connection with meaning and also helps to remember the context.

Difficulties faced by students:

Some learners face great difficulties to understand the metaphors. Because metaphors don't have one to one relationship between words. The most useful and instant application of word relations is the initial presentation of new vocabulary. It would be difficult to explain words without reference to their synonyms, antonyms, co-hyponyms, super-ordinates, and so on. Especially in the advanced levels, overtly using sense relationships and their terminology will help in several ways.

Cohesion: Cohesion is an ideal characteristic of any discourse. It works as a systematic relationship builder among different parts of a particular context. For example:

Text 1: There is an international stadium in this city. The last international sports competition was arranged at this stadium. *(The connection between the sentences is not established well).*

Text 2: This is the international stadium of this country, which is one of the most prominent and well-known in South Asia, arranged the last international sports competition in 2018. *(The connection of ideas is better than the first text). This is the cohesion of this text.*

Coherence: Coherence helps in connecting ideas in our imagination. It directs the discourse in an organized sequence by providing supporting information.

Psychological perspectives of the learners:

It is useful to teach different metaphors to help further understandings, such as a dictionary, an encyclopedia, a thesaurus, or a computer. We should not assume that the processes are the same in L1 and L2. Let's see the process of the words in mind.

1. Input: how we record words.
2. Storage: how we retain words.
3. Retrieval: how we recall words.

We are babies with very little knowledge of the world when we learn our first language. Most people learn their second language when they are older especially, through formal instruction. The input which the L2 learners receive is very different than the fact in first language acquisition. Whereas babies only receive spoken input for learning L1 vocabulary, most L2 learners receive both spoken and written input. In fact, in many parts of the world, they receive more written

than spoken input. The implication is that the learners are exposed to rules about both spelling (orthography) and sounds (phonology) from a very early stage.

For effective teaching, more important information or features related to a language item should be revealed well to the learners. The materials going to be followed in teaching should be considered according to the current level/ capability of the students.

Vocabulary development through reading-text:

Vocabulary learning and reading academic or non-academic texts are much more inter-related phenomenon. According to the identified issues of the national reading panel, it is necessary to read and analyze the phonemic details, phonics, fluency, vocabulary in time of reading. In a normal sense, vocabulary is the meaning of the words. But actually, the combination of these two words (learning vocabulary) not only stands for just 'meaning learning'. Vocabulary learning refers to acquiring words beyond learning the dictionary definition. There are two forms of vocabulary learning. One is receptive and another is productive. Receptive knowledge can be gained through extensive and intensive reading to reach a level of high productivity.

The instrumentalist hypothesis:

The main goal of vocabulary instruction is to improve students' comprehensibility. Learners with a limited vocabulary face great difficulties in reading comprehension. Vocabulary instruction should be made very effective in the purpose of reading comprehension. This concept of learning can be illustrated like: 'vocabulary learning for reading-comprehension and, reading-comprehension for vocabulary learning. Decades of research indicate that reading comprehension requires more than knowledge of individual words (Beck & McKeown, 1991; Nagy & Scott, 2000). Reading comprehension is a wonderful activity in coming to touch with the new words. If a learner reads a paper on an interesting concept, he or she will learn new words greater than the others who are not interested in extensive reading [note: Extensive reading is 'reading texts for enjoyment']. The relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension is 'knowing more words makes someone a better reader'. It is referred to as a hypothesis. Because, several studies have been conducted to prove that, 'teaching words can improve the comprehensive skill'.

The knowledge hypothesis:

It emphasizes the role of readers' background knowledge in comprehending texts. According to the knowledge hypothesis, there is a causal link from knowledge to comprehensibility. And, vocabulary knowledge is considered as the key which contributes to reading comprehension.

The aptitude hypothesis:

If any learners have high verbal IQs, this hypothesis suggests that it can help them for acquiring large vocabularies.

Teachers can improve their students' vocabulary repertoire by giving chance to utilize their knowledge about words already partially known, even if before introducing new words. Learners can also take individual responsibility which is termed self-learning, by using such strategies as keeping a vocabulary notebook. Research has shown that learning thirty words per hour is possible, at least, in the sense of gaining some initial partial knowledge. So, the incremental nature of learning vocabulary is undoubtedly significant. The implication is 'except new words, learners

will be adding to some existing knowledge of the L2 words. Attempting to enhance this partial knowledge, vocabulary learning will depend on what learners already know. The expert Graves (1987) highlights the multiplicity of vocabulary learning, distinguishing into six types:

1. Learning to read known Words.
2. Learning new meaning senses for known words.
3. Learning new words representing known concepts.
4. Learning new words representing new concepts.
5. Enriching and explaining the meanings of known words.
6. Moving words from receptive to productive vocabularies.

Conclusion:

Vocabulary learning is a vital pre-requirement to develop in a language. Especially in secondary school, vocabulary learning is crucially important. Because afterward, the students need to deal with more complex language items at the advanced level. The teachers should nurture them well by giving them diverse strategic knowledge to build up their skills in learning words. The cognitive and psychological perspectives and also the barriers of the learners should have observed to teach effectively. The teachers should apply these theories practically. Training programs should be arranged to drive away from the lacking and inevitable knowledge of the school teachers in terms of teaching vocabulary. They should be trained up properly. Since vocabulary is the key component of a language, it is very necessary to implement the effective and right way of teaching theories into practice by following these above-discussed strategies, and techniques in the paper to ensure enriching the learners' repertoire with adequate input of vocabulary items.

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