

ESL LEARNERS' COGNITIVE AND METACOGNITIVE VOCABULARY STRATEGIES

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ANNOTATION

Vocabulary strategies are useful in learning and teaching. There are different strategies that can be used in learning and teaching lexis. However cognitive and metacognitive vocabulary learning strategies are important because they promote a deeper level of learning and understanding of the language being studied. By using self-regulated learning strategies, such as metacognitive techniques, learners can become active in the learning process, instead of passively absorbing language words and structures.

Key words: *cognitive, metacognitive, strategy, vocabulary learning.*

Vocabulary is an essential tool for communication and personal development. It is the foundation upon which all forms of communication, including reading, writing, and speaking, are based. Understanding and using words effectively is essential to increase knowledge and be able to express oneself in a clear and meaningful manner. Having a strong vocabulary is important for advancing in the professional world, both in speech and in written communication. People with a wide vocabulary show others that they are knowledgeable, articulate, and able to effectively communicate their thoughts and ideas. Consequently, this can lead to an increased level of respect, recognition, and trust from peers, employers, and clients.

Vocabulary learning strategies are a part of language learning, so researchers try to find out further information about it. Researchers give different classifications vocabulary learning strategies. Oxford (1990) has divided them into two classifications: direct and indirect. Gu and Johnson (1996) have divided them into two categories cognitive and metacognitive vocabulary learning strategies. Cognitive strategies are all about using thought processes to study and retain material. This can be done in many different ways, and each forms a helpful part of the process of vocabulary acquisition. One of the most popular cognitive strategies used in language

learning is memorization. This involves intentionally and consciously preparing for the task ahead, by taking memory cues and chunks of material to store in one's mind. It can be helpful for learners to make and use flashcards to help drill and reinforce the meanings of words.

Contextualization and personalization of vocabulary are powerful approaches in learning and better memorizing vocabulary. Contextualization and personalization involve taking the target language words and creating or finding natural contexts and stories the student can relate to. This can help make abstract concepts more tangible and easier to remember.

A possible way to incorporate this approach is to create illustrated storybooks with characters or objects, that link a list of new words to that story. Over time, this helps the student to recognize and strongly store in memory, the meaning of the new words. Associating words with different tools and games could also help in this approach, like for example with word matching games. For instance, someone can match two words with corresponding images, repeating the mentioned pairs and shapes until the student acquires the new language material.

Another effective way to acquire and remember new vocabulary is using mnemonics. This is a memorization technique that utilizes associations between easily remembered words to create psychological connections with other objects and ideas. For example, to remember that 'frustrated' means 'angry and disappointed', a student could associate the word with a frustrated bee, and the image of a bee on a windowpane, buzzing in anger and disappointment. Repeating this image helps to embed it and make it easier to recall.

Overall, cognitive strategies can be a great way to speed up the process of vocabulary learning and to improve student outcomes. These strategies allow the learner to actively construct meaning in various ways to help them make sense of language material and store it more effectively in their memory.

Metacognitive vocabulary learning strategies are methods used to assist learners in improving their language learning skills by actively reflecting on the meaning of words and their understanding of a given context. This strategy is especially useful for learners who are learning a second language, as it requires them to take ownership of their learning and understand their own language-learning strengths and weaknesses. One way to think of metacognitive vocabulary learning strategies is as the conscious control of one's own thinking, and they can be applied at various levels. At the most basic level, these strategies involve breaking down words, such as syllable by syllable, and then investigating the definition of the words, their connotations and origins. By breaking down words into smaller, easier-to-understand pieces, learners are more likely

to notice patterns and rules of language, as well as more quickly recognize words in context. By actively reflecting on their understanding of words, learners will also become more aware of their mistakes, making them more conscious of their errors and more willing to challenge accepted structures and come up with alternative interpretations.

At more advanced levels, learners can take advantage of metacognitive vocabulary learning strategies by using websites or software created specifically to teach languages. Learners can not only read and listen to a text, but by navigating through the various menus and topics, they are actually thinking and reflecting on their own language usage and its meaning. Additionally, they can personalize their learning by creating flashcards with words they find most challenging, or by making audio recordings of their voice so they can listen to their own language and compare it to that of the native speaker.

Metacognitive vocabulary learning strategies are a great way to become a more mindful, reflective learner and improve language skills in a short amount of time. By taking ownership of their learning, learners can better conceptualize and remember new words, make fewer errors, and better interact with native speakers in natural contexts. Metacognitive vocabulary strategies are powerful tools that help teachers guide their students toward a deeper understanding of both academic content and their mental processes. To improve their students' vocabulary skills, teachers often incorporate metacognitive strategies into their instruction. Metacognition is the process of reflecting and thinking about how one learns and processes information. Metacognitive vocabulary strategies help students develop the ability to analyze and evaluate the words they encounter in their reading, writing, and speaking.

One popular metacognitive strategy used to develop students' vocabularies is teaching them to prefix and suffix hunt. Prefixes and suffixes are parts of words that are attached to the original root word to change its meaning. In addition to helping students detect shades of meaning and nuance in words, prefix and suffix hunting also helps them to expand their vocabulary. Teachers can engage their students in the discussion of the meanings and connotations of prefixes and suffixes. This will help them become aware of the way different prefixes and suffixes can change the meaning of a word. In addition, teachers can create activities that involve applying prefixes and suffixes to a word. This allows students to practice using and recognizing the various meanings of each.

Another powerful metacognitive strategy for building vocabulary is sentence frames. Students can use sentence frames to practice using new and unfamiliar words

in context. For example, if a teacher alerts their student to a new word, they can provide a sentence frame to put it into context and ensure understanding.

Similarly, teachers can use semantic maps to explore the relationships between words. By connecting multiple words to the same concept, students can make more sense of words that seem unrelated. Ultimately, this strategy allows them to process and recall unfamiliar words more effectively.

Metacognitive strategies adapted to target vocabulary can help students develop and refine their understanding of words and phrases. With practice, students may acquire a deeper and more nuanced grasp of academic language, as well as improve their communication skills.

Moreover, metacognitive strategies are crucial tool for ESL learners to acquire and understand new vocabulary words. A metacognitive strategy involves an individual learner actively taking part in the learning process, specifically reflecting on the information they are presented in order to understand it better. ESL learners can apply metacognitive strategies to improve their vocabulary in a number of ways.

1. **Visual Cues:** Using visuals such as pictures and diagrams to help learners identify and remember new words or concepts can be extremely useful. Creating a mental image of a word can help learners make a mental connection to the material, therefore allowing them to remember it more easily.

2. **Creating Context:** Using the new vocabulary in a sentence or a short story can help learners make the connection between the word and its meaning. This can be done by the learners themselves when they apply their understanding of the new word in a given context, or it can be done by the instructor when they provide examples of how to use the new word in sentences.

3. **Peer-Learning:** Peer-learning can be an effective tool to help ESL learners come to grips with words they find difficult to understand. Through this process, learners can work together to discuss and form an understanding of difficult words.

4. **Self-Testing:** By testing themselves on their understanding of the new words, ESL learners can gain a better understanding of the words, as well as their own areas of knowledge. This can be done through examinations, quizzes, or other activities created to assess their understanding of the new words.

Through the use of metacognitive strategies, ESL learners can become better equipped to handle new vocabulary. By using the strategies outlined above, learners can gain a better understanding and mastery of new words, which can lead to improved English language proficiency.

Overall, according to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), the division between cognitive and metacognitive strategy is not very transparent. Cognitive Vocabulary

Learning Strategies focus more on the information side of the learning process. Strategies such as word association, mental imaging, and repetition are among the most common cognitive approaches students tend to use.

Metacognitive Vocabulary Learning Strategies involve more thinking about the learning process itself. Strategies such as self-monitoring and self-regulation are among these. Additionally, learners can use reflection and planning strategies to help direct their learning, by setting achievable goals or making a plan for what to learn each session.

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