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SIGNIFICANCE OF WORD KNOWLEDGE FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

English is learnt today, since it still occupies an important place in education system. As an international language, English has created better understanding among the nations of the world and has been responsible for the cultural give and take. It has facilitated mobility of people. English has been rightly described as a window of the rapid progress of technology and scientific knowledge that is constantly taking place in the world. As a link language, in India, it is the only language which is understood by the educated people all over the country. Every new word that is learnt widens and strengthens one's vocabulary equipping one to be explicit in sharing views, grasping ideas, thinking logically and thus connecting with the world around engagingly. The teachers can use various methodological tools to teach new words since a rich vocabulary creates a favourable impression and also trains the learner to speak with accuracy, brevity and clarity which are the hallmarks of efficacious communication.

KEY WORDS: Language, vocabulary, LSRW skills, teaching tools.

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INTRODUCTION

Language is a human system of communication that uses arbitrary signals such as voice sounds, gestures and written symbols. It is a system of sounds and symbols used to communicate ideas and feelings. This system consists of learned conventions that are slowly but constantly changing. The English language system consists of three subsystems: sound (phonology), words (morphology) and the way these words and sounds are arranged (syntax). Language is conventional, that is, it is accepted by a large number of people. The words in language communicate meaning because a large number of people use the language, accept and recognize particular meanings for particular symbols.

Perhaps, one of the fascinating aspects of language is that it constantly changes. At times, language may seem to be a system that is firmly established; it is actually a dynamic, constantly changing system that people control. Language is a tool that people form, reshape and use to communicate ideas and feelings. The change in language usually occurs very slowly. Even though words grow in meaning and new meanings are created to stand for new versions of objects and experiences, one needs a good understanding of words to communicate effectively.

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people all over the country. English language can be seen as a medium of communication. It is a kind of social behaviour; two people cannot normally communicate without a language. The function of English within a nation's daily life is influenced by geographical, historical, cultural and political factors. It has facilitated mobility of people.

Listening is an important skill but unfortunately teachers tend to neglect this skill in English classes, mostly because instructors assume that this skill will develop automatically, when the learners hear English spoken in the classes. Listening is different from hearing as it involves understanding. The development of speaking skills is not given enough attention in most of the English classes, either because the teacher does not feel confident to do it or the learners do not feel the need for the skills. Speech equally plays a role in developing good communication. Learners should be given opportunities to speak, because speaking skills can be developed only through engaging the learners in the act of speaking. Reading is the most favoured and most practised skill in English classes. Reading should be followed by checking the learners' understanding of comprehension.

WORD KNOWLEDGE

"Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man" says Francis Bacon. Vocabulary plays a prominent role in making one's communication effective. It is rightly said that words are like bricks, which are used to construct the building of language. With one or two bricks, one cannot construct a huge building. Therefore, when a person wants to fluently express his or her thoughts in English, he or she should have a good collection of English words in his or her memory. The habit of reading will increase one's vocabulary.

A vocabulary is a set of familiar words within a person's language. A vocabulary, usually developed with age, serves as a useful and fundamental tool for communication and acquiring knowledge. Students need to be able to do so much more than reel off of vocabulary because it can support their communicative needs. One of the most important responsibilities of every teacher is to help students develop a strong working vocabulary.

Vocabulary falls into four categories:

1. Listening
2. Speaking
3. Reading
4. Writing

To develop learners' vocabulary, teachers must encourage a curiosity about the meaning and use of unfamiliar words and promote the use of strategies that will help students find the meaning of unfamiliar words. The size of a learner's working vocabulary is both a measure of educational level and a key to academic and career success.

METHODOLOGY

Strategies for nurturing vocabulary development fall into two methods: teaching strategies for vocabulary in a direct method and learning new words in an indirect method. The rest come from their everyday experiences with oral communication, listening to text read aloud and reading a wide variety of texts independently.

Talk is also important. Students, whose parents talk to them often on a range of topics, come to school with a much larger vocabulary than students from homes where talk is limited. These students do not have a larger vocabulary because they are smarter – rather, they are smarter because they have a larger vocabulary. Teachers should engage students in conversations on a wide range of topics, calling attention to the shades of meaning of interesting words in their daily interactions with text both written and oral, and promote a spirit of curiosity about words and the different meanings that words can have in different contexts. Students should not be afraid to use complicated words, as this is how students will learn. They can learn new words by finding meanings of words in meaningful contexts using dictionaries and using structural analysis to find the meaning of unfamiliar words.

I. DICTIONARY USAGE: Students should be taught how to use dictionaries to look up the meanings of unknown words. Dictionary skills, such as using guide words, understanding parts of speech and deciphering phonetic spelling should be explicitly taught and practised. Dictionaries are also useful in introducing multiple meanings of words as this helps them to foster their vocabulary

improvement. Students can practise working out the relevant meaning of a word in a given passage.

II. VOCABULARY- BUILDING: Words that are used often can be displayed in a classroom on a word wall. Teachers should be selective about which words go on the wall, making sure the words displayed are really those the students need to know.

III. STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS: Structural analysis involves looking at word structure or word parts that students know—a base word, prefix, suffix or word root—to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Once students understand how multisyllabic words are constructed and once they master the meanings of common prefixes and suffixes, they can deconstruct the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Providing students with contexts in which they can learn new words incidentally is the most effective way to build vocabulary. The explicit vocabulary instruction can also help the students to develop the strategies in learning new words representing new concepts or to clarify and enrich the meanings of known words.

IV. ANALOGY: One way to enrich explicit vocabulary study is through the use of analogies. An analogy shows a relationship between words and can be used to help students learn new words. Analogies are also frequently used in standardized tests, so it is important that students learn a step-by-step strategy to decode analogies. To solve word analogies, students must first understand the relationship between the words.

V. ROLE PLAY: Role play is another technique to respond to the fundamental notion of variety in teaching. Teachers are advised to use the role-play activity in order to motivate their students and to help the less motivated learners take part in the lesson.

VI. TEACHING TOOLS: Flash cards are considered as an important tool in teaching especially a second language, since they play the role of a facilitator in teaching new vocabularies such as fruits, vegetables, clothes, etc. Besides, they are very helpful in drawing especially beginners' attention to follow and match new words to items. In addition to flash cards, realia is an authentic material that helps the teacher to overcome

classroom artificiality. Creating stories with the students is another way of developing speaking and writing skills.

SUGGESTIONS

Learners should be made to understand that the first step of learning any language is by listening to it and one should make oneself familiar with the language. There are various methods of listening. It constantly makes a learner think in that specific language as people do in their mother tongue. If he has acquired that skill of thinking in a particular language, it is a good sign of his progress in that language. The short statements can be ruminated every day so that he would be clear of his day-to-day activities in a foreign language other than his own.

Once a student has got the interest in listening, he can pass on to next step, which is, reading. He can understand a language and become familiar with that language. Reading directly goes to the mind and when he ruminates in a particular language, he becomes doubly talented in that language. Reading and writing are skills normally addressed amply in a regular and an average classroom scenario. Skimming texts and reading and understanding of textual materials could be introduced in the classroom to acquire effective reading skills.

The active skills are speaking and writing. The active skills proclaim a learner's talents to the world. Speaking is a part of almost every classroom, but it can be easy to assume that they already know how to do things like challenging an idea or back up an argument with evidence. In reality, those oral communication skills must be explicitly taught like other core skills in school. A well-spoken, confident young learner will have occasions to use those communication skills throughout his or her life.

Writing requires proper guidance from the teachers. Students can be asked to make sentences of their own. They can be given simple topics for writing such as the experiences of an excursion, picnic, about their best friend and their hobby. Writing needs constant practice so that they write without grammatical errors.

CONCLUSION

A good range of vocabulary lends richness and clarity to one's speech. If the teachers train their students in an innovative way, they would acquire efficient communication skill. Thus the motivation of the teacher plays a major role in improving the language skills of the students. The teachers will feel free to adapt guidelines to meet the needs of their students, for teachers are always the best ones to design materials for the class.

Teachers should make sure that their students always understand what they say and use demonstration, pictures, translation or a combination of these to ensure that the students get what they communicate. When the teacher introduces a new grammar point, he/ she should select the model sentences very carefully. They should try to introduce only one new grammar point in a set of model sentences, so that the students can focus on the point the teacher wishes to emphasize. The teacher should always strive to keep the topics unified in theme and relate it to the students' interests. They should use model sentences that reflect usage and try to introduce those sentences in situations as discourse and not as isolated sentences.

Thus, effective communication can take place when teachers enable students to use language correctly and appropriately. This can be achieved by acquiring word knowledge.

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