

Секция «Современные лингвистические исследования разноуровневых единиц языка:
морфология и синтаксис»

Techniques in teaching vocabulary

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Сотрудник

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Vocabulary learning is an important and indispensable part of any language learning process. The purpose of my thesis is to show and explain the importance of teaching vocabulary. As English language has become a lingua franca of the world, there is clearly a need for learners to speak and interact in different situations. For that vocabulary knowledge should be developed appropriately and adequately.

Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings. As Steven Stahl [Stahl: 1] puts it, “Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world”. Vocabulary knowledge is not something that can ever be fully mastered, it is something that expands and deepens over the course of a lifetime.

The importance of vocabulary. Vocabulary is central to English language teaching because without sufficient vocabulary students cannot understand others or express their own ideas. David Wilkins [Thornbury: 13] wrote that “. . . while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary *nothing* can be conveyed” and Michael Lewis [Lewis: 89] went further to argue, “lexis is the core or heart of language”. Particularly as students develop greater fluency and expression in English, it is significant for them to acquire more productive vocabulary knowledge and to develop their own personal vocabulary learning strategies.

Vocabulary is the key to **communicate** successfully with other people. Words are the **currency** of communication. To really understand words, students have to know: a) what they mean, b) what other words they are used with, c) which situations they are used in, d) what the social consequences of their use can be.

Penny Ur states the learners need to be taught the form of the word, then grammar, collocations, meaning and word formation. In the form pronunciation and spelling should be mentioned. The learner has to know what a word sounds like (its pronunciation) and what it looks like (its spelling). [Ur: 60]

The grammar of a new item also needs to be taught. Again, depending what level the learners are they should be taught to follow some grammatical rules. For example, when teaching nouns, we would like to present their plural forms, also regular and irregular (girl-girls, mouse-mice). When teaching verbs, maybe we would like to present their past forms, especially if the verb is irregular (forget-forgot).

Collocation - is a predictable combination of words, which is another piece of information about a new item which it may be worth teaching. It is important to get students use the combinations correctly and appropriately.

The meaning of a word is primarily what it refers to in the real world, its denotation. [Ur: 61]. In my opinion it is important to inform learners about the meaning of the word as well as their form and grammar. Learners find this sometimes very difficult and discouraging because some words do not have just one meaning. Context helps them to find the right meaning. Thus, it is good when the learners know synonyms (smart-intelligent) or antonyms (cheap-expensive). We can relate items together - for example, words like “a school, a teacher, a whiteboard and a break” are all associated with education.

Word formation - using prefixes and suffixes, using hyphenated words will be useful for learners in order to develop their vocabulary widely and to polish their skill up.

To summarize this, firstly I think that knowing the word and understanding its meaning go hand in hand. Secondly, it is easier to remember concrete words like *a chair* or *a dog* than abstract words. Young learners often put the words together with what they can see, hear or with what they can touch. But as said above they also need to know other aspects of the words they learn. In my opinion, it is important to teach them all these aspects.

There are many different methods and approaches of teaching a foreign language, including vocabulary. I want to mention just some of them that can be used for teaching young learners.

· To help the learners understand it is important to visualize the item and get the students to repeat or use the item actively. One good way of doing this is to let them see or perhaps touch the vocabulary item, for instance a house. We need to let them repeat it in different ways and they should be given a chance to listen to the teacher talking about it.

· A little bit of shocking method is the direct method or the direct approach. The mother tongue is never used, there are no translations. Only target language is used in the classroom and only complete sentences are used.

· Suggestopedia is very successful method in helping learners to memorize words. This method stimulates the learner's brain by music while learning.

· What really works especially for young learners is the Total Physical Response method - TPR. Nowadays many children are very hyper and physically active and to concentrate for a long time can be very difficult for them. Using this method, games, changing topics and using variety of activities is very appreciated by them.

In teaching vocabulary it is important to understand learners' needs, their expectations with which each student comes to the lessons, also ways of motivating them and last but not least their learning style. Furthermore, teacher needs to repeat vocabulary often, because students must work with a word or phrase many times before acquisition takes place and we must offer variety to keep the exercises fresh and to cater to different learning styles.

References

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