



RETENTION OF VOCABULARY THROUGH TWO MEMORY STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary learning has been main factor of achieving high level of proficiency for recent years. It is a crucial factor of communication of meaning (Wilkins, 1972) and of mastering a language (Schmitt, 2008). Moreover, as Mediha and Enisa (2014) claimed, language learners could not communicate proficiently without having enough vocabulary. However, retention of new words in the English classes is subject to various challenges and limitations. Recent years group of cognitivists researched and discussed these challenges and pointed out result of forgetting new vocabulary commonly related to memory and mental process

I. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary learning has been main factor of achieving high level of proficiency for recent years. It is a crucial factor of communication of meaning (Wilkins, 1972) and of mastering a language (Schmitt, 2008). Moreover, as Mediha and Enisa (2014) claimed, language learners could not communicate proficiently without having enough vocabulary. However, retention of new words in the English classes is subject to various challenges and limitations. Recent years group of cognitivists researched and discussed these challenges and pointed out result of forgetting new vocabulary commonly related to memory and mental process. As Schmitt and Meara (1997) contended as a main problem, the approaches used before included the following mismatches:

- a. The process of learning is boring and monotonous
- b. Approaches are impractical and ineffective
- c. It was demanding without natural factors
- d. The materials were lack of practicality and forgetful
- e. They are demonstrated de- contextually

- f. Memorization and definition were main focus
- g. Learning approaches are rejected
- h. There were no attention has been given to cognitive properties of learners.

This case study aims to provide reasons of forgetting and applying two memory strategies: association with pictures, and association with a topic according to the small- scale research on vocabulary learning in the second language. In this article, cognitive approach is chosen that would help our ESL learner to overcome some of the mentioned challenges above and state effectiveness of cognitive perspectives than traditional methods for teaching vocabulary, for instance direct method and grammar translation that pointed out memorizing a huge amount of new vocabulary. It would be chance for our learner in facilitating vocabulary acquisition and retention new words for longer duration of time.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Having research on this topic, we became convinced that vocabulary learning is crucial component to be functional in language learning, as Wilkins (1972) claimed "without vocabulary nothing

can be conveyed" and "without vocabulary, no communication is possible" (Folse, 2004, p. 25). Furthermore, Folse (2004) contended, "How frustrating it is when you want to say something and are stymied because you don't know the word for a simple noun!" (p. 23). However, majority part of learners face to challenges in acquiring the vocabulary and apply new words only in short period of time, in as much as, various reasons which leads psychologists and cognitivists researching on these issues.

There was always debatable investigations about effectiveness of vocabulary strategies on vocabulary retention. As Sanaoui (1995) claimed students, demonstrate better recalling vocabulary who had more structured learning vocabulary approach. Kusumarasdyati (n.d) also contented that learners should practice various vocabulary strategies to find out which of them is comfortable for themselves.

Oxford (1990) deliver four set: creating mental linkages, applying images and sounds, reviewing well, and employing actions" which are also named memory or mnemonic strategies. How to put strategies into implementation is explained by Rivers (1983): "vocabulary cannot be taught. It can be presented, explained, included in all kinds of activities in all manner of associations: but ultimately it is learned by the individually in an individual way" (p. 123). Moreover, vocabulary strategies are can counted helpful actions that assist learners to understand and remember vocabulary.

Association with pictures

As Arias (2003) mentioned, learning vocabulary based on pictures is grossly helpful for those who is visual learner. This gives visually oriented students to combine what they imagine and see, to make new expressions active one in their speech, and to retrieve words easily from their long- term into a working memory (Thornbury, 2004). According to Goll (2004): "the more strongly you imagine a situation, the more effectively it will stick in your mind for later recall" (p.309). For language learners it can be effective, simultaneously, colorful experience turning monotonous learning process into active one.

Association with a Topic

Oxford (1990) claims that "this strategy incorporates a variety of memory strategies like grouping, using imagery, associating and elaborating valuable for improving both memory and comprehension of the new expression" (p.62). Association with a topic differ from former strategy, in that, it demands from learners using their critically thinking skills to decide in what way they should define the connection they had experienced among the words in a word map. Furthermore, this strategy requires not only association, but also, concentration in order to find out connection between topic and each expression to recall the notion of the vocabulary, which was not simple task. Via this strategy, learners have to interact with each other more than traditional way, they ask meaning of the word from each other and share ideas in what ways they can connect them. In topic based vocabulary learning, in as much as, it is cognitively demanding task, learners try to solve their

challenges or lack of experience with the help of mutual support.

III. CONCLUSION

This research work mainly focused on learning vocabulary through two memory strategies and Cognitivist Theory, as it is discovered vocabulary strategies concern both cognitive and affective factors.. In as much as vocabulary learning one of the expanded challenge language learners and chose this topic for my research work. As Thornbury claimed (2004) "Association with pictures moved the learner from relying on the first language to using their imagination to visualize and represent accurately the meaning of the words". Association with pictures allows learners to use own imagination to make connection between meaning of the word and their background knowledge. Practicing with pictures so as learning new words gave them chance to recall easily and applying in speech actively.

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