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Implicit and Explicit Instruction in Teaching Vocabulary

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ANNOTATION

Learning vocabulary seems time-consuming and pretty dull for a person who has just started his language learning experience. This article, mainly, discusses both implicit and explicit way of leaning vocabulary, stating out some effective sides of them on learners vocabulary acquisition. It is often assumed by a large number of teachers that when students do not learn new vocabulary words, they simply need to practice the words some more. Research has proved, however, that it is often the case that students simply do not understand the instructional task involved, indeed. This article takes a close look on vocabulary learning strategies as a language learner, and discovers many more useful tips for them to apply in their learning context.

KEYWORDS: explicit, implicit, contexttextual, strategies, exposure, incidentally, components, instruction, comprehension, mastering, acquire, morphemic analysis, indirect, methods, interaction, authentic, program.

Introduction

Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings, their usage in different contexts. Vocabulary knowledge is not something that can ever be fully mastered, it is something that expands and deepens over the course of ones lifetime, and can never be completely finished. Instruction in vocabulary involves far more than looking up words in a dictionary and using the words in a provided sentence by user. Vocabulary is acquired incidentally through indirect exposure to words and intentionally through explicit instruction in particular words and some word-learning strategies. As professor Michael Graves (2000) stated that, there are four components of an effective vocabulary program: wide or extensive independent reading to expand word knowledge, instruction in specific words to enhance comprehension of texts containing those words, instruction in independent word-learning strategies, and word consciousness and word-play activities to motivate and enhance learning.

Materials and Methods

The National Reading Panel (2000) claimed that there is no any research-based method for teaching vocabulary, indeed. According to its analysis, the panel recommended using a variety of direct and, at the same time, indirect methods of vocabulary instruction.

According to the National Reading Panel (2000), explicit instruction of vocabulary is considered to be highly effective. To develop vocabulary intentionally, students should be taught both specific words and word-learning strategies only in an explicit way. To widen students' knowledge of word forms and meanings, specific word instruction should be robust (Beck et al., 2002). Seeing vocabulary in enriched contexts provided by authentic materials, rather than in isolated vocabulary drills, produces robust vocabulary learning, at some point (National Reading Panel, 2000). This kind of instruction often does not begin with a definition, for the ability to give a definition is often the result of knowing what the word means, overall. Rich and robust vocabulary instruction should, also, go beyond definitional knowledge, getting all students actively engaged in using and thinking about word meanings and in creating relationships among words.

According to Neumann & Dwyer (2009), the importance of vocabulary can be defined as “the words we must know to communicate effectively: words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary)” (p.385).

Richards and Renandya (2002) claim that vocabulary is a central component of language proficiency and is the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. They continued that with extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners will achieve to their fullest potential and be encouraged to make use of language learning opportunities around them such as listening to the radio, listening to native speakers, using the language in different contexts, reading or watching television. Vocabulary can be defined as “the words we must know to communicate effectively: words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary)” (Neuman & Dwyer, 2009, p. 385). So, second language learning is deeply related to the size of vocabulary learnt (Nassaji, 2006). In the case of learning vocabulary, Harmon, Wood, and Kiser (2009) state that it is a continual process of encountering new words in meaningful and comprehensible contexts.

There are generally two types of vocabulary teaching- learning that can be used to teach students: explicit vocabulary teaching-learning versus implicit vocabulary teaching-learning. Ellis (1994) claims that implicit vocabulary teaching-learning methods involve indirect or incidental learning, whereas explicit methods involve direct or intentional teaching-learning. According to Berry (1994), a central concept in cognitive psychology as well as in second language acquisition research that has generated a host of fruitful work is the implicit/explicit distinction, which takes several different forms and has been applied to different referents. For instance, researchers are intrigued by the processes of implicit and explicit learning, by the nature of implicit and explicit knowledge, and by the effect of implicit and explicit teaching-learning strategies on language acquisition. In the realms of cognitive psychology and second language acquisition alike, the presence of awareness serves as a primary defining feature in terms of this implicit/explicit distinction

Results and Discussions

Research shows that there appears to be more words to be learned than can be directly taught in even the most ambitious and preferable program of vocabulary instruction. Explicit instruction in word-learning strategies gives students tools for independently determining the meanings of unfamiliar words, they are coming across

but have not been explicitly introduced in class. Since students encounter so many unfamiliar words in their reading passages, any help provided by such strategies can be of great importance for them.

Word-learning strategies include dictionary use, morphemic analysis, addressing to their synonyms, authentic use of words and contextual analysis. For ELLs whose language shares cognates with English, cognate awareness is also one of the most important strategies. Dictionary use teaches students about multiple word meanings they look into, as well as the importance of choosing the appropriate, clearcut definition to fit the particular context. Morphemic analysis is the process of deriving a word's meaning by analyzing its meaningful parts, or morphemes, dividing them into small meaningful parts. Such word parts include root words, prefixes, and, suffixes. Contextual analysis involves inferring the meaning of an unfamiliar word by scrutinizing the text that comes along with it. Instruction in contextual analysis is, mainly, about involving teaching students to employ both generic and specific types of context clues.

Conclusion

To conclude, the utilization of the explicit vocabulary teaching strategy should also be given enough attention to provide students with background knowledge about the assigned texts and to facilitate to improve students' language proficiency.

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