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VOCABULARY ENRICHING – A FACTOR THAT CONTRIBUTES TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SPEECH FLUENCY

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Summary

The methodology of English teaching stresses the importance of formation of active communicative abilities. This can be achieved through a continuous vocabulary enriching. The lexical approach is a method that contributes to the continuous enriching of learners' vocabulary. A permanent and continuous acquisition of new words provides a good communication and understanding.

Rezumat

Cultivarea vocabularului – o condiție în perfecționarea comunicării fluente

Cunoașterea unei limbi moderne rezidă în abilitatea de a comunica fluent, fapt posibil doar în cazul unui vocabular variat și bogat. Obiectivul procesului de predare a limbii moderne este oferirea unui reper mediciniștilor utilizabil în comunicare, capabil să le asigure capacitatea de a se exprima într-o altă limbă decât cea maternă.

Metodologia predării limbii engleze este în continuă implementare de metode și procedee ce ar optimiza și ar facilita procesul de cultivare a vocabularului. În prezenta lucrare sînt descrise tehnici noi care vor facilita însușirea unităților lexicale propuse la lecțiile de limbă engleză și terminologie medicală.

Language teaching came into its own as a profession in the twentieth century. The whole foundation of contemporary language teaching was developed during the early part of twentieth century, as applied linguists and others sought to develop principles and procedures for the design of reaching methods and materials. Language teaching in the twentieth century was characterized by frequent change and innovation and by the development of sometimes competing language teaching ideologies. The main goal of language teaching is teaching the speech.

Speech is regarded as the basis of language, and speech structure is viewed as being at the heart of speaking ability.

Central to an approach or method in language teaching is a view of the nature of language, and this shapes teaching goals, the type of syllabus that is adopted, and the emphasis given in classroom teaching. Acquiring a great number of “lexical units”, that is words, is essential while learning a new language.

An approach used intensively in the process of language teaching is the so-called lexical approach. Its usage enables the learners to get a great word-supply.

A lexical approach in language teaching refers to one derived from the belief that the building blocks of language learning and communication are not grammar, functions, notions, or some other units of planning and teaching but lexis, that is, words and word combinations.

Lexical approaches in language teaching reflect a belief in the centrality of the lexicon to language structure, second language learning, and language use, and in particular to multiword lexical units to “chunks” that are learned and used as single items. Linguistic theory has also recognized a more central role for vocabulary in linguistic description. Formal transformational/generative linguistics, which previously took syntax as the primary focus, now gives more central attention to the lexicon and how the lexicon is formatted, coded, and organized. Chomsky, the father of contemporary studies in syntax, has recently adopted a “lexicon-is-prime” position in his Minimalist Linguistic theory.

The use of lexical approach that is the continuous personal vocabulary enriching fosters the free and spontaneous communication.

The teacher's role is to create during the lesson an environment predisposing to the acquisition of a certain word-stock. A great number of teaching methods and procedures should be used in order to reach the target. The majority of ordinary language teaching situations should be geared towards language oriented communication.

For learners who are studying English in a non- English-speaking setting it is very important to experience real communicative situations supplied by the teacher with a certain number of active lexical units which in the process of usage will be readily remembered. Using these communicative situations supplied with a lexical minimum, the students will express their own views and attitudes better and more easily.

Learning a foreign language is not just a matter of memorizing a different set of names for the things around us. It should not be a passive process; it must be an active process, that is, they should be used actively in speech. Learning of some new lexical units is more effective if the learners are actively involved in the process. In order for the students to become proficient readers and writers, they need to enrich their vocabulary in addition to building their rhetorical skills.

Accordingly, proponents of the communicative language teaching approach argue that English as a foreign language students are in need of communicative language teaching methodology in order to gain facility and confidence in using English. Based on student centeredness, the communicative language teaching approach features low profile teacher roles, frequent pair work or small group problem solving, students responding to authentic samples of English, extended exchanges on high interest topics, and the integration of the four basic skills, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The communicative language teaching approach discourages extensive teacher-controlled drills, quizzing of memorized material, and extended commentary on forms of English.

In the face of the many adverse conditions that militate against significant and authentic communication among students in English as a foreign language classrooms, my own observations in English as a foreign language settings have led me to conclude that the most frequent obstacle to communicative language teaching is excessive talk on the part of the teacher. This teacher tendency possibly rests upon teachers’ own contrary beliefs about how language learning takes place. There may be failure to appreciate the way communicative language teaching methodology aims to track the known processes of second language acquisition. Alternatively, excessive teacher talk may simply be the reassertion of old habits that resist change in spite of teacher acknowledgements about the value of communicative language teaching activities. Conceivably, lack of preparation time may lead some teachers to fill the class hour with extemporaneous talk about the target language. Whatever the cause, students end up doing less talking. That is, excessive teacher talk hampers the emergence of sustained purposeful student talk.

This is not to deny that the breakdown may indicate a lack of ready repertoire of communicative language teaching techniques, or that classroom conditions are often limiting. I also recognize that some instructors may harbor doubts about their own ability to model the complex sociolinguistics of spoken English. Over time, however, much can be done to alleviate these drawbacks. On the other hand, the teacher talk variable is most immediately accessible to

change and clearly under the command of the teacher. I maintain that as teachers self-impose a reasoned and disciplined control of their own talk in the classroom, classroom activities, with a few basic techniques, will move in the direction of meaningful exchange between learners.

Having taught English to students for almost six years, I have observed that there are some efficient procedures that can facilitate the students' remembering of the new vocabulary. These procedures are designed to help the students learn additional vocabulary within the framework of the oral skills and writing courses they are required to take.

The system has proved to be efficient and successful – efficient in that it demands a minimal amount of class time and successful in that the students can remember and use the new vocabulary with ease.

Step one: Assessing the needs of a specific class.

This can be done by the teacher, the students, or as a collaborative effort by both parties. The first step is to compile a vocabulary list with the same number of words as students in a given class. The words should be taken from both literary sources and methodology readings that the students will have to read in the upcoming academic year. Whenever possible, the words should be given in the context in which they appear (either in a phrase or a sentence).

The criteria for accepting a word are: its usefulness in nonprofessional as well as professional contexts and its frequency of usage in literature and spoken language.

Step two: Preparing a transparency.

The list should be written on a transparency for projection onto a screen. The students are then asked to identify each word they know. Hopefully, they should recognize some of the words or be able to guess their meanings.

Step three: Assigning responsibility for each word.

Next, each student is assigned a word to look up and present to the rest of the class. To guide their efforts, a “word profile” is suggested. Some of the items are mandatory, while others are optional.

Word Profile:

- definition
- part of speech
- a defining sentence

Step four: Vocabulary reports.

In each class session, one student is responsible for presenting a vocabulary item. The reports take about five minutes, and are usually given at the beginning of the lesson. Students are encouraged to recall contexts in which they have encountered the word.

Step five: Review and self-checking.

Every few weeks, the students review the vocabulary items that have been presented in class. Several procedures can be used for reviewing, depending on the aspect of vocabulary that the teacher wants to emphasize.

1. Provide a worksheet with sentences in which one vocabulary item is missing. The students go over their vocabulary lists and fill in the missing word. This is a simple word recognition activity.

2. Provide a worksheet with partial sentences which need to be completed. In each partial sentence, one of the vocabulary items is mentioned. The task of the students is to complete the sentence in any way that is meaningful. This reviews the vocabulary and provides more writing practice.

3. If there's a strong literature component in the students' program, it is advisable to ask students to write down the vocabulary items that they have found citing the literary context for some of these words.

The procedures described above are efficient and require very little time. This approach heightens the student level of awareness of vocabulary and strengthens their oral skills.

The vocabulary enriching should be done constantly, regularly and gradually. The students should take part in different classroom activities and they should perform special

vocabulary – focused tasks in order to enrich their own vocabulary. A certain number of new lexical units introduced by the teacher each lesson will guarantee a necessary lexical supply.

Teachers must strive to sift through the many claims they have encountered about language learning and determine what in fact they themselves hold to be most descriptive of the process.

Lesson by lesson, activity by activity, teachers can gradually increase the degree of meaningful interaction between their students.

One widely shared portrayal of second language acquisition for teachers to consider is often referred to as learner interlanguage. This refers to the learner's imperfect but evolving representation of the target language at any point in the acquisition journey.

The communicative language teaching approach assumed that a student's interlanguage development is benefited most by uninterrupted trial and error, along with attentiveness to the responses of interlocutors. It is through all of these acts of communication and feedback in the target language that students gain facility in the language.

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