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HOW TO TEACH VOCABULARY

It is a received opinion that the highly industrialized world of today demands common language for successful information exchange and progress development. That's why English being an available means of international communication has become an integral part of contemporary education.

A language being an open system is constantly under the influence of external and internal factors, so to stay up-to-date a person should acquire the basis of a language as soon as possible and move on improving and enriching it. Taking this consideration into account language teachers around the world aim at applying the most efficient and intensive methods of teaching. And if grammar is a more or less constant component of a language, vocabulary is apt to develop day after day.

The primary problem to be solved in foreign language teaching is the amount and character of the lexical material introduced per lesson. The number of words language learners should acquire depends on the syllabus requirements, conditions and methods used.

The principles of vocabulary selection, according to I.V. Rakhmanov, are the following:

- ability to describe as many notions as possible (e.g. with the help of the word «thing» you may produce quite a number of different in meaning phrases);
- exclusion of synonyms (e.g. among the words «famous» (positive), «notorious» (negative), «well-known» (neutral) it's better to introduce the last one, though mentioning the others);
- compatibility (e.g. with «to do» one can produce more phrases than with the help of «to commit»);
- word formation value (e.g. careful, careless, caring, to care about, to care for, care-taker, care-worn – all have the same root «care»);
- polysemitism (e.g. «head»: man's head, the head of the committee, headquarters, headline).

As far as passive vocabulary is concerned the principles are:

- polysemitism,
- word formation value,
- semantic principle (words with the reference to a particular topic, e.g. *delinquency, generation gap*, etc.),
- frequency (words often used both in written and oral texts).

After the vocabulary has been selected the mechanism of its presentation and retention becomes an essential issue. I. A. Gruzinskaya suggests the rules for presenting new words. They are:

Rule 1 – While teaching learners vocabulary, introduce words in sentence patterns in different situations of intercourse. Present the words in keeping with the structures to be taught.

Rule 2 – Present the word as an element, in a sentence pattern first. Then fix it in the learners' memory through different exercises in sentence patterns and phrase patterns.

Rule 3 – While introducing a word pronounce it yourself in a context, ask learners to pronounce it both individually and in unison in a context, too.

Rule 4 – In teaching words it is necessary to establish a memory bond between a new word and those already covered.

According to G. Rogova [Рогова 1975] the process of learning a word means to learners:

- learning what the words means;
- learners' activity for the purpose of retaining the word;
- learners' activity in using this word in the process of communication in different situations.

Accordingly, the teacher's role in this process is:

- to furnish explanation, to present the word, to get learners to identify the concept correctly;
- to get them to recall or recognize the word by means of different exercises;
- to stimulate learners to use the words in speech.

It is common knowledge that each kind of practising speaking, reading, writing and hearing skills has a potential for vocabulary enrichment as words are elements of the language used in communication. Language learners should know that every word has its form, meaning and usage. G. Rogova [Рогова 1975] says that it is desirable to organize learners' work to approach the new words in many different ways. The teacher can ensure lasting retention of words for his learners if he relies upon learners' sensory perception and thinking, upon their auditory, visual, and kinesthetic analysers so that learners can easily recognize the words while hearing or reading, and use them while speaking or writing whenever they need. To use a word the learner should:

- search for it in his memory;
- choose the very word he needs;
- insert the word in a sentence;
- use it properly to express his thought.

Sometimes a teacher can resort to non-traditional techniques, aids and materials to present, assimilate or review the vocabulary depending on the aim of teaching a word and the nature of the word. It has been generally accepted that teachers should

motivate learners by introducing variety in their lessons. For example, songs can be a source of new vocabulary items. Teachers use songs for several purposes: to introduce a new topic for discussion, its vocabulary items; to practice vocabulary; to practice comprehensive skills and intensify learning; to stimulate discussion based on learners' attitude to the problem; to stimulate creativity, etc.

Russian methodologists A.I. Derbaremdicker [Дербаремдикер 2009] and V.A. Vasiliev [Васильев 2009] suggest the stages of working with a song:

- Pre-listening: anticipating difficulties;
- Listening;
- Comprehension exercises: true or false tests, answering the questions;
- Word-for-word translation;
- The second listening;
- Fulfillment of post-listening exercises;
- Oral / written speech exercises.

Reading can also contribute to vocabulary enrichment. Reading as well as listening comprehension implies perception and understanding of the given material which may be different. To show non-traditional ways of working one can use poems as a material. It can help to deliver to learners universal values; make them think over meanings of some words, notice different shades of meanings; teach them to express themselves. There are several stages of applying a poem:

- Linking a poem with the main topic;
- First-time reading: learners read it for the first time, analyze vocabulary items, try to get the idea.
- Introduction of a new vocabulary: writing out new words;
- Line-by-line translation, to make text understanding easier;
- Pointing out grammar structures;
- Intonation and pronunciation work;
- Expressive reading;
- Literary translation.

To be able to express one's thoughts and attitudes one must develop speaking skills. To make speaking efficient in matters of vocabulary enrichment professor Newton figured out three main processes. They are:

- Attention – make a word stand out in narration; make learners understand they need the word to express the idea;
- Frequent use – learners should come across new vocabulary items as often as possible either in talking to the teacher, or hearing it from him / her, or seeing in grammar / phonetical exercises;
- Generalization of meaning – it may be either receptive – designation in a new context; or productive – the use in different contexts, forms.

For practising speaking skills teachers can apply:

- Simple retelling;
- 4/3/2 retelling;
- Read and say;
- Role play.

Simple retelling is quite a common activity, while the others may provoke questions.

4/3/2 is a form of retelling when four minutes is given to the first learner to retell the text, and then the second one does the retelling in 3 minutes and the third – in 2. As a result learners shorten the text omitting some less important information and picking the most vital.

Read and say – is a form of retelling, when a learner has questions to the text in front and has to answer them using the vocabulary.

Role play – is another activity meant to stimulate speaking and develop the vocabulary. Learners try being different characters and act accordingly.

Writing cannot be neglected in matters of vocabulary retention. Various forms of writing show their potential. There are different kinds of dictations:

- **Word dictations:**
 - Chains;
 - Associations;
 - Word Groups.
- **Sentence Dictations:**
 - Distributing phrases

- **Passage dictations**

All the techniques of vocabulary presentation and retention mentioned above can be helpful as:

- phonetical warming-up at the beginning of the lesson (listening-comprehension of English songs, dictations, work with poems);
- practising grammatical and lexical material (spelling dictations, sentence / passages dictations, retellings, role plays);
- developing speaking skills and creativity;
- a means of relaxation at the end of a lesson (listening comprehension of English songs, role plays).

Teachers should realize that they help learners assimilate vocabulary when:

- different learning styles and strategies are catered for;
- there is constant repetition and recycling in different ways and in different contexts;
- there is lots of exposure to language;
- all the senses are involved;
- all the skills are involved;
- they get learners to reflect on their learning;

- they expand, remodel learners' language;
- they praise;
- they use gesture and body language;
- they ask questions appropriately;
- they can understand and relate to the reasons for doing it;
- it builds on what learners already know;
- it makes sense and is relevant to learners;
- it fits with learners' experience of human intentions;
- it is whole;
- it fits into a natural, real or understandable context;
- language is used to do things;
- activities are challenging;
- learners are given a chance to work things out from what they know;
- it helps develop thinking skills;
- outcomes are valued;
- it sparks interest and attention;
- it generates pleasure in language;
- it arouses curiosity;
- there is a sense of fun;
- activities lead to success;
- there is a natural real interaction;
- learners are encouraged to cooperate, respect and help each other;
- classroom activities are shared experiences and events;
- there is a sense of community;
- learners are given opportunities to choose what to say.

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