

Techniques of Teaching Professional Vocabulary with special reference to Vocabulary used in Media

Dr. Najmus Sarifa

Lecturer, Department of Language and Translation, King Khalid University, Abha, KSA

Corresponding Author: Dr. Najmus Sarifa, E-mail: najmus.sarifa@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

English became one of the common modes to get back to the audience and common mass. Media jargons and registers are not very easy to handle and vocabulary is a key issue in media studies. This research solely emphasizes on the importance of professional English vocabulary. It also focuses on professional vocabulary of Electronic and Print Media in context of ESP. It enlightens on how different vocabulary teaching strategies can be well exploited in teaching vocabulary to the students of Electronic and Print Media. These activities of vocabulary teaching are strongly opposed to rote learning. These activities are highly productive and can be used not only for ESP learners but also for ESL and EFL students. It is a comparative research. After identifying the problem, a hypothesis has been formulated. A detailed study of literature review has been done. Similarities and differences between various vocabulary teaching strategies are being obtained. The findings of the study showed that context clues for teaching of vocabulary appears to be quite fruitful, particularly while teaching subject specific vocabulary or technical words and jargons. Vocabulary learned through this strategy is more concrete and allows learners to use their word knowledge both receptively and productively.

INTRODUCTION

Professional Vocabulary

While teaching vocabulary and talking of its development it is necessary to know what Professional English Vocabulary is? The term professional vocabulary is a part of applied linguistics, but with its own theoretical principles (terminological theory) and its own applied purposes (the writing of vocabularies, glossaries and dictionaries, and the standardization of designations). Though it comes under the domain of linguistics, it does not make use of all linguistic concepts; it chooses its dimensions according to its objectives, i.e. it takes elements from morphology, lexicology and semantics and only operates with a limited number of concepts from these branches of

linguistics. Hence, professional vocabulary is an interdisciplinary field of enquiry whose prime object of study is the specialized words occurring in natural language which belong to specific domains of usage. Consequently, there is no single scientific approach to professional vocabulary, but several ones. The three most important approaches include:

- 1- For linguistics professional vocabulary is a part of the special lexicon that is characterized by subject and pragmatic criteria.
- 2- For scientific- technical disciplines professional vocabulary is the formal reflection of their conceptual organization and thus an essential means of expression and communication.
- 3- For the user (either direct or intermediate), professional vocabulary is a set of communicative

units which must be evaluated from the point of view of economy, precision and suitability of expression.

Importance of Professional English Vocabulary

Professional English is a special form of English which allows students to satisfy their immediate needs of English in a particular vocation or profession. Professional English is different from general English in its choice of words and language items. Professional English contains professional vocabulary which comprises of special vocabulary or technical words and jargons. Oxford Learner's Dictionary defines jargon as:

“Words or expressions that are used by a particular profession or group of people, and are difficult for others to understand (p.693)”.

While students are working in a specific situation, they face problems with professional vocabulary both in written and spoken forms. This problem arises due to the varying concepts in the system of language and confusion occurs due to the lack of apparent knowledge of professional words. So students going for a particular vocation must receive vocational training that deals with specific course content. ESP course is very suitable for this purpose because vocabulary is always a key issue in ESP and it always investigates what language items learners need to perform the task.

Strategies of Teaching Vocabulary

Vocabulary teaching has been always marginalized by the teaching of grammatical structures. It was only after the 1970s, that vocabulary gained a proper status in ELT. Then onwards it became an aspect to

be taught in language classroom with a major focus on it.

Some commonly used strategies of vocabulary teaching are:

Away from rote learning or bi-lingual word list, there are several strategies to teach or learn vocabulary. Such as dictionary use, semantic mapping, deducing the meaning from context, affixation, learn words through flash cards, word puzzles, reading comprehensions, predicting family words, learn word through riddles etc. There are different advantages of using these strategies in vocabulary teaching. Dictionary use is an independent way of vocabulary learning. New words are learned through encountering what they stand for. It is the easiest means and a shortcut to get an accurate definition of a word. Except the meanings, various entries in the dictionary promote vocabulary learning in different ways. For example; the word families gives the words related to the main word, it gives the phonemic transcriptions of the word, it also gives pronunciation and further suggests the synonyms and antonyms. Semantic mapping provides visuals which represents the relationships between words. This also encourages the learners to connect new vocabulary to prior knowledge. It is an effective strategy of vocabulary learning which makes the learner compare and contrast the words of same category. When practiced in classroom it makes the active participation of students. Learning words through the process of affixation helps the learner learn the definition of key vocabulary concepts by focusing on the parts of words such as roots prefixes and suffixes. Learning words through flash cards is one of the easiest strategies in vocabulary learning. The use of pictures enhances the learning process and it also makes the learners encounter the words and its

meanings when they see the picture. Word puzzle is another very interesting strategy of vocabulary teaching. It provides enough room for learners to guess the word after reading the clues and it also helps the students relate the new words with their background knowledge. Reading comprehension is also a widely used vocabulary teaching strategy which allows the learners to gain information from the text which helps to confirm the meaning of a word or group of words. This strategy gives the learners more opportunities to get exposed to real communicative situation in a target language. Learning words through predicting family words provides learners with illustrative examples or images which makes them to connect the word with other words and make it easier to remember the meaning. Learning vocabulary through context is one of the most commonly used strategies nowadays. It is a meaningful way of vocabulary acquisition; it gives learners numerous opportunities to use the words in their reading and writing and also helps them to understand how words are used in real life. The important key factor to all strategies is, that the more a learner is exposed to a word the stronger his understanding of word and word meaning becomes. All these strategies provide multiple opportunities to use a new word in written and spoken form.

Context Clues:

The term context means the morphological, syntactic and discourse information in a given text. Context clue is the information a reader may extract from a text that helps to figure out the meaning of a word or group of words. Teaching vocabulary in context is more meaningful process of vocabulary acquisition and the learners have better understanding of a word when they see and hear how the word is used in real life. Learning word in context helps the learners to grasp the meaning of other word features of a word,

like collocations and grammatical structures. It also leads to related exposure where the students encounter what a word means when they are used in different context. It is one of the most effective strategies to teach vocabulary knowledge to media students.

Sample Worksheet: Find the synonyms of the underlined words in the sentences and write before them.

Exercise 1:

- i. The sound track of the movie is quite good.
- ii. Mr. President Jets to New York for a weekend holiday.
- iii. Move on to the next footage.
- iv. The reporter forgot the address of the rendezvous.
- v. The kids row keep parents disturbed.

Answer Key: v) argument, iv) meeting place, iii) recorded video clip, ii) flown, i) music

It is a two end strategy, first it allows the students guess the meaning. Secondly, it makes the students learn the synonym of a particular word. It is one of the easiest strategies to learn ESP vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

These activities are a strong oppose to rote learning because rote learning is a very old and conventional method of vocabulary acquisition. Vocabulary learning is transitory and ephemeral for which rote learning method is not applicable. The activities suggested emphasize learning in context which is a suggestible method of vocabulary acquisition. It is a

meaningful way of vocabulary acquisition. It also provides the learners with numerous opportunities to use the words in their writing and reading and helps them to understand how words are used in real life. It makes learning more easy and interesting. It also helps the student bridge the gap between the students' real life exposure to vocabulary and the learning environment of the class. Through these strategies vocabulary can be learned by using multiple intelligence. Students are able to acquire more words within a limited period of time. Understanding vocabulary through context learning is so concrete that students can very easily make use of these words for language production in their professional settings. These activities are highly productive and can be used not only in Professional English class room but also in ESL and EFL classrooms.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Najmus Sarifa has a Ph.D. in in English and she is a dedicated faculty member with an experience in teaching ESL and EFL in the Faculty of Language and Translation, King Khalid University, Abha, KSA. She has been implementing methods and techniques of teaching English as a second language to students during her teaching career.

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