

Teaching Vocabulary in the EFL Classroom

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Abstract: *The learning of vocabulary is an important part in foreign language learning. The meanings of new words are very frequently emphasized, whether in books or in verbal communication. Vocabulary is considered as central in language teaching and is of paramount importance to a language learner. Vocabulary is a basic of one learns a foreign language. Through this article, the writer summarizes the related research that focus on the importance of vocabulary and explains many techniques used by some English teachers and lecturers when teaching English, as well as writer's personal view of the issues.*

Key words: *systematic approach, structured approach, phrase, contextualization, repetition, visuals, mnemonics, word families.*

Teaching vocabulary is an essential component of any language learning program. Vocabulary is the building block of language as it provides the words and phrases necessary for communication. However, teaching vocabulary can be challenging, and it requires a systematic and structured approach. In this article, we will discuss some effective strategies for teaching vocabulary.

1. Contextualization

Contextualization is one of the most effective ways of teaching vocabulary. It involves presenting new words and phrases in a meaningful context so that students can understand and remember them easily. A context can be a story, a dialogue, or a situation that illustrates the meaning and use of the target vocabulary.

For example, if you are teaching the word "excited," you could present a story about a child who is excited to go to the zoo. This story would provide the necessary context for students to understand the meaning of the word and how it is used in a sentence.

2. Repetition

Repetition is another effective strategy for teaching vocabulary. The more students see and hear a word, the more likely they are to remember it. You can use various techniques to repeat the target vocabulary, such as flashcards, games, and drills.

For example, you could use flashcards to present the target vocabulary, and then ask students to match the words with their meanings. You could also play a game of bingo, where students have to mark off the words as they hear them. Finally, you could use drills to practice the target vocabulary in context.

3. Visuals

Visuals are powerful tools for teaching vocabulary. They help students to visualize the meaning of the new words and make connections between words and images. Visuals can be pictures, diagrams, or videos that illustrate the target vocabulary.

For example, if you are teaching the word "apple," you could show a picture of an apple and ask students to name the fruit. You could also use a diagram to show the different parts of an apple, such as the core, the stem, and the seeds. Finally, you could show a video of someone eating an apple and ask students to describe what they see.

4. Mnemonics

Mnemonics are memory aids that help students to remember new words and phrases. They involve creating a mental image or association between the new word and something that is already familiar to the student.

For example, if you are teaching the word "elephant," you could use a mnemonic such as "Eddie the Elephant" to help students remember the word. You could also use a sentence such as "Elephants always love to eat hay" to help students remember the spelling and pronunciation of the word.

5. Word Families

Word families are groups of words that are related in meaning, such as "happy," "happier," and "happiest." Teaching word families can help students to understand the meaning and use of new words and expand their vocabulary.

For example, if you are teaching the word "happy," you could also teach the words "happiness," "unhappy," "happily," and "unhappily." This would help students to understand the different forms of the word and how they are used in context.

Teaching vocabulary is an essential part of language learning, and it requires a systematic and structured approach. The strategies discussed in this article, such as contextualization, repetition, visuals, mnemonics, and word families, can help students to understand and remember new words and phrases.

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