

THE EFFECTS OF VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGY THROUGH NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION OF VOCABULARY

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Abstract: A great segment of job postings lists communication skills as one of the chief attributes that an applicant must hold. In today's place of work, communication skills are not optional, but it is indispensable. Training and wisdom of vocabulary have a significant position in English Language Teaching. Thus, this paper aims to analyze the vocabulary enhancement through Vocabulary Learning Strategy (VLS) and examine the retention level of it. The participants' included 352 students at an engineering college, with 284 males and 68 females have been selected for the experiment from three diverse classrooms. Before carrying out this study, a pre-test has been conducted with the selected control group and the experimental group of students to determine their knowledge of the words. And then, some words are selected through newspaper articles of Survey Reports and taught through Vocabulary Learning Strategy - Morphemic Analysis. This study also investigates the impact of Vocabulary Learning Strategy: Morphemic Analysis. Finally, the participants' immediate and delayed performance on vocabulary has been assessed through post-tests to identify their retention level.

Keywords: Real Classroom Experience; Vocabulary Process; Morphemic analysis; Retention Levels; Target Words; Strategy; Vocabulary Learning Strategy.

Introduction: Vocabulary acquisition is an essential language skill to be imbibed by higher education students who learn English as a foreign language. It gains prominence in the process of mastering a language, as sound vocabulary ensures knowledge of words and the system of techniques as a means of expression in addition to listing the correct choice of words in all circumstances. In short, vocabulary is a vital tool to communicate in English language because in the process of communication sans vocabulary, students cannot understand others or express their own ideas flawlessly. (Helena FariskaPutri 2010).

In the current scenario, majority of the prospective employers are on the lookout for hiring employees with competent communication skills, so the onus lies on the English language teachers whose classroom methodology should be tailored to develop the verbal competency of the students.

Importance of Strengthening Vocabulary Skills among College Students: The IT revolution and globalization of business have brought technical communication skills to the forefront of academia and industry. Success in this competitive environment does not just depend on acquiring knowledge and hard skills, but also on developing effective technical communication skills (Madhumati R Patil 2013). Language is a shared activity which requires true associates for communication (Ram BhaskarRaju and Rachana, 2015).

Statement of Problem: Today, the career progress of the students with technical expertise in the portals of higher education is often hindered by the lack of expression of their ideas using precise and appropriate vocabulary. Generally, learners achieve high grades but they often fail to gain proficiency in

the language. This is because of a result-oriented approach and rote memorizing the concepts. 'In the twenty first century today demand of English language is far different than post-independence', (Karhale.G.A, 2016). Therefore, it is essential for students to create an atmosphere to enrich their vocabulary during their class.

Research Methodology: This study aims to analyse the impact of using Vocabulary Learning Strategy (VLS) in the process of learning vocabulary and considers its effects on retention levels. The study has been conducted at an engineering college in Coimbatore. The researcher has implemented Vocabulary Learning Strategy: Morphemic Analysis. The survey is conducted among the control and experimental group students. Teaching aid and supports are provided to the experimental group student, based on the post-intervention period, two tests are conducted (i) Post-Test One and (iii) Post - Test Two.

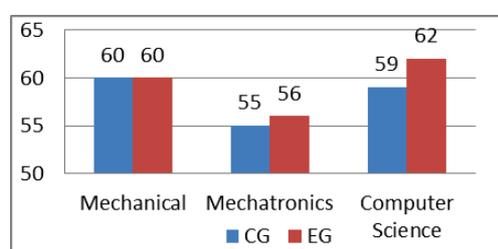


Figure 1: Distribution Of Control Group And Experimental Group Students

Sampling Framework: The findings of the sample form the basic area in this research. The researcher has selected 352 students. Out of which, 284 are males, and 68 are females. A population of 31.8 % among the whole first-year students from the college

participated in the survey. Out of the two sections selected from each department, one section was treated as CG and another section was treated as EG. Figure 1 furnishes the details of the total number of students in the CG and in the EG.

Strategy: Morphemic Analysis: Morphemic analysis is a technique that can be used by students in the classroom by understanding the context in which the word is being used or by breaking the word down and recognising familiar word parts. For this strategy, two

survey reports from *newspapers* were taken as a reading passage for this activity: (i) 'Officials to try again to kill Lake Davis Northern Pike' and (ii) 'Rescuers back off injured whales'.

The total number of target words in this passage was ten. They are: voracious, ecological, eradication, rotenone, coax, rescuers, predator, embarked, repel and backtracking. The following chart was designed for the strategy.

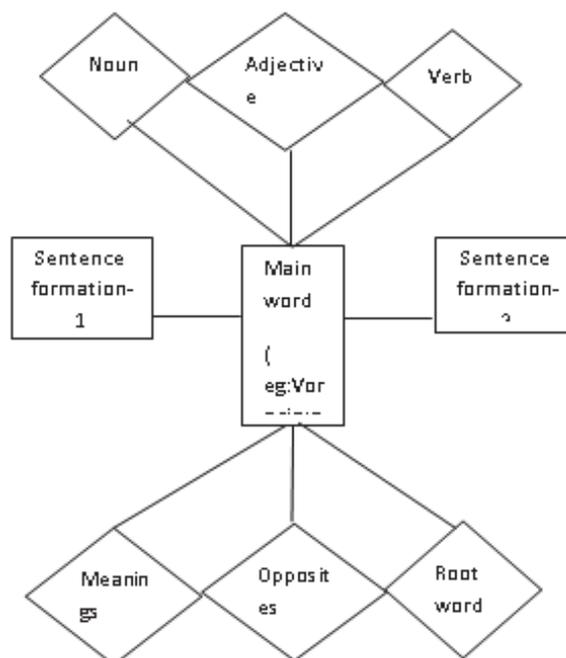


Figure 2: Morphemic Analysis Design

The above morphemic analysis strategy chart was prepared and each student was given five sheets for the process. The students were grouped into pairs. The students were asked to write the main word in the middle of the chart, and they were asked to write its meaning, noun forms, adjective forms, adverb forms (other form of parts of speech) and sentence formations in the columns provided.

The students did the same for all the ten target words, by utilising the online dictionary and also discussing with the team members. The time allotted for this strategy was 45 minutes, and the students completed the work within the time. After completing the process, the questionnaire for post-test I was given to each student, which they completed within 10 minutes. The sample post test questions are given below:

Sl.No	Sample Questions (Find the closest meaning)	Options (Please ✓)
1.	What do you mean by 'voracious' here? (Ans: Hungry)	Hungry
		Lengthy
		Very smart
		Very eager
2.	What do you mean by 'embarked' here? (Ans: Started)	Started
		Moved
		Boarded
		Drowned

Figure 3: Sample questions for morphemic analysis

The questionnaire for post-test II was matching the following. Post-tests were conducted only for the EG.

The Detailed Result Analysis For The Strategy: The main reasons for conducting the pre-test and post test are to determine the students' efficiency

level in the newspaper reading passage of survey reports, to examine their reading skills and to analyse their understanding skills. The results indicate that there is a significant difference between the CG and EG.

Morphemic Analysis – Comparative results of pre-test, post-test I and post-test II (EG):

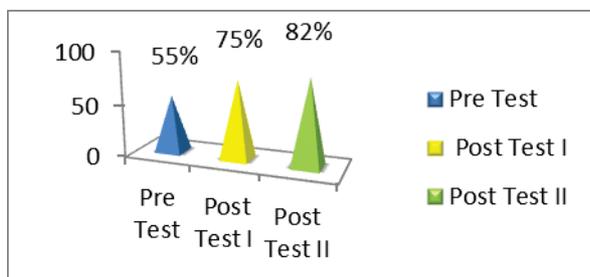


Figure 4: Morphemic Analysis Comparative Results Of Pre-Test, Post-Test I And Post-Test II (EG)

Based on the results, 82% of the students were able to remember the words in post-test II. The remaining 25% and 18% of the students were unsuccessful. The main reasons are:

- ❖ Lack of understanding of context.
- ❖ Lack of reading skills.

Summary of Morphemic Analysis: The following Table 2 presents the summary of morphemic analysis strategy of the CG students and the EG Students.

Table 1 Summary of Morphemic Analysis

S.No	VLS	Pre-test		Post-test	
		CG	EG	CG	EG
1.	S5-Morphemic Analysis	59%	55%	56%	82%

Table 1 indicates on retaining the English vocabulary, this particular strategy proved that it increased the students’ confidence level from different angles. The results of this study reiterated the short- and long-term effectiveness of retaining words through

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morphemic analysis strategies. The students were able to retain words after the activity because:

- ❖ They performed well with proper group work and with the help of an online dictionary.
- ❖ They exhibited good short-term memory and long-term memory of English vocabulary.

The major concern of the present study was to explore the practices of vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) among the engineering students. After the detailed study, it has been concluded that the strategy was very successful.

Suggestions: Based on this study’s findings, the following suggestions are proposed to overcome issues faced by the facilitators.

- ❖ To use complex and essential comprehension concepts through various activities to enhance students reading ability.
- ❖ Proper utilization of the newspapers regularly in the classroom to update both language skills and current affairs.

Scope for Further Research and Conclusion:

Studies on vocabulary acquisition in the field of linguistics have largely focused on vocabulary, what is to be learned or what is learned, rather than acquisition, how is vocabulary learned to the learning/acquisition process (Crow 1986; Meara 1980). Following are few topics and avenues that merit further research.

- ❖ The future research can be done in Arts and Science colleges.
- ❖ Learning strategies can be enriched to teach grammar, listening, speaking and writing skills for different disciplines.
- ❖ An in-depth analysis on computer programs or online platforms to enhance the learning process.

In conclusion, it is proved in this study, full-fledged and dynamic vocabulary can be developed only when the learners develop their skills intentionally and inductively making use of strategies both within the classrooms and outside the prescribed books.

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