

# Role and Enhancement of Vocabulary in English language learning

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**Abstract** - Communication plays an important role in education as well as at the workplace. Learners become perfect users of communication on the basis of skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In fact, these four skills are the pillars of any language learning that are further enhanced by vocabulary or treasure of words one has. Researches have proved that learning a language keeps the brain in proper shape and boosts cognitive skills as well as memory. It increases the concentration of learners, develops with age, and becomes a basic tool of knowledge or content acquisition. This article focuses on the vocabulary enrichment part of language learning through rhyming words and the use of phrases that would prove useful to novice as well as proficient users.

**Keywords** - communication, vocabulary, rhyming words, phrases

## I. INTRODUCTION

Communication is a process of passing on the message or information from one individual to another. Children learn language informally by listening to it while others around them are speaking, yet before schooling starts. More words were spoken at home to help children learn more words and enter school with a better vocabulary. LSRW, that is, listening, speaking, reading, and then writing way of language learning, enables learners to acquire language learning skills such that they will permit the child to communicate effectively with others. Experiences will further scaffold sharpening communication skills. As a result of this, children will keep on exploring language use and improve their communication skills. To support this, learners seek mentors who may be their parents, teachers, or age mates so that they play around with the tricks in order to update themselves. Research has also proved that the younger the age, the faster is the learning of language. Neglecting this may delay language development and usage that may be an obstruction.

## II. RATIONALE

While interacting with the learners aspirant for IAS / IPS /ASO competitive examination, it was noticed that learners scuffle with the inclusion of new words in descriptive answers such as essays. As a result of this, their descriptive writing lacks creative elements and shows the repetition of words. In order to escape from this trap, it

was thought to give a different experience to the learners so as to make them realize the advantages of vocabulary increasing. In view of this, it would be in the fitness of terms if certain concepts/terms that would be repeatedly used time and again are seen in the background of their working definitions, as given below.

## III. WORKING DEFINITIONS

Following key words have been used several times in this article, hence defined here-

**Communication:** a message or information passed on from one individual to another.

**Vocabulary:** treasure or collection of words an individual has.

**Rhyming words:** words that end with similar pronunciation

**Phrase:** creating associations, making it easy to understand and remember the meanings.

## IV. OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

- To list devices used by learners for vocabulary acquisition
- To identify various devices used by learners for vocabulary acquisition
- To explore rhyming words supporting vocabulary enrichment
- To use the contextual phrase in memorizing the meanings.

## V. TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY ACQUISITION<sup>1</sup>

Various devices used by learners, as advised by their teachers, for acquiring vocabulary are called techniques. The techniques that are followed for teaching vocabulary acquisition are many. Some of these more popularly used, according to Google search, for vocabulary acquisition is-

- Visuals and realia-by showing concrete objects and /or their images or pictures
- Verbal techniques – by explanation, definitions, examples
- Mime and anecdotes – by using body movements and no words
- Eliciting and contexts-



- Using synonyms and antonyms-by selecting a word that has a more similar meaning and the antonym that is a word having the opposite meaning
- Translation- communication of the meaning of a source-language text by means of an equivalent target-language text.

Dictionaries-by providing equivalent words, their origin, usage, and pronunciation

In addition to the above techniques, some of the following techniques are attractive ways to teach students vocabulary while making sure they boost their vocabulary acquisition<sup>2</sup>:

- Create a Word Map
- Music for Memorization
- Root Analysis
- Personalized Lists
- Use Context Clue

Although not enlisted in the above techniques, rhyming words and the use of phrases were mainly focused while teaching the aspirants of competitive examinations.

#### VI. HOW WAS IT DEALT WITH?

The English language has an estimated 1 70 000 words. The purpose of this work is to list and explore briefly various devices used by learners for vocabulary acquisition. The National Reading Panel Report (NICHD, 2000) and the RAND Reading Study Group (2002) heightened the importance of vocabulary instruction for student literacy learning. The rate at which vocabulary acquisition occurs in a person is the highest for a few years commencing at age 4 and keeps on increasing till the age 16-18 owing to the process of Observation. Children are most observant between the ages 4 and 10, and they learn by observing things around them and continuously asking questions about words, and associating Ideas with words. They don't learn words just as words in isolation but grasp the idea through some images or actions representing words. As an example, the word fruit may conjure up an image of an apple in some child's minds or something that refers to a healthy snack in some others. Yet another child may think of a tree laden with apples with some apples fallen scattered on the ground. While the human brain is naturally endowed with the capacity of association or visualization, its usage gradually recedes after the age of approximately 18 and then undergoes a rapid decline after the age of 20. A language learner needs to consciously practice various vocabulary-enhancing devices once in the '30s on account of the need for effective communication at the workplace or as a preparation of various competitive exams for getting into a desired profession. With the English language ever so growing on account of 100s of words added to the dictionary, users find it challenging to comprehend and memorize thousands of words used in verbal and written communication. Globally, users adopt various devices for vocabulary acquisition such as root word learning, word grouping, Mnemonics, theme building, and rhyming words.

#### VII. RECOGNIZING RHYMING WORDS

Out of several vocabulary acquisition devices employed at present, the rhyming words technique, if explored, can produce prodigious results since the similarity in the sounds of rhyme words from the same group makes it easier for the brain to memorize their individual meaning. Recognizing this fact, primary teachers nowadays teach the English language by introducing letters similar in pronunciation, for example- letters-B, C, P, T-all ending with 'I/ ee' pronunciation, or F, M, N, S, X prefixed with sound, 'E'.

As an illustration, some words were considered. These words were Sordid, Morbid, Torpid, turbid, and Rapid. The five words enlisted here rhyme in their sounds. Sordid refers to i) The dishonorable behavior or intention that causes contempt and ii) unclean, squalid conditions. Morbid refers to indicating a disease or marked by an abnormal inclination towards repulsive things or events such as illness or death. Torpid indicates sluggish. Turbid means - i) thick, opaque solution or ii) unclear, obscure in meaning, and Rabid implies extreme, an obsessive belief system about something. All these words have appeared in English literature in in-print media and the internet. If these words with rhyming sounds are grouped together, the user may find it easy to memorize them in the same compartment of Rhyme memory.

#### VIII. PRACTICE OF CONTEXTUAL PHRASES

This effort was also aimed at providing phrases for creating associations, making it easy for one to understand and remember the meanings. In this instance, the phrases formed can be Sordid, Dishonorable Behavior, and morbid inclination to disease/death, torpid, lazy couch-potato and/or torpid, ambiguous statement, and rabid fanaticism.

Rhyming words make it extremely easy to remember as the whole rhyming words group can work as Mnemonics, which are the tools that aid memory. Mnemosyne – a Greek Goddess whose name literally means 'Remembrance – is considered to be the word of the source to Mnemonic. This work explores rhyming words as a tool for Mnemonics.

Sordid, morbid, torpid, turbid, and rabid, as used in the phrases above, create associations that work as Mnemonics. Rhyming words can be the simplest technique, if investigated, to assist and aid memory. Rhyming makes it easier for the human brain to encode rhyming information, which is called 'acoustic encoding', which means the capacity to comprehend and remember information through hearing.

Another rhyming words group that can be illustrated is squalid, pallid, and stolid. If these 3 words are grouped and remembered together as a cluster, it becomes easy for the brain to memorize. Squalid means are unhygienic and unpleasant. So, the phrase can be formed as a squalid, foul-smelling place. Pallid implies pale owing to ill-health. So the phrase can be formed as pallid, pale tribal. The word stolid means calm and displaying little

emotion. So the phrase can be made as to the stolid, calm face.

Recapitulate, articulate and gesticulate can be grouped together, and phrases can be made so that remembering phrases becomes easy. Recapitulate implies summarizing and restating vital information, articulate means fluency and coherence of speech, and gesticulate means to use dramatic gestures instead of words to stress one's words. Thus, the phrase can be formed as recapitulate, summarize speech, articulate can be remembered with the help of the phrase articulate, fluent orator and gesticulate can be used in a phrase gesticulate dramatic gestures.

Another word group that can be considered is 'zeal, heal, spill, kneel, steal, still, mill, till or bestow and gusto or doleful, baleful and soulful or dole, mole, dale vale, which, due to similarity in ending sound makes it easier to remember.

Hundreds of such rhyming or similar sounding word groups can be explored so that anyone who is endeavoring to improve vocabulary can do so, using rhyming words and mnemonic phrase technique combination.

In this Endeavour, two vocabulary acquisition devices have been investigated together. Rhyming words technique assists in widening the range of one's vocabulary as already illustrated above and contextual phrase usage that greatly aids in memorizing the meanings. Although not much seen and appreciated in the usage of vocabulary enhancement, the aforementioned 2 techniques

can be extremely fruitful in developing a vocabulary for native English speakers and those with English as a foreign language alike. In this sense, the present venture could be considered novel as well as beneficial. The authors have a collection of hundreds of thousands of words using rhyming techniques.

To conclude, it could be said that a rich language vocabulary makes the basic language skills sharpened and create ease in performance as well as a further academic and literary achievement. To achieve this vocabulary enhancement through rhyming words and contextual phrases could prove to be valuable.

The authors would like to specially acknowledge and thank the authors/compiler and publishers of the dictionaries mentioned below in the reference section.

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