

THE BENEFITS OF THREE-TIER SYSTEM IN EXPANDING STUDENT'S VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE

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Annotation:

Knowing a variety of words is important for enlarging vocabulary knowledge. In this article, the three-tier system of words will be introduced and discussed: Tier 1 - Basic Vocabulary, Tier 2 - High Frequency / Multiple Meaning, and Tier 3 - Subject Related. Tier-one words consists of the most basic words that are commonly used in spoken language. These words rarely require direct instruction and typically do not have multiple meanings. Sight words, nouns, verbs, adjectives, and early reading words occur at this level. Tier-two words consists of high frequency words by language users across content areas. Because they are not used in spoken language as frequently. Tier-two words can present challenges to some students when they are used in text. These words occur often in mature language situations such as adult conversations and literature, and therefore, strongly influence speaking and reading. Tier-two words are the most important words for direct instruction because they are good indicators of a student's progress through school. Tier-three words consists of low-frequency words that occur in specific domains. Domains include subjects in school, hobbies, occupations, geographic regions, technology, weather, and etc. These words are necessary for understanding the content presented in academic areas.

Key words: Word, vocabulary, set of words, language, sentence, knowledge, tier-one words, tier-two words, tier-three words, definition, word-play activity, independent word-learning strategies, comprehension.

Anotatsiya:

So'zlarning xilma-xilligini bilish so'z boyligini kengaytirish uchun muhimdir. Ushbu maqolada uch bosqichli so'zlar tizimi tanishtiriladi va muhokama qilinadi: 1-daraja - Asosiy so'z boyligi; 2-daraja - Ko'p ma'noli so'zlar; va 3-daraja - Mavzuga oid so'zlar. Birinchi darajali so'zlar og'zaki nutqda keng qo'llaniladigan asosiy so'zlardir. Bu so'zlar kamdan-kam hollarda to'g'ridan - to'g'ri o'qitishni talab qiladi va turli ma'nolarga ega emas. Ko'rishni ifodalovchi so'zlar, otlar, fe'llar, sifatlar va o'qishda ishlatiladigan boshlang'ich so'zlar bu darajada uchraydi. Ikkinchi darajali lug'atga kiruvchi so'zlar og'zaki tilda unchalik ko'p ishlatilmaydi. Bu so'zlar matnda ishlatilganda ba'zi o'quvchilar uchun qiyinchiliklar tug'dirishi mumkin. Bu so'zlar ko'pincha murakkab vaziyatlarda jumladan, katta yoshdagi kishilar suhbatlarida, adabiyotlarda uchraydi va talabalarning gapirishi va o'qishiga kuchli ta'sir qiladi. Bu so'zlar to'g'ridan-to'g'ri o'qitishda eng muhim so'zlar hisoblanadi, chunki ular o'quvchining maktabda olgan bilimlarining yaxshi samarasidir. Uchinchi darajali so'zlar maxsus sohalardagi kam uchraydigan so'zlardan iborat. Sohalar o'z ichiga o'quv fanlari, sevimli mashg'ulotlar, kasblar, geografik mintaqalar, texnologiya, ob-havo va boshqalar kiradi. Bu so'zlar yuqorida qayd etilgan sohalarni tushunish uchun zarur.

Kalit so'zlar: So'z, lug'at, so'zlar to'plami, til, gap, bilim, birinchi darajali so'zlar, ikkinchi darajali so'zlar, uchinchi darajali so'zlar, ta'rif, so'z o'yinlari faoliyati, mustaqil so'z o'rganish strategiyalari, tushunish.

Аннотация:

Знание разнообразных слов важно для развития речи и понимания прочитанного. В этой статье рассматриваются три уровня словарного запаса: Уровень 1 - Базовый словарный запас, Уровень 2 - Часто употребляемые / Множественные значения и Уровень 3 - Слова, относящиеся к определенной тематике. Слова уровня 1 - это базовые слова, широко используемые в устной речи. Эти слова редко требуют прямого объяснения и не имеют множественных значений. На этом уровне встречаются слова, выражающие зрительное восприятие, существительные, глаголы, прилагательные и базовые слова, используемые при чтении. Слова из вторичного словарного запаса не очень часто используются в устной речи. Эти слова могут быть сложными для некоторых учащихся при использовании в тексте. Эти слова часто встречаются в сложных ситуациях, в том числе в разговорах взрослых и в литературе, и оказывают сильное влияние на устную и письменную речь учащихся. Эти слова считаются наиболее важными в прямом обучении, поскольку они являются хорошим результатом знаний, полученных учеником в школе. Примеры слов вторичного словарного запаса: *measure, masterpiece, fortunate, industrious* и т. д. В английском языке насчитывается около 7000 словообразовательных семей, входящих в вторичный словарный запас. Третичный словарный запас состоит из редких слов в специализированных областях. К таким областям относятся академические предметы, хобби, профессии, географические регионы, технологии, погода и т. д. Эти слова необходимы для понимания вышеупомянутых областей.

Ключевые слова: Словарный запас, лексика, подбор слов, язык, речь, знания, основной словарный запас, вторичный словарный запас, третичный словарный запас, определение, словесные игры, стратегии самостоятельного изучения лексики, понимание текста.

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings. Vocabulary consists of the words we understand when we hear or read them (*receptive vocabulary*) and words we speak or write (*expressive or productive vocabulary*). We build vocabulary by picking up words that we read or hear and through direct instruction from teachers or other professionals. As Steven Stahl puts it, "Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world."

Vocabulary knowledge is not something that can ever be fully mastered; it is something that expands and deepens over the course of a lifetime. Instruction in vocabulary involves far more than looking up words in a dictionary and using the words in a sentence.

Vocabulary is acquired incidentally through indirect exposure to words and intentionally through explicit instruction in specific words and word-learning strategies.

According to Michael Graves, there are *four components* of an effective vocabulary program: 1. extensive independent reading to expand word knowledge; 2. instruction in specific words to enhance comprehension of texts containing those words; 3. instruction in independent word-learning strategies; 4. word consciousness and word-play activities to motivate and enhance learning.

Learning vocabulary is a big part of learning a language. The more English words you learn, the better you can communicate your needs, ideas, thoughts and feelings to other people in English. Vocabulary is essential for understanding too.

In fact, learning new words is one of the biggest things you can do to improve your listening and reading, known as receptive vocabulary and through words spoken and written, known as productive or expressive vocabulary. There are nearly 600,000-800,000 words in the English language: therefore, it makes learning new vocabulary an ongoing process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vocabulary is a critical skill needed to successfully comprehend through listening and reading. Students will not be successful at comprehending any texts if they do not know the meaning of the words in which they are decoding. For many, lack of vocabulary knowledge could be a reason that students are not able to access the meaning of a text.

Moreover, Hart and Risley determined that a huge discrepancy exists between students who grow up in a welfare family versus a working-class family versus a professional family. They found that by age 3 children in welfare families had a vocabulary of 525 words where children in upper-SES families had vocabulary of 1,116 words. They also found that the children in upper-class families were learning vocabulary at a faster rate. Many strategies exist that can be used during vocabulary instruction to increase student word knowledge.

The National Reading Panel suggest that students should learn vocabulary through a variety of methods. If a method such as direct instruction is used, students still need to receive repeated and multiple exposure to the new vocabulary words. Given this knowledge, not only must preservice teachers be taught how to determine an appropriate strategy to teach, they must also be able to consider students' prior knowledge of words.

Familiarity with students' prior word knowledge allows teachers to determine which words they need to implement in their classrooms. Careful consideration is needed when determining which new words to teach. As a result, the Three-Tier System (Beck & McKeown) should be implemented to assist preservice teachers in this dilemma. The three-tier system classifies words based on level of utility or tier (Beck, McKeown, & Kusan). *Tier-one words* consist of basic, every day words, such as *happy, tree, mom, and shirt*, and sight words, such as *and, some, the, and from*. Both sets of words generally do not require much direct instruction because most students already know what these words mean and/or the function of the word. *Tier-two words* consists of high frequency words that occur across a variety of domains. That is, these words occur often in mature language situations such as adult conversations and literature, and therefore strongly influence speaking and reading. Following a list of standards for tier-two words:

- important for reading comprehension;
- characteristic of mature language users;
- contain multiple meanings;
- increased descriptive vocabulary (words that allow students to describe concepts in a detailed manner).

- used across a variety of environments
(generalization)

Tier-two words are the most important words for direct instruction because they are good indicators of a student's progress through school. Tier-two words are likely to appear frequently in a wide variety of texts and in the written and oral language of mature language users. Examples of tier-two words are: *masterpiece, fortunate, industrious, measure, curious, attention and examine*.

There are about 7,000-word families in English (or 700 per year) in tier-two. Unless teaching a content specific lesson or subject, teachers should focus their vocabulary instruction on implementing tier-two words, as tier-two words are words used frequently by mature language

users. These words are not meant to be mastered through independent study but through conversation, direct instruction, and multiple-repeated exposure. Additionally, tier-two words are important for reading comprehension as they contain multiple meanings, are used across a variety of environments, and are words that allow students to describe concepts in a detailed manner (Beck, McKeown, & Kusan)

In order to decipher which words are tier-two, Hiebert suggests that teachers ask *three questions*: a) is the word needed to fully comprehend the text? b) is the word likely to appear in future texts from any discipline? and c) is the word part of a word family or semantic network where you can use one word to introduce several? For example, the word “*migration*” shares the same derivative as “*immigrant*” and “*emigrate*”.

Lastly, *tier-three words* consists of low-frequency words that occur in specific domains. Domains include subjects in school, hobbies, occupations, geographic regions, technology, weather, or a specific content area (Beck, McKeown, & Kusan, 2013) Examples of tier-three words are: *economics, isotope, asphalt, revolutionary war, crepe*, and etc. The remaining 400,000 words in English fall in this tier.

It is important to remember that tier-two and tier-three words are not clear-cut in their tier classification. There is more than one way to select the words. Word knowledge is subject to personal experience. *Three-Tier system* is beneficial in supporting student learning, teachers must use their own judgement of students needs when selecting words to teach (Beck, McKeown, & Kusan)

When selected appropriately, tier-two words can be very *useful* and *productive* when implemented in lessons and used in the context of classroom discussions. Tier-two vocabulary knowledge influences student comprehension skills. Comprehension takes place in the transaction between *the reader* and *the text*. (Beck, McKeown, & Kusan)

If a student demonstrates difficulty in deciphering vocabulary, they will likely have a strenuous time understanding key points of a text, leading to difficulty in comprehension. When a student demonstrates difficulty in recalling key details such as the plot of a story, character names, and setting, it becomes evident that the student lacks foundational literacy experiences.

Furthermore, background knowledge is an indicator of likeliness that students are able to connect to a text. Thus, the relationship between vocabulary and comprehension reinforce the need for supporting preservice teachers in identifying pedagogical practices and strategies that will increase students’ word knowledge through vocabulary instruction.

Successful vocabulary instruction through literature would require teachers to select authentic literature: increasing student motivation, enthusiasm, and interest in reading. While there is not one simple definition for authentic literature, authentic texts vary among picture books, novels, and informational texts. Not only will tier-two vocabulary be taught through children’s literature but also through *oral* and *written* language among the teacher and students. Implementing new vocabulary words through these strategies provides students with a variety of different words, thus affording students the opportunity to describe objects in writing and adds creativity to their work. Adding tier-two words assures that students will be able to describe and be more specific with key vocabulary words that previously were unfamiliar. Providing students with this knowledge will also increase their written and oral communication skills, ultimately, benefiting their academic and professional success.

Tier-two words are known to be difficult, yet easily found in classrooms. For this reason, these words must become part of the daily instruction, if teachers want their students to be successful. Exploring these words can also increase students’ motivation for reading and writing.

Finally, introducing tier-two vocabulary does not exclude lower levels. While word acquisition may be different for all students, it is important to remember that they will acquire new words by vocabulary size rather than grade level. The students will acquire additional vocabulary when the instruction is paired with authentic literature.

For this reason, preservice teachers should be encouraged to use authentic literature outside of scripted curriculum to engage students and effectively increase word knowledge. Authentic children's literature such as *Jangles a Big Fish Story* (Shannon, 2012), *Giraffes Can't Dance* (Andrea, 2012), *Chrysanthemum* (Henkes, 1991), and *A Bad Case of Stripes* (Shannon, 2007) that contains tier-two vocabulary can be used in the classrooms to improve students' word knowledge. These individual stories include tier-two vocabulary (e.g., *wondrous, fellow, extraordinary, elegant, humorous, and bizarre*). Combining these stories with meaningful activities will increase student motivation and mastery of tier-two vocabulary words. Furthermore, as learners become familiar with tier-two vocabulary, the engagement with novels like *Charlotte's Web* (White) and *Rain Reign* (Martin). Students increase their vocabulary knowledge with words like *injustice, desperate, inconsiderate, overwhelmed, directional, and diagnosis*.

It is vital that the continuation of strong literacy instruction remain as students become proficient readers. Students may experience difficulty in identifying texts that are relevant to their interests, however, the need for detailed vocabulary instruction continues to be significant. Students who are advancing their vocabulary knowledge find choice activities to be more appealing.

Three-Tier system includes creating an encyclopedia with newly acquired vocabulary words, providing students the opportunity to create vocabulary packets, and the opportunity to reflect upon their vocabulary learning through the use of reflective or interactive journals. The encyclopedia consists of a notebook with each word dedicated to a page and placed in alphabetical order. On each page, the student is expected to write the word, write the definition, include a picture, and add any other pertinent information about the word.

Vocabulary packets utilize a word wall with tier-one words. Under each tier-one word will be baggies with tier-two words choices, which will especially aid in including diverse vocabulary in their writing.

Lastly, a reflective or interactive journal can be kept by each student to reflect upon the vocabulary word and their understanding of the word. Teachers can allow students to write a story, poetry, etc. in their journal utilizing the current vocabulary words. These activities are student centered, created by individual students, and can be utilized as tools for the students, thus, creating independent learners.

CONCLUSION

Learning vocabulary can, however, be tricky. If you don't know the best way to retain new words, you can forget what you've learned. I like to think of the mind as a garden. Each new word begins life as a seed. It needs to take root, and will die without attention early on. In this way, expanding your vocabulary is a long-term activity that depends on good habits and sensible practice.

Here are some tips on how to enlarge student's vocabulary:

1. **Little and often.** The first rule of learning is do it in small chunks. Brief bursts are better than one long blast. During a break of only an hour, the brain assimilates new connections, then is ready for more. Three words a day is a good number to aim for in a busy life.

2. **Write down new words.** It's a really good idea to write down useful new vocabulary. The act of writing the words helps you remember them better. Plus, lots of people learn better when they

see things written on paper, rather than just hearing them. You can add a translation in your language, a definition in English, a note on pronunciation or even a drawing!

3. **Revise new vocabulary regularly.** So, you've got an English notebook full of useful vocabulary to remember. But did you know that if you don't look again at the new words and phrases you've studied, you only remember on average 20-25 per cent of it? That's a shocking waste of time and effort! The good news is that if you look at your notes again after an hour, again the next day and once more after a few days, you can make sure that 100 per cent of what you learn goes into your long-term memory. So, make five minutes each day to revise your English vocabulary. The more you look backwards, the faster you go forwards!

4. **Read in English.** Reading is amazing for your English in general. But it's particularly good for learning new vocabulary. That's because understanding a new word as part of a story makes it much more memorable than trying to learn a list of words out of context.

5. **Learn from context.** Literally, "context" means the text that comes before and after a particular word. It also refers to the situation in which a word is used. It helps you guess the meaning of words you don't know; it shows you how a word is used in a sentence, and it helps you remember the word for longer. This means learning vocabulary by reading and listening is more effective than trying to study word lists. It also means that it's better to make a note of how a word is used in a sentence, rather than just the word on its own. For example, instead of "to make up = to invent", try learning, "He'd totally made the story up!".

6. **Use it or lose it!** This principle is the best way of enlarging the vocabulary knowledge. So, try using new vocabulary as soon as you can when you're speaking or writing in English. You should often use the same words and phrases when you're communicating in English.

Researchers have found that you need to see or hear a word on average ten times to remember it. But when you're actively making an effort with a word, for example, you ask the person you're talking to, how to say something - you learn it much faster. So, you should try to take every opportunity to communicate in English with other people.

Finally, one can remember the following quotation written by Evelyn Waugh "*One forgets words as one forgets names. One's vocabulary needs constant fertilizing or it will die*". It means that one should always try to enlarge one's vocabulary knowledge any times and anywhere.

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