

VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES OF EFL STUDENTS AT THE TERTIARY LEVEL

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Abstract

Vocabulary acquisition is a critical component of language learning, particularly for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students at the tertiary level. This article examines various vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) employed by these students, categorizing them into metacognitive, cognitive, memory-related, social, contextual, and dictionary use strategies. Each strategy's effectiveness is evaluated, highlighting its strengths and potential drawbacks. Additionally, the article addresses challenges such as individual differences, cultural factors, resource availability, and student motivation. By utilizing a comprehensive approach to vocabulary learning, EFL students can significantly enhance their language proficiency and academic performance. The article concludes with a call for further research into the efficacy of these strategies across diverse learner populations and contexts.

Keywords

vocabulary learning strategies (VLS), English as a foreign language (EFL), tertiary education, metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, memory-related strategies, social strategies.

Аннотация

Приобретение словарного запаса является важнейшим компонентом изучения языка, особенно для студентов английского как иностранного языка на уровне высшего образования. В этой статье рассматриваются различные стратегии изучения словарного запаса, используемые этими студентами, разделяя их на метакогнитивные, когнитивные, связанные с памятью, социальные, контекстуальные и стратегии использования словаря. Оценивается эффективность каждой стратегии, подчеркиваются ее сильные стороны и потенциальные недостатки. Кроме того, в статье рассматриваются такие проблемы, как индивидуальные различия, культурные факторы, доступность ресурсов и мотивация студентов. Используя комплексный

подход к изучению словарного запаса, студенты могут значительно улучшить свое знание языка и академическую успеваемость. Статья завершается призывом к дальнейшим исследованиям эффективности этих стратегий в различных группах учащихся и контекстах.

Ключевые слова

стратегии изучения словарного запаса, английский как иностранный язык, высшее образование, метакогнитивные стратегии, когнитивные стратегии, стратегии, связанные с памятью, социальные стратегии.

Annotatsiya

Lug'atni o'zlashtirish til o'rganishning muhim tarkibiy qismidir, ayniqsa oliy darajadagi ESL talabalari uchun. Ushbu maqola ushbu talabalar tomonidan qo'llaniladigan turli xil lug'at o'rganish strategiyalarini ko'rib chiqadi va ularni metakognitiv, kognitiv, xotira, ijtimoiy, kontekstual va lug'at strategiyalariga ajratadi. Har bir strategiyaning samaradorligi baholanadi, uning kuchli va mumkin bo'lgan zaif tomonlari ta'kidlanadi. Bundan tashqari, maqolada individual farqlar, madaniy omillar, resurslarning mavjudligi va talabalar motivatsiyasi kabi masalalar ko'rib chiqiladi. Lug'atni o'rganishga yaxlit yondashuvni qo'llash orqali talabalar o'zlarining til bilimlarini va akademik ko'rsatkichlarini sezilarli darajada yaxshilashlari mumkin. Maqola turli talabalar populyatsiyalari va kontekstlarida ushbu strategiyalarning samaradorligini yanada chuqurroq o'rganishga chaqirish bilan yakunlanadi.

Kalit so'zlar

so'z boyligini o'rganish strategiyalari, ingliz tili chet tili sifatida, oliy ta'lim, metakognitiv strategiyalar, kognitiv strategiyalar, xotira strategiyalari, ijtimoiy strategiyalar.

Vocabulary acquisition is crucial for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students at the tertiary level, as it underpins all language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Effective vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) can significantly enhance students' language proficiency and academic success. This article delves into various strategies employed by tertiary-level EFL students to improve their vocabulary and assesses their effectiveness.

Types of vocabulary learning strategies:

-Metacognitive strategies involve planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning processes. EFL students set specific goals for vocabulary learning, such as learning a certain number of words per week. They track their progress, noting

which words they have mastered and which need more practice. After a period, they assess the effectiveness of their strategies and make adjustments as necessary.

-Cognitive strategies focus on the active manipulation of vocabulary learning materials. Repetition, note-taking, creating word lists, and using flashcards are common cognitive strategies. Repeatedly writing, reading, or speaking new words reinforces memory, while jotting down new vocabulary and their meanings during lectures or reading sessions helps consolidate learning. Flashcards, both physical and digital, aid long-term retention through spaced repetition.

-Memory-related strategies enhance recall through association, visualization, and mnemonic devices. Connecting new words with known words, images, or concepts improves recall. Visualization, or creating mental images or drawings representing the word's meaning, makes words more memorable. Mnemonic devices, such as acronyms, rhymes, or stories, can also facilitate retention.

-Social strategies involve learning in collaboration with others. Group study, language exchange, and peer teaching are effective social strategies. Collaborating with peers, partnering with native speakers, or explaining new vocabulary to classmates can deepen understanding and reinforce learning.

-Contextual strategies emphasize learning words in meaningful contexts. Extensive reading exposes students to new words in context, aiding understanding and retention. Guessing the meaning of unknown words using context clues from surrounding text is another effective method. Media consumption, such as movies, music, and online content, provides rich contextual clues for vocabulary learning.

-Dictionary use is a fundamental strategy for precise understanding and usage. Bilingual dictionaries translate between the student's native language and English, while monolingual dictionaries provide definitions in English, promoting deeper learning.

Effectiveness of different strategies. Metacognitive strategies encourage self-directed learning and long-term retention, helping students become more autonomous and effective learners. Cognitive strategies are essential for initial vocabulary acquisition and consolidation, though they can become monotonous if not varied. Memory-related strategies are particularly useful for retaining difficult or abstract vocabulary, with techniques like visualization and mnemonic devices making learning more engaging and effective.

Social strategies enhance motivation and provide practical application opportunities, with peer and native speaker interactions deepening understanding and retention. Contextual strategies are effective for learning words in meaningful contexts, leading to better retention and encouraging natural, incidental vocabulary

acquisition. Dictionary use is vital for understanding precise meanings and usage, promoting independent learning and serving as a reliable reference tool.

Challenges and considerations. Individual differences in learners' preferences and aptitudes for different strategies suggest that personalized approaches are often more effective. Cultural factors influence strategy preferences, with some cultures favoring rote memorization and others contextual learning. Resource availability, such as access to dictionaries, digital tools, and native speakers, affects the choice and effectiveness of strategies. Motivation and attitude also play crucial roles, as highly motivated students are more likely to experiment with and benefit from a variety of strategies.

To sum up, vocabulary learning strategies are essential for the success of EFL students at the tertiary level. A combination of metacognitive, cognitive, memory-related, social, contextual, and dictionary use strategies offers a comprehensive approach to vocabulary acquisition. By understanding and applying these strategies, EFL students can enhance their vocabulary knowledge, leading to improved language proficiency and academic achievement. Future research should continue to explore the effectiveness of these strategies in different contexts and among diverse learner populations.

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