

An Empirical Study On Vocabulary Building- A Selected Interventionprogramme On Speaking And Writingskills

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ABSTRACT: *Expressing vocabulary in copious forms leads particularly to the holistic development of students' academic and their professional excellence. Enhancing word power to student -professionals lends fluidity on the arena to convey the most suitable thought-provoking ideas that are in the mind. 60 undergraduate-heterogenous students have been identified after conducting a random test on vocabulary. Based on their preintervention score of the test, participants have been randomly assigned into two treatment groups namely Experimental Group (EG) and Controlled Group (CG). EG has been instructed and guided over stipulated time on Vocabulary Building, and CG has not been received any instructions on vocabulary during the intervention, and they have been given the regular classes.*

Significant findings have been meticulously observed over Experimental Group during the intervention programme of vocabulary. The formulated language skills have been tested on Speaking and Writing modules to know the test's reliability and accuracy. According to (Hammill & Larsen, 1996), the test has been formulated to find out variations between the groups. This research study reveals that vocabulary can be enhanced in writing and speaking, if vocabulary is an integral part of lectures and focused strategies are imparted.

KEY WORDS: *Instructions, Preintervention, Reliability, Significant findings, Vocabulary.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Every language is rich with its vocabulary. Vocabulary plays a significant and constructive role of language expressions in both spoken and written forms. Vocabulary building at various levels significantly paves a superior way to express ideas and opinions which undoubtedly impact speaking and written skills of an individual. Teaching of vocabulary above elementary levels, traditionally, is most incidental and limited to students' perceptions. Students usually learn vocabulary by listening to teachers and reading various texts at their own levels. Understanding words contextually needs students' right perception.

Effective use of language encompasses employment of right words in spoken and written communication. Every day, we are put in various situations, where we may have to

expresses our views, opinions and ideas in the forms of narrations, descriptions, presentations, discussions, letters, emails, reports and proposals. In such scenarios, vocabulary naturally clips up to certain levels. However, enhancing vocabulary is a lifelong pursuit and it extends an individual's opportunities. Learning new words hinge upon various sources that are a part of regular academic and non-academic tasks. Usage of those words is apparently witnessed while communicating and can be labelled as extensively used vocabulary. There are certain misconceptions about the usage of grandiloquent words, that it attracts readers and make them feel that the communication is effective and impressive. But, the audience finds it hard to digest and comprehend the information or text unless commonly used vocabulary is employed. We could ascertain that commonly used words would fetch more readability than complex usage of vocabulary. Contextual Vocabulary usage is more constructive and communicative.

S. No.	Vocabulary enhanced through
1	Primary Sources-Texts books
2	News Papers
3	Magazines
4	Articles/Journals
5	Watching movies with sub-titles
6	Dictionary references
7	Using Vocabulary app
8	Conversations with peer-group and teachers
9	Watching news channels like BBC, ABC, CNN
10	Playing Vocab games and using Flashcards

Table 1

Table 1 clearly gives an idea that vocabulary can be enhanced through various sources. An individual user may learn or acquire vocabulary through any of the sources and students learning ability depends on the exposure to those sources. If an aspirant can focus on the following table (Table 2), building vocabulary through language aspects is very easy and can be learnt in a very simple process.

S. No	Vocabulary aspect
1	Idioms
2	Phrasal Verbs
3	Root Words
4	Synonyms
5	Antonyms

Table 2

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) are intuitively appealing to teacher and learners. It has also become a popular research topic among researchers in the last two decades. Recent years have seen two books (Gu, 2005; Takač, 2008) and a number of articles on learner's deliberate and strategic efforts in learning vocabulary (e.g., Barcroft, 2009; Tseng & Schmitt, 2008). Most research so far has demonstrated a meaningful relationship between vocabulary learning strategies and learning results, either through a co-relational approach (e.g., Fan, 2003; Gu &

Johnson, 1996; Kojic-Sabo & Lightbown, 1999) or by establishing strategy similarities and differences among learners with different degrees of success (Gu, 1994, 2003a; Moir & Nation, 2002).

The overwhelming majority of vocabulary measures in VLS studies have been some type of passive vocabulary size measure, in other words, the number of words a learner can recognize. A number of active vocabulary measures have been proposed (Laufer, 1998; Laufer & Nation, 1999; Meara & Bell, 2001; Meara & Fitzpatrick, 2000). However, none of these has been able to satisfactorily measure active vocabulary size. One of the most widely used measures of active vocabulary so far is arguably Laufer and Nation's (1995) Lexical Frequency Profile (LFP), which sketches the profile of a learner's active vocabulary use by providing the percentage of words used that belong to the first 1,000 most frequently used words, the percentage of the second 1,000 words, that of the Academic Word List, and that of words that do not fall into the lists compared (Morris & Cobb, 2004; Muncie, 2002). Probably, due to this lack of a single satisfactory measure of active vocabulary (Meara & Olmos Alcoy, 2010; Read, 2000), practically no VLS study has looked at how strategies are related to the growth of active vocabulary. Besides the lack of knowledge on productive vocabulary learning strategies,

very little is known about the change of VLS over time; nor do we know much about the effect of this change on the development of vocabulary along both passive and active dimensions. The only study which is aware of Cortazzi and Jin's (1996) cross-sectional description of VLS changes of 212 university students in China. These students were asked to report on a questionnaire, the strategies they were using, how effective they thought these strategies were, and recall on their use of the same strategies when they were in secondary schools. Cortazzi and Jin reported that major changes occurred from secondary school to university in terms of both VLS and their perceived effectiveness. Strategies used in secondary schools included mainly reading textbooks, listening to the teacher and taking notes; whereas a much larger repertoire was reported in university, including more opportunities for use, such as writing essays, listening to radios, and talking to English teachers and native speakers. Some ways of learning vocabulary remained remarkably stable. These included classroom-based activities such as listening to the teacher and taking notes. Outside the classroom, memorizing vocabulary remained the most widely used strategy.

Likewise, as learner proficiency improves eventually, learning strategies that are more suitable for a higher level of language learning and usage, will need to be applied. This phenomenon is explained in Laufer's (1991) "active vocabulary threshold hypothesis":

"Even though our passive vocabulary develops throughout our lifetime, long after the grammar of a language has been acquired, our productive lexicon will grow only until it reaches the average level of the group in which we are required to function. Active vocabulary was measured by the Lexical Frequency Profile (LFP). This was based on two of the participants' in-class argumentative compositions collected from their writing class at the beginning and end of the programme. It has been even shown in speaking skill to assess properly in both academic and non-academic domain. Their first composition focused on the brain-drain phenomenon in developing countries, while the last composition was about their arguments for or against cloning.

3. METHODOLOGY

60 undergraduate students have been taken to consideration for Intervention Programme, after giving identity numbers students. They have been scrupulously observed to know about their vocabulary usage in speaking and writing skills, as these two are productive skills. They are

given manifold numbers to record their grades, which are adopted from CEFR Lexical Resources A to E. To assess vocabulary in both skills, Vocabulary Rubrics have been adopted to get the test done reliability and practicability.

After segregating two groups into Experimental Group and Controlled Group, Experimental Group (EG) has been given extensive and guided instructions on vocabulary for a period of 3 months, whereas Controlled Group (CG) has not been given any extensive guidance and instructional methodologies on Vocabulary. CE was given regular teaching and same kind of general instructions. 2 hours have been devoted weekly for Experimental Group and totally 120 hours spent on imparting vocabulary building for the entire Intervention Programme. Significant development at a period of 3 months intervention programme has been observed that students' grades got observed and recorded by the electronic speech recorder SONY ICD-PX470 4GB Voice Recorder to verify with second test which has been taken place after 3 months. Test I and II (pre-test and post-test) grades scrupulously showed significant developments. Writing skill has been tested based on the same CEFR rubrics which has been a part of the study. Students were tested in the post test based on cohesion, coherent, grammatical structures and lexical resources. After the Intervention Programme, students were tested in the Post-test, and the findings were gradually enhanced from pre-test to post test. Their writing abilities have been improved according to adopted CEFR rubrics.

3.1. Findings in Test-I & Test-II:

Table 3: shows that findings of pre-test and post-test, and final observations

S.No	Learner's Id	Pre-Test grade	Post-Test grade	Observation
1	BVS1	C	B	Enhanced
2	BVS2	D	C	Enhanced
3	BVS3	E	E	No impact
4	BVS4	C	B	Enhanced
5	BVS5	E	E	No impact
6	BVS6	D	C	Enhanced
7	BVS7	C	B	Enhanced
8	BVS8	D	D	Neutral
9	BVS9	D	C	Enhanced
10	BVS10	E	E	No impact
11	BVL1	C	B	Enhanced
12	BVL2	E	E	No impact
13	BVL3	D	B	Enhanced greatly
14	BVL4	C	B	Enhanced
15	BVL5	C	C	Neutral
16	BVL6	C	B	Enhanced
17	BVL7	D	B	Enhanced greatly
18	BVL8	E	E	No impact
19	BVL9	D	C	Enhanced greatly
20	BVL10	C	B	Enhanced
21	BVK1	E	E	No impact
22	BVK2	D	C	Enhanced greatly
23	BVK3	C	B	Enhanced
24	BVK4	D	C	Enhanced
25	BVK5	D	C	Enhanced

26	BVK6	C	B	Enhanced
27	BVK7	C	B	Enhanced
28	BVK8	C	B	Enhanced
29	BVK9	D	C	Enhanced
30	BVK10	D	C	Enhanced
31	BVM1	E	E	No impact
32	BVM2	C	B	Enhanced
33	BVM3	E	E	No impact
34	BVM4	D	C	Enhanced
35	BVM5	C	B	Enhanced
36	BVM6	E	E	No impact
37	BVM7	C	B	Enhanced
38	BVM8	E	E	No impact
39	BVM9	C	B	Enhanced
40	BVM10	D	C	Enhanced
41	BVR1	C	B	Enhanced
42	BVR2	E	E	No impact
43	BVR3	C	B	Enhanced
44	BVR4	E	E	No impact
45	BVR5	C	B	Enhanced
46	BVR6	D	C	Enhanced
47	BVR7	C	B	Enhanced
48	BVR8	C	B	Enhanced
49	BVR9	C	B	Enhanced
50	BVR10	C	B	Enhanced
51	BVRA1	D	C	Enhanced
52	BVRA2	E	E	No impact
53	BVRA3	D	B	Enhanced greatly
54	BVRA4	D	C	Enhanced
55	BVRA5	C	B	Enhanced
56	BVRA6	D	C	Enhanced
57	BVRA7	C	B	Enhanced
58	BVRA8	C	B	Enhanced
59	BVRA9	E	E	No impact
60	BVRA10	C	B	Enhanced

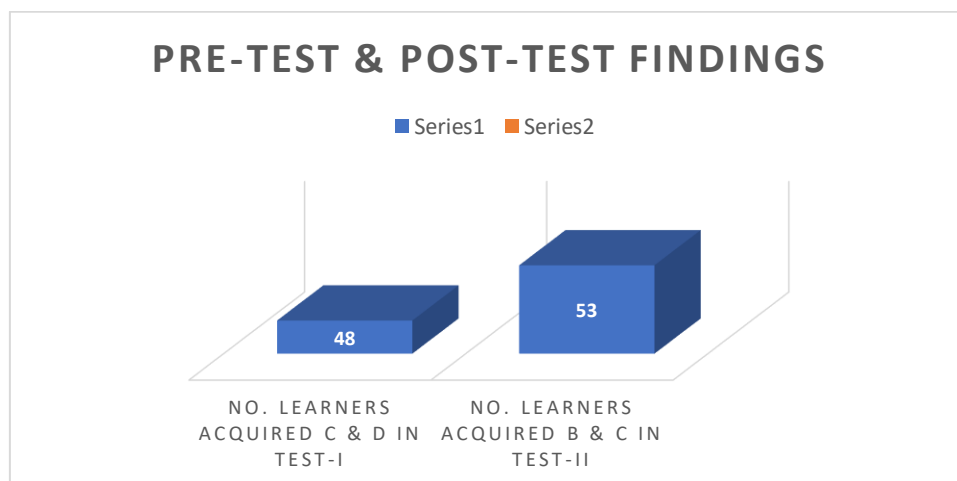


Diagram 1

CERF (Common European FrameWork of Reference for Languages) framingrubrics to assess intervention programme

Grade	Value
A	Excellent
B	Good
C	Performer
D	Average
E	Poor

Table 4:shows CEFR vocabulary grading frame work.

According to CEFR vocabulary rubrics, grades have been allotted to learners based on performance of vocabulary usage in Speaking and Writing skills. In Test-I 48 learners secured C & D grades which mean Performer and Average, according to that, their performance in vocabulary usage is not up to the bench mark. Their back ground of language is very good, all are from English medium. The data has been taken through student-questionnaire as the researcher has collected students' familybackground, parental incomelevels, financial sources, and educational backgrounds. Learners have been given 3 months intervention programme to enhance their usage of vocabulary in the mentioned skills. Three months period of intervention programme has been given through Word Sharing daily, Visuwords, Mini presentations, Quizzes, Usage of ICT tools, Flipcards and creating situations and contexts to usevocabulary extensively in Speaking and Writing skills. After the stipulated period of intervention programme, the formulatedTest-II (post-test) has been formulated to assess the usage of vocabulary in the aforesaid skills. As the learners got extensive teaching and guidance through the intervention programme,significant observations have been notified (table-3 and diagram-1 demonstrate it). 53 learners have secured B & C grades which mean Performer and Good. The learners those who secured very low categorized grades in Test-I, have secured very good grades in the Test-II. They meticulously imbibed and comprehended the methods and approaches imparted during the intervention programme. Their grades have also been improved and attained good level in vocabulary context and usage of it. The learners who secured D in the Test-I, have secured C in the Test-II, and the learners who secured C in Test-I, got B in the successive test. Writing tests have been conducted to know the vocabulary usage in Writing Skill amongst learners, and speaking tests have been conducted to assess the same under the scrupulous

observation by team of faculty from reputed institution EFLU-Hyderabad, India. The results have been significantly notified and recorded.

4. Distribution of Vocabulary components and its average to calculate

Category	Vocabulary Strategy	No.of items	average
Traditional beliefs about Vocabulary	Words should be learned through use	5	0.098*
Contextual guessing	1. Broader context	6	0.117
	2. Instant Context	6	0.117
Dictionary usage	1. Comprehension from dictionary	4	0.078
	2. Inculcating words from dictionary	5	0.098*
Learning material	1. Observing and understanding words	6	0.117
	2. Oral repetition	3	0.058
	3. Visual repetition	4	0.078*
Encoding vocabulary	1. Elaboration	4	0.078
	2. Semantic encoding	5	0.098
	3. Structure words	3	0.058

Table 5: shows vocabulary components and variables used in the Intervention Programme. Learners have been given various vocabulary categories to assess their vocabulary usage in various contexts and situations. Vocabulary items have been calculated at the average of all as the given components are tested to assess the learner's ability of how they have used. The stipulated period is also mostly and extensively considered in the assessing vocabulary for various components. Vocabulary strategy has played a significant role in leaning and understanding vocabulary as learners have been given 5 variables, their average is 0.098. Contextual guessing also played very important role in learning vocabulary as contextual guessing has been given 12 variables and their average is 0.117. Dictionary usage has been classified in to two categories namely Comprehension from dictionary and Inculcating words from dictionary, each has been given 4 and 5 variables and their average is 0.078 and 0.098 respectively. Learning material has been given into 3 classified variables such as observing and understanding words, oral repetition and visual repetition, and the given variables are 6, 3 and 4 respectively, and the average of them is 0.117, 0.058, 0.078. Vocabulary encoding has been classified into 3 variables namely Elaboration, Semantic Encoding and Structure Words and 4, 5 and 3 variables have been given respectively. Their recorded average is 0.078, 0.098, 0.058.

4.1 CEFR vocabulary levels

Table 6: shows vocabulary attainment levels

S.No	Vocabulary Level	Attainment	Average
1	Basic User	31/60	0.51
2	Independent User	20/60	0.33
3	Proficient User	9/60	0.15

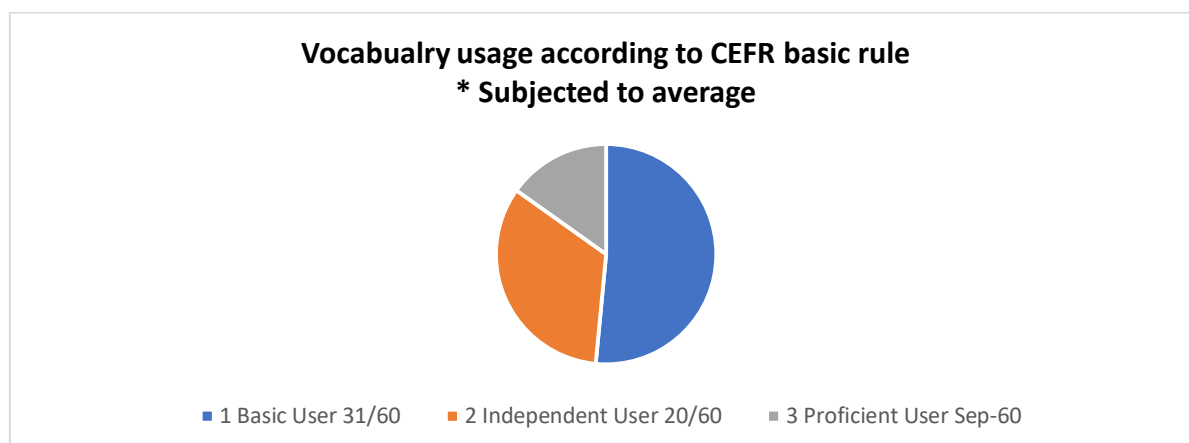


Diagram 2 depicts level of vocabulary usage

According to CEFR vocabulary levels, there are 3 levels of learners to use Vocabulary in different levels and contexts. Table 6 and diagram 2 paints those 60 learners have been tested to know their attainment levels. Basic User level is 0.51, Independent User 0.33, Proficient User 0.15 maintained their attainment levels. Interestingly, Independent Users are observed more than the two components. The least category is observed with Proficient Use (0.15) as Usage of vocabulary is very tough for the learner in both skills. The significant observation has been notified that Basic Users (0.51) are more than Proficient Users (0.15).

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Usage of contextual vocabulary has a significant impact in writing and speaking skills as these are productive and very indispensable tools for communication in any field. The basic ideation of using vocabulary rightly and perfectly is to be imbibed amongst undergraduate students so as to meet global standards in terms of effective writing and speaking. Building and enhancing vocabulary hinges on effective communication, and it completely depends on how they are developed from reading of books, magazines, playing vocabulary games, Visuwords, Filmcards and flip cards, YouTube videos, sharing daily vocabulary words etc. Right context needs suitable vocabulary to comprehend the meaning of the text quintessentially, and that would be possible only through usage of it correctly in any given or created manual contexts. Through the intervention programme, 60 undergraduate learners' basic, independent and proficient vocabulary usage had enhanced their standard levels to use the vocabulary in the tested skills only.

The study strongly demonstrates that students, at undergraduate levels, can enhance their vocabulary usage in writing and speaking skills, if they are given implicit and explicit instructions and guidance in the class rooms and language labs on the afore-said skills. It is possible to enhance vocabulary in any field.

6. ACKNOWLEDGE:

Researchers are responsible for the desired outcomes which have been recorded and they don't have any problems to notify the results of the study. The results are subjected to the above -mentioned skills and stipulated period of time. The researchers have also stated that the study has not been funded by any external sources.

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