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**THE IMPACT OF VISUALIZATION TECHNIQUES ON STUDENT'S
LEARNING VOCABULARY**

**WPŁYW TECHNIK WIZUALIZACJI W NAUCZANIU SŁOWNICTWA
JĘZYKA OBCEGO**

**ВЛИЯНИЕ ПРИЕМОВ ВИЗУАЛИЗАЦИИ В ИЗУЧЕНИИ ИНОЯЗЫЧНОЙ
ЛЕКСИКИ**

Abstract

The article shows the phenomenon of visualization and its role in the process of learning as well as focuses on visualization as the modern method to learn foreign language vocabulary. The current study is designed to outline the main advantages of using the visualization in learning foreign language vocabulary as well as to highlight vocabulary teaching techniques based on visualization that are effective for students.

Keywords: *visualization, visual, vocabulary, speaking skills, second language learners.*

Streszczenie

Artykuł przedstawia proces wizualizacji i jego rolę w nauczaniu. W tej pracy wizualizacja jest uważana za nowoczesną metodę nauki słownictwa języka obcego. Zidentyfikowano główne zalety stosowania tej metody w nauczaniu słownictwa języka obcego. Ustalono główne techniki wizualizacji, które są skuteczne dla studentów.

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Слова ключевые: *wizualizacja, wizualny, słownictwo, umiejętności mówienia, student uczący się "języka drugiego".*

Аннотация

Статья раскрывает процесс визуализации и его роль в обучении. В данной работе визуализация рассмотрена как современный метод изучения иноязычной лексики. Выделены основные преимущества использования данного метода в изучении словарного запаса иностранного языка. Определены основные приёмы визуализации, которые являются эффективными для студентов.

Ключевые слова: *визуализация, визуальный, лексика, навыки речи, студент изучающий "второй язык"*

Statement of the problem in general outlook and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks.

At the beginning of the 21st century a foreign language became an important tool of international communication and the time has come, when Ukrainian society feels an acute necessity for specialists in various spheres, using a foreign language for solving the professional and personal issues.

The main task of any higher education institution is to prepare a highly skilled and well-educated specialist. At the same time the graduate has to master not only his/her professional knowledge but also communicative skills.

In order to carry out a conversation, a learner must acquire a certain amount of vocabulary and have an awareness of how each word could be appropriately used. Vocabulary functions as an existential foundation for language. Furthermore, vocabulary learning is one of the most problematic fields in second language learning.

In the literature of English language teaching and learning an actual theme of vocabulary has been neglected.

French V. (French V., 1983) believes that vocabulary has been neglected in the past decades because 1) those who were involved in the teacher-preparation programs

during the past few decades felt that grammar should be emphasized more than vocabulary, 2) specialists in methodology believed that students would make mistakes in sentence construction if too many words were learned before the basic grammar had been mastered, and 3) those who gave advice to teachers said that word meanings can be learned only through experience and cannot be taught in the classroom.

More recently, however, a number of researchers have become interested in vocabulary instruction. They have concluded that vocabulary is an important area, worthy of effort and investigation. It has, consequently, gained popularity in the general field of English language teaching and learning (Coady J., Huckin T., 1997; Richards J. C., Renandya W.A., 2002; Hedge T., 2008).

Vocabulary can be learned in a variety of ways. The research leads teachers and scientists to ask the question: which methods are the most successful for teaching vocabulary to their students?

Thus, the acquisition of vocabulary can be challenging, as a result of large amount of words in a foreign language.

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Analysis of latest research where the solution of the problem was initiated.

A large number of studies have examined how to enhance the learning outcomes of vocabulary acquisition (Hsiao, I. Y. T., Lan, Y.-J., Kao C.-L., Li, P. (2017), Meara, 1980, Malt B.C., Li P., Pavlenko A., Zhu J., Ameel P., 2015; Zinszer B.D., Malt B., Ameel E., Li P., 2014, Barcroft J., 2004; Llach P.A., Gómez A.B., 2007).

Hague S. (Hague S., 1987) and R. Carter (Carter R., 1988) both decry the neglect of vocabulary instruction in second language classes, and they also suggest a variety of possibilities for improving them. Among the techniques suggested by pedagogues, the question of the nature of textual-input enhancement versus visual-input enhancement approaches has not been fully explored (Hasshemi M., Pourgharib B., 2013).

We learn our first language though the desire to understand the world around us; as children we wish to understand the world and circumstances make it so that we come to associate objects from everyday life with sounds and then, gradually, with words. Cognitive researchers (Lan Y., Fang S., Legault G., Li P., 2015; Rankin Y., Gold R., Gooch B., 2006) took this into account when they suggested that it can be very helpful to use visual aids when learning a foreign language.

There can be even more to this when we consider that the sense humans use the most is the visual sense: "research estimates that 80-85 % of our perception, learning, cognition, and activities are mediated through vision" (Brainonline.org 2014 study).

All of these studies display success when using visual techniques to teach vocabulary meanings. Thus, many researchers have found that students who learn in virtual worlds receive positive outcome in vocabulary acquisition.

Aims of paper.

The aim of the paper is to outline the main advantages of using the visualization in learning foreign language vocabulary as well as to highlight vocabulary teaching techniques based on visualization that are effective for students of every age and level.

Exposition of main material of research with complete substantiation of obtained scientific results.

Given the difficulties of vocabulary learning in a second or foreign language, along with the obvious necessity of trying to overcome them, one would expect that vocabulary instruction would be at the top of the agenda for language teachers. However, the opposite is often the case. Vocabulary is not explicitly taught in most language classes, and students are expected to "pick-up" vocabulary on their own without any guidance. Courses on reading, writing, speaking, listening, grammar, and culture are common in second language programmes, but very few vocabulary courses exist. Many instances of so-called vocabulary instruction involve merely giving students lists of words to memorize or providing limited practice opportunities, with no further assistance to the often overwhelmed learner.

Learning success in the acquisition of vocabulary will affect student's future skills in language learning in general, including, for example, reading skills (Cobb T., 2007; Kern R.G., 1989) and listening skills (Kelly R., 1991; Smidt E., Hegelheimer V., 2004).

We can't disagree with the statement given by J. Harmer (Harmer J., 2001) that language structures make up the skeleton of language as well as vocabulary provides the vital organs and the flesh.

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As D. Wilkins (Wilkins D. 1972) posits, without grammar very little can be communicated, but without vocabulary nothing can be communicated. Vocabulary, as M. Brown (Brown M., 2001) states, forms the building block of any language. That is, vocabulary is “a core component of the language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen and write” (Richards J. C., Renandya W.A., 2002).

Vocabulary functions as a cornerstone without which any language could not exist. Speaking would be meaningless and perhaps impossible having only structure without vocabulary. The word “vocabulary” generally represents a summary of words or their combinations in a particular language.

There is a number of techniques by which vocabulary instruction has been handled, mishandled, or avoided almost entirely by second language teachers. According to R. Oxford and D. Crookall (Vocabulary Learning: A Critical Analysis of Techniques, 1990) these techniques are classified into four groups: decontextualizing, semi-contextualizing, fully contextualizing, and adaptable.

Decontextualizing techniques are those that remove the word as completely as possible from any communicative context that might help the learner remember and that might provide some notion as to how the word is actually used as a part of language. Examples are word lists, flashcards, and conventional dictionary use.

Semi-contextualizing techniques allow some degree of context but fall short of full contextuality; thus, new words may be linked with something that is meaningful to the learner, but they are not used as a part of naturalistic communication. Examples are words grouping, word or concept asso-

ciation, visual imagery, aural imagery, keyword, physical response, physical sensation and semantic mapping.

Fully contextualizing techniques are those that embed new words in a more or less normal communicative context. Examples are reading and listening practice (comic strips, advertisements, letters, articles, stories, newspapers, magazines, books, jigsaw reading exercises) as well as speaking and writing practice (simulation/gaming, small group discussions, project work, and other communicative techniques).

These three types of techniques are not discrete but instead form a continuum of contextuality.

The fourth classification, adaptable, refers to a technique that can reinforce other techniques at any part of the contextuality continuum.

Answering the question how to make vocabulary teaching and learning effective S. Thornbury (Thornbury S., 1996) advises to visualize a picture for a new word or to link an abstract word with some mental image. Images drawn by students themselves have the best outcomes.

In our research visual vocabulary learning methods have been taken into consideration.

Visualization refers to our ability to make visual representations in our minds while learning vocabulary. It stimulates the imagination, enhances involvement with the text and improves mental imagery.

As the result of our research, visual English learning methods for learning vocabulary have been outlined. They are as follows: flashcards, visual imagery, advertisements, letters, gaming, project work.

1. Flashcards are among the most widely used vocabulary learning techniques. The flashcard technique involves at least three components: writing down (copying) the second language word on the front

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of a card, writing the word's first language meaning on the back, and then using the card to become familiar with the new word and its meaning. The flashcard thus represents a glorified second language - first language word list broken into units, each containing one new word or expression in both second language and first language forms. With creativity and thought on the part of the learner, flashcards can indeed be employed to provide greater context. For instance, students can sort flashcards into piles representing different groups of words (e.g., nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, prepositions; words that are already learned vs. words still to be learned; past tense forms vs. present tense forms). Students can tape flashcards to particular objects like lamp, table, and chair signified by the words on the cards, thus providing a visual (and to a degree tactile) context. Visual context might also be added by taping relevant pictures to the cards.

The presentation of vocabulary with flashcards can be done in lots of various ways, for example in telling a story or just simply based on a set of vocabulary for a particular topic.

2. Visual imagery is one of the most useful semi-contextualizing aid for learning second language vocabulary. The use of visual imagery for vocabulary learning is based on making associations between a picture and a word. The theory on which this technique is founded is that most students are capable of associating new information to concepts in memory by means of meaningful visual images, and that visual images make learning more efficient. Visual imagery is known to help students package information more efficiently than they could if using just words alone (Bower G., 1970; Higbee K., 1979; Nyikos M., 1987). Moreover, the pictorial-verbal combination involves many parts of the brain, thus providing greater cognitive power. A large

number of students are primarily visual learners (Dunn R., Dunn K., 1972), and about 94% of all people are at least moderately good at using visual imagery (Coleman D., 1986), though they do not always apply it to learning. People are used to the linkage between verbal and visual symbols, such as found in a whole array of public signs and notices (e.g., no-smoking signs on airplanes and stop signs and yield signs on highways). These familiar verbal-visual links can help second language learners.

Students can use visual imagery by making their own drawings or sketches of words or phrases (especially helpful for prepositions like above, over, under, and so on).

Visual effects, such as colour-coding different groups, e.g., in using yellow for nouns, green for pronouns, pink for adjectives can also be useful in learning vocabulary.

Even abstract words can be remembered through visual imagery; students simply associate such words with a visual symbol or a picture of a concrete object.

3. Gaming. In recent years, a lot of educators have realized that remembering vocabularies mechanically is the most boring part in English learning and they begin to pay much more attention to use games for English teaching, especially for learning vocabulary.

Game as the main form of activity is the basic means of education. Besides, game teaching is one kind of efficient teaching method that teachers can transform boring language into interesting games.

Using games in teaching English vocabulary starts with the introduction of definitions of the game and the characteristics of the game, then lists the types of the game.

There are two types of games in the classroom; one type stresses accuracy which is called language-focused games and the other stresses fluency, which is

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called communication-focused games. The language-focused games include Bingo Games, Guessing Games, Chinese Whisper, Musical Chairs, Counting Games, Simon Says, and so on, and the Communication-focused games like Describe and Draw Games, Spot the differences in a game, and so on. Lu Zi-wen W. (Lu Zi-wen W., 2004) points that "this kind of classification is convenient for teachers design and choose appropriate games to carry out relevant teaching activities". So, teachers should choose different types of games to arouse students' interests on the basis of satisfying students' different needs in learning English. Through providing all kinds of games, students can get interested in learn English words in the process of enjoying the mystery of all kinds of games.

While using games for learning vocabulary there are some essential points. They are: proper preparation for game, detailed interpretation of the game rules, control of the playtime as well as setting up rewards and punishment in order to keep discipline in the classroom.

Games can create a situation for students as close to the real language environment as possible, make the learning more lively and improve students' abilities of imagination, creativity and language skills.

4. Home projects. Project method is one of the modern method of teaching, in which the students point of view is given importance in designing the curricula and content of studies. This method is based on the philosophy of Pragmatism and the principle of "Learning by doing". In this strategy students perform constructive activities in natural condition.

According to W.H. Kilpatrick (Kilpatrick W.H., 1918), "A project is a wholehearted purposeful activity proceeding in a social environment".

It takes the student beyond the walls of the classroom. It is carried out in a natural

setting, thus making learning realistic and experiential.

Teachers using the project-based learning strategy need to make sure the project has the potential to meet some components. They are as follows: significant content, critical thinking, collaboration, reflection and revision.

Conclusions.

Language skills play a critical role in our globalized world for a person's career development. One of the most challenging parts of every language learning is the acquisition of vocabulary items. In the context of second language learning, the acquisition of vocabulary is considered the most fundamental, because it affects the way how well a learner could perform in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Students, however, complain that they cannot remember the words they have learned. To solve this problem, following conclusions have been made.

The application of visualization is becoming more and more popular in different areas of educational field, especially in foreign language learning. Some scientists predict that visualization will become one of the most powerful, effective, and necessary tool for teachers in the years to come. Thus, vocabulary teaching techniques based on visualization help students to understand the meaning and help to make the word more memorable.

The range of advantages of using vocabulary teaching techniques based on visualization has been outlined. Among them the most essential are:

- 1) it can open up the potential inner source of every learner's unique experience and creativity.
- 2) it can make learning more exciting and more personalized.

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3) it can stimulate students' learning vocabulary while using such techniques as using objects; drawing; using illustrations / pictures.

4) it can help to arrange learning time, improve learning efficiency, reduce the learning inertia and enhance interest in learning.

However, using visualization in learning vocabulary has some limitations. It is not suitable or sufficient for demonstrating the meaning of all words. For example, it is hard to illustrate the meaning of some words, especially the abstract ones such as "opinion" or "impact".

According to experience gained from classes, students always pay attention and are curious about what are they going to do with the visual aids.

However, there is always a downside: it can be quite time consuming to find the right visual aids for a specific type of activity for a beginning teacher who lacks his or her own collection. Still on the whole, this drawback is greatly outweighed by the above-mentioned pros.

Furthermore, when the collection of visual aids is once made, it can serve for a long time.

Another matter is the question of how to use visual aids effectively. It counts as general methodological knowledge that in learning languages, students should perceive the input through as many channels as possible.

Therefore, it is important to include variety of stimuli in teaching. It is important to find a balance and not to use visuals only but to combine them with other techniques and different types of stimuli (movement, verbal stimuli, sound, etc).

Moreover, visual aids used for demonstration of the meaning should be repeatedly connected with the spoken and subsequently also written form of the word or chunk of language.

Thus, techniques employed by teachers depend on some factors, such as the content, time availability, and its value for the students. This motivates teachers to employ certain techniques in presenting vocabulary. As the result of our research, we concluded that using visual aids helps students in remembering vocabulary better, because our memory for objects and pictures is very reliable and visual techniques can act as cues for remembering words.

Number of vocabulary teaching techniques based on visualization has been highlighted. They are as follows: flashcards, visual imagery, advertisements, letters, gaming, project work. The efficacy of exercises based on visualizing techniques are suitable for any group of students independently on age or level.

To sum up, it has been evidenced that visualization can help students to strengthen and reinforce what they have learned. The reason may be that they allow students to absorb the information through an additional sensory perception.

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