

THE VITALITY OF ACQUIRING AND LEARNING VOCABULARY

by:

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The English language plays a vital role not only for the learners and teachers but also for all humanity. It serves as the building block for communication to understand cross-cultural languages and nations. It also unites diversified people whose native language is not English. However, with these changes globally, the need for fluency in English is getting low. It is because of insufficiency in producing a knowledgeable individual who can talk about the language. According to Cameron (2001: 72), building up a helpful vocabulary is central to learning a foreign language at the primary level. It means young learners must learn vocabulary before they can comprehend other elements of language, such as grammar and writing. As cited in Thornbury (2002), Dellar and Hocking state that the more learners spend time learning grammar, their English will not improve much. From those explanations, vocabulary is very significant in language learning to communicate with other people.

More so, learning the English language is not easy as it sounds. It consists of elements you must be acquainted with, such as the macro skills, the grammar/structure, vocabulary, and of course, the proper pronunciation of the words. It remains the problem of the learners in terms of developing and improving their vocabulary. They were unable to construct sentences appropriately, choose appropriate words for the sentence, and of course, the absence of proper pronunciation of the terms, which students are unaware. McCloskey (2002) specified that there is a critical period for first-language development. According to her, although a child might be born with all the necessary equipment to develop language, language may not develop normally if the action is not triggered by language input at a certain age. Vocabulary is significant in learning the language

because the English vocabulary is enormous and different. According to El-Koumy (2004: 40), vocabulary is a crucial constituent of speech, and we would be utterly misguided if we disregarded teaching it.

In a localized setting, specifically in the Philippines, English proficiency and development learners' vocabulary are declining. Recent language test results showed that the Philippines is no longer the top English-speaking country in Asia. It has an alarming impact on job-providing industries in and out of the country. It is currently driving the Department of Education to intensify the effort to provide an educational system that will improve students' mastery of English. Teachers must be competitive enough in using the language to effectively teach students to become critical and analytical in communicating using English.

There are numerous ways that we could get to engage in the development of our learner's vocabulary. One way is to persuade students to speak the language often, especially at school sites. Schools have advocated the 'English Speaking Campaign' wherein learners are compelled to converse in English inside the classroom. Growth always begins within oneself. Thus, learners are urged to do self-study and exercise to enhance their competencies. Intermingling with native presenters of English is also highly supported. Viewing movies in English and listening to English-spoken media is also a helpful way to upgrade and get more vocabulary. Another valuable factor that could increase learners' language in English is exposing them to various texts such as visiting websites, reading different types of articles, and discussing topics in English to help them become confident in using English.

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