'NOTICING' AS A SCAFFOLDING TO ENHANCE THE VOCABULARY OF ESL LEARNERS AT THE FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES AND COMMERCE, UNIVERSITY OF JAFFNA.

K.L.Ramanan

Abstract

Teaching vocabulary requires the knowledge of what should be taught about words. Richards (1976) and Nation (2001), as cited by McCarten (2007), list them as ranging from the meaning(s) of the word to its connotations. Having these in the back ground, this study intends to utilize an experimental research oriented Task based Language Teaching (TBLT) method whereby the researcher tries to motivate the ESL learners, at the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Jaffna, to improve their vocabulary by engaging themselves in capturing photographs of billboards for collecting the English words on them. The primary objective is to make the students see, notice, learn and familiarize the words via taking photographs. The secondary objective is to make their passive vocabulary to be active. Nation (2001) introduced 'noticing' as a prerequisite for learning words. According to him noticing is seeing a word as something to be learned. The research makes the students notice the words and learn by engaging in relevant and interesting activities which are based on TBLT. The research is designed so as to require the target students to take photographs of bill boards of particular shops and to list the English words on them; a pre-test will be conducted to test their background knowledge, tasks will be designed by the researcher and they will be completed and a post-test would be employed to evaluate the improvements in the understanding of those words.

Key words: *Noticing, ESL Learning, Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Intentional Learning,*

1. INTRODUCTION

The key issues in learning vocabulary according to Schmitt (2010) are the following: need of a large vocabulary to function in a language, various kinds of word knowledge to use a word well, incremental vocabulary learning, requirement of vocabulary consolidation, and requirement of enhancement of partial knowledge. He contends that a large number of word families are necessary to function in a language and quotes several scholars for the minimum number of words required. According to him Nation indicated that general vocabulary is about 5000 word families and Hazenberg and Hulstijn indicated that learners need to have 10000 word families to use them in a variety of contexts. McCarten (2007)contends that the teaching of vocabulary should identify the most frequent 2000 to 5000 words.

The academic programme for students of the Faculty of Management

ELTC, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka. lakshmananramanan@gmail.com