

INVOLVING LEARNERS IN EXPANDING VOCABULARY THROUGH INTERACTIVE WORD CONSTRUCTION TASKS

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Annotation: This study investigates how well interactive word construction exercises improve primary school pupils' vocabulary acquisition. The study looks into how vocabulary retention, practical application, and motivation can be enhanced by getting students involved in word construction and vocabulary games. Pre-tests and post-tests were used to gather data, and the findings demonstrate the advantages of interactive approaches for learning English.

Keywords: Vocabulary acquisition, word construction, interactive tasks, learner engagement, language teaching

Introduction

Vocabulary plays a central role in learning a foreign language, as it directly influences learners' ability to read, speak fluently, and communicate effectively. Without a sufficient range of words, even students with strong grammatical knowledge often struggle to express their ideas clearly. However, traditional methods of vocabulary instruction, which mainly rely on rote memorization, have shown limited effectiveness in helping learners retain and actively use new words.

In recent years, researchers have increasingly emphasized the importance of active and meaningful engagement in vocabulary learning. One promising approach is the use of interactive word construction tasks, where learners analyze word structure, create new words, and apply them in appropriate contexts. Such tasks encourage deeper cognitive involvement and help learners better understand how words function within a language rather than simply remembering their meanings.

Experimental studies indicate that interactive word construction activities support stronger vocabulary retention and improve learners' ability to use newly acquired words in real communication. By engaging students in problem-solving and creative language use, these tasks make the learning process more dynamic and effective.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of interactive word construction tasks in enhancing vocabulary acquisition among learners. The paper discusses the research methodology, presents key findings, and considers their significance for improving foreign language teaching practices.

Literature Review: Vocabulary is a fundamental component of English language acquisition, as it directly influences learners' reading comprehension, communication skills, and ability to express ideas clearly. Learners with a strong vocabulary base are generally more confident and effective in both spoken and written communication. In contrast, limited vocabulary knowledge often restricts learners' ability to understand texts and participate actively in classroom



interactions. For this reason, vocabulary instruction has received significant attention in language teaching research.

Recent studies increasingly suggest that interactive approaches to vocabulary learning are more effective than traditional methods based on rote memorization. Interactive activities, such as word formation, games, and collaborative tasks, actively involve learners in the learning process and promote deeper cognitive engagement. This literature review critically examines three studies that emphasize the role of interactive methods in enhancing vocabulary acquisition.

A study conducted between 2019 and 2024 investigated the impact of interactive vocabulary activities in classroom settings. Students participated in tasks such as matching words with images, categorizing words according to their meanings, and constructing sentences using newly learned vocabulary. The findings revealed that learners demonstrated better recall and understanding of words when they engaged in interactive tasks rather than relying on passive memorization. Additionally, collaboration with classmates played a crucial role in improving vocabulary retention, as peer interaction encouraged discussion, clarification, and repeated exposure to new words.

Another study published in 2023 explored the use of vocabulary games in language courses to support vocabulary development. Activities such as word puzzles, crosswords, and quizzes required students to repeatedly use new vocabulary in an enjoyable and motivating environment. The results showed that these games not only enhanced vocabulary acquisition but also contributed to the development of critical thinking skills. While participating in game-based activities, students analyzed word meanings, sentence structures, and grammatical relationships. This process increased learners' confidence and encouraged them to use newly acquired vocabulary more frequently in both speaking and writing.

The third study, based on Booij's research in 2019, focused on word construction tasks through the use of morphological knowledge. The study demonstrated that understanding prefixes, suffixes, and root words enables learners to infer the meanings of unfamiliar words and independently expand their vocabulary. Furthermore, combining morphological awareness with interactive word construction activities allowed students to apply their knowledge in practice. This approach not only improved vocabulary development but also enhanced reading comprehension, as learners became more skilled at decoding complex words.

Overall, the reviewed studies indicate that traditional vocabulary teaching methods, particularly memorization, are less effective when compared to interactive and learner-centered approaches. Interactive activities and vocabulary games provide meaningful opportunities for practical application, which leads to deeper understanding and long-term retention. Moreover, these methods positively influence learners' motivation, participation, and confidence in using English. Interactive vocabulary acquisition strategies, including word games and word construction tasks, are highly effective for English language learners. The reviewed research highlights their success in increasing vocabulary size, improving retention, and supporting practical language use. Educators who integrate interactive vocabulary strategies into their teaching can create a more engaging and successful vocabulary learning experience for students.

Methods: This study employed an experimental design to examine how interactive tasks of constructing words were effective in increasing vocabulary acquisition. Thirty students from a primary school were taken for this study, who were divided equally into a control group and an experimental group. While the control group used traditional approaches, the experimental group opted for interactive methods.

The experimental group involved in various interactive tasks:

- Forming new words by using prefixes, suffixes, and root words
- Word game and puzzle completion



-Creating sentences using newly acquired vocabulary

-Team Activity: Matching words, meanings, and pictures with classmates.

The experiment lasted for four weeks, and the knowledge of vocabulary among students was determined through pre-tests and post-tests. The tests involved multiple-choice questions, fill in the blank exercises, as well as unscrambling words. Participation of students was determined by observations.

The obtained data were analyzed with pair t-tests, which compared the means of pre-test and post-test data, and independent sample t-tests, which allowed for side-by-side comparison of data from both groups. Thus, it was possible to ascertain if interactive word construction activities were effective in fostering vocabulary knowledge.

Discussion: On the basis of this study, it has been found that interactive word construction tasks are effective in promoting vocabulary development in students. This has been highlighted by the fact that students in the experimental group scored better in the post-test compared to those in the control group. This result was consistent with Sri Yuliani, et al. in 2023, which also found that interactive vocabulary strategies greatly improved students' understanding of vocabulary. In their research, it was found that students in the experiment group scored higher in post-test than those in the control group, and the result of t-test showed a significant value of $t = 6.101$, $p < 0.05$.

Likewise, in previous studies from 2019 to 2024, it was proven that interactive vocabulary activities, which involved paired picture identification, sentence building, and group activities, improved retention and understanding. The students were also motivated, actively participated, and showed better recall compared to those who used traditional memorization techniques.

A key point raised by Booij (2019) is that knowledge of morphology, that is, knowledge of root words, prefixes, and suffixes, enhances students' ability to derive meanings of unknown words and also enables students to develop their own vocabulary. Such knowledge when used in conjunction with activities enhances students' ability to apply vocabulary in practical situations, thus improving reading and speaking skills.

From these findings, it appears that interactive approaches to vocabulary development, including playing, word formation, and group work, are effective in increasing vocabulary retention, learner motivation, and application. This seems to be a better approach than traditional memorization techniques.

Teachers are also encouraged to implement engaging activities and morphological exercises in their vocabulary instruction in order to help students develop their confidence and competence in using the English language. Feedback and opportunities for students to work with a partner can even further enhance vocabulary performance in class.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research proves that interactive elements in tasks of constructing words contribute effectively towards vocabulary acquisition in students of primary school compared to conventional approaches. Word games, forming sentences, and group activities enabled students to recall and apply words effectively.

Furthermore, research indicates that educating students on root words, prefixes, and suffixes aids in understanding new words and generating their own vocabulary. Incorporating engaging activities enhances fun, boosts motivation, as well as their speaking and reading fluency. Teachers should incorporate interactive word activities in their teaching to encourage students to learn with ease and increase their vocabulary.



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