
AN EFFECTIVE METHOD OF TEACHING
VOCABULARY IN HIGH SCHOOLS

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Under the Supervision
of
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The learner of English as a foreign language probably has much difficulty in learning English words; especially, Korean equivalents for English words as well as the correct usage of words in an English sentence. Some way of solving this difficulty could surely bring about a desirable effect on English learning. Though many kinds of efforts have been made by teachers and students to get over trouble in practicing English vocabulary, it seems that most of the methods developed by them might still be far from effective enough for teachers and students in the high school to avoid trial and error. However, if both teachers and students devise an effective way of practicing new words, it will surely help them to economize time and effort in learning and teaching English. To put it another way, by doing so, students could take, so to speak, a short cut to a mastery of English.

This paper is concerned with the necessity of learning vocabulary and with a variety of effective ways for practicing vocabulary. To be

more precise, the purpose of the present study is to provide the learner and the teacher of English as a foreign language with practical and effective ways of practicing vocabulary.

Chapter II will deal with the necessity of learning vocabulary, based on empirical evidence.

This paper chiefly discusses the noun, adjective, and verb, among the parts of speech. The detailed reason why those three parts of speech are chosen here is shown in § 2.2.

First of all, the most essential attitude for a learner to form is the habit of consulting a dictionary whenever they come to meet a new word. This is explained in Chapter III.

Nouns are said to be the principal part of speech, in the sense that they usually take the position of subject in every sentence. How can we become familiar with nouns, easily and effectively? Chapter IV will illustrate this.

In Chapter V, a solution to the problem of how one should

practice adjectives is demonstrated. Adjectives exist for the purpose of modifying nouns, and a variety of ways of matching adjectives with nouns are presented there.

Chapter VI is concerned with a method of practising verbs. Every sentence has its own structural pattern, which is absolutely connected with verbs. Therefore, verbs must be practised with their objects. This will be considered in this chapter.

The importance of onomatopoeic words in learning English cannot be ignored, for they can be categorized as adjectives and could be effective for the students to form an intuitive feeling for English. This will be dealt with in Chapter VI.



CHAPTER II

THE NECESSITY OF LEARNING VOCABULARY

2.1. Introductory Remarks

A few surveys have been made to explore how important the study of vocabulary is in learning English.

The data derived from the questionnaires collected in March, 1989, from students who just entered Hallim Girls' Middle School in Cheju-do, Korea, showed that their favorite subject was English. The fact that they liked English best was certainly due to the students' psychological phenomenon, that they were just starting to learn a foreign language, English, for the first time in their lives, immediately after they entered the middle school. Sixty-one students out of sixty-four chose the answer that they were interested in English, and were curious to learn it.

Two months later (in May), another questionnaire collected from those students who answered in March revealed that about one third

of the students who were interested in English in March felt that English had become boring. What had made them bored with English? An attempt was made to discover why English had become boring to the students during the short period of two months. The teacher formed a supplementary class with the students who answered that English had already become boring, and asked them to read the reading part of the lesson, Lesson 5, which was being taught in the ordinary class. Surprisingly, their reading was quite good. On the contrary, their dictations left much room for improvement.

Few of them were sure of the spelling of the words of the sentences they had read. Few of them could write correctly half of the words newly introduced in Lessons 4 and 5. This means that the latent factor making the students gradually bored in English was their lack of familiarity with the spelling of the words newly introduced in each lesson. The following are some of the incorrect words in their spelling.

moning<morning .	stady<study
studnt<student	oclak<o'clock
tenis<tennis	bicicl<bicycle

The above exploration convinces us that the students unfamiliarity with spelling causes the students not to be interested in English. Therefore, helping the student to become familiar with new words, in spelling as well as in pronunciation, is one of the best ways of teaching English. How we should help them to get over the difficulty in spelling of the newly introduced words will be considered in §4. 3.

2.2. Another Survey Proving the Necessity of Learning Vocabulary

Another survey for the exploration of the importance of English vocabulary was made with the reading of a test passage in French in the trial college-entrance examination on one day in March, 1984.

Three teachers in a girls' high school, who had never been taught French, made an attempt to solve the problems of reading the passage in French. Since they were completely ignorant of the French language, the primary meanings of the nouns, the adjectives, and the verbs in the reading passage were written between the lines by the teacher teaching French in the school. The marks those three teachers got in the experimental test were similar to the students' average mark.

A similar attempt for proving that the word power plays an absolute role in learning English was made with pupils in the sixth grade in a primary school, the Attached Primary School in Cheju City, on March 10, 1989. The pupils took an experimental reading test, the problems of which were the very problems of the entrance examination for high schools conducted on December 10, 1988. Since the pupils were totally ignorant of the linguistic characteristics of English, the meanings of nouns, the adjectives and verbs written between the lines could be the only clue for them to comprehend the reading passage. The average mark of the primary school class was so satisfactory as to prove the hypothesis that the most important factor in learning English is the power of vocabulary.

2.3. A Scholar's Opinion of the Importance of Vocabulary

If the learner strives for communication and survival in the target culture, words may well be more important than grammar. A learner with an adequate vocabulary, but who is restricted to the basic structures of a language, will be able to express his communicative needs with few differences. This is called the approach of "vocabulary first, structure second".¹⁾

1) Smith, P., *Teaching Vocabulary* (Madison, Wisconsin : The University of Wisconsin Press 1969), p. 531.

In fact, the number of words newly introduced in the first-year text book of middle schools in Korea is less than five hundred. On the contrary, the grammar to be taught in the first year of middle school are the usages of *to be*, *to have*, *the present tense*, and *the past tense of regular verbs*. This helps us to agree with the fact that the unfamiliarity with the new words causes the first-year students to become bored in English. Consequently, we cannot over-estimate the importance of vocabulary in learning English.

2.4. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, the results derived from three experiments are enough for one to be sure that :

- 1) the more accumulated the unfamiliar words are in each lesson, the more uninterested the student becomes in English;
- 2) helping the students to get over difficulty in spelling is one of the best ways of teaching vocabulary;
- 3) despite the learner's lack of grammar, he or she, if given the meanings of the vocabulary, can comprehend the reading passage to some degree. Therefore, we can use a system of "vocabulary first, structure second".

In the following chapters, a few practical ways of teaching vocabulary, which have proven effective by the writer's experience, will be shown.



CHAPTER III

FORMING THE STUDENT'S HABIT OF CONSULTING A DICTIONARY

3.1.1. A Method of Writing on the Blackboard

The first recommended method for the students to practise the new vocabulary is how we can form the students' habit of taking English dictionaries with them and looking up the new words whenever they come to meet a strange word. The following is a way for forming the habit of consulting dictionaries.

Never act as a dictionary, but act as a guide who always compels the students to consult dictionaries. If you want to introduce a word *vertical* to the students, and its antonym, *horizontal*, you had better not write the following on the blackboard.

vertical ↔ *horizontal*

You had better write on the blackboard the following.

vertical () *hori*_____

The students have to consult a dictionary in order to complete the spelling of the word, horizontal, and in the course of completing it, they come to know the antonymous relation in meanings between the two words, vertical and horizontal. The dictionary enables the students to complete the word, horizontal, and to fill the blank with a mark, \longleftrightarrow , indicating the antonymous relation between the words.

The following form of writing on the blackboard helps the students to understand the pronunciation as well as spelling of a word.



low () hi__
 [haiϕ]

The spelling, hi, can be pronounced as [hai], then the students will easily and simultaneously understand that the spelling, gh, functions just for the written form, not for the pronunciation.

Surely, the word completion form shown above compelled students to consult the dictionaries. After three English classes in which such a teaching method as shown above was used, just two or three students in a class failed to take dictionaries with them for the English class. It proved satisfactory.

3.1.2. A Method of Teaching Reading of Passages.

Let me adopt a passage from an English textbook for high school students.

Alfred Nobel, the great Swedish inventor and industrialist, was a man of many contrasts. He was the son of a bankrupt, but became a millionaire, a scientist with a love of literature, and an industrialist who managed to remain an idealist. He made a fortune but lived a simple life, and cheerful in company, he was often sad in private. A lover of mankind, he never had a life or family to love him.²⁾

If one wants to help students comprehend the passage above,

2) Min Y. B., *High School English* II-1 (Seoul: the Study of Current English 1985), p. 80.

one should make sure at first that they know the meaning of the word, 'contrast'. It was found effective in the author's class to let his students look up the word, 'contrast', in a dictionary, and then to check how many examples are given to support the expression of "a man of many contrasts".

However, the conclusion drawn from teaching a passage is **Never act as a dictionary. act as a guide who makes conditions under which students have to consult dictionaries.**

3.2. A Scholar's Opinion on Consulting Dictionaries

To put an emphasis on the importance of the habit of looking-up vocabulary in a dictionary, the following expression by Smith (1969) is quoted :

"A skeleton without flesh is not a person; a scaffold without walls is not a house; and a structure without a vocabulary is not a language. Therefore, it might even be argued that a person who knows the words, though not the best order in which to arrange them, will usually succeed better in communicating than a person who

knows the word order, but does not know the words".³⁾

Smith also says that students should be strongly urged to use an all-English dictionary. Though he recommends an all-English dictionary to the students, I would like to ask my students to use the English-Korean-English dictionary. The reason is to be explained in § 5.1. None can gainsay that we cannot overestimate the importance of students' habits of consulting dictionaries in learning English.

3.3. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, the following can be summarized:

- 1) Forming the students' habit of consulting dictionaries is essential
- 2) Never act as a dictionary, act as a guide who makes conditions under which students have to consult dictionaries. For example, you can use the typical blackboard-writing form of students completing words by themselves, through consulting dictionaries.


3) Smith, P., *Teaching Vocabulary* (Madison, Wisconsin : The University of Wisconsin Press 1980), p.531.

CHAPTER IV

A METHOD OF TEACHING NOUNS

4.1. Introductory Remarks

Korean students are having triple difficulty in familiarizing themselves with English vocabulary. They should practise the spelling, the pronunciation, and the meaning of a word. The method of using flash-cards, which is to be explained in §4.2.1 and 4.2.2., helps our students to practise simultaneously the spelling, the pronunciation, and the meaning.

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Another fact that should be accepted is that a noun is the primary part of speech. This means that nouns must be practised first, of all parts of speech, as a beginning step in learning English, in the sense that the word a baby utters first after its birth is a noun, Mom, and the subject of a sentence is most often a noun (or else a pronoun). Therefore, we cannot help using flash-cards for teaching nouns to those students who are not yet rich in vocabulary.

Students should be helped to get over the notorious discrepancy between spelling and pronunciation of English.⁴⁾ A method for helping the students practise spelling is to be shown in §4.3.

As students get richer in vocabulary, they can easily increase the amount of their vocabulary by using methods of paraphrasing nouns, matching a noun with its inherent adjective, and finding synonyms and antonyms, which will be considered in §4.4., 4.5., and 4.6., respectively.

4.2.1. A Method of Teaching through Flash-cards

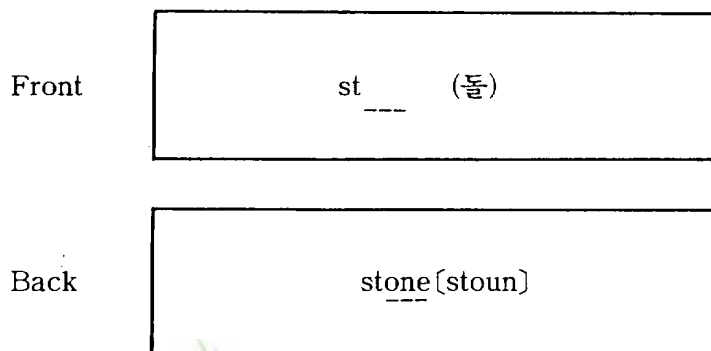
As introduced in §4.1., flash-cards proved effective and convenient to use. The following are their merits.

- (1) They enable us to check how many students have previewed the new words for the class.
- (2) They help the students practise, simultaneously, spelling, pronunciation, and the meaning of a word.

4) Hwang O. T., *A Spelling Approach to English Stress* (Seoul: Department of English of Graduate School of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies 1983), p.1.

(3) Though many teachers consider it effective to teach nouns by paraphrasing, it is almost the same as giving another burdensome problem to those students who just entered the middle school, or who are not yet rich in vocabulary. Flash-cards are good for those students.

An Example of a Flash-card.



The spelling, -one, in the word, “stone”, has the pronunciation of /oun/, which is different from the pronunciation of the word, one. This way of using a flash-card helps the students to practise how to spell and how to pronounce at the same time. Furthermore, if you let your students fill the blanks of st ___ after hearing your pronunciation, through consulting a dictionary, it is more helpful in forming the habit of students’ consulting dictionaries.

The following is a larger form of flash-card.

Q.) Fill in the blanks with proper spelling.

A bridge made of st _____

A rolling st _____ gathers no moss.

Don't throw a st _____ into a pond.

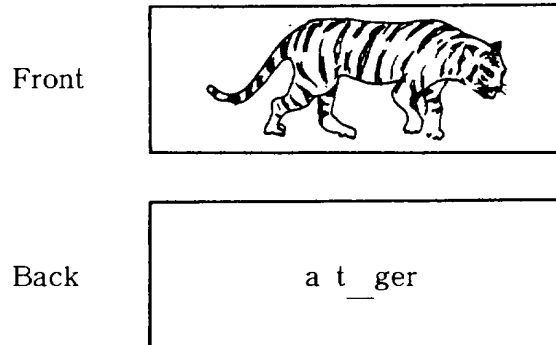
The reason why it is difficult to apply the above method to the first-year students of a middle school is that the word *bridge*, *moss*, *rolling*, and *thrown* above are also new to them. It goes without saying that it is more advantageous for high-school students.

4.2.2. A Method of Using Picture Flash-cards



To get the effectiveness of prolonging the LAD (Language Acquisition Device), we had better not use a Korean translation on the flash-cards. To do so would imply that the deep structures of *horang-i* (호랑이) in Korean and *tiger* in English are same. Instead of relying on the Korean translation, a picture of a tiger is helpful for the students to imagine what kind of animal they should express in surface structure. The following is an example of a picture

flash-card.



In the course of completing the word, 'tiger', students will also easily know that the spelling of i has the pronunciation of /ai/.

4.3. A Method of Helping Students Get over the Burdensome Feeling Caused by the Length of a Word.

Every student is prepossessed with the feeling that a word longer in spelling is difficult to practise than a shorter one. Many a middle school teacher may have the experience that quite a few students fail to write down words whose spellings contain more than five letters.

To help students get over the burdensome feeling caused by the length of a word, the following method had been tried and proven

effective, in bringing about a satisfactory result. Give the students homework from which they shall be given a test of dictation about the words the spelling of which have five, six, or seven letters. The first-year students will get accustomed gradually to practising the words long in spelling. In fact, this kind of dictation, after their practising the words through doing their homework, makes the students feel it necessary to practise the long words intensively. Consequently, the students are confident of the words which are long in spelling. The following table illustrates the lengths of words in the first-year textbook of middle school.



The Table of Words And Spelling⁵⁾

The figure in the blank means lesson.

The Number of Spelling & Words	The Number of Spelling & Words	The Number of Spelling & Words	The Number of Spelling & Words	The Number of Spelling & Words	The Number of Spelling & Words	The Number of Spelling & Words
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I (1) a (1)	am (1) my (1) is (1) he (1) Mr. (1) it (1) he (2) or (3) an (3) do (4) me (4) up (5) go (5) to (5) oh (5) at (5) by (5) in (6) on (6)	too (1) you (1) are (1) she (1) two (2) not (2) dog (2) cat (2) car (2) bus (2) yes (2) pen (2) who (3) boy (3) her (3) him (4) has (4) get (5) mom (5) the (5) ten (5) bed (5) now (5) six (6) and (6) can (6) now (6)	this (1) your (1) that (2) book (2) desk (2) what (3) name (3) girl (3) four (4) like (4) play (4) have (4) very (4) much (4) many (4) them (4) they (4) five (4) time (5) open (5) door (5) when (5) walk (5) home (6) pool (6) swim (6) well (6) draw (6)	house (2) table (2) three (3) album (3) uncle (3) often (4) seven (5) close (5) forty (5) eight (5) after (6) study (6) watch (6) sorry (6)	lesson (1) friend (1) father (1) mother (1) sister (1) school (2) pencil (2) doctor (3) Korean (3) pen pal (3) tennis (4) little (4) o'clock (5) window (5) please (5) thirty (6) Sunday (6)	student (1) brother (1) teacher (1) ball pen (2) America (3) English (3) fifteen (5) bicycle (5) evening (6) picture (6)

8	9	10	11
notebook (2) baseball (4) football (4) homework (6)	breakfast (5) sometimes (6)	blackboard (2) basketball (4) playground (6) television (6)	tabletennis (4)

5) Shim M. H., *Middle School English I* (Seoul : Kyohak-Sa 1989),
p. 8~102.

4.4. A Method of Paraphrasing Nouns

A noun is the part of speech most appropriate for use in a method of paraphrasing in teaching. Compared with nouns, adjectives are impossible to paraphrase, in that no description can be made, to have the exact original expression, using other words. For example, 'father' and 'mother's husband' mean the same person, but an adjective, 'beautiful', cannot be paraphrased into other words having the same meaning. Verbs do not need to be paraphrased, for they play their main part in forming syntactical structures, rather than as synonyms or antonyms. Therefore, one can come to the conclusion that nouns are worth being paraphrased for the students to understand their meanings easily.

If one wants to teach a new word, 'diet', for example, what kind of teaching method would be hit upon? Which way of teaching, between the following, would be desirable to use in a class?

- (1) _____ : a kind of eating plan for a person to lose weight
- (2) If you are on a _____, you are eating special kinds of food because you want to lose weight.⁶⁾

6) Cobuild, C., *Essential English Dictionary* (Glasgow, London : William Collins Sons 1988), p. 215.

The former is often seen in English tests. The latter would be preferable, though, for it forms a sentence, and the students can familiarize themselves with a phrasal expression through it. Nevertheless, the most preferable form of paraphrasing is paraphrasing a noun in a dialogue. See the following. It seems worth calling this form of paraphrasing, **dialogue-paraphrasing**.

(3) A : Have a biscuit.

B : No thanks, I'm on a di__ .

Three kinds of paraphrases have been shown. The paraphrasing in (2) is good for students to improve reading comprehension ability, and the third paraphrasing, which may be called dialogue-paraphrasing, has its merit in improving dialogue. Here are some examples of **sentence-form paraphrases**.

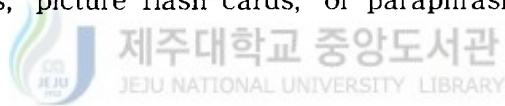
(1) _____ is the formal ending of a marriage by law.

(2) A _____ is something that you enjoy doing in your spare time, such as collecting stamps or painting.

(3) Your _____ is are the two parts of your body between your neck and the tops of your arms.

- (4) F _____ consists of books and stories about imaginary people and events.
- (5) If you have a _____, your temperature is higher than usual because you are ill.
- (6) A _____ is a period of fighting between countries or states.

What is noticeable here is that the method of paraphrasing is also to be accepted as the method of teaching vocabulary, through matching a new word with a word with which students are already familiar. It can be said, in a sense, to be a kind of collocation. However, every new word must be connected to other words, for the students to practise easily, regardless of the methods of connecting; Flash-cards, picture flash-cards, or paraphrasing.



4.5. A Method of Matching a Noun with Its Inherent Adjectives

Matching nouns with their inherent adjectives is also recommended. Every noun has its own typical characteristic, to be described properly by its inherent adjective. The details are explained in the following chapter.

4.6. A Method of Teaching Nouns through Finding Synonyms And Antonyms.

Finding synonyms and antonyms of a noun would also be effective for us in teaching nouns. The following is an example.

anx ____ () <i>uneasiness, worry, disquiet, anguish, apprehension</i>
() <i>relief, certainty, confidence, calmness, serenity, composure</i>

After troubling with a dictionary, the students will complete the word, anxiety, and will fill the two blanks with \rightleftharpoons and \leftrightarrow , which show the synonyms and antonyms, respectively.



Using synonyms and antonyms, Kruse (1979) argued, turned out effective in teaching vocabulary. Kruse expressed an opinion similar to the method explained above, that most students have studied and enjoy learning words with similar and opposite meanings.⁷⁾

7) Kruse, A. F., *Vocabulary in Context* (London : Oxford University Press 1979), p. 212.

4.7. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, this chapter can be summarized as follows.

- (1) Flash-cards are useful for the students to practise spelling, pronunciation and the meaning of a word, simultaneously.
- (2) Picture flash-cards are also recommendable in teaching vocabulary. They are effective for prolonging the LAD (Language Acquisition Device), as the students do not need to be helped by the Korean translation.
- (3) Helping the students not to feel scared of words with long spellings is also necessary.
- (4) Paraphrasing is also a recommended way of teaching nouns. Sentence-form paraphrasing and dialogue-paraphrasing are recommended.
- (5) Using synonyms and antonyms is proven effective for teaching vocabulary.

However, every method of teaching nouns is fundamentally based on the method of matching a new word with its frequently collocated words, with which the students are already familiar.

CHAPTER V

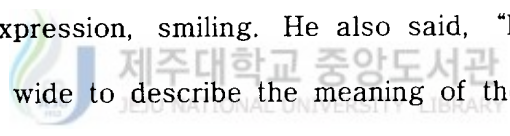
A METHOD OF TEACHING ADJECTIVES

5. 1. Introductory Remarks

The learner of English as a foreign language usually tries to comprehend the adequate meaning of an adjective by translating it first into his native tongue. This tendency could not, of course, be thoroughly satisfying, because the meaning of an adjective is usually not concrete but abstract, and it also functions as a modifier of a noun. In fact, it cannot be denied that teaching adjectives is even more difficult than teaching nouns or verbs. Following are two examples of this difficulty.

My students were once asked to look up in a dictionary the words *imaginary*, *imaginative*, and *imaginable*. All the students were confused by the meanings of the words in Korean, '상상의', '상상의, 상상력이 풍부한', '상상할 수 있는', respectively. This will help in understanding that it is very difficult to discriminate and teach the adequate meaning of the adjectives just with their meanings in Korean. How about matching

them with nouns? For example, an *imaginary* dragon (a dragon is not a real animal), an *imaginative* poet, and an *imaginable* event. (How is it imaginable for a man to bite a dog? Of course, it sometimes occurs that a dog bites a man.)

There is another episode. A teacher was asked to give a demonstration class by the Bureau of Education, and was also asked to use the direct method that, in the class, no one, the teacher as well as his students, is permitted to utter a word of their native tongue, Korean. They must teach and learn English by uttering only English. The teacher tried to teach the meaning of an adjective, *happy*, by giving his students all the gestures he could make. He made a happy expression, smiling. He also said, "I am happy", with his arms open wide to describe the meaning of the word, *happy*, to his students. When the class was over, an inspector who attended the class as a guest asked a student what the meaning of the word, *happy*, was in Korean. The student said, with a look of some confidence, "미친 것입니다 (*he is mad* in Korean)." 

These two facts help in understanding how difficult it is to teach the proper meaning of an adjective just by its Korean translation or

just by the explanation in English like the above-mentioned direct method. Even though confusion can be avoided, regarding the exact meaning of an adjective, through looking it up in a dictionary, one is still confronted with the task of discriminating nouns to be modified by an adjective. Adjectives function as the modifiers of nouns. Therefore, matching adjectives with nouns, which can distinctively show how the adjectives matched with nouns intend to express their inherent meanings, can surely help in teaching high school students the exact meaning and usage of an adjective.

5.2. A Practical Method of Matching Adjectives with Nouns

Smith (1969) says, "The students had better be asked for the meanings of *credible* and *creditable*, of *discreet* and *discrete*, of *appraise* and *apprise*, of *factious* and *factitious*, of *illusive* and *elusive*". Such a list, requiring the student to understand and distinguish, is immensely more helpful than a random list; furthermore, the words will be much easier to remember; and the student can see the point of the following exercises.⁸⁾

8) Smith, P., *op. cit.* (Wisconsin : The University of Wisconsin Press 1969), p. 533.

The following examples proved to be effective for students to discriminate their meanings and to improve their syntactic competence, by matching them with their inherent nouns.

Q.) Match the noun with the proper adjectives.

(1) historic _____

historical _____

sword, castle, tower, movie, drama

(2) favorite _____

favorable _____

insect (fly), lunch on Sundays, place

(3) industrious _____

industrial _____

revolution in England, progress, pollution, workers

- (4) practical _____
practicable _____

plan, jean pants, theory, method

- (5) a sensible _____
a sensitive _____
a sensual _____
a sensuous _____

gentleman, aquabelle, poet, sculpture

Linguistic intuition in a foreign language is believed to be originated from the drills of repetition and substitution. This way of matching adjectives with nouns is very similar to the drills of repetition and substitution. Furthermore, it surely helps the students to understand the exact meaning and usage of an adjectives by the typical image of its inherent noun.

5.3. Matching Korean Adjectives with English Nouns.

As mentioned in §5.1. of this chapter, teaching adjectives needs

both the clue word in Korean and the practising course of matching the adjective with its inherent noun.

Though it is probably somewhat difficult for high school students to translate a Korean adjective into English adjectives which are properly collocated with English nouns, they can soon figure out what difference the Korean adjectives has, when it is translated into English. The multiple-choice form also helps the students to match the adjective with its noun.

Q.) Choose a suitable adjective for the blank.

- (1) a _____ wear
 a _____ typewriter
 a _____ way

simple and easy, casual, portable

- (2) _____ writing
 _____ sand
 _____ linen
 _____ bones
 _____ rain / drizzle
 a _____ sieve

slender, fine, delicate

As Channell (1981) writes in the article, “*Applying Semantic Theory to Vocabulary Teaching*”, the method explained above is proven effective by the following statement.

“The learner knows ‘pretty girl’, but does not know that *pretty* may also collocate with : *bird, flower, landscape, view, picture, and even mess.*”⁹⁾

In conclusion for §5.2. and 5.3., a noun can give birth to adjectives. On the contrary, an adjective can also give birth to nouns. See the following.

a historic

sword /

castle /

tower, etc.

polluted /water

drinkable /

pure

9) Channell, J., *Applying Semantic Theory to Vocabulary Teaching* (London : Oxford University Press 1981), p. 116.

Therefore, students should learn vocabulary, not in isolation, but by collocation, which is easily obtained from the drills of repetition and substitution.

5.4. A Method of Teaching Color Adjectives

Why do we Koreans say “새빨간 거짓말” for the English expression, “a downright (barefaced / whopping) lie”, or “a pure fabrication”? Is the *downright lie* seen vividly red, like fresh blood, to Koreans? The difference of the expressive feelings about colors between English and Korean is worth studying as one of the analyses of the inherent.

Here is a Korean fairy tale, which is probably helpful in understanding the derivation of the Korean expression, “새빨간 거짓말.”

Once upon a time, there lived in a forest hut a poor family composed of mother, a daughter and a son. One day the mother had to go out to work at a wheat mill, and she was afraid that no adult else was at home to take care of the children. She told her children not to open the door whoever else might ask them to open it until she

came back home, teaching them the way of making sure that their mother herself, not anyone else, would really be in front of the door.

“Don’t open the door until you can make sure that the visitor’s finger is powdered white with wheat powder, for I will come back from working at the wheat mill.”

It got dark before the mother returned. A hungry tiger, then, came near the hut, and ate a hen, so all round its mouth was tainted with blood, but it was not enough for the tiger to feel fully fed. He went forward to the door of the hut. Disguising himself as the mother and mimicking the mother’s voice, the tiger asked the children to open the door.

“I will never open the door until I make sure you are my mother. Put your finger through the hole into this room, and I can decide that you are really my mother,” said the sister. The tiger put his finger and said,

“Your finger has many furs. My mother’s finger is smooth with dough.”

The tiger came back again, with his finger doughed smooth, and put it through the hole into the room, and said, “This is your mother’s finger.”

This Korean folk fairy tale shows that “새빨간 거짓말” told by the tiger means

- (1) red, like the color of fresh blood, so that it gives us a feeling of thrill,
- (2) probably the moment dreadful and harmful, if the opponent is taken in,
- (3) a lie momentarily told, not having been planned in advance,
- (4) a lie to be soon revealed if a light is lit, just as the tiger's lips are easily to be seen red with blood, by a flash of light.

As stated in the above, the difference that ‘downright lie’ in English is “새빨간 거짓말” in Korean makes one curious as to the differences of the expressive concepts of colors between the two languages.



The following are problems for students in understanding the cultural difference in colors.

Fill in the following blank either with ‘white’ or ‘black’.

- (1) a () *Christmas* : a Christmas when it doesn't snow and is mild

- (2) I'd like () *coffee*. : coffee without sugar or milk.
- (3) I prefer () *coffee*. : coffee with which sugar and milk
are mixed
- (4) a () *night* : quite a dark night
- (5) a () *lie* : a harmless lie (선의를 거짓말)
- (6) My father made his name () again. : My father
proved himself innocent.
- (7) He is not so () as he is painted. (그는 들던 것 보다
나쁜 사람이 아니다.)
- (8) Her face went () at the news. : She was surprised at
the news.
- (9) He looked () in the face with anger.
- (10) the () *ingratitude*
- (11) A *cowardly man* is a ()-*livered man*.
- (12) a () *night* (잠 못 이루는 밤)

The characteristic differences between the colors *black* and *white* can be recognized through an attempt to solve the problems above. Black involves the indicative meanings of dark, bad, wicked and black in tint. On the contrary, good, innocent, and weak are the

elements of the expressive concepts as the invariants of the color of white.

Fill in the blank with green, blue, yellow or red.

- (1) a () *hand* : (푼나기 일꾼)
- (2) a () *house* : (온실)
- (3) He drank till all's (). : (녹초가 되도록 마셨다)
- (4) She was () about not being invited to the dance. : (무도회에 초대가 되지 않아서 우울했다.)

The intuition that the Korean prefix, '푼 (*put*)', indicates 'young herb' helps to complete the phrase of 'a green hand'. On the contrary, the Korean word of 온실 (*onsil*) needs to be explained, for students to get the intuition of the inherent meaning. 'Onsil' is not warm house in English, but a house to be kept warm, so as to keep the plants growing *green*. The derivation of the expression that 'he drank till all's blue' may be originated from the visible fact that the color of the skin of a man who overdrinks is changed into *blue*. The inherent expression of color to express the matter of drinking can also be found in the color red: 'he painted the town red' (술을 진탕 마시며 돌아 다녔다.) Considering that the two different color adjectives, *red* and *blue*, can

express a matter of overdrinking, it must be taken for granted that a single primary meaning of an adjective cannot cover all the extended meanings of the word.

The meaning of blue in '*the blue Monday* (방학이 끝나고 등교하려니 기분이 좋지 않은 월요일)' doesn't mean 'fine', but means *depressed in spirits, dismal* and *downhearted*'. Therefore, it must be considered necessary to introduce to the students the inherent adjectives of nouns that adjectives have, in many cases, a typical meaning which is independent of the primary meaning elucidated in dictionaries. These facts require reliance on a brief comment as to the inherent meanings in Korean, just as was previously indicated on page 27~29.

In other words, the inherent meanings of adjectives are, in not a few cases, so far related to the primary meanings explained in the dictionaries, as shown in the above example of '*the blue sky and the blue Monday*', that they are necessary to be introduced first in brief Korean.

5.5. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, this chapter can be summarized as follows.

- (1) Adjectives are confusing enough for the students to have difficulty in discriminating, just with their meanings in Korean.

- (2) An adjective must be practiced through collocating it with a noun which is widely used with the adjective.
- (3) Learning a foreign language is, in a sense, said to form linguistic intuition, which is originated from the drills of repetition and substitution. It must be undoubtedly done after matching an adjective with a noun; that is, collocation.
- (4) As for color adjectives, they have much cultural difference. The color blue in a phrase of *the blue Monday* doesn't mean the same as the color blue of *the blue sky*. Therefore, the drill of repetition is much more necessary in practising color adjectives.



CHAPTER VI

A METHOD OF TEACHING VERBS

6.1. Introductory Remarks

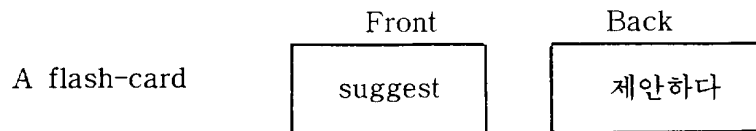
The structure of a sentence is originated from the usage of a verb. This means that students should realize that they should know the structural patterns influenced by the usage of a verb.

Unfortunately, students are apt to ignore the importance of structural patterns caused by the verb in the first stage. This makes the teacher feel it necessary to improve students' habits of looking up the verbs in a dictionary. An attempt to improve their habits was made as follows.

Flash-cards of the verbs newly introduced in a lesson are collected and shown to the students, to check whether they know the primary meaning of the verb in Korean. As usual, the rate of the students who had previewed the new words for the lesson was high enough for the author to proceed to do the lesson, (51 students out of 58; 87.9%). Nevertheless, not a few students (45 students) were at a complete loss as to how they could make a sentence with the

verb. This fact forced the teacher to make an attempt to help the student to approach the structure originated from the verb. The students were asked to make a sentence containing the verb in Korean. The Korean sentence made by a student surely helped his classmates to guess and understand what kind of a structural sentence could be made in English.

6.2. Composing a Sentence with a Verb



One student, asked to make a Korean sentence with 제안하다, the Korean equivalent of the English verb, suggest, made the following sentence in Korean.

“그녀는 / 우리가 일찍 출발할 것을 / 제안했다.”

We can easily start translating the above Korean sentence into a sentence in English as follows.

She suggested / 우리가 빨리 출발할 것을.

Now the students were asked to complete the sentence in English. Of course the students were allowed to consult a dictionary.

This procedure proved helpful for the students to understand typical structural patterns sensitive to the kinds of verbs. To give the students quick instruction on the usages of the verbs, the following method was found effective.

Lets try to find the common elements of the objects in the following sentences.

1. I suppose / *you'll be there.*
2. I wish / *you wouldn't interrupt.*
3. Do you think / *it'll rain?*
4. He said / *he was busy.*
5. He admitted / *he was wrong.*
6. He hinted (to me) *that I was being cheated.*

The multiple-choice shown next could also bring about the effectiveness, similar to that of the method explained above.

She suggested / 우리가 빨리 출발할 것을.

- a) *us to start early*
- b) *we must start early*
- c) *we (should) start early.*
- d) *our early starting.*

As shown above, the core of teaching can be said to be based

on the structural characteristic of the objectives, rather than on the meaning of the verb itself. Therefore, the following way of discriminating between the sorts of objects enables the students to understand verbal phrases and to compose the English sentences in the subsequent stage.

catch up with / *the world events*

him

the class

the new fashions

In conclusion, what is emphasized in the course of teaching and learning of verbs, is not the meanings of verbs but the structural patterns originated from the verbs. Therefore, helping students to discriminate between the typical elements of the objects can be recommended as an effective way of teaching the verbs.

6.3. Scholars' Opinions on Teaching Verbs.

Twaddell (1973) argues for the method of teaching verbs in just the same way that has been discussed above. Twaddell (1973) introduces

the following method of teaching verbs. "If X is a verb, does it refer to an action, change, condition, relationship? When? Do people do it? If not, what kind of thing does it?"¹⁰⁾

According to Korosadowioz-Struzybska (1980), verbs also need to be collocating with their appropriate objects. See the following :

Ex.) A speech can be given/

made/

delivered/

read, etc.

but it cannot be *enunciated/

*expressed/

or *pronounced.¹¹⁾



Mckay (1980) also has a method of teaching verbs similar to that of the present study. The following verbs, for example, are listed as synonyms for *inform* : *announce, communicate, declare, disclose, discuss, expose, express, mention, refer, report, and state*. The sentences from the corpus with

10) Twaddell, F., *Vocabulary Expansion in the TESOL Classroom* (Washington, D. C. : TESOL Quarterly 1973), p. 74.

11) Korosadowioz-Struzybska, M., *Word Collocations in FL Vocabulary Instruction* (Poznań, Poland : Adam Mickiewicz University Press 1980), p. 113.

the verb *express* demonstrate that this verb generally takes a human subject, and some emotion or opinion as its object.

Ex.) She expressed/disapproval

anger

belief

determination.

On the other hand, *announce*, a semantically similar verbs, is much more likely to have, as its object, a significant event.

Ex.) She announced/her candidacy

the birth

the death

the verdict

the ruling

the promotion.¹²⁾

12) Mckay. S. , *Teaching Syntactic, Semantic and Pragmatic Dimentions of Verbs*
(Washington, D. C. : TESOL Quarterly 1980), p.18.

6.4. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, the following can be summarized.

- (1) Not a few students who have previewed the new verbs to be taught in class could make sentences with the verbs. This means that they need to be taught how important objects are in learning verbs.
- (2) Helping students to match verbs with objects is a short cut for them in learning the structures of sentences. The following step will help them make a composition composition of a sentence in English.
- (3) After collocation of a verb with its object, letting the students repeat the structures is recommended in forming linguistic intuition.

Students should not feel satisfied with learning only the meaning of a verb. They should remember what kind of objects can be collected with the verb and repeat the collocation until they can intuitively utter and expression based on the collocation.

CHAPTER VII

A METHOD OF TEACHING ONOMATOPOEIC WORDS

7.1. Introductory Remarks

Languages differ in their choice of onomatopoeic words. Not a few students of the first year class in a middle school (no more than fifty-four out of sixty two students) could not recognize the sound of 'grunting, grunting' as that of a pig. The sounds of animals in English are found in this English class to be much more difficult for the students to recognize than expected. Nevertheless, once they are introduced to the students, the intuition of the inherent meanings of onomatopoeia of animals is more easily formed than that of the other adjectives, for the students' linguistic feeling and imagination about onomatopoeia, even if in a foreign language, helps to correspond the sound with its utterers.

However, the intuitive feeling of onomatopoeia is more sensitive than that of other adjectives. Therefore, the course of developing the intuitive feeling of onomatopoeia is effective for the first step of developing that of the inherent meanings of adjectives.

Q.) Fill in the blank with a proper sound below.

- (1) Dogs are _____. / the _____ dogs
(2) Pigs are _____. / the _____ pigs
(3) Chickens are _____. / the _____ chickens
(4) Hens are _____. / the _____ hens
(5) Ducks are _____. / the _____ ducks
(6) Crows are _____. / the _____ crows
(7) Lions are _____. / the _____ lions
(8) Cats are _____. / the _____ cats
(9) Goats are _____. / the _____ goats

barking (howling)

grunting (squeaking)

peeping (piping)

cackling (clucking)

quacking

cawing

roaring

mewing (meowing)

baaing (bleating)

As explained on the previous page, if you give your students questions, as to whether they can discriminate the animals' sounds, most students are confused. After they are once taught, though, a

surprisingly high rate (eighty-three percent) of the students could give eight correct answers out of nine questions.

7.2. Concluding Remarks

This result is convincing of the effectiveness of the method of teaching adjectives by which the meaning of an adjective must be introduced in Korean and the adjective must be connected with the inherent noun. This result also leads one to believe convincingly the possibility that it will be effective to teach students the usages of adjectives in a similar way as they are taught the sounds of animals.



CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters, we have considered the necessity for practising vocabulary in learning English and a variety of ways of teaching vocabulary useful in high-school classes.

According to the analyses of questionnaires and students' dictation, it was revealed that the greater an accumulation of words with which the students are unfamiliar there is in each lesson, the more uninterested they become in English. Despite the learner's lack of grammar, he, if given the meanings of the vocabulary, can comprehend the reading passage to some degree. Therefore, one may use the quotation "vocabulary first. structure second".

Since most of the students do not have a route for practising vocabulary, they have much trouble in practising it, wasting time and effort. However, the aims of this paper are focused on introducing to the students how to practise vocabulary exactly and easily. The following are the methods of practising vocabulary adopted from this paper.

(1) The dictionary is the best of all teachers of English. Make the

environmental conditions under which the students are urged to consult dictionaries. Do not write on the blackboard all the spellings of the word you are going to teach. Urge your students to complete the word by looking it up in a dictionary. This way proved very effective in forming the students' habit of consulting dictionaries. **Never do as a dictionary, but do as a guide,** who always creates conditions in which students have to consult dictionaries.

- (2) The method of teaching through flash-cards is very effective in checking how many students have previewed the new words and in helping the students simultaneously practise spelling, pronunciation, and the meaning of a word.
- (3) Picture flash-cards are also recommended in teaching vocabulary. They are effective for prolonging the LAD (Language Acquisition Device), for the students then do not need to be helped by Korean translation.
- (4) Sentence-form paraphrasing and dialogue-paraphrasing are effective in teaching nouns.
- (5) Using synonyms and antonyms proved effective.

-
- (6) Students should learn vocabulary, not in isolation, but by collocation, which must be followed by drills of repetition and substitution.
- (7) Adjectives must be practised by collocating them with their inherent nouns.
- (8) Color adjectives must be learned from the base of understanding the cultural differences.
- (9) Do not let your students feel satisfied only with the meaning of a verb. Urge them to remember what kind of objects can be collocated with the verb and to repeat the collocation until they can intuitively utter an expression based on the collocation.
- (10) Practising onomatopoeic words by matching them with the objects that make the sounds is so good a course that the students can get a linguistic intuition for English easily.

In brief conclusion, every word must be practised through collocating it with a co-occurring word. We can not over-estimate the importance

of vocabulary in learning English. “Just as a skeleton without flesh is not a person, or a scaffold without walls is not a house, so a structure without a vocabulary is not a language.”



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(Summary in Korean)

국문초록 (國文抄錄)

중·고등학교에서의 效果的인 영어 語彙 지도법

본고(本稿)에서, 영어 학습에서의 어휘 숙달의 필요성과 중고등 학교 교실에서 활용할 수 있는 여러 가지 어휘 지도법을 살펴 보았다.

학생들에 대한 설문 조사 분석과 받아 쓰기 분석에 의하면, 매 단원마다 익혀 나가야 할 어휘들이 숙달되지 않은 상태로 누적되어 갈수록 학생들이 점점 더 영어에 흥미를 잃게 된다는 사실이 밝혀졌다. 사실상, 문법 지식이 부족함에도 불구하고 어휘의 뜻이 우리말로 주어졌을 때, 어느 정도까지는 독해가 가능했었으며, 이것은 Paul Smith의 “첫째 어휘, 둘째 문법”이라는 주장과 일치되는 분석의 결과이다.

그러나, 학생들이 어떻게 하면 어휘를 효과적으로 익힐 수 있으며, 또한 교사들은 어떻게 하면 효과적으로 어휘를 지도할 수 있을까에 대한 “뛰어난 길”이 여태껏 일반적으로 알려져 있지 않아서, 그것을 위한 하나의 작은 발자국으로서 역할을 하기 위하여 본 연구를 시도하였다. 연구방법은 설문 조사, 교단에서의 경험 및 그 분석, 문헌 연구를 바탕으로 하고 있다. 다음은 본 연구의 내용을 간추린 것이다.

(1) 사전은 최상의 영어 교사이다. 학습중에 학생들로 하여금 사전을 찾지 않으면 안될 여건을 마련해 주는 것이 좋다. 즉, 칠판에 단어를 전부 판서해 주지 말고, 사전을 찾을 수 있을 정도의 철자만을 알려 줌으로써 사전을 찾는 과정에서 그 어휘를 완성시킬 수 있도록 하는 것이 바람직하다. 결코 교사가 사전 역할을 전부 대신할 수도 없으려니와, 그렇게 애를 쓴다면 그것은 학생들로 하여금 굳이 애를 써가며 사전을 찾으려 하지 않게 하는 결과를 낳게 되며, 학생들은 차차 사전과 멀어져 갈 것이다. “사전 역할을 말고, 사전 안으로 인도하는 안내자가 되어라.”

(2) 어휘 숙달이 영어 학습에 중요하다면, 학생들이 얼마나 어휘를 알고 있어서 학습을 받을 준비가 되어 있는가를 교사가 확인하는 것도 역시 중요하다. 그것을 앎으면 문자 그대로 “학생을 모르고 가르치는 것”과 같아서, 교사의 노력만큼 학생들의 학습 효과가 나오지 않는다. 어휘 카드는 매우 효과적이다. 이것은 학습진도에 지장을 주지 않고 (짧은 시간에) 학생들의 어휘 준비를 확인할 수 있을 뿐만 아니라, 철자, 발음, 뜻을 동시에 훈련시킬 수 있는 장점을 지니고 있다.

(3) 그림을 활용한 어휘 카드는 한국어로 어휘의 뜻을 전달할 필요가 없기 때문에, 어휘습득기능(LAD : Language Acquisition Device)을 연장시키는 효과까지도 얻을 수 있다.

(4) 문장을 통한 언어(連語) 지도와 대화를 통한 連語지도는 명사를 지도하기 위한 어휘 풀이의 한 방법으로 바람직하다.

(5) 동의어와 반의어를 사전에서 찾도록 하여 그 連語的 관계를 알도록 하는 것도 어휘력을 신장시키는 데에 효과적이다.

(6) 어휘를 낱개로써 숙달하는 것 보다는 이미 숙달된 어휘와 連語를 이루어 반복하고 치환시켜 연습토록 하는 것이 언어 학습의 수고를 덜어 준다.

(7) 형용사는 어휘풀이 보다는 명사와 連語시켜 반복 연습토록 하는 것이 그 명사의 고유적 특성을 연상케 되어 그 형용사의 정확한 의미를 이해하는 데에 도움이 된다.

(8) 색깔 형용사는, 그 색깔 표현이 나오게 된 문화적인 연유를 連語의 요인으로써 이해시키는 것이 문화적인 차이까지 가르치는 한 단면이 될 수도 있다.

(9) 동사를 지도할 때에는, 어떤 형태의 목적어가 連語로써 이어질 수 있는가를 우선적으로 상기해 둘 필요가 있음을 깨닫게 하는 방법을 채택하는 것이 문장 구조를 익히는 바탕이 된다.

(10) 의성어와 동물을 연결짓는 방법은 언어적 직감(Linguistic Intuition)을 형성케하는 초기적 효과를 얻을 수 있다.

결론적으로, 모든 어휘는 그 어휘가 흔히 이어지는 다른 어휘와 연결지어 지도하는 것이 효과적이며, 이것을 확대시켜 나갈 때 문장 완성 능력으로 발전되는 결과를 얻을 수 있게 된다. 영어 학습에서 어휘의 중요성은 아무리 강조해도 지나치지 않는다. “살이 없는 골격이 사람일 수 없듯이, 거푸집과 동바리만으로는 집이 될 수 없듯이, 어휘력없이 문법만으로는 영어를 지을 수 없다.”

