

THE ROLE OF VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE IN LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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Annotation. In current era, regardless of age categories, most people are engrossed in learning a new language. In this article, there is given adequate information about the importance vocabulary knowledge in listening comprehension.

Key words: listening comprehension, audios, vocabulary, lexis, communication.

Аннотация. В настоящее время, независимо от возрастных категорий, большинство людей поглощены изучением нового языка. В этой статье дана достаточная информация о важности знания словарного запаса для понимания на слух.

Ключевые слова: понимание на слух, аудио, словарный запас, лексика, коммуникация.

INTRODUCTION

The majority of linguists acknowledge that research on second language acquisition is contingent upon having a sufficient vocabulary. Vocabulary knowledge is crucial for effective reading comprehension in EFL. However, there has not been much research done on the relationship between lexical knowledge and listening comprehension, especially EFL listening comprehension. For this reason, teachers and students have long been perplexed about the precise role that vocabulary knowledge plays in L2 listening comprehension. Qian (1998) and Read (1993) have noted that vocabulary often consists of two dimensions: depth and breadth. Nonetheless, the impact of vocabulary breadth has received more attention in the scant research on vocabulary and hearing. A growing number of academic studies agree that language depth plays a crucial role in listening. However, a great deal of empirical research has been done to determine the precise functions of vocabulary depth and breadth in EFL listening comprehension.

MAIN BODY

It is generally acknowledged that understanding aural text is an inferential process in which the listener actively constructs meaning through the employment of two major knowledge sources: linguistic (e.g., phonological, lexical, syntactic, semantic, or pragmatic knowledge) and nonlinguistic (e.g., knowledge of the context, topic, or general knowledge of the world). To make sense of spoken input, the listener applies a variety of the different types of knowledge through top-down and bottom-up processes, and it is assumed that successful listening comprehension is the result of a complex interaction between top-level and bottom-level cues. Besides all, there are several researches done by some researches related to vocabulary knowledge and listening comprehension. For example, Bonk (2000) similarly investigated the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and listening comprehension in EFL but attempted to determine a lexical coverage threshold below which it would be

impossible for learners to achieve good listening comprehension. Fifty-nine Japanese learners of English listened to four text passages of increasing lexical difficulty, and Bonk examined the relationship between the amount of familiar lexis in the listening texts (through dictation) and gist comprehension (through recall protocols) of the texts. The recall protocols were rated on a holistic scale from 1 (inferior comprehension) to 4 (good comprehension), the latter being assigned to participants who “clearly had a complete understanding of the entire story, mentioning the important main idea and several correct details”. A definite minimum vocabulary threshold for listening comprehension was not found, but the study showed that participants who recognized fewer than 80% of the different lexical words (nouns, verbs, adjective, and adverbs) in the input texts were unlikely to achieve high comprehension scores. Additionally, the data revealed that 60% of the participants who knew more than 90% of the lexical word types achieved good comprehension. According to Schmitt (2008), these figures suggest that 95% of the running words (i.e., word tokens) in the texts had to be known to enable most of the participants to obtain good comprehension scores. In general, high dictation scores were associated with better comprehension, although the data only produced a modest, but significant, Kendall’s tau correlation of .45 between dictation scores and comprehension scores. The reason for this modest correlation was the fact that some participants were able to achieve good comprehension on the basis of recognizing less than 75% of the lexical word types in a text. In contrast, there were several examples of participants who recognized more than 90% of lexical words but did not achieve good comprehension. These results indicate that the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and listening comprehension is complex and by no means an unequivocal one and that further investigation into thresholds of lexical coverage and vocabulary size for adequate listening comprehension is necessary.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, vocabulary knowledge is considered to be crucially vital element of developing listening comprehension. As it is suggested language acquisition requires learners to master vocabulary in that language. For the reason, it is critical to understand most part of the words spoken in that audial input. Actually, as stated above, listening has different purposes, such as, listening to practise, listening to communicate, listening to relax and so on. All of those purposes completed through lexical competence (vocabulary knowledge). Therefore, every student planning to master a new language recommended and required to learn simple words by heart. One by one soon after their level gets increased they begin learning more advanced vocabulary, since they practice more advanced tests, it is necessary to be aware of some words related to such topics. These all mean that, no word no communication, no listening, no reading and no writing at all.

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