

Use of Eclecticism by Teachers in Teaching English Vocabulary

H.S.M. Ovitigama¹

Eclecticism is a multi-sensory language approach which involves different language learning methods rather than sticking into one approach. This research is based on teachers' use of Eclecticism in teaching English vocabulary. Main aim of this study was to investigate how Eclecticism affects to develop vocabulary of students learning English as a second language. It was hoped to provide a rationale for employing Eclecticism in teaching vocabulary for second language learners and investigate whether the English teachers use Eclecticism in teaching vocabulary in the North Central Province in Sri Lanka. Moreover, it was anticipated to find the attitudes of English teachers in the North Central Province regarding Eclecticism and to bring out the reasons behind the effectiveness of Eclecticism regarding teaching vocabulary. Another objective was to find the language development rate of Experimental group vs Controlled group. Learning vocabulary is a universal problem in second language learning. As the learners are of different learning styles, forgetting and unlearning methods, the effectiveness of Eclecticism was experimented in the research. Through trial and error, the people have realized that there is no single method or approach of language learning which is universally accepted as the best. As a remedy Eclecticism was introduced to the field of language learning. The investigation was implemented with 100 students and 20 teachers in the North Central province. Teachers' lessons were observed under a criterion with ten techniques. Quantitative data were gathered from pre-test, post-test and O/L results of the same students and qualitative data were gathered from questionnaire given to the teachers and lesson observation. Quantitative, qualitative data together with primary and secondary data helped to derive the conclusion. In the research, the vocabulary development was measured under memorizing, rate of learning, contextual use of vocabulary and number of words learnt within given period. Data were analyzed with the use of descriptive statistics. In conclusion it was proved that Eclecticism helps the second language learners to improve their vocabulary knowledge other than one traditional method. The research revealed that most of the teachers in the North Central province do not use Eclecticism to teach vocabulary. Most popular techniques used by the teachers to teach vocabulary were translation and visual aids in both Experimental and Controlled groups. The positive attitudes of teachers regarding Eclecticism were brought out by the research. This research introduces a method to teach English vocabulary in an effective way and gives guidance to teach and learn vocabulary. It was proved that the vocabulary learning rate was accelerated in the Experimental group. Finally, it was found that the main reasons behind the effectiveness of Eclecticism are its various capabilities of multi-sensory approach followed by motivation. Therefore, it is recommended that the Education authority of second/foreign language teaching should pay more attention to introduce this approach to English teachers and provide a training regarding effective use of Eclecticism in teaching English.

Keywords: Eclecticism; Vocabulary; second language learners; motivation; multi-sensory learning

¹ Department of Linguistics, University of Kelaniya, Kelaniya, Sri Lanka