M.A. THESIS IN LINGUISTICS

METHODS OF IMPROVING ENGLISH VOCABULARY AS SECOND LANGUGAE LEARNERS

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA

SEWWANDI EMALKA JAYAWEERA

Department of Linguistics

University of Kelaniya

December 2014

FGS/LING/MA/13/42

Abstract

Improving English Vocabulary is a main category in the process of learning English as a Second Language. The main strategies that are used to improve English vocabulary are divided into few categories such as 'Social Strategies', 'Determination Strategies' and the methods of 'using a Dictionary', 'Reading Method' and 'Memorizing Word Lists' are introduced as the most effective methods under those main strategies. This study, 'Improving English Vocabulary as Second Language Learners at the University of Kelaniya' was conducted to examine the usage of these methods by the Undergraduates of the University of Kelaniya to improve English vocabulary and also to examine the effectiveness of using the 'Reading Method' and 'Memorizing Word Lists Method', which are considered to be the most popular methods of improving English vocabulary. The practical problems of the Undergraduates who use these methods are given priority and solutions for the issues are also introduced with the suggestions of the Undergraduates where they are also given an opportunity to introduce more new methods of improving vocabulary. Questionnaires consisted of two parts and examined the effectiveness of these methods. They were distributed among randomly selected hundred Undergraduates who follow English Course Units, offered by the English Language Teaching Unit of the University of Kelaniya. The study proved that although they are aware of the effectiveness of using 'Reading method', the most popular method is 'Using Dictionaries' as they attempt to learn new English words by memorizing them, along with their definitions.

Key Words: *English Language, Second Language Learners, Vocabulary Learning Strategies, Reading Method, Memorizing Word Lists*