Several Strategies of Teaching Vocabulary to Beginner Level Students

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Dedication

This report is dedicated to Department of English and Humanities of BRAC University and my parents.

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Chapter One
Introduction

After joining the Department of English and Humanities at BRAC University, I had three options which are Literature, Applied Linguistics, and Media & Culture to choose my major from. I chose Applied Linguistics because I always had a fascination of being a teacher. Some of my teachers in the school and colleges had always inspired me to choose this profession. I remember my English teacher Mr. Rezaul Karim, whom I was very fond of as he used to teach grammar items in an interesting way.

Choosing Applied Linguistics as a major in my graduation was a step ahead to fulfill my goal of being an English Teacher. I have successfully done my internship in St. Margaret's International School from 17th September to 16th December. I worked there as a Teaching Assistant of a senior teacher named Janevie Costa. I used to teach students of KG-1 in the school.

In my internship report, I am going to discuss several strategies of teaching vocabulary to beginner level students on the basis of my experience.

Chapter Two
Literature Review

2.1. Theories of Vocabulary:

Margaret Ann Richek (2005) mentioned that children develop their vocabulary even before their school begins. While learning vocabulary students look words up in a dictionary, copy or restate definitions, and then create sentences using the words. Students may not know how to choose the appropriate definition of a word that has multiple meanings (p. 414). Richek came up with several strategies to teach vocabulary in the classroom. One of the strategies is 'find that word'. In this strategy, students seek out the words they are studying in their environment. They may find these words in free reading, other subject area books, speech, radio, television, or through computer searches. When the students read or hear a word used, they write down the sentence containing it and bring it in to class and read their sentences to the class (p. 421).

Flanigan and Greenwood (2007) believe that there are at least four factors to keep in mind while making instructional decisions: the students who are being taught, the nature of the words the teacher decides to teach, teachers' instructional purposes in teaching each of those words, and the strategies teachers employ to teach the words (p.227). There are four levels in teaching vocabulary to students. These levels are, critical "before" words, "foot-in-the-door" words, critical "after" words and "words not to teach." At the 1st and 2nd level, words must be known before reading; in the 3rd level words do not need to be known before reading and in the 4th level, all the words need not be addressed (Flanigan and Greenwood, 2007, p. 229). They further added several steps as a process for choosing words and strategies. Steps are:

1. Read the text and determine the instructional goals of the lesson.

2. Based on the lesson goals, identify words that students should know by the end of the lesson.

3. Identify the connections and relationships between the words or concepts.

4. From the pool of words chosen, decide which words the students absolutely need to know before reading the passage.

5. Decide which words the students should know on some level, but don't need to have directly taught before instruction (Flanigan and Greenwood, 2007, p. 231-232).

Martha Rapp Haggard (1986) came up with a new approach called the Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS), which differs significantly from traditional instruction through its use of student generated word lists and its emphasis on students' personal experience and world knowledge. The VSS may be used for general, basal reading, or content area vocabulary development (p. 635). Haggard (1986) also said that the Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy begins with an assignment for each student and the teacher to bring a word in class that he or she believes the entire class should learn. Students are encouraged to find words in their own environment and to determine the best meaning from context. On the day of presentation, students and teacher write their words on the board and take turns identifying their word and telling (1) where each word was found, (2) the context-derived definition, and (3) why they think the class should learn the word (p. 635). In my opinion, this new strategy of teaching vocabulary is motivating and differs from other approaches by its emphasis on students' choice in

deciding what words are to be read, and students' experience as the basis for determining word meaning.

According to Jack C. Richards (1976), the goals of vocabulary teaching must be more than simply covering a certain number of words on a word list. Then teachers must look into how teaching techniques can help realise the concept of what it means to know a word. Vocabulary had for some time been one area of the syllabus where this link between approach, method and technique was neglected (p. 88).

Herman and Dole (1988) did their research on vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. They said that teachers often assume that vocabulary is an important part of a comprehensive reading program because they believe that students who understand words in a selection will comprehend what they read. In fact, researchers have demonstrated the strong link between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension (p. 44). Herman and Dole (1988) also came up with three major approaches for vocabulary learning. They are definitional, contextual, and conceptual. In definitional approach, a student learns a phrase or synonym that defines a word. The advantage of this approach is that a large number of words can be covered and not very time consuming. A student reads one or more sentences provided by the teacher that specifically illustrate the meaning of a word or while reading, a student learns a part or all of the meanings of a word incidentally through using clues in context in a contextual approach. In the conceptual approach, students learn how the meaning of the word fits with related words or concepts. The goal of the conceptual approach in vocabulary learning is to develop comprehensive knowledge of a word which can be achieved thorough understanding of the word, how the word is similar and different from related concepts, and how the word

is used in several situations (p. 45-50). This article basically talks about how students learn new words through reading and what can be done to encourage this habit more.

According to Pinker (1999), to understand the "boundless expressive power" of our language, one must deal with "the first trick, the word" (as cited in Baumann et al., 2003, p. 448-449). Graves (2000), noted that whereas teaching specific words is a common activity in classrooms, teaching students strategies for deriving or inferring word meanings is relatively rare: "I know of no detailed archival description of a well-planned, serious, powerful, and long-term attempt to teach students word-learning strategies. This is very bad news" (as cited in Baumann et al., 2003, p. 488). In 2003, Baumann et al. drew a summary from their research that instruction in morphemic and contextual analysis provides an important complement to a vocabulary program that includes instruction in specific words as well as independent reading and word play and word consciousness activities (p. 452). The research of Baumann et al. tried to provide some insight into the vocabulary tricks related to how teachers can provide students instruction in morphemic and contextual analysis in valid educational settings.

In this regard, Vygotsky (1986) said "The critical role of vocabulary in content area learning is well established, given the use of words as labels for concepts" (as cited in Harmon et al., 2008, p.44). Harmon et al. (2008) think that vocabulary knowledge is closely linked with students' ability to understand texts. Students' choice has a great priority while teaching vocabulary because self selection encourages students to learn and motivate them intrinsically (p. 44). According to Johnson & Pearson (1984), as in all other aspects of learning, a student's background knowledge plays a vital role in vocabulary development and content-specific learning. Furthermore, vocabulary

knowledge and the acquisition of new concepts develop simultaneously with each

supporting the other. In other words, the more students know about a topic, the more

words they know that relate to that topic (as cited in Harmon et al., 2008, p.44). Harmon

et al. (2008) came up with the conclusion from their research that the actual process of

selecting, thinking about and evaluating the importance of a word used in a passage

requires students to think metacognitively as they make these word selections and by

using a focus on word meaning within a conceptual framework empowers students to

take control of their own learning and that of others (p. 51). I believe that in the article,

the motivating aspects of the activities can provide a powerful stimulus for learning and

help the students to extract important information. The use of instructional framework

requires clear explanations and instructions for students so that they understand what they

are expected to do.

2.2. Teaching through Visuals:

Igo et al. (2004) said that for vocabulary instruction to be effective, it should

include the presentation of words (a) in context, (b) in as concrete a manner as possible,

such as in picture form, and (c) with accompanying definitions or rules. Words are easier

to learn when all three of these components are presented, and they are more difficult to

learn when one or more component is missing (p. 166). According to Paivio (1991), "It is

not always possible to include each of these components in vocabulary instruction,

however, because not all words are concrete and seemingly cannot be represented in

picture form. Consequently, some words are easier to teach and learn than others" (as

cited in Igo et al., 2004, p.166). Tennyson & Cochiarlella (1986) said "Words that

represent concrete concepts (e.g., apple) are easy to learn. They can be represented in picture form, which allows students to see the defining features of the words" (as cited in Igo et al., 2004, p.167).

Pictures can be especially important to learn new words. In fact, extensive research indicates that pictures are powerful learning tools that help in "(a) the resilient recall of discrete information over time, (b) the performance of procedural tasks, such as first aid, (c) the effectiveness of psychology lectures, (d) the learning of cause and effect relationships regarding lightning formation, and (e) memory for prose" (Igo et al., 2004, p.167). This article emphasizes the importance of pictures that can make word learning easier and vocabulary instruction better.

In 1974, Finocchiaro noted that pictures can stimulate interesting and meaningful practice in the vocabulary, structures, and sounds of English. In addition, pictures help learners to strengthen and organise their "verbal recall." According to implications made by Haber (1970), if children can be taught to attach words to visual images, their recall will improve dramatically (as cited in Sinatra, 1981, p. 539). Paivio (1971) said, "We often store information by forming mental image" (as cited in Sinatra, 1981, p. 539).

Hence, Sinatra (1981) came up with an effective way to influence students' in vocabulary learning through showing a series of pictures that explains how something is constructed (p. 543). Similarly, Kaplan (1976) suggested a technique called "storyboarding" which can very easily be adapted by second language teachers because this technique uses sequential or thematic visual stories to teach vocabulary (as cited in Sinatra, 1981, p.544). He in addition said, "Photos or pictures are mounted to a page, sequenced on long strips, or arranged "accordion" style. Cut out pictures arranged in left

to right fashion across a strip of cardboard would help students to visualize the sequential structure of a story and to compose their verbal accounts accordingly" (as cited in Sinatra, 1981, p.544). I find these strategies very effective as these strategies such as the three picture story format, picture stories, and spatial organization etc. allows learners to recognize relationships of time, space, and alikeness and differences among objects and help them to elicit appropriate content and functional words.

2.3. Theories of Psycholinguistics:

Behaviorism: Behaviorism tries to explain child language acquisition. It is the dominant theory of learning. Behaviorism theory believes that human minds are like 'blank slates' and everything comes from outside. Children learn from repetition, imitation, and practicing things again and again (Cruttenden, 1979, p.98). Skinner (1938) developed a new concept which is called 'operant conditioning'. In this type of situation, "the original behavior, instead of being an automatic reflex, is behavior which at first occurs by chance but, because of the effect it has when it does occur, is likely to be repeated" (as cited in Cruttenden, 1979, p. 98). So, learning depends on consequences/ reinforces/ response. If a student is continuing to do the same thing then it is considered as positive consequence. But if the student stops doing the action then it is considered as negative consequence. In my school, I have seen that learners learn by positive reinforcement. For example, if I give them chocolates for completing their home works then students do it and they will more likely to repeat the behavior in the future.

Cognitive Theory: Cognition is a knowledge which includes perception, learning, memory, reasoning etc. Language depends on cognition. When a child grows

up, language develops along with cognition. Cognitive development is seeing as a prerequisite for grammatical and lexical development as the same way that perceptual and motor development is seen as prerequisites for phonological development (Cruttenden, 1979, p.107). Piaget (1954) came up with children's development sequence for acquisition. These stages trace cognitive development instead of language development. There are four development stages suggested by Piaget. Which are sensori motor stage (0-2 years), pre-operational stage (2-6/7 years), concrete operational stage (6/7-11/12years), and formal-operational stage (11/12-above). I taught children of KG-1 in the school. So, they fall under concrete operational age which is from 6/7-11/12 years.

In the concrete age, children are able to master concrete concepts and logical operations. In this age, children are much less egocentric and they learn to view things from others perspective. Children's sense of logic also develops. For example, Children are able to understand that "if ball A is bigger than B and ball B is bigger than ball C, then A must be bigger than C" (as cited in Cruttenden, 1979, p. 107).

Socio-cultural Theory: This theory gives a lot of importance to social environment. Social interaction is very much important here as human beings develop their linguistic ability through interacting with the other members in the society (Cruttenden, 1979, p. 111). Halliday (1975) describes language as a development to serve needs "which exists independently of language as features of human life at all times and in all cultures" (Cruttenden, 1979, p. 111). Besides, Lev Vygotsky proposed 'Social Development Theory'. In the theory he mentioned that in a supportive environment a child is able to gain knowledge and give better performance than he/she would be capable of in an environment without any help. Vygotsky referred to ZPD which is Zone of

Proximal Development. To reach the ZPD, children need the help of other individuals to support them as they are learning new things. It is not possible for an individual to perform the tasks offered by ZPD independently, but he/she can accomplish the tasks with the help of other individuals (as cited in Cruttenden, 1979, p. 112-113). So, the socio-cultural theory emphasizes language as learnt for purposes of interaction with other human beings. Only innate abilities are not enough, interaction is also necessary.

Motivation:

Motivation in L2 learning has mostly been used to refer to long-term stable attitudes in the students' minds, in particular integrative and instrumental motivation as introduced by Robert Gardner and Wallace Lambert (as cited in Cook, 2008, p. 137)

Dennis Coon and John O. Mitterer (2007) believe that punishing students is a mistake for the teachers as students learn nothing by being punished. Most of the time, it is seen that students are repeating the same thing again and again (p. 241).

Anita Kwiatkowska (2008) in her research on "Ideas on Classroom Management in YL Classes" presents several ways of motivating students. Kwiatkowska thinks that nothing works better for students than a decent amount of praise. Students at the beginner level might not understand "very good", "great," or "excellent" but they will surely get "bravo," "super" or "perfect." Several motivating strategies like thumbs up, clapping hands and a huge smile on a teacher's face will definitely help the kids realize that they did a great job and made the teacher pleased. A way of reward is also very motivating. Drawing faces, stars or use stamps or stickers help to show teachers' appreciation (p. 2).

Williams and Burden (1997) see motivation as: "a state of cognitive and emotional arousal, a state which leads to a conscious decision to act and give rise to a

period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort" (as cited in Ghanea et al., 2011, p. 458). In addition, in 2011, Mahshid Ghanea, Hamid Reza Zeraat Pisheh and Mohammad Hassan Ghanea mentioned that "Motivation does imply to some incentive that causes the individual to participate in activity leading toward a goal and to persevere until the goal is reached. Motivation is affected by students' self-concept, values, needs, and goals" (p. 458). These authors believe that students who are motivated, they are more active and engage themselves in effective language learning.

2.4. Theories of English Language Teaching (ELT):

Theories of ALM:

Diane Larsen-Freeman (2000) says that the aim of Audio-Lingual Method is to use the target language communicatively. Language learning is a process of habit formation. The more often something is repeated, the stronger the habit and the greater the learning (p. 43). In the school I see that they follow repetition drill where the task is to listen carefully and attempt to mimic the teacher's model as accurately as possible.

In brief, Hockett (1959) talked about repetition drill that if students practice the same task again and again then it is easy for them to remember the topic (as cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.52). Fries (1945) developed the approaches of Audio-Lingual Method as he believed that this approach is not useful to learn a foreign language grammatically and phonologically (as cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.52).

In general, Audio-Lingual Method expects learners to memorize things as repeated by the teacher several times. Positive reinforcement is very much important here which help the students to develop correct habits. Things are repeated in a way so that

students over learn it and learn to answer automatically without stopping to think (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 43).

In the school I noticed that the teachers focused on students' reading and writing skills but they did not focus on speaking skill. But we know that speech is more basic to a language than the written form. As a result, students in my school were unable to communicate in English as they had very poor knowledge in their target language which is English. Brooks (1964) mentioned that at first a language should be learned for speaking purpose and then for reading and writing. Since many languages do not have a written form and a child at first learns to speak rather than reading or writing (as cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.55).

2.5. Error Correction:

It has been seen that correction outside the classroom by the teacher has less impact than the in class correction by both the teacher and peers. In this regard, Macbeth (2004) said "Correction in classrooms is an identifying task and achievement of classroom teaching" (p.705). Though in some cases students can correct themselves, sometimes they need assistance from their teacher to initiate self-correction (Gower, 1995, p.167). Again, Gower (1995) said "If neither self-correction nor student correction is effective you must assume that either the students hasn't understood what you're getting at or doesn't know what the correct version should be" (p.167). For this reason, if any topic is not clear for the students then teacher's simple explanation or demonstration can help the students to understand the topic (Gower, 1995, p.167).

Many researchers have agreed that methods that apply elicitation to enhance self-correction are favoured by the students and it not only gives the teacher information on

the learner's proficiency but also provides the learners a chance to learn from their own. Katayama (2007) noted "Self-correction was also favored by the students" (p.76).

      Lyster (2001) mentioned that a teacher's elicitation moves that facilitate self-correction may draw learners' attention to correct-incorrect mismatches more effectively than does a teacher's recast or explicit correction (as cited in Katayama, 2007, p.76). In the KG-1 classroom, I find that students prefer teacher correction rather than self-correction. Students feel very insulted when peers try to correct them as we come to know from the Psycholinguistic theory that students in this age become very egocentric.

Chapter Three
My Experience

As a part of my graduation at BRAC University, I am supposed to do internship or thesis. I decided to do internship because this working experience will help me in the future as I want to be a teacher. The school I have chosen for my internship program is St. Margaret's International School which is located in Farmgate, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Here, the medium of instruction is English. It is a very renowned school as the school was established in 1967.

I have done my internship in St. Margaret's International School from 17th September to 16th December. The educational level in the school starts from KG-1 to O level and it follows the Edexcel syllabus. The aim of the school is not only making students do their studies but also inspiring them to take part in different extra curricular activities such as singing, dancing etc.

I have been working as a Teaching Assistant (TA) of a senior teacher at the beginner level of the school. The teacher's name was Janevie Costa. She is the class teacher of kindergarten (KG)-1.

On the first day, Ms. Costa gave me detailed information about the educational system of the school. In the class, she corrected my mistake in a very polite manner. As my onsite supervisor, she also helped me to learn the ways of teaching beginner level students such as using appropriate gesture, posture, facial expression etc.

I had fifteen students in the class. They had three major subjects- Bengali, English, and Math. They also had drawing and music course. They had only one teacher

for all subjects. I have noticed that Ms. Janevie Costa was very much aware of how to manage the time for all four subjects properly.

3.1. Teaching Vocabulary to Beginner Level Students:

As the students at the beginner's level are kids, I tried to teach them easy words at first. I used to write words on board and told them to help me so that they got involved in the class. When I had to give examples of any word to make them understand, I used sentences using their names so that they can understand the word. For example, to teach them the name of several colors, such as *"green"- Sohala bought a green dress yesterday* or *"pink"- Nusrat has a pink doll.* This is only for making them happy and concentrate on their class.

As I mentioned Flanigan and Greenwood's (2007) point of view regarding giving instructions in teaching new vocabulary is that at least four factors should be kept in mind when making instructional decisions: the students' level, the nature of the words the teacher decides to teach, teachers' instructional purposes in teaching each of those words, and the strategies teachers employ to teach the words (p.227).

I taught students the names of 5 fruits, leafs, animals and flowers. At first I wrote the name of 5 fruits, leaf, animals, and flowers on the blackboard. Then the students wrote it in their exercise copies. Then they tried to memorize the names. While they were busy in memorising, I monitored them actively. I went to every student and if they had any confusion then I tried to clear them. I also used some phrases like "Are you facing any problem?" or "Is it clear to you?" etc. to check their understanding. After sometime, I pronounced the words one by one and students had to repeat the same words as accurately as possible which is called as "repetition drill." As a result, the words were

over learned. This repetition drill stemmed from Audio Lingual Method which helped the

students improve the habit of memorizing the words through repetition. I also used 'Use

it or lose it' principle which is to say the word in an interesting way that ensures the long-

term memory. Diane Larsen-Freeman (2000) believed that language is a form of habit

formation. The more often something is repeated, the stronger the habit and the greater

the learning (p. 43). Hockett (1959) also agreed that if students practice the same task

again and again then it is easy for them to remember the topic (as cited in Richards and

Rodgers, 2001, p.52). I also agree with behaviorism theory which believes that human

minds are like 'blank slates' and children learn from repetition, imitation, and practicing

things again and again (Cruttenden, 1979, p.98)

     I also used the strategy of dictation to teach students words. There are four types

of dictation and they are: the phonemic item dictation, the phonemic text dictation, the

orthographic item dictation, and the orthographic text dictation. In the classroom, I used

the orthographic item dictation which is dictating of individual words in isolation. I also

tried to teach them words from the poems. For instance, I taught the students the poem

"Winkie Wee." At first each of the students stood up and read the poem aloud. If they

made any mistake I corrected them. Then I gave them some time to read the poem by

themselves. Then I chose some words from the poem and dictated the words. Students

also practiced words from their books starting with "fr," "gr," "pr" etc. They made

certain words like frog, tricks, grass, trunk etc.

     Usually in these ways students learnt new words from their reading book *The New

Radiant Way*. When they used to read the story, they did not know all the words and then

they asked the teacher about the meaning of a new word. I think, Lev Vygotsky's 'Social

Development Theory' is applicable here as he mentioned that in a supportive

environment a child is able to gain knowledge and give better performance than he/she

would be capable of in an environment without any help (as cited in Cruttenden, 1979, p.

112-113).   Here students also followed contextual approach as mentioned by Herman

and Dole (1988) that while reading, a student learns part or all of the meaning of a word

incidentally through using clues in context (p. 45-50). They further said that teachers

often assume that vocabulary is an important part of a comprehensive reading program

because they believe that students who understand words in a selection will comprehend

what they read. In fact, researchers have demonstrated the strong link between

vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension (Herman and Dole, 1988, p. 44).

3.2. Teaching through Visuals:

I used to show different images to the students while teaching a poem. I taught my

students a poem named "I am a Frog." I downloaded some pictures of frogs and also a

picture of the life cycle of a frog from the internet. In the class, I showed them those

pictures to elicit several views from them. I asked them various questions such as, "Have

you ever seen a frog in the real life?", "what they eat?", "What is the color of a frog?"

etc. Students came up with different views and they were enjoying giving their opinions.

Then I showed them a colorful picture of the life cycle of a frog and very briefly

described them each stage to make the class more interesting for them. After that I read

the poem aloud and explained each line to the students. Then I gave them some time to

read the poem by themselves and asked each student to stand up and read the poem. I

corrected the mistakes they made in their pronunciation. I also underlined certain

spellings of words which students had to memorise. As Finocchiaro (1974) has noted,

pictures help learners to strengthen and organize their "verbal recall." Paivio (1971) also

said, "We often store information by forming mental image" (as cited in Sinatra, 1981, p.
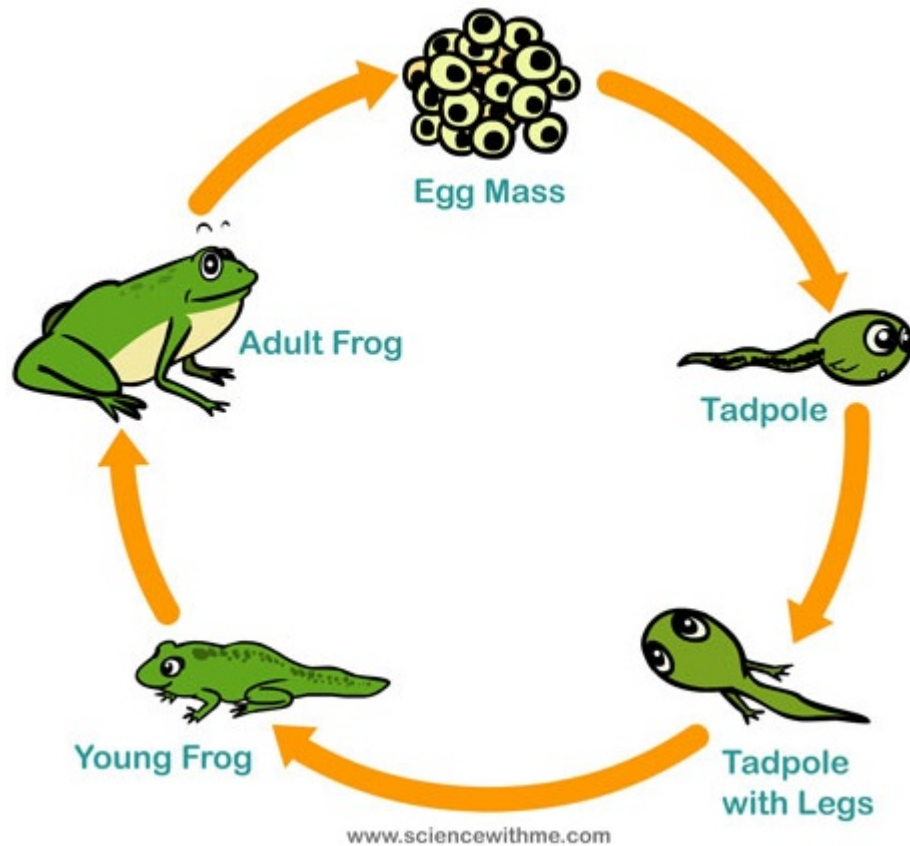
539).

www.sciencewithme.com

Figure 1: The diagram of a Frog's Life cycle

       While teaching names of different animals, I tried out some warm up activities

before teaching them. I asked students several elicitation questions about the zoo such as,

"Have you ever been to the zoo?", "What you have seen there?" etc. In the class, every

student went to the zoo so that they could very easily relate themselves with these

questions. Then I showed them certain colorful pictures of animals such as deer, tiger,

and lion. I tried to make them to understand the difference between market and shopping.

Then I asked them the question, "Have you seen your parents going to the market?" and most of the students said 'yes'. After that I drew a picture of a cock on the blackboard and asked them to say whether we find a cock in the market or not. Most of the students said that they find cocks in the market. I also showed them several pictures of vegetables such as potato, cucumber, tomato etc. which also are available in market. Scrivener (1994) said that teachers should write on a blackboard in a way that their body does not block the view for everyone so that they can make eye contact with students. It has to be a slightly sideway position which allows teachers to talk to students, ask questions and look around (p. 97). He furthermore said that "For the quick explanation of vocabulary items, for setting up a discussion, a dialogue or role play, for story building, you need pictures" (Scrivener, 1994, p.97). Cochiarlella (1986) mentioned "Words that represent concrete concepts are easy to learn. They can be represented in picture form, which allows students to see the defining features of the words" (as cited in Igo et al., 2004, p. 166-167).

One day in the class, I taught students something new which is from their workbook. In the workbook, certain pictures were given on the right side and students had to give the right answer. I tried to elicit the first word of the list from students. I showed them the picture of a clock and said, "I have a face and hands. I tell you the time. What am I?" Students then came up with correct answer. After that students did the others by themselves in their workbook and I checked their work. It was a very interesting activity and students enjoyed the activity a lot. I noticed that pictures encourages students a lot and inspire them to involve in the activity no matter how hard the task is. Using pictures is an effective way to learn vocabulary effectively. I totally

agreed with Igo et al. (2004) who believed that pictures can also make word learning easier and vocabulary instruction better (p.167).

3.3. Error Correction:

While writing spellings, if students wrote wrong spellings then I corrected them immediately and they had to write the spellings again so that they understand their errors. While writing names of different animals, students made errors. Such as to write "Bear," they wrote Ber or Baer. Many students had problem in 'b' and'd'. They wrote 'Bod', 'bell' instead of 'Bob' and 'dell'. While doing several activities, students faced problems after seeing plural things. For example, when I showed them a picture of two men then they said "mans" instead of "men." They messed up irregular forms with regular forms. As Macbeth (2004) said "Correction in classrooms is an identifying task and achievement of classroom teaching" (p.705).

Sometimes I used to make immediate error correction when students pronounced something wrong. Such as, if students are asked that whether they had submitted their homework or not, then few students answered "I submit." I immediately corrected them and asked them to say "I have submitted." If students needed to go to toilet, they said, "Toilet." Then I politely told them to say full sentence as "Miss, may I go to toilet please?" Also at the tiffin time they sometimes said "hand wash please." Then I corrected them to say, "Miss, may I go to washroom and wash my hand." I agree with Gower (1995) that "If neither self-correction nor student correction is effective you must assume that either the students hasn't understood what you're getting at or doesn't know what the correct version should be" (p.167). In this case it is only the teacher who can correct students' errors.

I mostly preferred self correction and wanted my students to practice that. I know that self correction is a bit difficult in this age but still sometimes I used to do that but I did not get positive responses from my students. I support what Katayama (2007) noted "Self-correction was also favored by the students" (p.76).

In the classroom, I noticed that students feel very insulted when peers try to correct them. In the cognitive theory I mentioned that my students fall under concrete operational age which is from 6/7 to 11/12 years. At this age, students remain very egocentric. So, when peers try to correct them they felt very insulted and angry. Once, one of my students hit another student, when the other tried to correct his errors.

3.4. Motivation:

As I noted in Chapter two, Mahshid Ghanea, Hamid Reza Zeraat Pisheh and Mohammad Hassan Ghanea (2011) mentioned "Motivation is affected by students' self-concept, values, needs, and goals. Motivation is influenced by success or failure in past classroom activities, by the social environment of the class, and by the teacher's behaviour" (p. 458). I have realized that it is appropriate for the beginner level students because they easily get influenced by teachers' behaviour and they are more inclined to learn about different aspects of life from the environment. Students also get affected by the feedback they get from various activities. As they are too young to get self-motivation to study, it is necessary to develop the sense of studying inside them. My students loved to draw and color the pictures. They often asked me whether their drawings are nice or not. I always tried to motivate them positively. But if they were negatively motivated, they reacted in a negative way. Sometimes students forgot to complete their tasks then I

positively motivated them and very politely told them to bring the homework in the next class. When students did not do well in their tasks then I used to accept their tasks with mistakes and inspired them to improve them in the next. I tried to use several praising words such as "Perfect" "You have done very well" "Mind blowing" "Wow" etc. Here, I tried to motivate students instrumentally because in this age they cannot be motivated by integrative motivation. I agree with Kwiatkowska (2008) who thinks that nothing works better for students than a decent amount of praise. Students at the beginner level might not understand "very good", "great," or "excellent" but they will surely get "bravo," "super" or "perfect" (p. 2).

Positive Reinforcement:

From Skinner's (1938) behaviorism theory I remarked a new concept which is called 'operant conditioning'. In this type of situation the original behaviour, instead of being an automatic reflex, is a behaviour which at first occurs by chance but, because of the effect it has when it does occur, is likely to be repeated. So, learning depends on consequences/ reinforces/ response. If a student is continuing to do the same thing then it is considered as positive consequence (as cited in Cruttenden, 1979, p. 98). In the school, I was used to announce rewards for finishing students' task quickly. For example, I said, I was going to give three stars to that student who would finish quickly, or I used to draw a smiley face in the exercise copies if they did the tasks properly. I have seen that this strategy really worked. They listened to me and tried to finish their work as quickly as possible. Positive reinforcement really influenced a lot, even weaker students got motivated when they saw other students being praised. I used the strategy which

Kwiatkowska (2008) had mentioned while talking about motivation. Drawing faces, stars or using stamps or stickers help to show teachers' appreciation (p. 2).

To make the students come to school I also used positive reinforcement. I told them that "tomorrow I will give chocolates to all of you" or "tomorrow we will do lots of fun and less study." Sometimes I brought stickers for students and students were very happy to get it. These tricks were very effective to bring students to the school.

Negative Reinforcement:

Then again, Skinner (1938) said "the behaviour which is not reinforced inclines to be crushed out or diminished or it becomes weakened" (as cited in Cruttenden, 1979, p. 98). So, when the student stops doing the action that is considered as the negative consequence. Sometimes students are negatively reinforced to show bad manners like fighting with peers, or abusing each other. For instance, once, two of my students started to abuse each other by saying one another, "tor mukh banorer moto." Suddenly another kid said, "tor mukh hatir moto." At first I tried to calm them down, but failed. Then I told them if they continued to abuse each other then I would take them to the Headmaster's office and he would punish them as students were very much afraid of the headmaster. After that students stopped themselves.

At the beginner level, punishment does not take place much as it weakens students' behavior, but sometimes it becomes necessary to punish them. Sometimes kids made so much noise that it became hard to control my anger. There were some naughty students in my class who used to disturb others without any reason. So, sometimes I had to give punishment such as- standing up in the class, pulling one another's ears etc. After the punishment the class remained silent for some time and then students started to make

noise. So, sometimes I got fed up about controlling these students. I believe what Dennis Coon and John O. Mitterer (2007) mentioned that punishing students is a mistake for the teachers as students learn nothing by being punished. Most of the time, it is seen that students are repeating the same mistakes (p. 241).

3.5. Learning beyond Syllabus:

Sometimes, my students asked me to tell a story to them. So, I tried to tell them stories from the reading book of KG-2. Such as, I told them a story about "My Mother." After that I asked students to share their opinions about their mothers. They came up with different positive attitudes towards their mothers. This session improved their speaking skill. I also told them stories like "Cinderella," "Little Mermaid" etc. I always tried to make them speak by asking them several questions such as- *Did you like the story? How was the character? What's your opinion? What type of story do you want to hear?*

Sometimes I asked them several questions to enhance their general knowledge. Such as- *How many days make a week? What are the names of a week? What is the name of our national poet, fish, flower, and animal?* etc. I liked this session because students did not have any referred book to read from where they came to learn about the topics. Students should not stick to their referred book only; they should learn something beside their institutional study.

3.6. A Special Student:

In the class, I had a student named Adiba. She was an autistic and also a slow learner. I gave some extra time to her to complete her class exercises because she could not cope up with other students. I always spoke very softly and politely with her so that

she could feel comfortable with me. I also tried to help her out by sitting with her after the class to clear her understandings about class work.

3.7. Being an Invigilator:

I had an exciting experience to be an invigilator in the school. During their monthly test I was the invigilator. During the English examination, students mainly wrote spellings according to the dictation, filled in the blanks and answered oral comprehension questions. During their examinations, they asked several unnecessary questions but I tried to keep them quiet. I also had to make them aware of time limitations of the examination as students were too young to know the time limitations.

As their comprehension exam was oral. I asked them to come to me one by one. They were asked 5 questions from the given comprehension. If they missed one, they would lose 20 marks. Though students have oral comprehension but in my opinion, it should be both written and oral. Writing answers from the comprehension will help students not only improve their writing skill but also create the habit of finding the answers by themselves from the comprehension.

In their math examination, reciting different tables of numbers was examined orally. I called them one by one and asked them to recite any of the tables of 2 to 7. In their answer script, they wrote answers on mixed tables, wrote different numbers, and spelt them as well. Most of the students made a mistake when they wrote numbers.

Certain students were too lazy and were looking outside the window without writing. So, I had to use certain encouraging words such as "Hurry Up" "You are a good girl/boy" "Don't talk please" etc. Here, I tried to motivate students instrumentally

because at this age they cannot be motivated by integrative motivation. I agree that

motivation in L2 learning has mostly been used to refer to long-term stable attitudes in

the students' minds, in particular integrative and instrumental motivation as introduced

by Robert Gardner and Wallace Lambert (as cited in Cook, 2008, p. 137).

  I also had the chance to be an invigilator during students' final examination.

During their exams, students asked several unnecessary questions but I tried to keep them

quiet. Some students tried to look back to see their friend's script. Some were trying to

have an eye contact with friends who sat beside them. So, I had to use certain

disapproving words as well as sometimes I had to be strict so that they could finish their

examination in time. I also monitored the students actively in the exam hall by walking

between the rows of seats. If they had any question or they did not understand anything,

then I made them clear. I also reminded them not to forget to revise. It was really a new

and exciting experience for me to be an invigilator.

Chapter Four
Problems I Faced

Being a teacher of beginner level students at the school was a new experience for me. Before I joined the school I clearly said the Principal of the school that I want to take classes as a regular teacher in the school. But he offered me the position of a Teaching Assistant where I have to observe a senior teacher's class and assist him/her. In fact, I wanted to take English classes of the students myself rather than being a TA. My onsite supervisor Janevie Costa used to give me a few classes to take. I wanted to take only English class, but as they were kids so I had to take classes such as Bengali, Math, and also drawing as well.

When I entered the classroom for the first day, I was nervous. I faced a little problem in mingling with new colleagues in that new environment. As I am an introvert person by nature, it was difficult for me to cope up with kids too. So, when I used to teach them, I had to come to their level and had to make them understand everything. But I believe that I was successful to control them and manage the classroom as I had a very good understanding with my students. I found that their way of teaching English was totally different from other school. Though the school is an English Medium School but almost every student and teacher speak in Bengali in the school which irritates me a lot. Sometimes I tried to use English while having conversation with other teachers but I did not get that much response. As the school follows the Edexcel syllabus, they should use English as much as possible in the school. If teachers do not use English in the school then students will not be able to learn to form the habit of speaking English.

Another major problem I faced in the school was the lack of a teachers' room. Teachers sat on the benches kept in the school veranda. So, if visitors come then they may have a bad impression of the school to see this situation. Classes were held on the 4th and 5th floor but there was no lift in the school. Some senior teachers had trouble to go back and forth from ground floor to 5th floor by stairs. So, it was really hard for them to take the classes up stairs without any lift.

While taking classes, I saw that my supervisor was not allowing implementing my own ways of teaching. For instance, I used pictures to teach vocabulary to students rather than simply memorizing and rote learning. The procedure was effective as students had a great response towards it. But my supervisor, Janevie Costa did not want me to use this process and she was a little bit angry with me for not listening to her. I think, a teacher has the authority to take the decisions how to deal with the students so that they can improve themselves. These are the few things which troubled me during my internship. But, in spite of all of these, I really enjoyed being a teacher a lot.

Chapter Five
Conclusion

Besides some negative aspects, I have really enjoyed my three-month internship. I have learned a lot of things as a Teaching Assistant from my supervisor, Janevie Costa. The most important thing I learned from her is how to control the classroom and interact with the students. As they were kids, so, extra care was needed for them. I also learned from my internship how to motivate the students to study. I tried to use new approaches and make the class interesting so that students learn better.

When I first started my journey as a teacher I was not much confident. As the days passed, I learnt to manage the classroom, delivering the lecture, to initiates students' interest and to make them participate in the classroom activities. Gradually, I became more confident and realised that a teacher also improves day by day as it is not possible for him/her to understand everything overnight.

To be a good teacher, it is very important to deal with students' mind especially when they are kids. To teach students vocabulary I used several strategies as well as motivated them so that vocabulary learning becomes more interesting for them.

 I have certain suggestions for the improvement of St. Margaret's International School as I am closely attached with this school. As the school follows the Edexcel syllabus, they should use English as much as possible in the school. If teachers do not use English in the school then students will not learn how to speak in English as well. The school authority should take steps to have a teacher's room in the school. They can also install a lift that makes it easier to have a class up stairs. The most important thing which

I would suggest is that the school should take qualified teachers because most of the teachers in the school have not finished their graduation and as a result, their communication skill in English is very poor. So, the school authority should at least take graduate teachers. Only a teacher can help students to give their best and learn better through his/her knowledge and motivation.

In spite of a few problems, I have gained a beautiful experience which I would never forget in my life as I believe that this was the beginning of my life for becoming a good teacher in future.

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List of Figures

Figure 1: "The diagram of a Frog's Life Style."

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