ABSTRACT

The store of knowledge requires an equal store of words. Enhanced word power means more effective conversation, more efficiency in the use of soft skills and more real power in the domain of communication skills. True mastery of a language lies in knowing and appropriate use of vocabulary items.

This study attempts to integrate the teaching techniques and learning strategies to enhance, enrich and expand the word power of Engineering students in the six diploma-level Engineering institutes in Pune region. The vast expanding global communication network demands the establishment of a global language. Though Chinese and Spanish have larger number of users, English has become a global language on account of its recognition as the lingua franca in 45 countries and its use in all the pure and applied sciences, in all the fine and applied arts and in all the walks of advanced civilized life. The aim of the present study is to find out problems with respect to learning vocabulary, to expand the engineering students active vocabulary for productive use in order to help them to express themselves more clearly and appropriately and to provide some effective strategies for enhancing the word power of engineering college students. An attempt has been made to make use of some new techniques along with the often used traditional methods for better learning and the teaching situation so as to enable learners to become self-reliant in their grasping and using their vocabulary of English. The study discusses how the researcher has taught different vocabulary processes, teaching techniques and methods with copious examples in the real class-room that can be used with specific reference to Engineering college students.

The first chapter is ‘Introduction’. It is introductory in its nature. At the outset, some preliminary remarks have been offered to bring out the significant status and the contemporary relevance of the English language in the global scenario and in particular in the present-day Indian situation. The vast expanding global communication network demands the establishment of English as a global language. The global significance and the national relevance in India of the English language
has been sketched in the first three sections of the first chapter. The status of English in the technical educational stream is pointed out in the next three sections. The methodological aspects such as the aims and objectives of the study, its scope and limitations, its research methodology, the procedures of data collection and data analysis, the questionnaire and its gradation have been outlined. A detailed Literature Review has been presented in this chapter. Thus the conceptual and contextual framework, the review of the literature of the past and the methodological background are the main constituents of the first chapter of the present research study.

The second chapter is entitled as ‘Vocabulary: An Important Component For Effective Communication’. It highlights the significance and relevance of vocabulary as a component of communication. The definitions of vocabulary as discussed by linguists like Palmer, Bloomfield, Tries and Traver and comments on the term “word power” have been taken into consideration. The growth and development of English vocabulary through Anglo-Saxon, Greek, Latin and French influences has been sketched in the fifth section. Age, Education, Experience and Exposure, Socio-economic Grouping, Dialects and Intelligence Quotient are the six factors that have an impact on vocabulary. Words change their meanings through the five processes of generalisation, specialization, radiation, elevation and degeneration. Word meaning, grammatical meaning, intonational meaning and pragmatic implication are the four factors that contribute to the meaning of an utterance. The first eight sections of the second chapter deal with these various significant aspects of the nature and structure of the vocabulary of the English language. The ninth section of the second chapter deals with different types of vocabulary such as Active and Passive vocabulary, Denotations and Connotations, the classification into Content and Function words, Receptive and Productive vocabulary and Technical vocabulary. The tenth section deals with the vocabulary selection through word Frequency, Structural value, Universality of the word, Range of Applicability and Material Association. The processes of word formation such as Affixation, Conversion and Compounding which are the major processes while the minor process of vocabulary enhancement such as Borrowing, Coinage, Reduplicatives, Blending, Clipping and Acronyms are
discussed. The major problems observed by the researcher with respect to vocabulary are presented in this chapter.

The third chapter is entitled as ‘Techniques Adopted For Developing Word Power of Engineering College Students’. This is the central chapter of the thesis. ELT experts like Nation, McCarthy, Ur, Carter, Palmer have suggested activities like affixation, forming synonyms and antonyms, providing lexical sets, finding the odd words, exercises on words often confused and some vocabulary games to develop word power. The present study verifies whether the techniques suggested by these scholars could be implemented while building word power of Engineering college students. This study has made an attempt to develop some innovative techniques as well for enriching students’ vocabulary. Knowing the meaning of a word is important, but guessing it is equally significant. Several activities have been designed by the researcher in order to teach the art of guessing the meaning of the word from the context provided. Certain exercises are framed in order to motivate learners to make use of a dictionary, thesaurus and activator. Certain word games have been created by the researcher in order to create conducive atmosphere for learning. Some innovative exercises have been used to teach collocations.

The researcher has also made use of Songs, Short Stories, Film Reviews, Puzzles, Proverbs, Role-playing and Mobile phone technology to teach vocabulary in an innovative manner. Different types of exercises have been framed for the purpose of reinforcement. This chapter also studies the impact of these techniques on the students’ mind at the psychological level.

The fourth chapter is entitled as ‘Data Analysis’. The students’ responses in the Diagnostic and Achievement test have been tabulated and are presented in a graphic format. The graphical representation has been depicted for all the students. Each table and graph is accompanied by the analysis of each question, and the performance of each student statistically mentioning the percentage for each question-wise response is also given. The analysis is a critical scrutiny of the performance of 240 students. The comparative analysis of the scores of Diagnostic and Achievement test reveals that there is a substantial difference in the marks and percentage obtained by the learners.
Chapter fifth is entitled as ‘Conclusions’. This chapter presents the main findings of the present study. Word power or the collection of vocabulary items can be expanded and extended to a large extent. It is observed and confirmed through the project conducted by the researcher that the qualitative as well as quantitative increase is possible if proper teaching techniques and methods are applied by the teachers and the same are absorbed and employed by the learners in the Engineering colleges. The innovative techniques used in this study can make teaching and learning of vocabulary an enriching experience for both teachers and students. The chapter concludes with the limitations of the study and provides suggestions for future research.