



THE BIG-PICTURE OF RECIPROCAL ACTION BETWEEN LEXICON CORPORA AND ASSIMILATION IN READING COMPREHENSION TEXT

DR. D. KANAKADURGA

Research Guide/Supervisor
Prof. of English (Retd.)
Osmania University, Hyderabad,
Telangana State – 500 007.
(TS) INDIA

D. VENKATESWARA RAO

Research Scholar, English
Regd. No: PP ENG. 0077,
Rayalaseema University,
Kurnool – 518007,
(AP) INDIA

ABSTRACT

This piece of writing discusses significance of vocabulary size in relation with the performance-level of reading comprehension. It also touches upon different types of vocabulary lists, to boost up the size of the learners' needed/graded vocabulary. This article also accommodates some blueprints to discuss the interplay between vocabulary and reading comprehension, to bring it to the notice of the teaching-practitioners. The article culminates with the message that there is a strong bond between word-hoard and comprehending a reading-text.

Key Words: Vocabulary size -- reading comprehension -- lexical thresholds -- classification of vocabulary lists -- blueprints to connect corpora with reading texts.

INTRODUCTION

English, as an International language serves many functions. It helps people to get their messages/ideas across to the other people and to share the knowledge with other people. Language consists of three factors. They are 1) sound system, 2) Grammar (syntax), and 3) Vocabulary. Of all the three ingredients, Vocabulary/Word-hoard is the crux for language communication. Fluent readers read the text in chunks, make connections among/between

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D. VENKATESWARA RAO

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the points in the text, recognize the words automatically, and comprehend the message of the text. Among the mentioned three components, vocabulary plays a predominant, role in Reading Comprehension and to become a fluent reader.

1.1. Importance of Interrelatedness between Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary:

Schelling et al (2006) rightly quotes about the importance of Vocabulary in connection with Reading Comprehension: "Reading is the construction of the meaning of text. It is an active and strategic process, in which the readers skill and knowledge interact with the characteristics of the text such as genre the hording and structure of the text (p.550)." Joshi and Aaron (2000) say that knowledge of vocabulary is a potent fore-caster of reading expertise, reading speed and comprehension ability, with apt interpretation. Qian (2002) pinpoints the interplay of size of vocabulary and the amount of comprehension: "having a larger vocabulary gives the learner a larger database from which to guess the meaning of the unknown words or behaviour of newly learned words, having deeper vocabulary knowledge will very likely improve the results of the guessing work (p.518)." Joshi & Aaron (2000) argue that vocabulary size and reading comprehension are greatly associated. Bromley (2004) insists that: "It is clear that a large and rich vocabulary is the hallmark of an individual. Indeed, a large vocabulary repertoire facilitates becoming an educated person to the extent that vocabulary knowledge is strongly related to reading proficiency in particular and school achievement in general."

1.2. Vocabulary Size and Reading Comprehension:

Language experts have talked about different ranges of vocabulary that required to a learner to become autonomous. Some experts say that between 3,000 and 14,000-word families would be the range-required to become independent learners. Some other experts insist that between 6,000- and 7,000-word families would be the ideal vocabulary threshold to read authentic materials independently, without the assistance of the teacher. Language researchers differ widely on this matter. Different researchers ranges are as listed below:

- Laufer (1992) proposes 3,000-word families are needed to read academic texts.
- Hirsh and Nation (1992) argue that 5,000-word-families are required to read for pleasure (e.g., novels, magazines etc,)
- Hazenberg and Hulstijin (1996) assert that 10,000-word-families are required to peruse university textbooks.
- Chujo and Hasegawa (2003) claim that nearly 44,000-word-families are recommended for reading university textbooks.



- Nation (2006) believes that some midway range of 8,000-9,000-word-families are needed to read academic texts and some halfway range of 6,000-7,000 word-families are obligatory to interact with spoken discourses.

1.3. The Process for the Selection of Words for Academic Texts and for Teachers' Instruction:

The low mastery level of vocabulary size in-between 2,000-3,000-word-families would be a stumbling-block for learners to turn themselves into self-initiated readers. Generally, the words are chosen from High-Frequency lists, for instructional purposes. Nation (2001) proposes that to obtain the message of 98% of the reading comprehension, learners are thought to learn nearly 8,5000-word-families are mandatory, and to reach the 95% of the crux of the reading comprehension around 4,500-word-families are required. There are four types of vocabulary lists which are prevalent for a language learner. They are 1) High Frequency Word Lists, 2) Academic Word Lists, 3) Technical Word Lists, and 4) Low Frequency Word Lists. Here is a brief analysis of all the four Word-lists.

1.3.1. High Frequency Words:

West's (1953) General Service List (GSL), Nation's (2006) High Frequency Word List (which is selected from British National Corpus), Brezina and Gablasova's (2015) New GSL are some of the High Frequency Lists. West's (1953) list is going cover 2,000 most frequent word families to cover in formal and informal discourses.

1.3.2. Academic Words:

Campton and Elley's word list, New Academic Word List, University Word List, Coxhead's (2000) Academic Word Lists are some of the popular ones. Coxhead's Academic Word List consists of 570-word-families. These word families cater around 10% of the running words in the academic texts.

1.3.3. Technical Words:

These words belong to academic disciplines, such as Economics, History, Physics etc. Some of the technical words may overlap in more than one subject area of study. These lists, may accommodate nearly from 1,000 words to 2,000 words. Business Word List, Science Word Lis etc., are some of the Technical Word Lists.

1.3.4. Low Frequency Words:

The words which are not included in the above three lists, fall under this realm. By and large, 1,00,000-word families embrace this grid and most of these word families may not be familiar to the native speakers, as they are not encountered in the above three categories and they are not experienced in every day speaking and writing situations.

Usually the native educated speakers of English would have grip over 20,000-word families. The low frequency word-level percentage would be a round 2% in the running words of conversation and writing.

1.3.5. Lexical Thresholds:

Lexical Threshold is the vocabulary-size for the learner to understand the 98% of the message, from the reading texts, and also to encounter running words with ease in a reading comprehension text. Douglas (2015) gives the threshold levels for different language skills, as mentioned below.

Word families	Reading	Writing
1,000		
2,000	76%	88%
2,570	86%	94%
3,000		95%
4,000		
4,500-5,000	95%	
5,000		98%
6,000-7,000		
8,000-9,000	98%	
11,000		
12,000		100% (est.)
14,000	100% (est.)	

1.4. Reading Comprehension Paradigms in Connection with Vocabulary Knowledge:

Anderson and Freebody (1981) talked about a blueprint concerning the relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension. They presented a pattern of three hypotheses. They are: a) instrumentalist hypothesis, b) the aptitude hypothesis, and c) the knowledge hypothesis.

a) Instrumentalist hypothesis:

This theory says that when a person possesses large vocabulary size, he/she performs well in the academic realm, specifically in reading comprehension.

b) The aptitude hypothesis:

This notion highlights the learners who have higher verbal abilities perform in a better way than those of lower verbal ability students.

c) The knowledge hypothesis:

This view states that in addition to vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge/prior knowledge is essential to help the learner in grasping reading text.

Mezynski (1983) added a fourth hypothesis to the existing Anderson and Freebody's (1981) model. Mezynski (1983) included an access view hypothesis. This hypothesis says that when the learners are exposed/accessed to new words, their efficiency and quickness are improved in respect of reading text.

Hu and Nation (2000) suggested a framework, with three ingredients. They are a) background knowledge/prior knowledge, b) language knowledge (mainly vocabulary), and c) skill in language use.

1.4.1. Stumbling Block of Reading Comprehension:

Main impediments which are faced by L2 learners are: a) Text construction b) Syntactical structures, c) Word complexity, d) Grammatical knowledge, e) Prior knowledge, f) Lack of concentration, g) Meanings of multi-part-words, h) Vocabulary size, and i) vocabulary knowledge.

1.5. Relationship in Connection with Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Knowledge:

Davis (1944) examined, in his study, tests of nine skills and revealed that vocabulary knowledge and reasoning skills were important to crack out reading comprehension.

Huang (1999) came out in his study that there would be a strong correlation between vocabulary size and performance in reading comprehension. Nation (1990) administered Vocabulary Levels Test to students and suggested to the readers that comprehension of a passage would bank on vocabulary knowledge and prior knowledge, but he insists mainly on vocabulary knowledge.



1.6. Conclusion:

The research findings show that word knowledge is indispensable in the matter of gaining ability in reading comprehension. Administering of vocabulary tests to the students activate positive developments/insights in the mental-networks of the learners. The students will have good command over spellings and have creative expression skills, when the learners are given good amount of practice in vocabulary drills.

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