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Enhancing motivation in vocabulary learning: a Cognitive approach

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List of abbreviations

L1: First language.

L2: Second language.

SLA: Second Language Acquisition.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

HMCM: Highly motivated students using the Cognitive method.

HMBM: Highly motivated students using the Behaviourist method.

LMCM: Low motivated students using the Cognitive method.

LMBM: Low motivated students using the Behaviourist method.

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Abstract

Learning a language implies dominating different skills, including vocabulary. Teachers usually give a word list which the students have to study. In addition, the exercises and the test to verify that the students have learnt what they were expected to, do not facilitate the students' learning process. My proposal is to use a Cognitive methodology.

The purpose of my study is to see which methodology, Behaviourist or Cognitive-based, enhances students motivation. I also want to check in which way students learn and acquire the vocabulary easier and faster. I believe that by using Cognitive techniques and activities the students will learn vocabulary easily. I also believe that it is related to motivation. From my point of view, the Cognitive-based methodology enhances students' motivation and helps them to enjoy the learning process. In the present study I intend to discover if my assumptions are correct and to check if the students feel more motivated and learn easily by using a Cognitive method in which they can relate the vocabulary to their previous experiences and knowledge.

I had the opportunity of implementing a lesson plan to analyse how the students learn vocabulary easily. I could check the level of motivation of the students and learn about the factors that influence them. Moreover, I was able to see which methodology worked better to teach and learn vocabulary in a Secondary school classroom. With the results obtained in the final test conducted by the two groups involved in the study and the results of the writings of the student body, two main conclusions can be drawn. On the one hand, the Cognitive-based method proved to be more useful for teaching vocabulary in a Secondary Education class. The students who were taught with this technique obtained better results than the students who learnt with a behaviourist-based method. On the other hand, the students who had a high motivation also obtained better results and they acquired the vocabulary with ease by using the Cognitive methodology.

Key Words: Motivation, Cognitive method, Behaviourist method, vocabulary teaching, vocabulary learning.

1. Introduction

As English teachers, we should take into account that Secondary Education students are day after day more demotivated. We should ask ourselves if it is not due to the strategies that we use in the classroom. Most of times students feel bored in class or they feel it is too difficult for them to learn and understand a language that is not their mother tongue. If we use an inappropriate methodology in class, the result can be disastrous. It is essential that teachers take into account students needs and motivations in order to encourage their learning. Students do not have to see the learning process as a boring process, but as a useful and interesting one. We do not pay attention to students' lack of motivation, but I believe that it is connected to the methodology used in the classroom. Motivation depends on the strategies the teacher uses and on the way knowledge is presented in the classroom.

Nowadays, vocabulary is not seen as a very important skill to learn, but we all know that in order to acquire a language and to be able to use it and to communicate with other people, vocabulary is essential. We should start to change the way vocabulary is seen and taught. The Behaviourist methodology in which students are provided with word lists and they do activities such as filling the gaps or translating may not work. Maybe, we should introduce the Cognitive method. Students will learn by connecting the vocabulary to their previous knowledge and experience and in my opinion they will acquire the vocabulary easily.

In short, vocabulary is not seen as an important skill for language learning. We should change the view we have on vocabulary and the strategies used. I believe that motivation, vocabulary acquisition and the methodology used are closely related. I want to see if the Cognitive method is more useful and appropriate for vocabulary learning and to check if motivation is linked with the strategy used in the EFL classroom.

1.1. Justification of the election and relevance of the study

I have decided to do research on the field of vocabulary teaching and learning since I think it

is very important and in my view, the usual methodologies used may be improved. When learning a foreign language, there are many different aspects to take into account. Vocabulary is one of those aspects. It is fundamental for language learning and I believe that it is not taught deeply enough. During the master course, I have seen that reading, writing, listening and speaking are the focus of attention, while vocabulary has a small role in an EFL classroom. Teachers do not pay attention to vocabulary teaching and they use Behaviourist strategies, which I think are inappropriate for helping students in their learning process. Moreover, students' motivation is not taken into account when selecting the materials or the strategies used by the teacher. In order to look for a solution and to check if my thought is correct or not, I have implemented two different approaches in two different classrooms, one with motivated students and the other one with unmotivated students, in Jose Vilaplana high school.

This paper attempts a theoretical revision of vocabulary teaching and learning approaches used in Secondary school. Furthermore, it includes a practical part in which two different methodologies, Behaviourist method and Cognitive method, are used in order to elucidate which one is more relevant for vocabulary learning and acquisition. It also wants to check if students' motivation is essential and to what extent it is fostered by a particular method as well as its influence on the success of the method used.

The first step consists in analysing the students' motivation by means of a questionnaire. After that, the implementation of the two vocabulary lessons in two different classrooms. I have divided a classroom with students with a low degree of motivation into two parts and each part of the class has been taught the same vocabulary with a different strategy, Cognitive or Behaviourist. On the other hand, a classroom with students who have a high degree of motivation has also been divided in two. Each part of the class has been taught the same vocabulary by means of different strategies. One part has used the Cognitive method and the other part of the classroom has used the Behaviourist method. Finally, all the students has been asked to complete a test and to write an

essay. I have used the test to check if the students have acquired the vocabulary they were supposed to, while I have used the writing task to see if the students are capable of using the vocabulary in a context and in a real life situation.

1.2. Research questions, hypothesis and objectives

The Research Questions formulated in my project are the following:

1. ¿Is the Cognitive approach useful for learning vocabulary?
2. ¿Is the Behaviourist method useful for learning vocabulary?
3. ¿Is motivation enhanced by a particular method for learning?

My hypothesis is that Cognitive strategies will be more effective than Behaviourist strategies used in EFL classrooms in order to teach vocabulary. I believe that the Behaviourist strategies commonly used by the teachers are useful only partially and do not help students enough in their learning process. The connections between their previous knowledge and strategies and the vocabulary they have to learn will help the students to learn better and faster and will motivate them more effectively.

I have analysed and compared the results of both methods with the different groups of students. I used the qualifications of a final test and a writing task in order to see which group of students has internalized vocabulary better and which method has worked better when teaching vocabulary. Moreover, I checked if the students felt more motivated with a particular methodology.

2. Image schema, Frame and Script

2.1. Image schema

As Peter Gärdenfors (2007) affirms, although we listen to and use language in our daily life, it is not until we listen to someone speaking in a language which is unknown to us that we realise the complexity of the process of understanding and using a language. It is necessary to interpret the other person's words in order to communicate a message. But, what is meaning? This author says

that Cognitive Semantics asserts that meaning is located out of the human mind. People have schemas in their minds which are the words' meanings. For example, we have a schema for the word “dog” which includes all the characteristics of the animal (its sound, its smell, its appearance) and these characteristics define our understanding of the word “dog”.

In Cognitive Semantics, one of the most important theoretical notions is that of an image schema. It is assumed that such schemas are closely linked and related to perception, memory and meaning. To explain what an image schema is I am going to use an example by Lakoff (1987), who considers the schema “over”. The author says that “over” denotes a spatial relation between two objects. According to Lakoff (1987), the relation is linked to the trajectory between the two objects, which is supposed to be horizontal (for example, a bird flew over the yard). Apart from this information, the image schema does not contain more information about the type of objects which are related. It is a schema that can be complemented with more details depending on the situation and the objects involved. Image schemas are not stored in our mind in isolation. They are related among them. For example, the image schema of “under” is closely related to the image schema of “over”, the main differences are the objects involved. It is supposed by Johnson (1987) that each image schema corresponds to a different word.

Evans and Green (2006) affirm that image schemas are emergent. This means that image schemas are not innate, but we acquire and learn them thanks to our experience and our interpretation of that experience. Concepts are formed by using the image schemas we acquire from our experiences in our childhood. Once an experience has been stored as an image schema, a conceptual representation for it arises.

2.2. Frame

Fillmore (2008) claims that words meaning has two properties that makes it difficult to create a system. First, the openness of the words meaning. Meanings of words are created and defined by a series of experiences that the person has lived during his/her life. For example, the

word “Friday” will have different connotations for each person depending on the experiences of his/her life. Secondly, the richness of words meaning is another problem we encounter. The meaning of a word includes many different connotations. For example, the word “alimony” includes in its meaning the presupposition of being divorced and being previously married.

The concept of frame (Fillmore, 2008) is closely related to the knowledge and beliefs that help humans to make sense of their experiences. They are essential when understanding, remembering and reasoning about our previous experiences. According Brachman and Schmolze (1985) a frame includes a set of events and the different participants of those events. For example (Fillmore, 1996) analyses the frame “buy”. A person (A) owns some money and another person (B) has some goods. A wants to buy the goods from B. After an agreement A pays money to B and B gives the goods to A. Leaving the agreement apart, we have the following frame of the word “buy”:

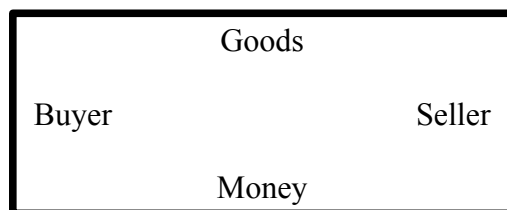


Figure 1. The “buy” frame (Ungerer & Schmid, 1996) PAGINA

Frames are conceptual structures which help us to provide a context for our interpretation of a situation. They are used to explain how we understand sentences in different ways (depending on the person and his/her experiences) and not literally.

Considering the example previously mentioned, Fillmore (1982) affirms that the concept of “alimony” depends on the concept of “divorce” and at the same time on the concept of “marriage”. In order to understand “alimony” we need to explain what a “divorce” is and, consequently, what “marriage” is. Considering the example of the word “Friday”, it implies that the person has a certain knowledge about days, weeks and months since a relation exists between these terms and it is necessary to know all of them to understand “Friday”. According to this, each person has words and background concepts that are linked to each word. These background concepts would be called

frames. A single word would provide a set of frames. Thus, the word “divorce” would provide the background concepts “marriage”, “groom”, “bride”, “law”, “fiancee”, etc. Fillmore (1985) says that each frame organizes a vocabulary domain:

“We could say that the assumed background of knowledge and practices – the complex frame behind this vocabulary domain – stands as a common ground to the figure representable by any of the individual words. [...] The words belonging to a frame are lexical representatives of some single coherent schematization of experience or knowledge”

Fillmore (1985:223)

In some cases, the experience of the person affects and changes the related concepts that appear linked to a particular word. For example, the word “alimony” would be different depending on the experience of each person. The following chart exemplifies the lexical relation that exists between frames and words:

| Words | Frames |
|--|-----------|
| Bride, groom, marriage, wedding, divorce, -in-law, elope, fiancee, best man, maid-of-honor, honeymoon, husband, wife | Marriage |
| Alimony, divorce court, divorce attorney, ex-husband, ex-wife | Divorce |
| Child, nine months, midwife, birth, belly | Pregnancy |

Table 1. Lexical relation between frames and words.

The frame, according to Evans & Green (2006), relates the elements and entities which are associated with a particular scene or situation that exists from our experience. Fillmore (1977), affirms that the meaning of a particular word cannot be understood without its association to a particular frame.

2.3. Script

According to Schank and Abelson (1977), people know how to act and react in certain

situations thanks to the fact that they have knowledge about the world in which they live. There are two types of knowledge: general knowledge and specific knowledge. The first one makes possible that a person understands another person and his/her actions and messages just because of the fact of living on the same world and having knowledge about people's needs and the methods used in the society. For example, if a person asks “Can I have a glass of water?”, although you have never seen this sequence before, you can understand the needs of the person and the reasons of the action and you do not need to ask why. Specific knowledge is used to interpret and understand events we have already seen many times. For example, it is not necessary for us to ask why we should pay after having dinner in a restaurant because we have seen this situation before and we know and understand the reason of the action. A person who has never eaten in a restaurant would have problems in understanding the situation. This understanding of situations depends on our experience.

There are certain sequences of events that occur always in the same way or in a similar way and people create a chain between these events in order to deal with them and store that knowledge in their brains. Just by mentioning or experiencing one of the events of the chain, we will be able to identify all the linked events. Our knowledge of this chain of events is called script. Although we have a clearly formed chain in our heads about a particular event, it does not mean that it can not change. For example, the script of going to a restaurant would include the following events:

- 1) You choose a restaurant.
- 2) You go to the restaurant.
- 3) You order a meal.
- 4) You eat your dish.
- 5) You pay and you leave the restaurant.

It is an example of the script a person always has of the sequence of events “going to a restaurant”. Although we have this script established in our mind, some changes can occur. For example, we can know that when we go to a particular restaurant we always seat at the same table

but that one day we have to seat at a different table. In this situation a change has occurred on the script, but the person is able to perceive the change and see that it is included in the same script. When someone is making reference to a script (a particular chain of situation), he/she knows that it is not necessary to give all the details of the story. The person knows and assumes that the interlocutor is familiar with the script and by just mentioning important events he/she will recognise the script and the events included in it are automatically assumed.

3. Cognitive approach

According to Vyvyan Evans and Melanie Green (2006: 156-162), Cognitive Semantics is a linguistic approach which focuses on the processes that the mind follows when processing language in relation to its meaning and in a particular context. Cognitive Semantics appeared in the 1970s. It appeared with the works of important scholars such as Leonard Talmy, George Lakoff, Dirk Geeraerts and Bruce Wayne Hawkins, who started using it to talk about Lexis.

Some studies in Semantics focus on the use of language as a container that organises the knowledge we acquire in our mind and it deals with the conceptual content of language, i.e. it tries to check and prove the ways in which the mind uses language and how they are related in order to organise our experience. In order to understand a word or a sentence, our mind needs to relate it with our experience. Without this relation it would be impossible for us to make sense of language. Cognitive Semantics supports the idea that lexical meaning is conceptual, i.e. when we say a word, its meaning does not refer to the physical entity itself and it has no relation with the object in the real world that we are referring to. It is described by the followers of Cognitive Semantics as a concept that is located in our mind and to which we give meaning and sense by using the experiences we have about the entity it is referring to.

Fillmore (1977) affirms that meanings have an internal structure and this structure is determined and related to a background frame. Croft and Cruse (2004) affirm that words denote units of meaning, i.e. concepts. It is possible to organise or relate words depending on their features.

For example, “stallion” and “mare” can be compared since they are very similar in meaning but we can differentiate them thanks to the division of their semantic features: “stallion” is equine and male, and “mare” is equine and female. Moreover, concepts are also defined depending on the conditions according to which the concept applies or not to the context. Words are not stored at random in our mind, they are clearly organised depending on their characteristics and our experience. For example, the term “restaurant” is related in our mind with other concepts such as waiter, eating, bill, etc. Fillmore (1985) gives importance to the understanding, referring to the message the speaker wants to transmit and the message the hearer understands. Speakers use words in order to transmit an idea, a concept, that is, words raise a frame and hearers invoke a frame upon the words they hear. The author uses the following example to explain his theory. The words “man”, “boy”, “woman” and “girl” raise a frame in which characteristics such as age, behaviour, and sex are included. Words are defined according to frames that are located in our long-term memory. The meaning of a particular word cannot be understood and inferred without the frame in which it occurs and to which we associate it.

3.1. Cognitive learning

Once I have explained the basic aspects of the Cognitive theories, it is important to mention how they see the learning process since I want to use it in my study. According to Cognitive theories, knowledge is not an object that can be transferred by a teacher to a student. It is reconstructed by the students by selecting the information, creating hypotheses, investigating evidences and relating new experiences to the old and existing ones. Bruner (1960) believes that a Cognitive teaching method should take into account the following aspects:

- The learner's predisposition to learn.
- How to organise the knowledge itself in order to make the learning process easier for the student. The learner has to be able to use the information, relate it to his background

knowledge and generate new propositions with that new information.

- The material used in class has to be appropriate and used in the correct order.
- Giving feedback is important for the students' learning process.

Taking into account these aspects, this author stated some key principles:

- Learner predisposition. The students have to be highly motivated in order to learn. The teacher has to try to motivate his students and adapt the materials to the learner's cognitive abilities and experiences in order to motivate him/ her and help the student in his/her learning process.
- Organisation. The classroom should be well structured. It has to be taken into account what the student already know in order to give new information to the learner and not repeat the old information.
- Students' active role. The student has to receive the new information, test it by himself and formulate the rules of that information. The teacher is important as he ensures the learning process. The teacher is a guide but the active role in the class is of the students since they have to relate the new knowledge to their previous experiences.

Moreover, according to Jonassen (1991), there are some useful principles that could be used in a classroom:

- The importance is not on knowledge reproduction. Practice is a key point in a Cognitive classroom.
- Give to the students real situations in which they could interpret the situation and its different perspectives. They have to deal with real situations and be able to deal with them without problems. The students should be provided with tasks based on authentic situations in order to practice.

- Negotiate with the students their learning process. The learners have an important role in their learning process. For that reason, they should decide about the objectives of the lesson and activities and give their own feedback. It is a good idea that the students give feedback to the other students and even about their own work.

All these aspects are related to my study since I want to prove that cognitive-based theories are more effective to help the students to acquire knowledge. The students are supposed to learn easily by using their previous knowledge and by relating it to the new information or to the activities they have to do. In order to do this, I asked the students to use their previous knowledge and the new one to create a role-play emulating real situations to see if they are capable of using their knowledge in the real life. Moreover, since my study is also related with the students' degree of motivation, this point is relevant to understand the processes I have followed during my study.

4. Behaviourism

Behaviourism is a term that refers to the psychology school founded by John B. Watson, which was based on the belief that human behaviours and actions (responses) can be explained, and changed as they are conditioned by the environment (stimulus). Skinner is one of the most important philosophers who based their theories on Behaviourism. According to Behaviourism, human and animal behaviours are the responses to a reinforcement, which the authors call stimulus. If an action receives good results the organism will repeat the behaviour, while if the results are negative the organism will try to avoid that behaviour. For example, if we make a ring sound every time we give food to the dog, he will relate the sound of the ring with the result of obtaining food. If we want to reinforce that behaviour and make the dog understand that when he listens the ring he has to come, we have to reinforce it by feeding the animal as a stimulus. If we want to obtain the opposite result, the stimulus has to be negative and make the dog understand that when he listens the sound of the ring he has to stay away.

Stimulus-response adherents believe that by observing the behaviour of a person or an animal you can figure out what had been reinforced previously. Although this association can be used for human and animal behaviour and interaction, there is one aspect that is difficult to explain for the behaviourists: language. For this reason, in 1957, Skinner published his book “Verbal Behaviour” in which he tried to explain language learning by focusing on Behaviourism. He believed that language is developed in the same way as other skills are and that a sentence is a part of the behaviour itself.

Skinner (1957) defines three basic concepts which are: mand, tact and intra-verbal. Mand represents the statements by which the speaker asks the listener for something such as for example, “Can you give me some water please?”. In this example, the verbal behaviour is conditioned by its consequences. By tact Skinner (1957) makes reference to the fact that the verbal behaviour is determined by non-verbal stimulus. For example, the word “blue” is defined in relation to the colour of the sea and the sky. Finally, the intra-verbal concept refers to the verbal behaviour which is closely related to the speaker. For example, when the speaker says “I believe..” the speaker is trying to make comments about other verbal behaviours.

4.1. Behaviourist learning

During my internship I observed that English teachers based their teaching methodology on the Behaviourist theory. Behaviourism is based on the stimulus-response theory according to which, any kind of behaviour is a response to a stimulus. For this reason, teachers who try to follow the Behaviourist methodology have the challenge of giving the appropriate reinforcement and punishment to the students. It is difficult to know which reinforcement and punishment are correct and useful for each student in order to obtain a desirable behaviour or change an undesirable behaviour. If a student has a negative behaviour the teacher has to find a stimulus to change it and if the behaviour is appropriate the teacher should reinforce it by using a positive stimulus.

Skinner (1957) says that if teachers want to reinforce a good behaviour they should use praises or points as stimulus for the students. On the other hand, if what the teachers want is to change a negative attitude, they should ignore that behaviour. Although behaviourism is based on stimulus-response, Skinner (1957) believes that in order to change a negative action or attitude punishment should be avoided. According to this author, the best way of changing a negative attitude is to ignore it. I would explain it taking the following situation as an example:

"A child is in a school classroom. When he is quiet (reading or drawing) the teacher pays no attention to him. He throws a ball of paper at another child. The teacher tells him off. He starts reading but after a while throws something again. The teacher pays attention to him. After a while he frequently throws things." (pg 53 Greene and Hicks, 1984)

In the example above, the student increases his bad behaviour. It is due to the fact that the appropriate behaviour is not being reinforced. However, the student believes that the bad behaviour has been reinforced as by throwing objects he obtains no punishment but the attention of the teacher, that is what he wants. In this situation the teacher has to reinforce the good attitude and ignore or punish appropriately the bad behaviour.

According to James Hartley (1998) four key principles are related to the Behaviourist teaching method:

- *Importance of the activities.* In order to make the learning process more useful, the students have to have an active role and participate on it.
- *Repetition, generalization and discrimination are important.* It is necessary to practise in order to acquire certain knowledge and skills.
- *Reinforcement is essential.* Negative attitudes should be punished and positive behaviour should be reinforced and not ignored.

- *Clear objectives are helpful for the students.* The objectives should be clear at the beginning of each lesson.

I observed all these aspects in the daily English lessons I could observe during my internship. I noticed two important aspects during my observation period. The first one was that the teachers based the students learning on repetition. They had to repeat what the teacher said in order to acquire the knowledge. The second aspect was that the negative behaviours were punished but the positive behaviours were ignored. Teachers only paid attention to the bad behaviours and they did not pay attention to the good ones. I believe that in this way the good students felt not motivated to continue and improve their learning process while the bad students had no necessity to improve since they obtained the attention of the teacher only with bad actions.

5. Motivation: An important factor for SLA

This section is highly related to my study since my purpose is to check if the strategy used by the teacher in the classroom and the students' motivation have any relation. For this reason, I believe it is important to mention and explain the term motivation and the relation of it with the teaching-learning process.

Motivation is an essential factor for second language acquisition. As teachers, when we find students who are not motivated nor interested in the learning process we use different strategies in order to motivate them. We make our lessons more interesting, we praise, we penalize or we try to make students more participative. Alonso Tapia (1991) assures that although most times we try hard, it is not enough. It is necessary to know why the student is sometimes motivated by the task or activities he or she has to do and why sometimes he or she is not.

Gardner (1982) identified a number of factors which are essential for SLA. His model attempts to relate some features to the acquisition of second language acquisition. These features are explained below.

The cultural milieu refers to the context of the individual, including beliefs about other cultures and languages. These beliefs are an important influence on SLA. For example, in some countries the minority cultures are supposed to learn the dominant language while a huge majority believe that it is not necessary to learn the language of a minority group. On some other countries it happens the opposite and bilingualism is encouraged within society.

In addition to this, Gardner's model includes four individual differences which are prominent in SLA. They are intelligence, language aptitude, motivation and situational anxiety. As the basis of this work requires it, I am going to focus only on motivation. Atkinson & Feather (1966) argue that student's motivation is related to the feeling of self-satisfaction after the failure or success of their marks or their results. The experience creates an accumulation of positive and negative results which can help us to predict our possible results. According to Alonso Tapia (1991), without taking into account other factors, the accumulation of failing experiences makes motivation and the expectations of success decrease. In order to change this situation we should try to reduce failure experiences at school to a minimum. Tapia (1991) affirms that it is possible to differentiate two main types of motivation:

1. Integrative motivation. Crookes and Schmidt (1991) define it as “*the learner's orientation when learning a second language*”. Falk (1978) believes that students who like the culture and the people related to the language and have the desire to become familiar with them are more successful when learning that particular language.
2. Instrumental motivation. It is the study of the language in order to obtain something practical of it. For example, applying for a job or achieving higher social status. It usually happens when a student is learning a second language without any interest on the target language community.

As Alonso Tapia (1991) says, when students are not motivated with the activity or task, we try to motivate them with a reward or a punishment. They seem to be the most effective ways of

raising motivation if they are correctly employed. Although sometimes these procedures are necessary, they are not as effective as we would like. They are effective when they are present but once the reward or the punishment has ended, the motivation disappears. There are studies which prove that when there is an absence of reward, the students use to solve more difficult problems, to involve themselves more in the activity and they are more logical and coherent when using a strategy to solve the problem. According to these facts, rewarding or punishing students' performance can be positive or negative, it depends on how we use these measures.

Moreover, as Joan Vaello (2011) says, it also exists the intrinsic motivation which refers to the interest that the student has for the subject itself. The students with this type of motivation enjoy learning the subject and they do not need any external motivation to learn. Most of times, the teacher has an important role since it has to introduce the students to the subject and awake their intrinsic motivation. For this reason, the contents that are taught and the way they are presented to the students are fundamental in order to make the students feel more motivated.

Not all students are the same or are motivated in the same way. According to Carrascoso and Baignol (1993), there are different types of students depending on their motivation:

1. Students who do not need to be motivated because they already are.
2. Students who need clear reasons and powerful arguments to motivate themselves to learn.
3. Students who are not interested or motivated in the classroom.
4. Students who are not motivated in the same way their classmates do. They need an extra motivation.

In order to motivate students to learn and to be interested in the learning process there are sources that can be used (Carrasco & Baignol, 1993):

- Teacher's personality. The voice, the energy and the enthusiasm of the teacher are important to help the students and to lead the class. In my study I tried to be energetic and to make the

students feel the good energy I was transmitting.

- Appropriate material. The importance of the material has to be taken into account since it can be used to make the topic more interesting and attracting. I tried to use attractive and real materials to motivate the students.
- The different techniques and strategies used by the teacher can be very helpful: role-plays, debates or group works are examples of activities that motivate the students to participate and learn. In my study, I used new activities which the teachers do not normally use. I asked the students to create a role-play in order to make them use the new vocabulary in a real situation.

In conclusion, motivation is a crucial factor for SLA. It can be different depending on the person but the teacher can use different methods or techniques to motivate the students and help them to feel more comfortable in their learning process. However, we have to be careful with the techniques we use and how we do it since we can obtain the opposite result to what we expected.

6. Teaching vocabulary in the classroom

In the 21st century vocabulary acquisition is assuming a more important role in Secondary schools. However, it has not the importance it deserves and more attention should be paid to the teaching and learning of this skill. In the classroom, the teacher is faced with the challenge of how to teach and introduce vocabulary to the students in an effective way which helps them to acquire the new words and to store them in long-term memory.

Thornbury (2002) says that vocabulary learning and acquisition is related to memory. He refers to three different types of memory: short-term store, working memory and long-term memory.

Regarding short-term store, the author describes it as the capacity of the brain to hold a limited number of information for a few seconds. For example, when the teacher says a new word

in English and all the students repeat it, they are using their short-term store memory. However, successful vocabulary learning needs more than holding the word for a few seconds.

The working memory refers to the focus on a word during the necessary period of time to perform operations on it. The information we have in this type of memory can be downloaded from the long-term memory or it can be manipulated from the external sources. The ability to hold and remember a word in a working memory is an indicator of a language learning aptitude.

Finally, Thornbury (2002) describes long-term memory. He says that, unlike the working memory which has a limited capacity and cannot store words for a long period of time, this memory has an enormous capacity to retain words and its contents are durable over time. The author describes a series of principles that have to be followed in order to move the materials into permanent long-term memory:

1. Usage. Students have to use the words in order to acquire them in the long-term memory.
2. Students' participation. The students will learn the words easier if they have to use them in real situations and take decisions about them.
3. Importance of speaking. Conversation and role-playing activities help the students to remember and acquire the new vocabulary easily since they can personalise the learning process and adapt it to themselves and their necessities.
4. Creating links. It is possible to associate all the words to a particular mental image. This process of creating a relation between the old and the new knowledge helps the students to learn.
5. Motivation. It is very important. Although unmotivated students will also learn if they are provided with the appropriate materials, they will have more difficulties and the teacher will have to motivate them.

Apart from this, other important factors in the language learning process would be the samples the students are provided with, the opportunities they have to experiment with the data and

the feedback they obtain and which is used to check if they are doing it well or if they have to re-direct their learning process.

7. Learning Vocabulary in the classroom

According to Huckling, Haynes and Coady (1993), during a long period of time vocabulary learning has gone unnoticed by many of the different approaches such as the Communicative method or the Functional model, which paid no attention to the learning of this skill. It has always been seen as a natural process that did not need to be cared for because we tend to compare L2 vocabulary acquisition with L1 vocabulary acquisition. In our mother tongue we acquire vocabulary in a natural and practically unconscious way. For this reason we use to think that the same process occurs in the learning of the L2. Krashen (1982) mentions the idea that some approaches called the “natural approaches” defend the idea that L2 vocabulary should be learnt in the same natural way as L1 vocabulary is, by providing the appropriate context and conditions.

Schemata have an important role in vocabulary acquisition since many studies revealed that in order to learn a word we have to understand it, and to understand it we use our background knowledge (schemata). This schemata knowledge is stored on our long-term memory. We store information about a huge variety of words and situations such as restaurant, food, places, Chinese restaurants, etc. The reader or the student automatically recognises a characteristic feature of the word which he or she can relate to his or her previous knowledge in order to acquire the word. Word-formation is an example of relation of learning with schemata. It can be seen as a process of learning in which the students use their background knowledge to acquire new information. For example, if we know that a word which ends with -ly is an adverb, when we see a new word ending with -ly we will automatically store it with the adverbs we already know.

Stenberg (1987) says that when we see a word a lot of times, it has more probability of being stored in our schemata. Some researchers such as Jankins and Dixon (1983) say that we need to see

a word between 6 and 12 times in context to acquire it. Another important factor is saliency or importance of a word. Words become salient in relation with their frequency of occurrence but also depending on their relevance for the message that is being communicated. As Sternberg (1987) says:

If a given unknown word is judged to be necessary for understanding the surrounding material in which it is embedded, the reader's incentive for figuring out the word's meaning is increased. If the word is judged to be unimportant to understanding what one is reading (or hearing), one is unlikely to invest any great effort in figuring out what the word means (p.93)

8. Methodology

In order to develop my study I have used an experimental approach with which I first observed the classroom environment and practices, I created different activities and I analysed the results. It has taken about five weeks and it consists of different stages :

- Two weeks were devoted to observe the students' behaviour, the strategies used by the teacher and the students' motivation to learn.
- One week to design and implement a questionnaire (appendix 1). I administered the questionnaire to the students of two classes of the fourth year of ESO. The questionnaire included questions to analyse and characterise the students' motivation.
- Two weeks to develop the lessons. One week was used to work with the two classes using the Behaviourist method. Another week was used to work with the two classes working with the Cognitive method. I divided the two classes into two groups each, one with motivated students and the other one with unmotivated students. I used the Cognitive-based method with one part of the class of the motivated students and with one part of the class of the unmotivated students. Moreover, I used the Behaviourist method with some motivated students and with some unmotivated students.

The aim of this design and these steps was to do a research on the adequacy and usefulness of methodologies for vocabulary learning and teaching in a Secondary Education classroom. Moreover, I wanted to see if motivation is closely related and linked with a particular methodology and if it increases or decreases depending on the strategy used by the teacher. My purpose was to analyse and study the methodology used in a real class when teaching vocabulary and to do some activities to see which strategy is more appropriate and more useful and which one produces better results. I also wanted to check the relation of the Cognitive method to motivation.

In order to do that, the students filled out a questionnaire to check their level of motivation. After that, they did some activities. The activities were different depending on the methodology used, Behaviourist or Cognitive method. Finally, they did a test and a writing task to check which method produced better results. I analysed the results of the test to see if the students had acquired the vocabulary and the writing task to see if they were able to use the vocabulary in a particular context without difficulty.

My purpose was to use the student's experience and previous knowledge to learn and acquire new vocabulary. By relating their experiences with the new words they are expected to learn, their learning process would be faster and more useful. I also wanted to see if, by creating these connections, the students would feel more motivated to learn and to participate in their learning process.

9. Implementation Of The Lesson Plan

9.1. Introduction

I wanted to create a series of activities which were related with the curriculum and the units of the book the students were using in class.

In order to develop my study, I introduced the body and sports equipment vocabulary to the students of 4th of ESO of IES Jose Vilaplana. They work with the book “Real English 3” from

Oxford University Press. In the curriculum imposed by the LOE it is established that the students who are studying the fourth year of ESO must learn sports vocabulary. Besides, it says that the students on the fourth year of ESO must learn vocabulary related to topics of personal and general interest and vocabulary related to other subjects and to the students' daily life. Sports equipment and body vocabulary fulfil all these characteristics since they are related with the P.E. subject and they are words that can be used in the students' daily life. Moreover, in the unit 8 of the textbook used by this course, the students should be introduced to this vocabulary and to learn how to use it in an appropriate context. They are expected to be ready to maintain real conversations in everyday situations. Apart from this, the programming that the teachers and the English department created before the beginning of the academic year establishes that during the third trimester the teachers should work and study unit 8 in which the sports vocabulary is described.

Accordingly, the vocabulary I used in order to do my study and the required activities was the following:

| Sports Equipment Vocabulary | The Body Vocabulary |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protective Gear • Helmets • Mouth Guards • Wrist Guards • Knee Guards • Elbow Guards • Tennis Rackets • Golf Club • Hockey Sticks • Baseball Bats • Ice-Skates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance • Barefoot • Blood • Bone • Brain • Coordination • Endurance • Finger • Gene • Heart • Lung |

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skateboards • Boxing Gloves • Baseball Gloves • Treadmills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscle • Speed • Strength • Toe |
|---|--|

Table 2. Activities' vocabulary

9.2. Place and Time

The implementation of the activities I developed in order to do my research was done during the months of April and May of 2014. It was done during my period of internship in which I could design a didactic unit. I designed a didactic unit which was focused on vocabulary learning and teaching and which would help me in my research. Regarding the place, it was done in the Secondary school Jose Vilaplana, in Vinaròs. It is one of the high schools of the village and it is located in the outskirts.

9.3. Participants

The study was developed with the students of 4th of ESO. In the high school, the students of 4th of ESO were divided into different classes depending on some factors which are described in list below. In order to create this list, I used the information from the high school. The groups and their characteristics are the following:

- 4th ESO1: They have the need of learning and express themselves with the knowledge they acquire. They are given texts according to their level and interest. They are autonomous in their learning process.
- 4th ESO2: They show interest in learning. They are provided with the appropriate material for their academic training.
- 4th ESO3: They do not show interest, they have difficulties when organising themselves and they need more motivation. They are provided with texts and materials that rouse their

interest in the subjects. Teachers help them to organise their work and to be autonomous.

- 4th ESO4: They have no motivation. They need very easy texts and materials to help them to learn and cover the minimum objectives of the subject. Self-organization and autonomy are worked with this group.

I worked with the students of 4th ESO1 and 4th ESO4. The students of 4th ESO1 were 32 students highly motivated and their attitude in class was really good, while the students of 4th ESO4 were 25 students who had a low level of motivation and their attitude in class was negative. With this group selection I pretended to use and compare the same methodology with motivated and unmotivated students. In order to do that, I divided each group into two in order to work with the two methodologies in both classes. The groups description is the following one:

- 4th ESO1 working with the Cognitive method. I divided the class of 4th ESO1 into two. This half of the class was working with the Cognitive method. These students were highly motivated and they were interested in learning. Their English language level was high and they were participative. During this work I will refer to this group as the “Highly Motivated Cognitive Method” (HMCM).
- 4th ESO1 working with the Behaviourist method. I divided the class of 4th ESO1 into two. This half of the class was working with the Behaviourist method. These students had a high degree of motivation. They participated in class and their level of English was good. In this project this group will be called the “Highly Motivated Behaviourist Method” (HMBM).
- 4th ESO4 working with the Cognitive method. I divided the class of 4th ESO4 into two. This half of the class was working with the Cognitive method. The motivation of these students was low and their English level was bad. They did not participate in class and they paid no attention to the explanations of the teachers. This group will be called the “Low Motivated Cognitive Method” (LMCM) in this work.

- 4th ESO4 working with the Behaviourist method. I divided the class of 4th ESO4 into two. This half of the class was working with the Behaviourist method. These students had low motivation and they had no interest to learn. They were not participative in class and they paid no attention to the explanations of the teachers. They had a low level of English language. In this project I will refer to this group as the “Low Motivated Behaviourist Method” (HMBM).

The fact that the two classes are different, as far as motivation is concerned, was made on purpose, since I wanted to compare both groups' knowledge, development and level of motivation. In this way, the results of my study would be more interesting and the proofs I obtained would be more relevant.

9.4. Implementation

Regarding my study implementation, I elaborated an initial questionnaire, different activities depending on the methodology used and a final test to check the results of my study. I worked with two different classes and I divided each class into two parts in order to work with both methods, Behaviourist and Cognitive.

The first two weeks were devoted to analyse and observe the students' and teacher's behaviour and techniques used to teach vocabulary. I could observe that the behaviour of the students changed depending on the classroom and the techniques used by the teachers were similar. The motivated students paid attention and asked when they had a doubt about the new vocabulary they were learning. Moreover, the teacher had a positive attitude. She gave the students a list with the words and they repeated the words aloud. Then, the teacher said the meaning of each word and the students had to do some activities such as translating or filling the gaps. Regarding the unmotivated students, their attitude was different since they paid no attention and were talking during most of the time. They did not ask questions to solve their doubts and when the teacher

asked them they assured that they had no doubts. However, when they were asked to do activities about the new vocabulary they were not able to do them. The teacher of this group had a negative attitude towards the students since he felt that they had no interest and he was wasting his time and patience. The process he followed to teach vocabulary to this group was similar to the one used by the teacher of the other group. He gave the students a word list with the new vocabulary and he said the meaning of the words to the students. Then, they did some activities such as filling the gaps or relate the words in Spanish with the words in English. The attitude of the students affected their learning process since they were very negative towards the new vocabulary and they were not participative when doing the activities.

In order to develop my study, I gave an initial questionnaire to all the students in order to check their level of motivation. The questionnaire was anonymous and they were asked to answer with honesty. After that, I implemented a series of activities, which were different depending on the methodology I was using.

9.4.1. Behaviourist methodology

One part of my study consisted on teaching vocabulary by using the Behaviourist methodology that is usually used in the Secondary schools in two different classrooms: one with motivated students (HMBM) and the other one with unmotivated students (LMBM). The steps of the process were the same with both groups.

Phase I

Activity 1

After that, I implemented a series of activities. First, I made a presentation about sports equipment and body vocabulary. In each slide there was a photo of the word that the students were learning. In this way, the students related the image to the word and their learning process was supposed to be easier and faster. Moreover, it also appeared the word in Spanish. With this, the

purpose was to make them relate the image to a particular word and facilitate their mental processes. My idea was that if the students relate the image and the word in English to a word in Spanish they already have stored in their mind, they would learn the vocabulary faster. The word in English appeared in the slide in order to help the students do the connections between the three words that were on the slide. Taking into account the students with special needs, the power point contained big images to facilitate the view to those students with vision problems. Moreover, the characteristics of the activity made possible the participation of all the students without any problems since all the students could speak in the class and give their opinion about the words.

Activity 2

In the next activity, the students must work in pairs. In this way, they had to interact and speak in English. They were asked to share their ideas and give their opinion and it was a good way to practice speaking. They were asked to write sentences with the words they had on the sheet of paper. The sentences had to be coherent. The students had to do this activity without the teacher's help. The only material the students were given was a sheet of paper with the words they were asked to use to write their sentences. The purpose of this activity was to make them use the vocabulary they had learnt. They should write coherent and cohesive sentences in which the words were correctly used. The fact that they worked in pairs was interesting since they could have different ideas and different opinions and they could help each other if they made a writing mistake.

Activity 3

Activity number three consisted in relating the words with their definition. In this activity the students must work in pairs. They were given a sheet of paper in which they had a definition for each word they had learnt in that session and the word itself. They were asked to join the definitions with the correct word. The teacher did not help them. If the students had any doubt about the vocabulary, they needed to guess the meaning of the word or the expression from the context. The purpose of the activity was to see if the students knew the meaning of the word. At the same time, it

was useful to practice reading comprehension because the students had to read the definitions and understand them. In addition, the fact that they worked in pairs was useful for making them speak in English and express their ideas. They had to debate between them which was the best definition for each word and arrive to an agreement. Moreover it also encouraged students' autonomy since they could not ask the teacher and they needed to guess the meaning of the words from the context.

Activity 4

Activity number four must be done as homework. The students were asked to work individually and to write an essay. They should work at home on their own and they had to write about one of the following topics: *a sport you practice* or *a sport you would like to practice*. The students must choose a topic and relate their personal experience and knowledge to the vocabulary they had learnt. It was very important that they used the new vocabulary on their writings. They should use it appropriately in context and try to create a coherent and cohesive text. With this activity, they learnt to work at home and to be autonomous. They were requested to do the activity on their own since the teacher only gave them the initial steps, but all the process had to be done by the students. Moreover, they were given the required minimums and maximums so they could adapt the writing to their level of English and try to accomplish the requirements of the activities. The students could give it to me on a sheet of paper or they could send it to me by email. The students had my email address and they could send the writing to my by email, In this way, TICs were included in the classroom and the students had freedom to use the traditional sheet of paper or to use the computer to write their essays. It was used as a way of motivating the students to write, since they were used to use the computer and they feel comfortable writing on it. This activity was used to check whether the students could use the vocabulary in context to express themselves or not.

Phase II

Finally, the students were given a sheet of paper with the test they were requested to do. The

purpose of this activity was to check if the students acquired the knowledge and the vocabulary they were supposed to. The test consisted of three questions. On the first question the students were asked to translate the words they had learnt into Spanish. With this, I wanted to check if they were able to recognise and translate the words in the two languages. The second activity was about writing sentences. The students got some words and they were asked to write sentences. The aim of this activity was to check if the students were able to use the vocabulary and create coherent sentences. The most important point was that the students used the vocabulary correctly in context since the word alone was useless and they needed to be able to create meaningful sentences for their daily life situations and for the situations in which they will need to communicate with other people. The third activity was about completing sentences with the vocabulary the students had learnt. The purpose of this exercise was to see if the students were capable of recognising the context in which a word fits and relate it to the correct word. The students had 30 minutes to complete the test, although if they needed more time they could spend 10 more minutes to complete the activities. They were required to do it individually and they could ask the teacher, using English, if they had any questions. At the end of the lesson, I asked the students to write in a few lines about the experience. I wanted them to write their feelings and if they had learnt or not. I also asked them to explain if they wanted to learn more and about their level of motivation after the activities.

9.4.2. Cognitive-based methodology

In order to compare two different ways of introducing the vocabulary to the students, I created some activities which used the Cognitive method to teach the new vocabulary. I created a didactic unit and I used the same activities with both groups: motivated students (HMCM) and unmotivated students (LMCM). The steps I followed during the process were the following ones:

Phase I

Activity 1

First, I made a presentation about sports equipment and body vocabulary. In each slide there

was a photo of the word that the students were learning. In this way, the students related the image to the word and their learning process was supposed to be easier and faster. Moreover, it also appeared the word in Spanish. With this, the purpose was to make them relate the image to a particular word and facilitate their mental processes. They had to create a relationship between their mother tongue and the new language they were learning. The students were asked if they know the word in English and they tried to guess it from their previous knowledge. It was not important if they did it right or wrong. The most important point was that they try to guess, participate and use their previous knowledge in order to look for the word. Then, the word in English appeared in the slide in order to check whether the students already knew the word or not. If they did it well it was gratifying for them, and if they did it wrong they had learnt how the correct word was so that they will remember it. As in the other group, taking into account the students with special needs, the power point contained big images to facilitate the view to those students with vision problems. Moreover, the characteristics of the activity made possible the participation of all the students without any problem since all the students could speak in the class and give their opinion about the words.

Activity 2

The next activity, in which the students were expected to use their experience and previous knowledge, was a role-play. They created groups of 3 or 4 people. In this way, I tried to promote group work and help them to learn how to accept other people's opinion and how to defend their own opinion since when you work in group, each member of the group can have different opinions and ideas and some conflicts may emerge. They had to solve the differences between the members of the group and arrive to an agreement. Moreover, the purpose of making the students work in groups was to make the activity funnier and to make them interact and speak in English. They had to speak in English to each other while they were sharing their ideas and doing the activity. The groups had to be balanced. That means that I tried to create groups with the same number of

students and with students with the same level of knowledge and motivation. In this way, the students that had problems with the English language and whose level was not very high could learn from their classmates and help each other. After that, they were prompted to think about a situation in which they would use the vocabulary they had learnt. Then, they were asked to write a short role-play. In previous units they had seen what a role play is as well as some examples. Thanks to this fact, it was easy for them to complete the task. It was very important that the students used the vocabulary accurately and that they created the appropriate context. They had to think of a situation that can occur in their daily life and create a real dialogue. It was important that all the members of the group participated and that they spoke only in English. The selection of this activity was because it was a different exercise from the ones they used to do when learning vocabulary. The purpose of this activity was to see if the students could use their knowledge and their experiences to create real situations and to use the vocabulary appropriately in a real context. Finally, the students played the role-play in front of their classmates.

Activity 3

After that, the students were asked to do an activity as homework. They must write an essay at home on their own about one of the following topics: *a sport you practice* or *a sport you would like to practice*. The students had to choose a topic and relate their personal experience and knowledge to the vocabulary they had learnt. It was very important that they use the new vocabulary on their writings. They had to use it appropriately in context and try to create a coherent and cohesive text. With this activity, they learnt to work at home and to be autonomous. They should do the activity on their own since I only gave them the initial steps, but all the process needed to be done by the students. Moreover, they were given the required minimums and maximums so they could adapt the writing to their level of English and try to accomplish the requirements of the activities. The students could give it to me on a sheet of paper or send it by email. They had my email address and they could send me the writing by email.

Phase II

Finally, as in the groups HMBM and LMBM, they were asked to do a final test. The purpose of this activity was to check if the students had acquired the knowledge and the vocabulary they were supposed to. The test had the same three questions as the one used with the other group. On the first question the students were requested to translate into the words they had learnt in English in order to check if they were able to recognise and translate the words in the two languages. The second activity was about writing sentences to see if the students were able to use the vocabulary in context. The third activity was about completing sentences with the vocabulary the students had learnt. The purpose of this exercise was to see if the students were able to recognise the context in which a word has to be used and relate it to the correct word. The students had 30 minutes to complete the test, although if they needed more time they could spend 10 more minutes to complete the activities. They had to do it individually and they could ask the teacher, using English, if they had any queries. At the end of the lesson, I asked the students to write about the experience in a few lines. I wanted them to write their feelings and if they had learnt or not. I also asked them to explain if they wanted to learn more and about their level of motivation after the activities.

10. Results

In order to see which one of the two methods of teaching vocabulary was more successful and to see if motivation correlates with the Cognitive-based methodology, it is necessary to analyse the data from three sources: the initial questionnaire, the final test and the writing task.

10.1. Initial questionnaire

I needed to check the level of motivation of the students in both class groups participating in the study. In order to do that, I asked all the students to complete a questionnaire with different questions to see their motivation to learn English. Although I asked the teachers before conducting my study about the most motivated class and the less motivated class, I wanted to check if the

information they gave me was correct. I selected a questionnaire from FengXia Wang (2008) to test the students' level of motivation and to see if the teachers' stereotypes and division of groups were real or not.

Two different classes with different levels of knowledge and motivation participated in the study. The first group was 4th of ESO 1. The result of the questionnaire showed the following information:

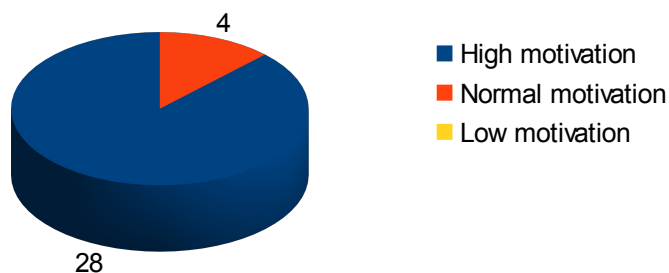


Figure 2. Motivation 4ESO 1

As the graphic shows, 28 students were highly motivated. They were very interested in English and they had a good level of knowledge of the language. Moreover, they were interested in learning. On the other side, only 4 students showed an intermediate level of motivation. Although they used to pay attention, study and do homework, they saw English as a difficult subject and their only interest was to pass the subject. Apart from the questionnaire, I also spoke with them and asked them about their interest on the subject and on the learning process. The general answer was that they wanted to learn and to get good marks. They usually did the homework and studied for the exams. These students wanted to learn more things about the English language, pay attention and participate in class.

The second group was 4th of ESO 4. The results of the questionnaire in this class showed the following information:

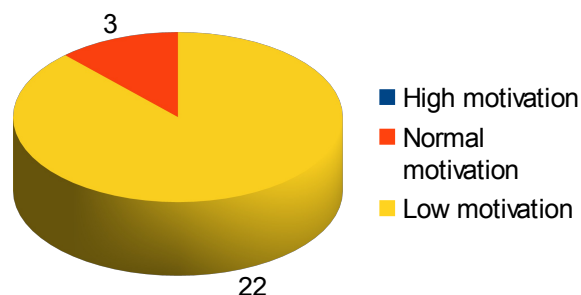


Figure 3. Motivation 4ESO4

Regarding 4th of ESO 4 motivation, it was, in general terms, very low. Only 3 students had a normal level of motivation, while 22 of the students had a low level of motivation. Apart from filling out the questionnaire, I myself also asked the students what were their feelings about the subject and if they were motivated or they were not. The general answer was unanimous and very clear. They were not motivated and they had no interest in learning English. Their general view was that English was a very difficult and useless subject. They said that since they were in the 4th group (the worst group according to the high school opinion), they were supposed to fail in their academic life and for them it had no sense to do an effort to learn. They had no interest in learning and the excuse was that it was too difficult. They hardly ever did homework or studied for the exams. All the class agreed in the fact that the teachers saw them as lost cases and it made them all feel less motivated. However, they did not have interest in proving the opposite and demonstrating that they were capable of learning English.

In summary, the two classes that participated in the study had different views on the learning process and different levels of motivation and knowledge. The 4th of ESO1 class was highly motivated, while the 4th of ESO4 class had a low level of motivation. This difference between the two classes was useful for my study to check whether motivation is influenced by a determined methodology or it is not.

10.2. Final test

At the end of the lessons I made with the students of 4th of ESO, I did a final test (appendix 2). The purpose of the exam was to check if the students had learnt the vocabulary. I wanted to see if they were able to relate the words in their mother tongue and in the target language and to see if they could relate the words with a particular context. The results I obtained were different in the two groups.

10.2.1. Groups working with the Behaviourist methodology

In groups working with the Behaviourist method we can make a distinction between the motivated students (HMBM) and the unmotivated students (LMBM). The first group, obtained better results than the second group.

On the one hand, the students who were in group HMBM obtained good results. On activity 1, an average of 6 errors. They were able to identify and translate words that were familiar to them, but they were not able to complete the activity with the words that were new for them. On the activity 2, the results were significant. Although 3 students did the activity without errors, the rest committed a considerable number of errors. They wrote simple sentences in which the grammar was correct but very simple. The structures were repeated and similar in all the sentences and the students had difficulties to create a complex sentence in which the word could be used in an appropriate context. Finally, regarding activity 3, all the students did the activity without any mistakes. They did not find it difficult to relate the new vocabulary with a context and to complete sentences with the appropriate words.

On the other hand, the students who were in group LMBM did the activities with more difficulty. On activity 1, it was difficult for them to translate most words. They committed an average of 15 errors. It should be commented that the word “speed” was the only word that none of the students could translate. They confused the meaning of “speed” with the meaning of “fast” since

these are two words which have a connection and the students use the meaning they already have stored in their mind instead of using the new meaning they have learnt. On activity 2, the students had difficulties to create meaningful sentences in which the new vocabulary was used in a correct context. They wrote very simple sentences that in most cases were meaningless. They made literal translations from Spanish and they wrote simple and repetitive sentences. Regarding grammar, they committed basic mistakes. Moreover, most of the students were not able to write sentences with all the words since they did not know how to use those words in context. Finally, all the students did activity number 3 well. They had no difficulties in relating the words to a particular situation and they completed all the gaps correctly.

To sum up, the group HMBM, obtained good results when translating words. They only had problems when using the words in sentences and created more complex or real sentences. The group LMBM had more difficulties to translate the words that were new for them. Moreover, in the activity they had to create sentences they committed a lot of mistakes and, in some cases, they could not write sentences with words they had not seen before that day.

10.2.2. Groups working with the Cognitive-based methodology

In the groups working with the Cognitive-based method, the results obtained were good. I found them surprising, especially the results regarding the group LMCM.

The group HMCM had fantastic results in the final test. In the activity 1, all the students were able to translate all the words without any problem, with the exception of one student who committed one mistake. In the activity 2, the students created more complex sentences than the group HMBM. Although they had grammar errors, they wrote different structures for each word and they created the appropriate context for the words. Finally, in the activity 3, all the students did the activity perfectly, with the exception of 3 students who did not understand the context and confused the words “coordination” and “brain”. Comparing group HMCM with the group HMBM, it is

possible to see that the results obtained are better in the group HMCM. The students were able to translate almost all the words and create meaningful and complex sentences in which the words were used correctly, while in the other group had more difficulties and committed more mistakes. However, this group (HMCM) had errors in activity 3, while the group HMBM did the activity perfectly.

On the other hand, I also analysed the results obtained in the final test by the group LMCM. In the activity 1 they had less errors than the group LMBM. They committed around 5 errors when translating the words and all their mistakes were done with vocabulary that was new for them. They were able to translate easily the words they had heard before. In the activity 2, they use the word in the appropriate context. They created sentences for all the words. However, they wrote simple sentences with grammatical mistakes. In the activity 3, the students completed all the gaps perfectly and they had no mistakes. Comparing the group LMCM with the group LMBM, it was possible to see that the results were better in the group LMCM. Although they committed mistakes, the Cognitive-based method helped the students to translate and create sentences more easily than the group LMBM.

10.3. Writing task

In order to see the evolution of the students and analyse the results of my study, I also asked the students to do a writing task as homework. The purpose of this activity was to see if they were able to use the vocabulary in a text. The students were requested to use the new vocabulary in a text about their daily life. The results obtained were different depending on the methodology used in each group.

10.3.1. Groups working with the Behaviourist methodology

In the groups working with the Behaviourist methodology, we can see differences between the motivated group (HMBM) and the unmotivated group (LMBM).

In the group HMBM, I have observed that they wrote around 8 to 10 lines. Each text had around five words from the new vocabulary the students acquired. Most of times, the students repeated the words that were familiar to them in the same sentence or in the text. The test-words that were used in the texts by the students and their frequency are reflected in the next figure:

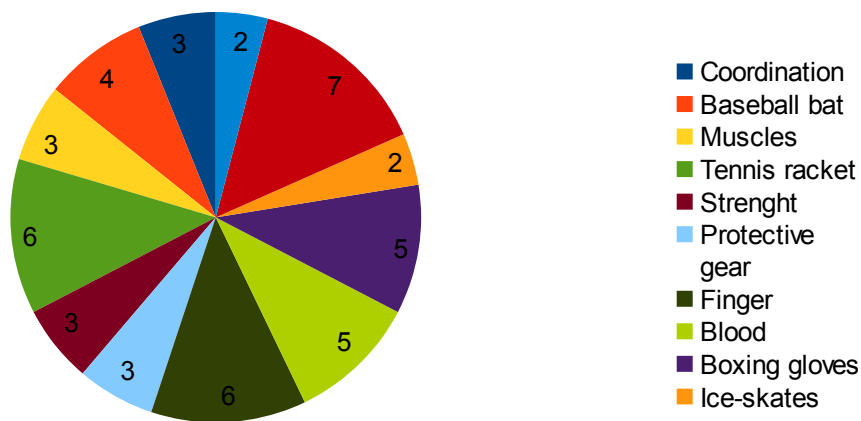


Figure 4. Test-words frequency HMBM

In the group LMBM, the results obtained in the writing tasks were worse than in the group HMBM. The students on this group wrote about 8-9 lines in each text, with the exception of two students who saw themselves not capable of doing the activity and wrote very short text of about 4-5 lines. Coherence and cohesion of the texts were bad and most of times it was difficult to understand the message that the students wanted to convey. They wrote very simple and repetitive sentences and structures in which the grammar errors were abundant. In addition, the average of test-words written in each text was about 3-5 test-words in each writing. It should be mentioned that all the students committed the same mistake. They used the word “resistence” instead of using the word “endurance”. It happened because they made a literal translation from their mother tongue since they knew they could use a word with that meaning but they did not know the adequate word they should use. The test-words that the students used and their frequency are included in the following figure:

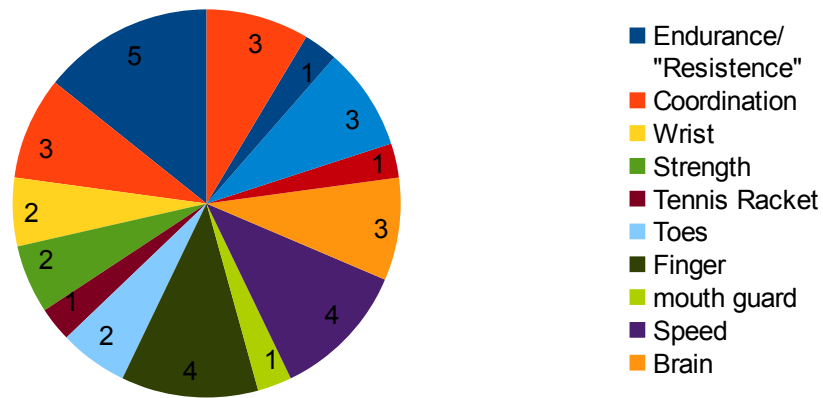


Figure 5. Test-words frequency LMBM

10.3.2. Groups working with the Cognitive-based methodology

The two groups working with the Cognitive-based methodology had very good results in their writings. At this point I am going to explain the differences I have seen between the groups.

In the group HMCM, the students did fantastic writings. They wrote long texts of about 10-12 lines. Their texts were coherent and cohesive and they were easy to follow. Moreover, they used complex sentences and structures to explain their ideas. In general terms, the students used an average of around 7-11 words in each writing. The words that the students used in their texts and their frequency are reflected in the following figure:

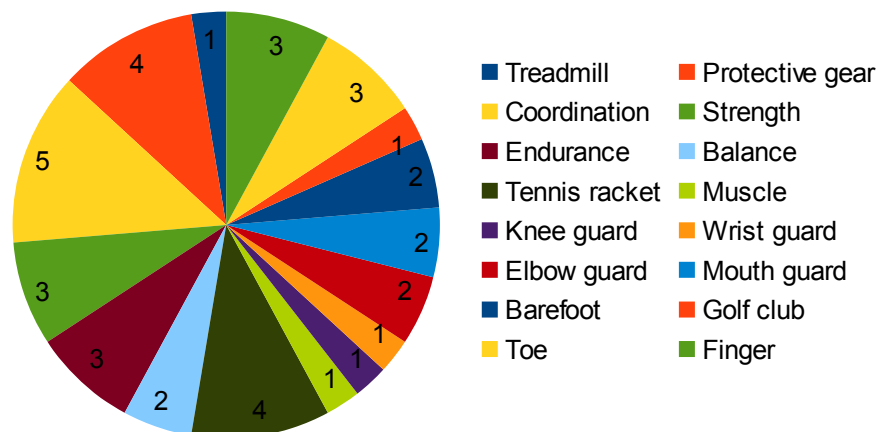


Figure 6. Test-words frequency HMCM

In the group LMCM the results obtained by the students in their writings were better than the results obtained by the group LMBM. LMCM students wrote around 7-9 lines in each text. All the students did the activity and obtained good results. They used an average of 5-7 words in

each text. Their texts were shorter than the text created by the group HMCM, but they also created cohesive and coherent texts in which the message could be followed easily. They expressed their ideas clearly and most of the words they used were correctly used. They selected the words and used them in the appropriate context in the text. The words this group used in their text and their frequency are reflected in the following figure:

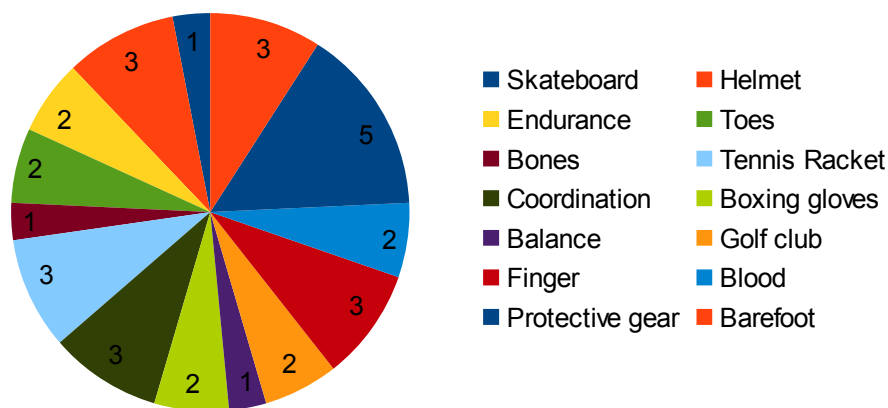


Figure 7. Test-words frequency LCMC

11. Conclusion

After having analysed all the data obtained from the activities done in class by the students of 4th of ESO, I can conclude that the Cognitive-based methodology is more useful and appropriate to teach vocabulary in a Secondary school class. Moreover, I have also observed that by using this method, the students who felt not motivated to learn had a better attitude and their learning process was better, more effective and faster.

The students who were taught with the Behaviourist methodology acquired and learned the vocabulary but with more difficulty. Their results in the final test and in the writing activity were worse than the results obtained by the students using the Cognitive-based methodology. They were able to translate the words, but they committed mistakes. Moreover, when they had to do the activity about creating sentences in isolation, they did it without any problem. However, they did grammatical mistakes which made the writing difficult to understand and the sentences were very simple. Taking into account that the marks of the final tests were out of 1, the results of their tests

were the following ones:

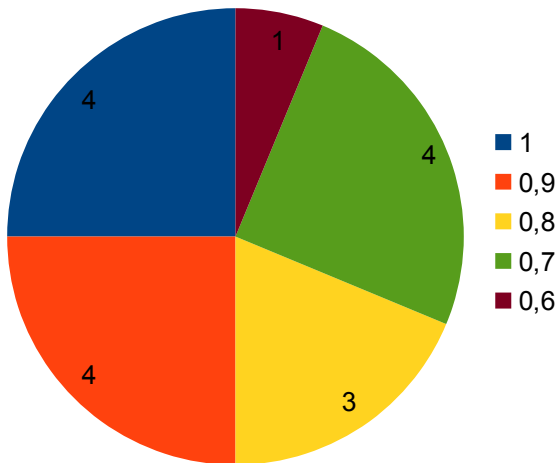


Figure 8. HMBM

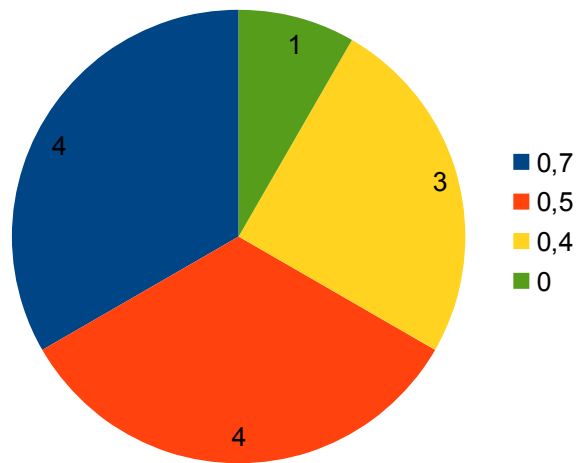


Figure 9. LMBM

The students who were taught using the Cognitive-based methodology learned the vocabulary early and obtained better results in their tests. They were able to translate more words than the other groups that used the Behaviourist procedures and they could create longer and more complex sentences to use the vocabulary. In addition, since they had practised how to use the vocabulary in a context and in a real life situation and how to relate it to their previous knowledge and experience, their writings obtained better results. They wrote longer texts with more words in each writing. They created more cohesive and coherent texts and they used the words in the correct context. Taking into account that the marks of the final test were out of 1, the results of their tests were the following ones:

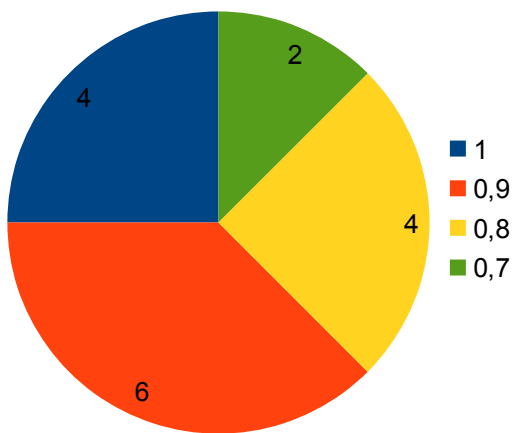


Figure 10. HMCM

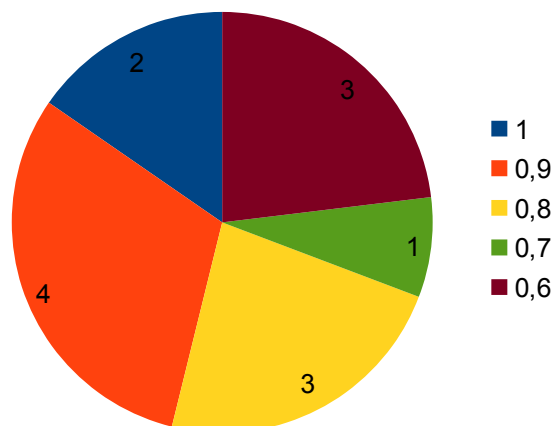


Figure 11. LMCM

The group of LMCM started to show interest during the process. They were very participative and their attitude was positive while they were doing the activities in class. Their learning process was faster and they were able to acquire the new vocabulary and do the activities they were asked to do without problems. They obtained good results and this increased their motivation to continue learning at the end of the study. On the other hand, the group LMBM felt bored and did not participate in the process. Although their attitude was not negative, they did not want to participate and most of them had a despondent behaviour. They learned the vocabulary with more difficulties and their results were not as good as the group LMCM.

To conclude, after having done this research, I have arrived at the conclusion that the Cognitive-based method is more useful to teach vocabulary. Furthermore, the students who did not feel motivated before starting the activities, increased their level of motivation during the process and they learned more. They participated and were interested in the exercises and their attitude was very positive. My survey has shown some clear evidence that Cognitive-based methodology is better to teach and learn vocabulary and to enhance students motivation toward their learning process.

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13. Appendixes

13.1. Appendix 1

QUESTIONNAIRE 1

PERSONAL DETAILS

- Age:
- Sex: Male Female
- Current level of English: Elementary Pre-intermediate Intermediate or above
- Degree course:

Thank you for your cooperation.

Read the following statements and choose the number that best matches your opinion of each statement:

1 Strongly disagree

2 Slightly disagree

3 Neither agree or disagree

4 Slightly agree

5 Strongly agree

1. I like learning English.
2. I will persist when facing difficulties in English learning.
3. I can finish my English homework actively.
4. I like listening to English speech.
5. I like reading English articles.
6. I feel more confident in English studying compared with my classmates.
7. I work on my English assignments according to a planned schedule.
8. I study English diligently for potential development in the future.
9. I like challenging to difficult tasks.
10. I treat English exams as an evaluation of what I have learned about English.

11. I like English films.
12. I am excited when I have accomplished a difficult task in English learning.
13. I study English hard for the praise of the teacher.
14. I seldom read English out of English class.
15. I study English only to pass CET-4 or CET- 6.
16. I seldom finished English homework.
17. It is very challenging to communicate with foreign speakers.
18. In order to know recent developments in my major, I study English diligently.
19. The English achievement is a crucial factor in getting the scholarship, so I study English diligently.
20. I study English diligently merely to graduate from university.
21. English is a very important tool for communication so I study it diligently
22. In order to get an ideal job in the future I study English diligently.
23. English learning takes great advantage on the future work.
24. In order to go abroad in the future, I study English diligently.

Source: FengXia Wang. Hubei University, China 2008

13.2. Appendix 2

FINAL TEST

Name:

Course:

Date:

1. Translate these words:

- Protective Gear:
- Helmets:
- Mouth Guards:
- Wrist Guards:
- Knee Guards:
- Elbow Guards:
- Golf Club:
- Skateboards:
- Baseball Gloves:
- Treadmills:
- Balance:
- Barefoot:
- Blood:
- Bone:
- Brain:
- Coordination:
- Endurance:

- Finger:
- Gene:
- Lung:
- Muscle:
- Speed:
- Toe:

2. Write a sentence with each word:

- Tennis Rackets:
- Hockey Sticks:
- Baseball Bats:
- Ice-Skates:
- Boxing Gloves:
- Heart:
- Strength:

3. Complete the sentences:

Coordination

Helmets

Barefoot

Finger

Brain

Treadmill

- In rugby they use _____ to protect their heads from the blows.
 - Before using a _____ it is necessary to warm up if you do not want to get hurt.
 - Practising sports is a good way of improving your _____.
 - The _____ is also used when practising sports since you have to concentrate and think on the best strategy to win.
 - It is very relaxing when you walk _____ on the beach.
- A: Hey! What happened to you?
- B: I broke my _____ playing rugby.
- A: Ohh! Sometimes practising sports can be dangerous.