**Program : ADP Islamic Studies**

**Semester : 1ˢᵗ**

**Course : Functional English**

**Course Code : GENG-101**

**Topic : Foundations of Functional English**

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*Vocabulary Building*

*Etymology:*

The word comes from the Latin word "**vocabulum**", which means **"name"** or **"word."**

Vox means "voice" in Latin, and vocare means "to call" or "to name."

So, the term vocabulary essentially means **"a collection of words"** and is derived from the idea of naming or calling things through speech.

Hence,

*Vocabulary building refers to the process of learning and acquiring new words to improve one's ability to communicate effectively.*

Here are a few key aspects of vocabulary building:

❖ *Learning New Words*

When you learn new words, you expand the range of ideas you can express. For example:

**Word:** "Serene"

**Meaning:** Calm, peaceful

**Sentence:** "The lake was serene in the early morning light."

❖ *Understanding Contextual Usage*

Words can change meaning depending on the context in which they are used. Understanding a word's meaning in different contexts is a crucial part of vocabulary building.

**Word:** "Light"

**Context 1:** "The room was filled with light." (Here, "light" refers to brightness.)

**Context 2:** "She carried a light bag." (Here, "light" means not heavy.)

⬧ *Learning Synonyms and Antonyms*

Expanding your knowledge of words with similar and opposite meanings helps in avoiding repetition and adding variety to your language.

Example of Synonyms:

**Word:** "Fast"

**Synonyms:** Quick, Speedy, Rapid

**Sentence:** "He ran at a rapid pace."

Example of Antonyms:

**Word:** "Hot"

**Antonym:** Cold

**Sentence:** "The coffee was too hot to drink, so I added ice to make it cold."

⬧ *Using Idiomatic Expressions*

Idioms are common phrases that have figurative meanings different from their literal meanings. Learning idioms helps improve fluency.

**Idiom:** "Kick the bucket"

**Meaning:** To die

**Sentence:** "The old man finally kicked the bucket after a long illness."

## 1) Contextual Usage

❖ ***Context refers to the circumstances or situation in which a word, phrase, or sentence is used, and it helps determine its meaning.*** In language, context provides clues to understand the meaning of words or sentences that might otherwise be unclear.

There are **two** main types of context:

i. ***Linguistic Context:*** The words or sentences surrounding a particular word or phrase. This helps to understand the meaning of the word in that specific situation.

**Example:**

"The bank was crowded today." (Here, "bank" refers to a financial institution.)

"We sat by the riverbank." (In this sentence, "bank" means the side of a river.)

In both examples, the surrounding words ("crowded" and "riverbank") help clarify the meaning of "bank."

ii. ***Situational Context:*** The external situation, events, or setting in which communication occurs. This includes the time, place, and people involved, which can affect the meaning of what is said or written.

**Example:**

If someone says "It's freezing in here" while standing in a room with the air conditioning on, the context suggests they are talking about the temperature being very cold.

**Contextual Usage:**

***Understanding the meaning of a word through the context in which it is used helps in mastering its application.***

**Example 1:**

**Word:** "Innovative"

**Context:** "The company's innovative approach to technology set it apart from its competitors."

**Explanation:** Here, "innovative" means creative or original, as the company is using new ideas in technology.

**Example 2:**

**Word:** "Elaborate"

**Context:** "The student gave an elaborate explanation of the theory."

**Explanation:** In this context, "elaborate" means detailed or thorough.

**Example 3:**

**Word:** "Bright"

**Context 1:** "The sun is bright today." (Refers to brightness or light.)

**Context 2:** "He is a bright student." (Means intelligent or smart.)

In both cases, the surrounding words help determine the intended meaning of "bright."

## Exercise:

Find the meaning of the word "tedious" in this context: "The process of filling out forms was tedious and time-consuming."

## 2) Synonyms

*Synonyms are words that have similar meanings.* Learning synonyms enhances your vocabulary and allows you to express the same idea in different ways.

**Example 1:**

**Word:** "Happy"

**Synonyms:** Joyful, Cheerful, Content, Elated

**Sentence:** "She felt elated after receiving the good news."

**Example 2:**

**Word:** "Important"

**Synonyms:** Crucial, Vital, Essential, Significant

**Sentence:** "It is crucial to submit the project on time."

**Example 3:**

**Word:** "Hard"

**Synonyms:** Difficult, Challenging, Tough

**Sentence:** "She felt joyful after hearing the good news."

## Exercise:

List synonyms for the word "angry."

## 3) Antonyms

***Antonyms are words with opposite meanings.*** Understanding antonyms helps improve contrast and variety in writing.

**Example 1:**

**Word:** "Generous"

**Antonym:** Stingy

**Sentence:** "The stingy man refused to give any donations."

**Example 2:**

**Word:** "Weak"

**Antonym:** Strong

**Sentence:** "Despite being sick, she remained strong and positive."

**Example 3:**

**Word:** Good

**Antonym:** Bad

**Sentence:** "Throughout in meeting, he had shown bad behaviour towards the staff".

## Exercise:

Provide antonyms for the word "brave."

## 4) Idiomatic Expressions

*Idioms are phrases whose meanings aren't deducible from the literal meanings of the individual words.*

**Example 1:**

**Idiom:** "Break the ice"

**Meaning:** To initiate a conversation or create a relaxed atmosphere.

**Sentence:** "At the start of the meeting, the manager told a joke to break the ice."

**Example 2:**

**Idiom:** "Bite off more than you can chew"

**Meaning:** To take on a task that is too difficult.

**Sentence:** "By agreeing to complete both projects by tomorrow, he bit off more than he could chew."

**Example 3 :**

**Idiom:** "Hit the nail on the head"

**Meaning:** To describe something perfectly or to be exactly right.

**Sentence:** "His answer hit the nail on the head during the discussion."

## Exercise:

Use the idiom "spill the beans" in a sentence and explain its meaning.


## Practice Section

Contextual Usage Practice:

Write a sentence showing the usage of following words in context:

Obvious , Efficient , Reluctant

Synonym Practice:

Write a sentence using any synonym of the word "beautiful."

Antonym Practice:

Write a sentence using the antonym of the word "polite."

Idiomatic Expression Practice:

Use the following idioms in sentences:

"Under the weather"

"A red letter day".


❖ **Role of contextual usage, synonyms, antonyms and idiomatic expressions in Vocabulary building in a language.**


Contextual usage, synonyms, antonyms, and idiomatic expressions each play an important role in building vocabulary. **Contextual usage** helps us understand the meaning of words by showing how they are used in sentences. This way, even if a word has multiple meanings, the sentence tells us which meaning is correct. **Synonyms** are words that mean the same thing, and learning them allows us to express ideas in different ways, making our language more interesting. **Antonyms** are words with opposite meanings, and they help us understand contrasts and describe things more clearly. Finally, **idiomatic expressions** are phrases with special meanings that native speakers use in daily life. Learning idioms makes our speech sound more natural and fluent. All of these elements together help us communicate more effectively and understand language better.