



UNLOCKING THE POWER OF PASSIVE VOCABULARY: ENHANCING COMMUNICATION SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary learning always has been a crucial part of language learning especially for ESL learners. Students complain about their ability to use the learned vocabulary in communication due to inadequate utilization of words and retaining phrases in long-term memory. This study examines empirical approaches to acquisition given vocabulary involving several techniques such as practice through reading, writing, speaking, and word games. Through actively taking part in learning vocabulary students are capable foster their overall language skills and widen their vocabulary more efficiently. By doing so, we suggest learners focus on practice repeatedly, embrace authentic language sources into application and use every chance to use vocabulary in real-life contexts mainly for B1, B2 learners.

KEYWORDS: *ESL learners, inadequate utilization, authentic sources, real-life contexts.*

INTRODUCTION

An essential component of human connection is communication, which enables people to connect, communicate, and exchange ideas. According to Nichols and Rupley (2004), may be characterized as "an integral part of a balanced approach to teaching vocabulary instruction" (p. 55). Vocabulary is one important element that frequently contributes significantly to good communication. Unlocking the potential of passive vocabulary is just as vital as using more active vocabulary, which most people concentrate on growing because these are the words they use on a daily basis while speaking and writing. The term "passive vocabulary" describes terms that people know and comprehend but do not often use in everyday conversation. These terms could have come up when reading, listening, or learning a language, but they have not been completely incorporated into the person's current vocabulary. Nonetheless, people may greatly improve their communication abilities and express themselves more clearly and confidently by utilizing the possibilities of passive vocabulary. Improving understanding and fluency in spoken and written communication is one of the main advantages of building a passive vocabulary. People may grasp and communicate complicated concepts more effectively by learning new words and developing a deeper understanding of the intricacies and complexities of language. This can thus result in more precise and impactful communication, allowing people to express their ideas and feelings more clearly and effectively. Additionally, people may become more flexible and adaptive communicators by realizing the potential of passive vocabulary. "It has long been known that vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension are closely related" (McNeil, 1992, p. 112). For this very reason, reading is primarily methods of learning vocabulary in contexts. People may more effectively adapt their language to various circumstances, audiences, and goals by being more familiar with a wider variety of words and expressions. This adaptability may be especially helpful in work environments because

establishing rapport, sharing knowledge, and accomplishing objectives all depend on efficient communication. Moreover, expanding one's passive vocabulary helps improve cognitive function and one's overall language proficiency. A wide and diverse vocabulary is linked to better levels of intellect, creativity, and critical thinking, according to research. People may hone their language skills, broaden their knowledge, and engage more with their passive vocabulary by actively using it. This will help them become more skilled communicators. Developing one's passive vocabulary may be a worthwhile and satisfying undertaking that has a good effect on communication abilities and general language competency. People may improve their comprehension, fluency, variety, and cognitive capacities by increasing their word knowledge and usage. This will ultimately enable them to communicate more successfully and confidently in both their personal and professional life.

Instructors looking for an efficient teaching approach can start by comprehending and putting into practice what is known about how kids learn and how the brain absorbs, stores, and uses information (Sousa, 1995). Jensen (2005) contends that word-based learning requires attentive, focused attention. If teachers teach language more effectively, classrooms can become vibrant, dynamic learning environments. According to Jensen (2005), "people will come to realize that you had better understand the brain if you wanted to understand human learning" (p. ix).

Students' brains are different from those of past generations, as Sousa (2003) notes. Diverse technologies and diversions including social media, religion, hobbies, and contemporary diets have an impact on kids' ability to think and their neural architecture. Educational scientists have discovered a great deal about the brain and how it works during learning in the last 10 years (Wolfe, 2001). Teachers are now far more aware of how critical it is to pay attention to and make content relevant during the teaching and learning process. They also know more about



how information is received, stored, and retrieved by the brain. As our understanding of the workings of the brain has grown, knowledgeable educational leaders are now better equipped to assist teachers in adapting their methods of instruction to better support the learning process. There are several problems in learning active vocabulary and I want to mention some of them before starting the article .

One of common issues called “Recall Difficulty” When speaking or writing actively, learners may find it difficult to remember and apply words they understand. It can be difficult to retrieve words from memory and incorporate them into writing or conversation on the spur of the moment. Learners do know the word but cannot remember since they have already become passive vocabulary in their brain.

Contextual Appropriateness: Students may find it difficult to utilize a term correctly in various settings even if they can passively understand its meaning. It might be difficult to grasp the subtleties of word usage and to know when and how to use a term effectively. Especially when students have a number of new words learned and they seem similar in their first language , learners struggle with choosing appropriate words which suits the context.

Lack of Confidence: Students may be reluctant to actively employ new words out of concern that they will pronounce them poorly or sound strange. Their apprehension about making mistakes may prevent them from embracing new words in their conversations. New learners usually try to avoid using these new learned vocabularies and they become passive in the end.

Limited Exposure to Usage: Words that are passively understood are frequently encountered in reading or hearing situations. However, learners may not be exposed to the word's practical usage if they are not actively speaking or writing with it, which makes it more difficult for them to internalize and employ. Practice is necessary to make the shift from passive to active vocabulary. Consistent practice and reinforcement are necessary. To reinforce their learning and usage, learners require opportunities to actively utilize recently learned terms in a variety of contexts.

It might be difficult to include new terminology into writing or speech that flows naturally. It could be challenging for learners to incorporate new words into their speech output without hesitating or pausing. As learners expand their active vocabulary, they may encounter words with varying levels of difficulty or complexity. Balancing the incorporation of new words with maintaining fluency and coherence in communication can be a challenge, especially for learners at different proficiency levels.

Cultural and Sociolinguistic Factors: Understanding the cultural and sociolinguistic contexts in which words are used is essential for effective communication. Learners may face challenges in grasping the cultural connotations or appropriate usage of words in different social contexts.

Active Reading: Examining reading engagement is crucial. According to Baker, Dreher, and Guthrie (2000), students who read regularly for pleasure, interest, and education are deemed engaged readers. According to Page 2, "engagement is the desire to learn new information about a subject, to follow the suspense of a story, and to broaden one's experience through print." According to a nationwide study, 44% of 9-year-old kids read for pleasure every day. By the age of 13, just 21% of people are reading for pleasure (Baker et al., 2000). According to Campbell, Voelkl, and Donahue (1997), just a small percentage of pupils engage in reading on a daily basis.

"Looking at what exceptional teachers do can help illustrate the current state of instructional practice" (Baker, et al., 2000, p. 11). Pressley, Wharton, McDonald, Allington, Block, and Morrow (1998) studied first grade. Five sites' worth of teachers who were recommended by their managers as successful in advancing their students' literacy were either watched or surveyed. These educators were classified as either exceptional or average. Examining teaching strategies, it was discovered that teachers classified as typical weren't bad educators—they were just average. Results showed that these teachers' methods of instruction had a discernible impact on the academic performance of their pupils (Baker, et al.). Expanding one's active vocabulary can present difficulties as learners come across words of varying levels of difficulty or complexity. Striking a balance between integrating new words and maintaining smooth and coherent communication can be challenging, particularly for learners at different proficiency levels.

Taking cultural and sociolinguistic factors into account is crucial for successful communication. Learners may encounter obstacles in grasping the cultural implications or appropriate usage of words in different social contexts. Turning passive vocabulary into active vocabulary through writing can be an effective strategy for language learners. Here is how you can approach it: **Keep a Vocabulary Journal:** Start by keeping a vocabulary journal where you list new words you encounter during reading or listening activities. Include the word, its definition, and an example sentence or phrase illustrating its usage.

Set Writing Goals: Establish specific writing goals that incorporate the use of new vocabulary. For example, aim to write a certain number of sentences or paragraphs each day or week using recently learned words.

Practice Word Usage: Select a few words from your vocabulary journal and incorporate them into your writing exercises. Focus on using the words in different contexts and sentence structures to deepen your understanding of their meanings and usage.

Write Regularly: Dedicate time to regular writing practice to reinforce the active use of vocabulary. This could include journaling, creative writing exercises, essays, or even writing emails or blog posts in the target language.

Seek Feedback: Share your writing with language partners, tutors, or teachers who can provide feedback on your use of



vocabulary. Ask them to specifically highlight instances where you've effectively incorporated new words into your writing and offer suggestions for improvement.

Use Writing Prompts: Utilize writing prompts or exercises that encourage the use of specific vocabulary. This can help you practice applying new words in different contexts and scenarios.

Revise and Edit: Review your writing regularly to identify areas where you can improve the use of vocabulary. Look for opportunities to replace common words with more precise or expressive alternatives from your vocabulary journal.

Experiment with Style and Tone: Explore different writing styles and tones to vary your use of vocabulary. Practice writing formal essays, informal blog posts, persuasive arguments, descriptive narratives, and other genres to broaden your vocabulary usage.

Expand Vocabulary Horizontally and Vertically: Horizontally expanding your vocabulary involves learning synonyms, antonyms, and related words to deepen your understanding of a word's usage. Vertically expanding your vocabulary involves learning words that are more complex or nuanced in meaning.

There are several ways to enhance our vocabulary learning skills through writing .
By consistently incorporating new vocabulary into your writing and actively practicing its usage, you can gradually transition passive vocabulary into active vocabulary while simultaneously improving your writing skills in the target language.

Actively participating in conversations with native speakers, language partners, or language exchange groups. Engaging in dialogue provides opportunities to naturally incorporate new vocabulary into your speech.

Participating in speaking-focused language activities such as role-plays, debates, discussions, or storytelling. These activities encourage you to actively use vocabulary in real-life contexts. Create speaking prompts or topics that require the use of specific vocabulary you want to practice. This could involve discussing current events, sharing personal experiences, or expressing opinions on various subjects. **Using Vocabulary in Context:** Paying attention to the context in which new words are used during conversations.

It is critical to use a variety of strategies that can support the reinforcement of these terms' usage in regular conversation in order to close the vocabulary gap between passive and active. Exposure to the new terms and regular practice are two successful approaches. This can be doing writing exercises, making flashcards for frequent study, or even incorporating them into everyday discussions. Context-based learning is an additional method for integrating passive vocabulary into active learning. One may better grasp how to utilize a term in their own communication by being aware of its meaning and usage in various contexts. Understanding the meaning of these terms

in everyday situations may be gained by reading books, articles, or watching films and television series. Actively employing passive vocabulary might also benefit from practice with a tutor or language partner. Confidence and fluency in the use of these terms can be developed by participating in discussions where they are accepted and corrected. Establishing clear objectives for introducing new vocabulary into everyday conversations—through written assignments, speeches, or even postings on social media—is also beneficial.

CONCLUSION

For B1 and B2 ESL learners, the journey of unlocking the power of passive vocabulary is a crucial step towards mastering the English language. While reading serves as a valuable tool for expanding vocabulary, it's equally important to actively incorporate these new words into both speaking and writing practice. In conversations, whether with classmates, teachers, or language exchange partners, strive to incorporate recently learned words and phrases. Don't be afraid to make mistakes; each conversation is an opportunity for growth and improvement. By actively using new vocabulary in real-life situations, you'll reinforce your understanding and develop confidence in your ability to express yourself effectively. Similarly, when writing, challenge yourself to incorporate a variety of vocabulary into your compositions. Whether it's a simple email, a journal entry, or a short story, aim to use newly learned words in context. Pay attention to how they fit into sentences and paragraphs, and practice using them in different grammatical structures. Remember, language learning is a journey, and progress comes with consistent effort and practice. By actively engaging with both passive and active vocabulary in reading, speaking, and writing, you'll gradually build the skills and confidence needed to communicate fluently in English. Keep exploring, keep practicing, and celebrate each milestone along the way!

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