

EFFECTIVE VOCABULARY LEARNING TECHNIQUES

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Abstract: This article discusses the effective vocabulary learning techniques of a foreign language for independent language learning, the formation and improvement of lexical and communicative competence, the development of student attention and memory, and the improvement of language skills.

Keywords: word, word-building, learning skills, independent work, self-control, language skills, using word-learning strategies

Vocabulary is understanding **how to use words in relation to their meaning**. Developing new vocabulary involves more than just looking up words in a dictionary and using those words in sentences.

Students' vocabulary grows throughout their lifetime through direct and indirect learning. There are some direct **teaching methods** such as:

- Introducing specific **word instruction** geared toward increased comprehension and vocabulary.
- Leading **wordplay activities** that build upon previously learned words.
- Encouraging students to **read often** to boost their word knowledge and language development.
- Using the dictionary to **teach word meanings** and asking students to use those words in sentences during class participation.
- Making **speaking skills a priority** when learning vocabulary.
- **Reading stories to the students**. It helps them to question and learn specific words. Books that contain pictures may help reinforce the 'bigger' words for your students.

Deepening vocabulary skills takes a lifetime. It's vital that students understand how to learn new words so that they don't feel singled out if they're struggling to enhance their vocabulary.

When teachers use word learning techniques and teaching strategies like dictionary use, morphemic analysis, and contextual analysis, students catch on quickly and can recall new words, synonyms and antonyms. (1) Each of these components builds on their prior knowledge of other words to create their own vocabulary library.

Effective teaching strategies include various methods which can be used in the classroom today:

- Exposing students to the same word many times to support learning
- Giving students the definition of the word and asking them to write that word in a sentence
- Using graphic organizers to define new words
- Teaching students to be independent and learn how to correct their own errors by explain "It's ok to make mistakes!"
- Bringing technology into the classroom and using digital tools suited to teaching vocabulary.
- To let students practice often simple and effective vocabulary strategies to help them to build an impressive vocabulary. But there are more tactics as:

1. Taking a student's perspective

It's important to understand what it's like to grow own vocabulary which can be done by practicing it for many times. With higher education and experience in reading and writing, there is much wisdom can be passed onto the students.

Adjust lesson plans to accommodate any problems that students encounter as they learn new words, showing them how to take a word they've never heard of before, sounding it out and showing its use in a sentence or two. (2) They'll pick up on its meaning through the sentences.

One way to level-up this language technique is to take a culturally-responsive approach. And it can be done by framing new words in examples that are familiar to the students whether it's geographically, culturally or socio-economically, for example.

2. Trying to use a word wall

A word wall encourages students to focus on learning new words. Word walls are easy to create! Simply type or handwrite a list of words in large letters and hang them up on a bulletin board or a wall where students can see it every day. Being sure to add new words throughout the year so that your students deepen their knowledge of unknown words and their meaning.

Inviting the students to take part in creating a bigger wall and add pictures, synonyms and antonyms to each word. If they're having trouble grasping the meaning of specific words, adding synonyms can help ease confusion.

Word walls provide a fun way to increase students' vocabulary skills.

3. Creating vocabulary notebooks

Vocabulary notebooks encourage students to expand their prior knowledge and boost their English language proficiency. Handing out notebooks so that they can jot down new words and their meanings. Motivating the students to think about writing synonyms and antonyms beside each new word.

To make vocabulary notebooks more fun by asking the students to draw pictures or create charts to show how they used a word in a few sentences. It gives them an opportunity to practice that word a few times and reinforce its definition. (2)

And speaking of opportunities, a perfect time for students to practice their language with vocabulary notebooks is during writing periods.

A regular cadence of writing periods coupled with their vocabulary notebooks will encourage students to reflect on the words they've learned and to actively use them in their writing to get additional practice.

These vocabulary word books remind students of their advancement. It'll help them realize just how much they've progressed throughout the year.

4. Connecting word meanings with semantic mapping

Semantic mapping is a type of graphic organizer that displays a relationship between specific words and phrases.

Selecting one student to draw a keyword on the chalkboard. Next, encouraging students to participate in creating the map and writing words that are connected to the keyword. For example, a student or teacher could write the keyword "farm" on the chalkboard. Your students would take turns writing words such as cow, barn, horse, hay and farmer.

Semantic maps help build students' vocabulary and reading comprehension. Teachers can add more challenging words each week. As students grow their vocabulary, they'll become confident in their reading and writing abilities.

5. Making word cards

Word cards help students to develop their ability to learn new words and highlight their meaning. There are a few ways you can get students to create their own word cards.

In this example, students can write single keywords on separate blank cards. They'll determine if that word is a noun, pronoun, adjective or verb. Make sure they write the definition below each word. Instruct them to use those words in a few sentences, or turn the word into a quick writing prompt.

Consider putting students into small groups of two to four students. They can help each other to develop their vocabulary by introducing keywords to each other and asking them to use those words in a sentence.

Weekly word cards support English language development and enhance reading comprehension.

6. Encouraging for reading comprehension

It's crucial to every student's academic success to develop reading comprehension abilities. A variety of teaching methods, combined with consistent reading assignments, should help build comprehension and vocabulary development.

Below, you'll find a few tips to help strengthen your students' reading comprehension skills:

- **Class discussion about books they're reading.** Talking about books helps students to remember the stories and promotes comprehension.
- **Phonics.** Practicing phonics is a fun way for students to build their vocabulary skills. Phonics helps students master sounds and differentiate between letters that sound the same as "s" and "th".
- **Reading grade-appropriate books.** Give your students books suited for their grade level. Books should be easy enough for students to understand the story's meaning but challenging enough to expand their vocabulary.
- **Read aloud.** Get students to take turns reading aloud to help them see words and to hear them, too. They can learn how to pronounce the words as they go. Be mindful of students who might find reading aloud in front of the whole class to be daunting. If any students come to mind, it can help them to read aloud to a partner, teacher, parent or small group.

7. Using visuals and situations

When possible, use meaningful visuals in your classroom. Flashcard tools like Vocabulary Cartoons help students connect words to fun cartoons through memory techniques. This program works well from the elementary grades through to high school.

Using the following visual vocabulary teaching strategies with your students:

- If the teacher has created a word wall, ask your students to make **paper flashcards** with new words and their definitions. Display the flashcards for the entire class to look at every day. Make sure to change the words each week so that they continuously learn new words and phrases.
- Turning the students into **word detectives!** This fun activity gets students to read books while searching for keywords. Hand them a list of keywords to find in the book. When they find the keywords used in sentences, encourage them to use those words in spoken and written sentences.
- Students love art, so why not get them to create drawings to express their understanding of words? Students can form their own connections to new words through drawings, patterns, and other examples.
- Make new words fun to learn! Combining visuals such as graphics and photos with auditory learning to cover a range of learning styles and make it easier for students to learn new words.

Using word-learning strategies

Word-learning strategies allow students to familiarize themselves with words and phrases. Instead of having partial knowledge, they'll learn the meaning of the word and any related words. Students can develop word consciousness with the help of quality reading materials and practical teaching methods.

Breaking down words into meaningful parts

Word parts are root words a teacher can add a prefix or suffix to make a new word.

Allowing students to read keywords and add prefixes or suffixes helps them garner the meaning of those words based on how it's used in a sentence. Give the students opportunities to guess the meaning of word parts to support their vocabulary growth.

Word parts work best for students with a larger vocabulary.

Asking questions about a word

One way for students to learn words involves understanding the definition, how it works grammatically and its subtext. Motivating the students to ask questions such as:

- Does the word have a masculine or feminine version similar to other languages?

- How can I use the word in more than one sentence?
- Does the word have several meanings? Homonyms such as "pen" can mean an instrument to write with, or an animal enclosure.
- When students deepen their word knowledge, they'll gain confidence in their ability to strengthen their vocabulary.

Reflecting and practicing new words

Some words are easier to learn than others. Inspire your students to test their word knowledge and determine areas where they need help. They might require assistance in boosting their confidence to use those words in sentences or to speak them with confidence. Also consider that they may not fully understand the meaning of those words.

Encourage your students to reflect regularly on new words and use them in their everyday conversations. This is where vocabulary notebooks come in handy to build word knowledge!

Additional vocabulary activities

Bring words to life through vocabulary development activities! There are lots of fun things you can do in the classroom that encourage students to practice vocabulary.

The activities to boost students' vocabulary skills:

- **Guided word sorting.** Give your students a list of words to sort into various categories, such as parts of speech (noun, verb, etc.), geography (cities, towns), or something they can relate to. Students develop an understanding of new words as they group them into categories. Turn word sorting into a fun game!
- **Word fixes** (on-purpose errors). Use a word incorrectly in a sentence and ask your students to correct the mistake. Choose one or more students to write the word correctly in a sentence and share it with the rest of the class.
- **Make mind maps.** Mind mapping involves the use of colored pencils and pens to create a graphic of how the keyword connects to other words, similar to the semantic map.
- With these fun activities, vocabulary isn't just another spelling quiz — it's a core part of your instruction that supports everything else you teach.

Every correct answer gives students more energy they can use to gather resources, craft items and build their very own village! Creating teacher's own free Prodigy teacher account to track student progress, sending assignments and helping build a love of learning also helps to improve vocabulary and interests to learn the vocabulary.

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