

Smirnov V. V., Mosiagina G. D.

Minsk,

International university “MITSO”

HOW TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY

Today the teaching methodology pays much attention to reading. The urgent problem of teaching future specialists is to learn how to read in a foreign language texts in the relevant branch of science and technology.

In the course of training students should obtain the maximum information in the shortest period of time. However, the practice of teaching in higher education indicates not only a small passive vocabulary reserve among students but also a lack of high-quality vocabulary. Besides they sometimes do not know in what context to use this or that word. The main task of teaching a passive vocabulary of a foreign language (vocabulary for reading) is to memorize it by students in a way that would allow them to quickly learn the studied material in the process of reading. The focus is on the processes of automatization of perception and recognition of language units. The lack of these processes makes it more difficult and slow to percept and understand the obtained information.

Methodological literature emphasizes that the minimum number of words to understand English texts (4000–5000) requires several stages of working with the vocabulary.

The idea of creating students' speech experience within a short time is not new. This process is performed more or less spontaneous in the native language. However, the task of teaching a foreign language should include the creation of special conditions that allow the student to accumulate speech experience to provide the opportunity of understanding the text quickly and accurately.

The creation of optimal conditions for using easily a foreign language vocabulary assumes the necessity of its memorizing in the speech experience of students. When defining the number of repetitions that provide vocabulary recognition it is important to take into account miscellaneous character (difficulty) of words to be learned.

But the absolute difficulty of this or that word defined by its structural and semantic features often becomes relative under the influence of two factors, such as individual speech and life experience of students and the context in which the word is used. It means it is necessary to consider the influence of the “outer order” factors, i.e. different contextual meanings. Factors of internal and external order interact. It is only necessary to know which of these factors is decisive.

A context is an objective reality and the establishment of the meaning of a word by it can only be successful if certain logical techniques are implemented.

Nowadays it is becoming indisputable the fact that the role of a context to determine the meaning of words depends on a number of factors: the quality of definitions contained in it, the degree of their specificity and the number of unfamiliar words in it.

Working on foreign language passive vocabulary includes self-study work on the potential vocabulary of students. The work on passive vocabulary in a high school can be successfully solved only with the comprehensive approach.

While teaching a potential vocabulary, it is necessary to teach students various techniques for establishing the meaning of unfamiliar words without the help of a dictionary. The base of a potential vocabulary is a passive vocabulary, which explains the need to control it at the level of absolute recognition.

Speaking about improving students' vocabulary, we should focus on both passive and active vocabulary.

Passive vocabulary refers to the words that students understand but they are not able to use it. They know the meanings of a word, they know how to use it, but cannot use it productively. Passive vocabulary is the one that students understand when reading and listening but they do not use it in writing or speaking. Active vocabulary, on the other hand, is the words that students understand and use it in speaking or writing. It obviously consists of the words that students know `better` than those that constitute their passive vocabulary. The same distinction holds for native speakers who also actively use only the words they are familiar with.

When learning a foreign language, should students focus on developing an ability to speak or on building up their understanding of the language? This is a question people ask when they start learning a foreign language.

The native speaker who you are going to speak with always has a bigger vocabulary than you do. So your understanding needs to be of a higher level than your speaking. Usually you spend more time listening than you do speaking.

It is embarrassing when you cannot say what you want. This is true. But if you at least understand what a person is saying, if you have a large passive vocabulary, you will feel more comfortable and more confident. This gives you more time to think and you can try to use some of your passive vocabulary. It will be activated once you start to speak more. If your goal is to be able to participate in the conversation, if you want to understand what people are saying around you, then you have to focus on your passive vocabulary

Our vocabulary refers to all the words we know and it includes both active and passive vocabulary. Everybody knows that it is very important to improve the vocabulary because it helps you understand what you read or listen. It also helps to speak and write well. It is very difficult to communicate if the vocabulary is poor. If you want to improve your English, you should learn more words and expressions. When we speak about knowing a word we mean knowing all its meanings, understanding its form. You should know how it is pronounced and spelt. Usually it takes much practice before you know a new word. You should find out what other verbs, adjectives, prepositions go together with this word.

Some people read very well but they cannot speak well. Those people who read well and understand well when listening are eventually going to be able to speak well. If they decide to go and speak with that kind of a grasp of the language based on passive vocabulary, they will become good active users of the language very quickly.

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