

## THE EFFECT OF ACTIVITIES ON IMPROVING VOCABULARY

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### Abstract

Mastery over vocabulary usually grows, evokes, and serves as the essential and fundamental tool for speaking. A large and rich vocabulary makes one feel more confident to handle the language effectively. By improving vocabulary it is easy to read and comprehend. The knowledge of vocabulary also plays a very crucial role in developing the major language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Mastery over required knowledge of vocabulary can make a learner an effective speaker, good listener, reader and writer. On the other hand, lack of vocabulary significantly affects these four language skills. Now that the industrial era has been transformed into an informational era, it is important that each and every one should acquire a sound. Applying activity makes everyone active, cheerful and enthusiastic. Through which one can gain vocabulary knowledge energetically and the power of vocabulary enhances the confidence level in a bigger way to speak the language effectively. Developing the good vocabulary will help to reach full potential in education and bring tremendous benefit in life.

### Introduction

The world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with its growing challenges invites people with language proficiency in the global market. Vocabulary is a part of human language and it is considered as a central component of language proficiency. Only through vocabulary one can easily be able to express their ideas, feelings, and experiences effortlessly and spontaneously. It is the one element that links the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing all together. Lack of vocabulary is an obstacle at the moment of communicating with someone. So vocabulary is necessary for having good relation among the people and it is considered as an important aspect of the language to be developed and improved. Acquiring of words should take place unconsciously in a cheerful environment. Activity based learning can make students to improve their vocabulary and fix both familiar and unfamiliar words in their minds.

### Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the set of words within a language that are familiar. A Vocabulary usually develops with age and serves as a usual and basic tool for communication and acquiring knowledge. Acquiring a good stock of vocabulary is one of the largest challenges in learning a second language. In order to communicate well one should be noted that the learners who are rich in vocabulary are expected to be able to express themselves more freely and confidently.

### Words and Word Knowledge

Words are the basic units of a language. Vocabulary is knowledge of words and word meanings.

#### 1. Words comes in two forms

- a. Oral and
- b. Print

Oral vocabulary: Oral vocabulary includes words that one recognizes and use in listening and speaking.

Print Vocabulary: Print vocabulary includes words that one recognizes and use in reading and writing.

#### (ii) Word knowledge also comes in two forms

- (i) Receptive Vocabulary
- (ii) Productive Vocabulary

#### Receptive Vocabulary

Receptive Vocabulary includes words that one recognizes when they hear or see.

#### Productive Vocabulary

Productive Vocabulary includes words that one use when they speak or write.

### Types of Vocabulary

Vocabulary items are classified on the basis of application and understanding. They are three types of vocabulary:

- a) Active Vocabulary
- b) Passive Vocabulary
- c) Ad-hoc Vocabulary
- d) Focal vocabulary
- e) Technical vocabulary
- f) Academic vocabulary

### Active Vocabulary

Active Vocabulary refers to the words that we correctly use in speech and writing, though which we fully understand the meaning and have complete control and mastery over a language. It is otherwise called as working Vocabulary.

### Passive Vocabulary

Passive Vocabulary refers to the words that we recognize learners can encounter such words when he/she listens to them or reads to them but rarely uses them. It is also called as Receptive or Recognition vocabulary.

### Ad-hoc Vocabulary

Ad-hoc vocabulary refers to words may be important for a given section of the text but are unlikely to be much use outside the text. That is the words which we require exclusively for an understanding of a particular thing or text are called ad-hoc vocabulary.

### Focal Vocabulary

Focal vocabulary is a specialised set of terms and distinction that is particularly important to a certain group, those with a particular focus of experience or activity. For instance Eskimos have several distinct words for different types of snow that in English is all together called as snow.

### Technical Vocabulary

Technical vocabulary is a words or phrases that are used primarily in a specific line of work or profession. For e.g. People who work in the steel industry often use words like "rock well", "Olsen", "Cup-test", and "chamber" These words have special meaning pertaining to the manufacture of steel.

### Academic Vocabulary

Academic vocabulary helps us to understand the concepts of the content taught in school and colleges critically. In identifying academic vocabulary learners must remember that not all terms are of equal importance. Some terms are critically important. Some terms are useful but not critical. Some terms are interesting but not useful.

### Types of Words

Word serves different purpose in language. It can be classified into two types (i) Content words and (ii) Functional words. Content words are the words that communicate meaning. It stands for things, ideas, individualities, actions and qualities. Functional words are words that cue a reader or speaker to the structure of the sentence. It is otherwise called as structural words. Some of the functional words are:

- i. Pronouns - I, he, they, your etc.
- ii. Preposition - on, under, in, at, among etc.
- iii. Auxiliary verbs - did, was, is may, shall etc.
- iv. Conjunction - and, but, yet etc.
- v. Relative pronoun - whose, which, whom etc.
- vi. Adjectives - that, any etc.
- vii. Adverbs - even, again etc.

This functional word makes the language meaningful while speaking and have coherent and readable while writing.

### Importance of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a very important aspect of our life. It is our tool to communicate with others, as well as explore and analyze the world around us. The general point here is that the absolute vocabulary has marked the effect on the way we learn English. Most people agree that fluent English speakers need very large vocabularies, that it makes sense to pace the learning of this vocabulary over a long time and that we should rely principally on the learners' own motivation to get them to these very high levels of vocabulary knowledge.

Action speaks louder than a word is a saying but sometimes words speak louder than anything else. So one can communicate little without grammar but one cannot communicate nothing without vocabulary. Without large vocabulary it is difficult to hold a proper conversation. It will be hard to master the language without mastering vocabulary. So vocabulary has an important role in everyone's life.

### Effect of Activities

"If the language structure makes up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary provides the vital organs and flesh. Language ability of the learners will be improved overall by vocabulary improvement. Look and remember way of vocabulary learning seems to be effective. With the use of activities, one can use the language to communicate, exchange information. Learning through activity could encourage and provide quite extensive language practice. Activities bring relaxation and fun, thus helps to learn and retain new words more easily. It usually involves friendly competition and keeps learners interested. These create the motivation, for the learners to get involved and participate actively. It also brings real world context into the classroom.

Improving vocabulary through activities has many advantages. For example they help learners to learn more words when they are engaged in the activity and enjoy it

without noticing that they are learning new words. Another advantage of using activity in learning takes place in a stress-free environment and reduces the anxiety, increase positive feeling and improve self-confidence.

To give a welcome, relief from normal routine a variety of activities are specified below.

- Word search and Framing sentences – improves by exposing to new words
- Guess the word – improves by intensive reading and thinking power to collect and recall more words.
- Word hunt – Improves by acquiring new words and increase the depth of the word knowledge.
- Coining words from a given words – Improving by converting the passive vocabulary into active vocabulary.

These are the activities through which the students can learn and improve their vocabulary lively and interestingly.

#### Strategies to Improve Vocabulary

To improve vocabulary first collect words and practice those words with expressions.

- Collect Words and Expressions

Keep a small notebook, as we read, study, listen to T.V or while talking with other people note down words and expressions that we think would be helpful.

- Practise Words and Make Sentence

For practice one should have two kinds of list one for active vocabulary and another one for passive vocabulary. Every week transfer the words that have written down in a small notebook and try to write some sample sentences using those vocabularies.

- Read, Read, and Read

The more you read especially novels and literary works, but also magazines and newspapers the more words you'll be exposed to. As you read and uncover new words, use a combination of attempting to derive meaning from the context of the sentence as well as from looking up the definition in a dictionary.

- Keep a Dictionary and Thesaurus Handy

When you uncover a new word, look up into the dictionary to get both its pronunciation and its meaning. Next, go to the thesaurus and find similar words and phrases and their opposites

- Link Sharing

Every week, vocabulary websites, related to vocabulary were added in link sharing. The link contains explanation, exercises, quizzes and a daily vocabulary lessons. Examples of the vocabulary websites are:

- Spell Check: <http://www.spellcheck.net/>
- Beginnervocabulary: [http://esl.about.com/library/course\\_s/blcourses\\_beginner\\_vocabulary](http://esl.about.com/library/course_s/blcourses_beginner_vocabulary)
- ESL Vocabulary: <http://depts.gallaudet.edu/englishworks/reading/main/vocabulary.htm>
- Power words: [http://www.executive\\_vocabulary.com/](http://www.executive_vocabulary.com/)  
These are the some of the websites through which one can improve their vocabulary.

#### Conclusion

In short, vocabulary can make or break one's life and career. Activities undoubtedly have high entertainment and provides opportunity to improve vocabulary in an effective and interesting way. But there is no magic; one cannot improve their vocabulary overnight, so, the more one practice, the more they learn.

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6. Schmitt, Norbert & Mc Charty, Michael. 1997. Vocabulary: Description Acquisition and Pedagogy. Cambridge University Press.

#### On-line sources

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2. <http://my.vocabularysize.com/>
3. <http://www.lexutor.ca/>