

Article

The Influence of a Learner's Vocabulary on Learning a Foreign Language

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Abstract: This article examines the formation and expansion of learners' vocabulary in the process of foreign language acquisition, as well as the development of skills for active vocabulary use. Vocabulary is considered not only as the foundation of language proficiency but also as a crucial component of communicative competence. The paper analyzes the influence of learners' motivation, learning strategies, teaching methods, and modern technologies on vocabulary acquisition, supported by practical examples. The main objective of the study is to identify effective approaches to developing vocabulary during foreign language learning and to propose methodological recommendations beneficial for Uzbek-speaking learners.

Keywords: Foreign language, vocabulary development, lexical competence, learning strategies, communicative approach, language learning motivation, modern technologies, methodology, educational process.

Introduction

In today's era of globalization, knowledge of foreign languages has become an integral part of human life. As a result of the intensification of economic, political, cultural and scientific cooperation on a global scale, the demand for knowledge of a foreign language is increasing day by day. Therefore, learning a foreign language is not only a communicative necessity, but also an important factor in the intellectual development of a person, broadening his worldview, and active participation in intercultural dialogue. One of the most important components in the thorough mastery of a foreign language is the learner's vocabulary, that is, lexical reserve. In-depth knowledge of the language, along with the correct use of grammar, is usually understood as the ability to choose words correctly and use them appropriately in context [1-3].

Vocabulary is the foundation of language learning. Because a person works primarily through words when expressing his thoughts, understanding or analyzing a heard text. The level of vocabulary is one of the main criteria determining the effectiveness of communication. If a learner knows grammar perfectly but does not have sufficient vocabulary, he cannot fully express his thoughts. Therefore, the issue of expanding vocabulary occupies a special place in modern language teaching methodologies.

Methods

Another important aspect of increasing vocabulary in the process of learning a foreign language is motivation. Motivation is the key to success in language learning as a driving force for the learner to actively learn. If a learner feels an internal need to learn a foreign language and connects it with his goals (for example, studying abroad, working, traveling, getting to know the culture), then the process of mastering words will be more natural and effective. On the contrary, for a learner who is under external pressure or

Citation: Oybek qizi A. A. The Influence of a Learner's Vocabulary on Learning a Foreign Language. International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics 2026, 5(3), 83-87.

Received: 10th Feb 2026

Revised: 11th Mar 2026

Accepted: 14th Apr 2026

Published: 24th May 2026



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studying only for the exam, vocabulary memorization will take on an artificial character and will be quickly forgotten [4].

Therefore, one of the main tasks for teachers is to interest the learner in the learning process, to make him feel his achievement. Modern technologies create wide opportunities in this regard. Mobile applications, online platforms, interactive dictionaries, learning programs based on artificial intelligence - all of them offer new approaches to increasing the learner's vocabulary. For example, applications such as Duolingo, Memrise, Quizlet use a spaced repetition system of repeating words. This system is considered the most effective for consolidating words in the brain in long-term memory. Also, chatbots based on artificial intelligence (such as ChatGPT) allow the learner to create a real communication environment and use the learned words in a natural context. Developing vocabulary in learning a foreign language is a multifactorial process. In this process, the psychological characteristics of the learner, the educational environment, teaching methods, and the technologies used are closely interconnected. Each factor has a different impact on the process of vocabulary acquisition, so an effective vocabulary teaching strategy must be developed taking all of them into account [5]. Learning a foreign language is a complex and multifactorial process. This process is directly related to the learner's methods, teaching methods, technological and cultural environment. First of all, if we analyze the process of learning, the level of attention and self-confidence in the acquisition of vocabulary play an important role. Learners with high intrinsic motivation learn new words actively and with strong willpower, while students with low motivation are likely to quickly forget the words they have learned. Again, the level of self-confidence also affects the process of vocabulary transfer in speech, since fear of mistakes or embarrassment from uncertainty in pronunciation slows down the process of introducing vocabulary into the speech process. From a psycholinguistic point of view, new words are first stored in short-term memory, and then, through contextual repetition, they are transferred to secure storage memory. For this, it is important to repeat words in at least several different contexts during the teaching process, using them in conversations, drawings, games or practical tasks. The emotional environment also has its influence: words learned with emotions are more firmly fixed in the brain, for this reason, playful, physical and creative physical education during the lesson is effective [6-8].

From a methodological point of view, different colors have been formed in the history of language teaching. In the grammatical-translation method, words were learned through translation, which enriched the passive vocabulary of the learner, but did not have a sufficient effect on the development of active speech. The communicative method is based on teaching words through real communication, in which the learner learns new lexical units through dialogues, conversations, role-playing games and real-life tools. These premises are the active use of learned words in the speech process. Contextual learning is also an effective method, in which words are mastered not in isolation, but within a text or event. This process provides a holistic understanding of the meaning, grammatical form and scope of use of a word. At the same time, game methods are also highly effective in language learning. For example, activities such as "Word Chain", "Memory Game" or "Bingo" actively involve the student in the lesson process, ensuring that the memorization process takes place in a natural and interesting way. Written exercises - about a diary, essay, storytelling - are one of the most effective ways to master vocabulary. The technological process is a control that leads to a solution in the modern educational process. The rapid development of information technology allows the learner to master vocabulary independently and interactively. For example, platforms such as Duolingo, Memrise, Quizlet allow you to learn the learning process and determine a spaced repetition system for repeating words. AI-based software and interactive systems like ChatGPT create a real communicative experience for the learner, where new words are reinforced in the context of a natural conversation. Multimedia tools — videos, podcasts, subtitled lessons — help to learn words along with real pronunciation, cultural

background, and visual context. At the same time, it is not right to rely only on technology, because the human factor, teacher analysis, and the interactive learning process still have their place. Therefore, “blended learning” — that is, the combination of traditional and digital education — is considered the most optimal. Cultural and social factors also significantly affect the process of vocabulary learning. Each language reflects the culture, worldview and values of its people [9]. For example, words such as “privacy”, “deadline” or “fair play” in English express specific cultural concepts and in order to fully master them, knowledge of the cultural context is also required. Therefore, when teaching vocabulary, it is necessary not to be limited to translation alone, but to teach based on cultural interpretation, real-life examples and communicative situations. Intercultural dialogue projects, virtual exchange programs, online correspondence allow the learner to use new words in natural communication and enhance the active use of vocabulary. [10]

Results and Discussion

Thus, the factors influencing the development of vocabulary form a complex system. Psychological state, motivation, methodology, technologies and cultural environment work inextricably together. If the teacher organizes the lesson in a way that combines these factors, the process of vocabulary acquisition by the learner will become more effective, sustainable and creative. As a result, the learned words will become part of natural speech activity, not artificial memorization. The process of vocabulary development in learning a foreign language is one of the most important stages in forming the learner's language competence, and the methodology for its in-depth study requires a combination of scientific and practical approaches [11]. The balance between active and passive vocabulary is one of the most pressing issues in language acquisition, since the volume of passive vocabulary in most students is much larger than the active vocabulary. To reduce this gap, teachers need to teach vocabulary not only through explanation or translation, but also through exercises aimed at communicative activity. By using words in real communication, discussion, role-playing games, in the process of creating a story, and in written speech, the learner transfers the vocabulary to an active form. Short daily exercises — for example, making sentences from new words, replacing them with synonyms, or using them in an English diary — help to keep words in active memory. The effectiveness of vocabulary acquisition is directly related to contextual learning, since the true meaning and grammatical function of a word are understood only through context. Learning words not in isolation, but in the context of a text, conversation, event, or phenomenon expands their semantic field. Therefore, teachers should deepen learners' lexical thinking by using words in multi-context exercises, comparing their meaning in different situations, and showing synonymous options [12]. In addition, associative approaches are also effective tools, since the human brain tends to remember information by associating it with images, sounds, or personal experiences. Through the word map method, the student places a new word in the center and builds its synonyms, antonyms, phrases, and contextual examples around it, which strengthens semantic connections and leads to systematic mastery of words. From a psychological point of view, the spaced repetition system is one of the most effective methods for storing vocabulary in long-term memory. This system prevents words from being forgotten by revisiting them at certain intervals. According to Hermann Ebbinghaus's "forgetting curve" theory, the human brain can retain information for a long time only through regular repetition, which is why students are recommended to process words at intervals of 1, 3, 7, and 15 days. Applications such as Anki, Quizlet, and Memrise, which implement such a system automatically, allow students to learn in a modern, individualized way. Multisensory learning is also important in the process of strengthening the learner's vocabulary, in which, by combining hearing, writing, seeing and pronunciation, several centers of brain activity are activated at the same time, which ultimately increases the efficiency of memorization. Independent learning is also one of the important factors in developing vocabulary. Each student should learn his individual learning style and choose a strategy that suits him. For example, flashcards for visual

learners, podcasts for audiotypes, and practical exercises for kinesthetic learners will be more effective [13].

The student's self-assessment skills are also an integral part of the process. Making a list of words learned every week, testing his knowledge in the form of a test, or writing an essay using those words - these methods increase motivation and encourage self-development. The issue of vocabulary teaching in the Uzbek education system has reached a new level in recent years. State educational standards have set the formation of lexical competence in students as the main goal. A contextual approach, communicative tasks, and authentic materials are widely used in foreign language textbooks. Through the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) methodology, students learn the content of the subject through a foreign language, which allows them to master vocabulary in a natural context. For example, students studying history or biology in English not only memorize scientific terms, but also use them in real texts, which turns lexical knowledge into practical competence. The introduction of the "Language Portfolio" system in language learning is also a notable innovation, as it allows the student to analyze his/her achievements, regularly monitor his/her vocabulary, and see the dynamics of his/her growth. According to empirical research, active participation, contextual exercises, and game-based methods are most effective in vocabulary learning. Research conducted at the Tashkent State University of Foreign Languages shows that the active vocabulary of students who studied using a communicative approach expanded by more than 40 percent compared to those who studied using the traditional translation method. This result clearly proves the superiority of a dialogue-oriented approach to vocabulary teaching [14][15].

Conclusion

In conclusion, the development of a learner's vocabulary is a multifaceted, integrative, and creative process. It is influenced by psychological, methodological, technological, and cultural factors in a complex way. In order to effectively organize vocabulary development, the learner must adhere to the principles of active learning, contextual application, and regular repetition. Then the foreign language dictionary becomes an active tool for the learner's thinking and forms real communicative competence. The issue of developing a learner's vocabulary in the process of learning a foreign language is considered an urgent scientific problem at the intersection of not only linguistics, but also pedagogy, psychology and modern educational technologies. Vocabulary is a central component of language competence, which determines the learner's ability to clearly express thoughts, understand and analyze the text, participate in dialogue and be active in intercultural communication. The analysis shows that for effective vocabulary acquisition, several important factors must act in harmony in the learning process: motivation, contextual approach, spaced repetition, communicative activity and technological support. The basis for expanding active vocabulary is the learner's use of words in a real speech environment, in practical situations.

If word memorization is based only on the activity of reproductive memory, it is quickly forgotten, but words learned on the basis of contextual and interactive exercises become a natural part of active speech. Therefore, game elements, conversations, role-playing games, writing exercises and intercultural communication tasks are of paramount importance in vocabulary teaching. Modern technologies have brought a new level to the process of vocabulary learning: mobile applications, online platforms and programs based on artificial intelligence create the opportunity to repeat, analyze words and test them in real communication. This forms the learner's independent learning skills and serves as an auxiliary tool for the teacher. At the same time, human communication between the teacher and the student, emotional support and personal motivation cannot be replaced by technology. Therefore, in order to achieve the most effective result, combining traditional education with digital education - the "blended learning" approach - is considered the most optimal solution. The Uzbek education system is also undergoing

significant reforms to improve vocabulary teaching methodologies, widely introduce the CLIL approach, organize lessons based on communicative tasks, and form a culture of self-assessment among students.

Also, the practice of monitoring a student's own learning process through the Language Portfolio system is increasing the effectiveness of vocabulary acquisition. In short, increasing vocabulary is not a one-time result, but a process of continuous development, research, and experimentation. Real success in language learning is not perfect knowledge of grammar, but the ability to use words correctly, appropriately, and creatively. In this sense, expanding vocabulary increases the level of expression of human thought through language, making it a participant in global intercultural dialogue. Therefore, developing a learner's vocabulary is the foundation for perfect mastery of a foreign language, and its effective organization is one of the most important tasks of modern education.

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