

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18454/RULB.2020.22.2.8>АДАПТАЦИЯ АКТИВНЫХ СЛОВАРНЫХ МЕТОДОВ, НАПРАВЛЕННЫХ НА «ПАССИВНОЕ»  
ЗАКРЕПЛЕНИЕ ЛЕКСИКИ

Научная статья

Нурутдинова А.Р.<sup>1\*</sup>, Епишева К.Д.<sup>2</sup>, Шайдуллина А.Р.<sup>3</sup>, Хусаинова Р.Р.<sup>4</sup><sup>1</sup> ORCID: 0000-0001-5759-0820;<sup>3</sup> ORCID: 0000-0001-5759-0820;<sup>1,2</sup> Казанский (Приволжский) федеральный университет, Казань, Россия;<sup>3,4</sup> Альметьевский государственный нефтяной институт, Альметьевск, Россия

\* Корреспондирующий автор (AiRNurutdinova[at]kpfu.ru)

## Аннотация

Изучение словарного запаса является важным процессом в изучении языка. Словарь влияет не только на прогресс обучения, но и восприятие нас другими людьми. В нашей повседневной жизни одной из причин, по которой человек идентифицируется как образованный, является разнообразие слов, используемых в речи. Вышеуказанная закономерность была принята во внимание и нашла отражение в целях современного образования. Центральная компетенция, сформированная в современной школе, является коммуникативной. Таким образом, учебный процесс также претерпел изменения. Кроме того, преподавательская лексика является, безусловно, самой многоаспектной частью обучения языку. Что касается формирования коммуникативных навыков, то словарный запас по активному и пассивному типам выходит на первый план. Проблема значительного беспокойства состоит в том, что большинство исследований и дискуссий изучают расширяющийся словарный запас в целом. В значительной степени они представляют методы обогащения и способы измерения пассивной лексики. Слово проходит несколько этапов, прежде чем перейти к активной части словарного запаса. Методы для усиления пассивных слов должны быть построены, чтобы помочь учителям в их практике. Он подчеркивает актуальность этого исследования. Объектом исследования являются методы пассивного укрепления словарного запаса. Предмет исследования определяется как процесс укрепления пассивной лексики. Цель исследования была двоякой: во-первых, изучить особенности пассивной и активной лексики; во-вторых, рассмотреть пути укрепления пассивной лексики. Рассматриваются следующие методы: 1) изучение теоретического материала о пассивной и активной лексике, включая их отличительные особенности, подтипы и способы измерения; 2) изучить методы активации пассивной лексики; 3) синтезировать новые методы путем преобразования существующих обогащающих словарный запас методов. В исследовании использовались описательное исследование вторичных данных по данной теме, анализ данных и предлагаемые методы, синтез новых способов обучения активной лексике.

**Ключевые слова:** пассивная лексика, активная лексика, коммуникативная компетенция, методы, активация пассивной лексики, способы обучения.

## ACTIVE VOCABULARY METHODS AIMED “PASSIVE VOCABULARY” STRENGTHENING METHODS

Research article

Nurutdinova A.R.<sup>1\*</sup>, Episheva K.D.<sup>2</sup>, Shaidullina A.R.<sup>3</sup>, Khusainova R.R.<sup>4</sup><sup>1</sup> ORCID: 0000-0001-5759-0820;<sup>3</sup> ORCID: 0000-0001-5759-0820;<sup>1,2</sup> Kazan (Volga) Federal University, Kazan, Russia;<sup>3,4</sup> Almetyevsk State Oil Institute, Almetyevsk, Russia

\* Corresponding author (AiRNurutdinova[at]kpfu.ru)

## Abstract

Learning vocabulary is a significant process in language learning. Vocabulary influences not only the study progress, but also the perception of us by other people. In our daily life one of the reasons why a person is identified as the educated one is the diversity of words used in speech. The aforementioned pattern was taken into account and has reflected in the aim of modern education. The central competence formed in today's school is communicative one. Thus, the teaching process has also undergone changes. In addition, teaching vocabulary is by far the most multi-aspect part of teaching language. With respect to forming communicative skills the vocabulary division on active and passive types comes to the fore. The problem of considerable concern is that most researches and discussions study the expanding vocabulary in general. Largely, they represent methods of enriching and ways of measuring passive lexicon. A word is going through several stages before passing to the active part of vocabulary. Methods for strengthening passive words should be constructed in order to help teachers in their practice. It outlines the relevance of this study. **The research object** is passive vocabulary strengthening methods. **The research subject** is defined as process of strengthening passive vocabulary. **The purpose** of the study was twofold: first, to examine the peculiar characteristics of passive and active vocabulary; second, to consider ways of strengthening passive vocabulary. The following methods are under consideration: 1) to study the theoretical material about passive and active vocabulary, including their distinctive features, subtypes, and ways of measuring; 2) to explore methods of activation passive vocabulary; 3) to synthesize new methods by transformation of the existing enriching vocabulary methods. Descriptive research of secondary data on this topic, analysis of data and suggested methods, synthesis of new ways for teaching active vocabulary were used in the study.

**Keywords:** passive vocabulary, active vocabulary, communicative competence, methods, activation of passive vocabulary, training methods.

Different scholars can offer various definitions of vocabulary, but most of them agreed that a word has several degrees of knowledge. It is stressed that vocabulary knowledge is not “an all-or-nothing phenomenon”. Scrivener pointed that remembering consists of four things: putting into storage, keeping in storage, retrieving, and using. The stages of knowing a word can be understood from the active/ passive distinction of vocabulary. The difference between “knowing a word actively and knowing a word passively is a gradual one, rather than a clear-cut one”.

Active vocabulary includes words “readily used and clearly understood by an individual when speaking and writing” (Nordquist). As it is used while speaking or writing, it is also called ‘productive’. Passive vocabulary is made up of the words that an individual recognizes when reading or listening, but rarely uses when speaking and writing. As the person perceives the vocabulary through sense organs, it is also called ‘receptive’ or ‘recognition vocabulary’. Corson adds that passive vocabulary consists of two parts: active vocabulary and ‘unmotivated vocabulary’. Unmotivated vocabulary is subdividing into two categories. The first is words, the use in speech performance of which is restricted by only partially comprehension. The second is the range of words which one does not need for daily communication. In terms of the study active vocabulary has also the name of ‘motivated’. The distinction between controlled and free active vocabulary was made by Laufer. The types are highlighted due to the will of learners to use infrequent vocabulary when they are not forced to do so: controlled active vocabulary is conditioned by the task, free active items – by the free composition of learner.

One more peculiarity is that active vocabulary takes easily accessing place in the vocabulary network, and assists in following to any parts of the system. Passive vocabulary items stand apart and can be accessed in the case of appropriate external stimulation. The moment of seeing or hearing the word represents the external stimulus, while active vocabulary does not require any stimulus. The connections are viewed in the work of Paul Meara, where he proposes to visualize them with the help of graph theory (Figure 1).

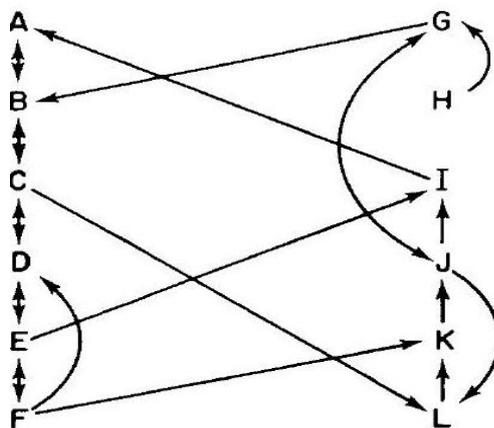


Figure 1

Nodes (words) are linked with arcs (associations), which have directions, because associations not always work in both directions (FLAG can lead to RED, but not vice versa). The node H has an arc that leads away from it, but has no one leading to it. If start is in the node H, it is possible to reach all other nodes. However, starting from other nodes will not lead to the node H. The node H is the passive vocabulary item.

The correlation between two types of vocabularies was also investigated. It was concluded that the development of active (particularly free active) vocabulary is slower than the development of passive vocabulary. At the same time learners’ passive vocabulary is larger than their active vocabulary. The receptive vocabulary increasing leads to productive vocabulary enriching. This correlation grows with moving towards higher word levels like 5000 and Academic word levels. Hence, the gap between two types of lexicons has decreased at high language proficiency levels. Azadeh Nemati stated the educational system has a great role in reducing the gap between the two knowledge types. Melka proposed the gap “varies and shifts according to linguistic or pragmatics factors”.

As was mentioned above, tests measuring the vocabulary is usually combined with passive vocabulary. Measuring active lexicon is an onerous task, yet some tests were designed. Laufer and Goldstein found out that one example of testing active vocabulary is asking for the second language (L2) equivalent of a L1 word. Another one is asking to select the correct answer from several options. In regard to the processes used for the tests, the first one is called a recall test, the second one – a recognition test. One more type of test suggests constructing a sentence with the correct use of the word. The ability to make a sentence with the correct use of the word is “the most advanced state of word knowledge” (Laufer, Goldstein)

Carver claims a process of activating the learner's passive vocabulary should be started from the intermediate stage onwards. From our point of view, it should be implemented from the first level of language learning.

Hill proposed a disputable idea that a teacher says what words should be active or passive vocabulary. He also considers that students divide all words into three categories alpha-, beta-, and gamma-words, assuming alpha-cluster to be active, beta- to be passive, gamma- as unnecessary words to remember. There is some sense in his words, but certainly we can point out that teacher’s role is of a great importance in the process of passive vocabulary strengthening.

Bintz assumes four factors considering strategies to teach vocabulary: (1) the students they are teaching, (2) the nature of the words they decide to teach, (3) their instructional purposes in teaching each of those words, and (4) the strategies they employ to teach the words.

Traditional methods of teaching vocabulary represent teaching single words, drilling less known ones. In the case passive vocabulary is exercised. However, the new, inward-pointing links to an active word are not being created. Making associations from already known words to new knowledge is a more effective way of activating a passive vocabulary.

Laufer marked “the cued recall” as a method, when a real life situation is offered and a student uses specific words which is more appropriate for the context. Situation should be constructed according to the list of words required to be trained.

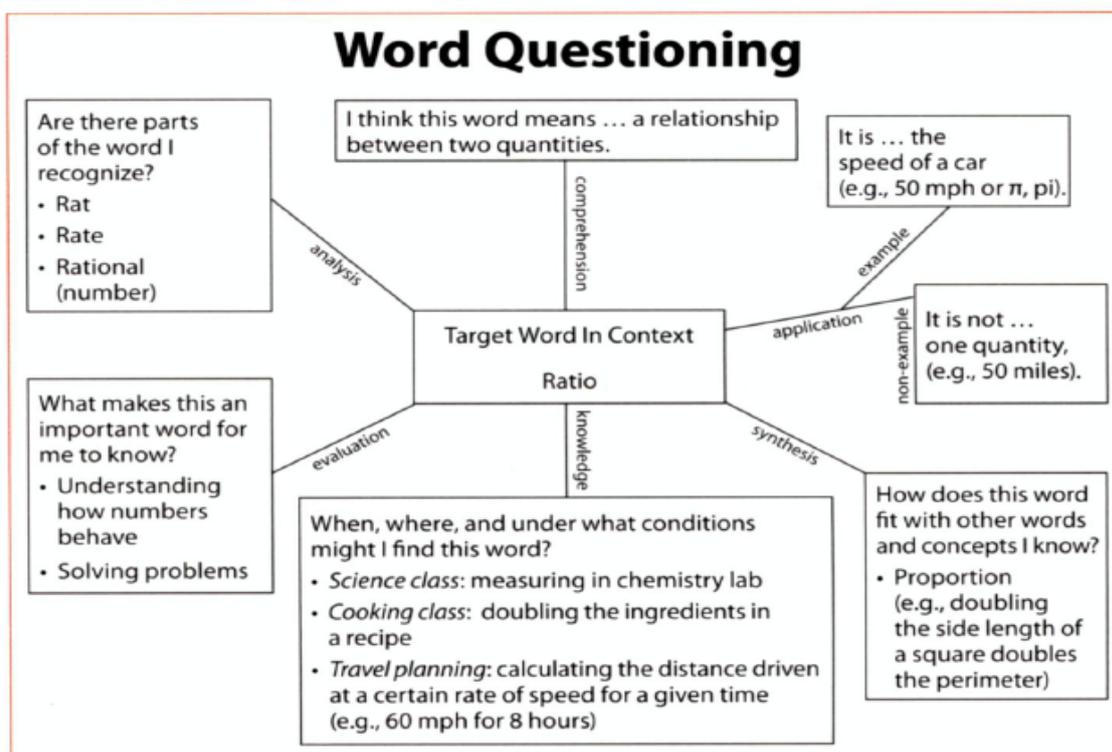
Corson provided the idea that vocabulary motivated if one is “regularly contracting relations where maximum possible explicitness is essential”. His idea was implemented by Carver, who designed four-stage method for idioms activating, but it can be tailored to separate words. Initially, students work in their vocabulary notebooks under the teacher's guidance. The teacher tells the student what words to write there. Two or three short sentences incorporating the lexical unit should be produced. Then teacher asks the learner to make, as a regular weekly assignment, further sentences of his/her own, also incorporating the item. Next step is oral presentation, when student retells from memory all or part of the passage, using words where possible. When pupil makes a long pause, the teacher helps him by asking questions or by quoting phrases from the passage. The exercise is not a test of memory; teacher should be ready with the prompts. Further step is blackboard composition. The class thinks over a composition by oral discussion. The teacher co-ordinates the discussion, and records on the blackboard the suggestions, correcting usage of the targeted words. Then pupils copy the blackboard composition into their exercise books. The final stage is to compose a small dialogue with words. It can be made by teacher or by students themselves, then learned by heart and performed.

Wen-Shuenn Wu noticed that students have common mistakes with lexical collocability using their productive skill. He added that lexical collocations are one way to make passive vocabulary active.

Swain proposed the Output Hypothesis that is concerned with the active dimensions of vocabulary knowledge. With regard to output, Fox stated all types of discourse aid in enriching vocabulary. We list those, enlarging active vocabulary: explanation, narration, argumentation, discussion and description. Also he describes a linguistic exploring expedition method, which we can refer to passive vocabulary strengthening methods. Pupils explore the origins of their names, making strong associations with unknown words, because they would be closely connected to them. Furthermore, pupils use their productive skills to share their research with classmates.

Kulikova presented the critical thinking development technology to activate passive vocabulary. She suggests the exercise called “circles on the water”, when pupils write passive word and to each letter of it select other word connected with the passive item. She also examines the method of filmstrips for university students, who experience the difficulties with a great number of terminology in the first semesters. However, we should add that for activation students have to do several exercises for producing the terminology after watching by the help of productive skills.

Bintz studied alphaboxes as the method for enriching vocabulary. With regard to passive vocabulary, we suggest using the organization to make a list of associations to the targeted passive word. The organization proposes writing an association to each letter of the alphabet, connected with the chosen passive item. Further, it can be useful to use word questioning method suggested by the same author. Word questioning method involves critical thinking. Teacher constructs the word questioning paper for teaching the word. It helps students to discuss the word by defining, analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating and application. The sample word questioning paper for the word *ratio* is depicted on the Figure 2.



Adapted from Allen (1999)

Figure 2

One more our consideration is that selecting synonyms and antonyms to the word will be also the effective way. Taking into consideration the abovementioned graph theory, the central word should be the targeted passive word to make those outward-pointing links to an active word that connect two words and foster active use of the central word.

While teaching real beginners, who are children, methods like miming as a part of Total Physical Response, flashcard games, using of realia and including it into role play games are appropriate ways for developing productive skills and activation passive vocabulary.

Students with higher level of language proficiency require even more practice to strengthen passive lexicon. *How to teach vocabulary like a pro* book describes ways helping students, who build specific academic vocabulary. The students of high level can control themselves, thus the effective technique will be declaring vague words taboo. Professor prepares a list of these words and discuss the options for their substitution. While students' speaking teacher can show a sign, which means a taboo word to understand the need to replace it. In students' writing tasks using academic equivalents instead of taboo words can be rewarded with additional point or competition for the best academic style work can be held.

Based on the results of the study and the related explanations several conclusions can be drawn. First of all, distinctive features of active and passive lexicons were observed, and these two types of vocabulary are different in learning. It is also significant to emphasize that authors of articles and books should mention what type of vocabulary they are discussing. For the moment, a few measuring active vocabulary tests exist; it means the issue has further perspectives for study. Secondly, teaching methods should also vary and be clarified what type of vocabulary they develop, because these two types of vocabulary are formed with either productive or receptive skills.

Active vocabulary enriching methods are focused on oral or written output and are aimed at constructing new connections of passive words with other active ones. Some suggestions for adaptation different vocabulary methods to the activation process were made. The present study does not explore the effectiveness of suggested methods, which can be addressed in future studies.

#### Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

#### Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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