NEW TECHNIQUES OF LEARNING AND REMEMBERING ENGLISH WORDS

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Abstract: This article discusses new techniques of learning and remembering English words, how to improve vocabulary by using different methods and strategies. It also discusses and demonstrates the importance of new vocabulary learning methods and strategies in teaching and learning the English language, along with suggestions and solutions from leading experts.
Key words: vocabulary retention, memorization, spaced repetition, the WRAP method, mental images, mnemonic strategies, acronyms and rhymes, long-term retention, word lists;

English is considered the most widely used language in the world, serving as an official language in 67 countries and spoken by an estimated 1.35 billion people globally. The majority aren't native English speakers, however. About 360 million people speak English as their first language. [1]

Widespread usage of the English language makes it the primary language for international communication in business, science, technology, diplomacy, and education. Proficiency in English opens doors to better job opportunities, access to top universities, and participation in different global events and conversations. English also acts as a bridge between people from different cultures, making travel and collaboration easier and more effective. With its dominance in media, the internet, and popular culture, English provides access to a vast amount of information and entertainment, further highlighting its importance in today's interconnected world. As English is becoming more and more widespread and demanded language of the 21st technology age and a lot of young people are learning this language and use it for daily and professional purposes. To use English for our everyday and professional usage we need a big amount of vocabulary. What are quick and effective ways of learning and remembering new English words? This article discusses some productive ways of learning and remembering new English words.

Learning and remembering new English words is a common challenge for language learners, but recent techniques have made this process more effective and engaging. Modern methods go beyond simple memorization and focus on active involvement with vocabulary.

Vocabulary retention is fundamental to overall academic success because it directly impacts reading comprehension and communication skills. A robust vocabulary allows students to understand and interpret complex texts, enhancing their ability to engage with academic content across various subjects. This understanding is crucial for performing well in exams and assignments, where comprehension is key.

Moreover, strong vocabulary skills improve communication, enabling students to express ideas clearly and effectively. This ability is vital for classroom participation, group discussions, and written tasks. Additionally, vocabulary retention supports cognitive development, as learning new words often involves understanding nuanced meanings and contexts, fostering critical thinking and analytical skills that benefit academic performance overall. [2]

What are the most common ways of learning and remembering new words? Spaced repetition, often used in digital flashcard apps, helps review words at optimal intervals, making them

easier to recall over time. Mnemonics, catchy songs, and rhymes also make vocabulary memorable by adding humor or personal connections. Most importantly, learning words in context—through reading, listening, and real-life usage—ensures deeper understanding and longer retention. By combining these innovative techniques, learners can remember English words more efficiently and enjoyably. One example of such learning words is the WRAP method which encourages learners to write new words down, repeat them, associate them with familiar ideas, and create mental pictures to strengthen memory.

What is the WRAP method?

The WRAP method—Write it down, Repeat it, Associate it, and Picture it —improves long-term vocabulary retention by actively engaging multiple cognitive processes that strengthen memory and recall. How to use the WRAP method? Write new words down by hand, repeat them aloud or in writing, associate each word with something familiar (like a personal experience or a similar-sounding word), and picture the meaning with a mental image or drawing. This multi-step approach helps you remember words more deeply by involving different parts of your brain. Let's look through this method closely.

Write it down: Physically writing new words helps encode them more deeply in memory, making them easier to remember.

Repeat it: Repetition reinforces learning by providing multiple exposures to the word, which is essential for moving information from short-term to long-term memory.

Associate it: Creating associations links new vocabulary to familiar concepts or experiences, making recall more intuitive. This is similar to the keyword method, which research shows significantly enhances both immediate and long-term vocabulary retention by establishing mental links and images.

Picture it: Visualizing the word or creating a mental image further strengthens memory by engaging the brain's visual processing, which is known to aid in recall.

By combining these steps, the WRAP method utilizes writing, repetition, association, and visualization—proven mnemonic strategies—to make new words more memorable and accessible for long-term use. This multi-faceted approach is more helpful than rote memorization because it creates multiple pathways for remembering vocabulary, leading to better retention and recall over time.[3]

Writing, repeating, associating, and picturing each play a unique role in enhancing memory retention by engaging different cognitive processes:

Writing: When you write information down, you involve motor skills and active processing, which helps encode the information more deeply in your brain. The physical act of writing reinforces learning by making you focus on the word's spelling and structure, improving recall.

Repeating: Repetition strengthens neural connections related to the memory. By reviewing information multiple times, you move it from short-term memory to long-term memory. Repetition also helps overcome forgetting by refreshing the memory trace.

Associating: Creating associations links new information to existing knowledge or familiar concepts. This connection forms mental "hooks" that make retrieval easier. For example, associating a new word with a known image, sound, or idea helps your brain organize and store the information more effectively.

Picturing: Visualizing information activates the brain's visual processing areas, which are powerful for memory. Mental images are often more vivid and easier to recall than abstract words alone. Picturing creates a strong sensory impression that aids in remembering. [3]

Together, these techniques engage multiple senses and cognitive pathways, making learning more active and meaningful. This multi-sensory approach creates stronger, more durable memories and improves the ability to retrieve information when needed.

Here are some new and effective techniques for remembering English words, supported by recent research and learning strategies:

1. Learning Words in Context

Instead of memorizing isolated words, try to learn new vocabulary through sentences, stories, or real-life situations. Repeated exposure to words in meaningful contexts—such as reading articles, listening to podcasts, or watching videos—helps you remember them naturally and understand their usage.

2. Associative and Mnemonic Techniques

Create associations or mental images that connect new words to familiar concepts. For example, use mnemonics—a funny or vivid story or image—to make the word memorable. The more unusual or personal the association, the better it sticks in your memory.

3. The Memory Palace or Background Method

Imagine placing new words in specific locations within a familiar environment (like your home or a "memory palace"). When you need to recall a word, visualize the place where you stored it. This spatial technique helps organize and retrieve vocabulary more easily.

4. Gamification

Turn vocabulary learning into a game. Use apps, board games, or create your own word games with friends. Gamifying the process makes learning more enjoyable and increases motivation, which helps you remember words better.

5. Embodied Learning

Whenever possible, connect new words to real objects or actions. For example, if you're learning the word "apple," hold an apple or look at a picture while saying the word. Engaging your senses and body in the learning process creates stronger memories.

6. Active Usage

Use new words in speaking and writing as soon as possible. Write sentences, short paragraphs, or even stories using the vocabulary you want to remember. The more you actively use a word, the more likely you are to remember it.

7. The Mimicry Method

Practice repeating new words as you hear them from native speakers, focusing on pronunciation and intonation. This technique, also called the immersion method, helps reinforce memory through listening and speaking practice.

8. Visual Learning

Draw pictures or diagrams that represent the meaning of new words, or use post-it notes around your environment. Visualization helps create strong mental connections, especially for visual learners.

9. Thematic Grouping

Group words by topic or theme (e.g., weather, food, emotions). Learning related words together helps you form mental links between them, making recall easier. [4]

By combining these modern techniques—especially using technology, context, and active engagement—you can significantly improve your ability to remember and use new English words in everyday life.

Learners can also apply new memory techniques to improve their English vocabulary skills by actively engaging with words in creative and practical ways. Here are some of the beneficial strategies:

Practice Spaced Repetition: Review vocabulary at increasing intervals using flashcards or spaced repetition apps. This method strengthens long-term memory by reminding you of words just before you might forget them, making learning more efficient and sustainable.

Create Mnemonics and Visuals: Make up funny or memorable stories, acronyms, or rhymes for difficult words. Drawing pictures or visualizing the meaning of new vocabulary can help you recall them more easily, especially if the images are vivid or unusual.

Engage with Words in Context: Use new vocabulary in sentences, conversations, or writing exercises. The more you interact with words in meaningful situations, the more likely you are to remember and use them correctly.

Mix Up Your Learning Methods: Combine different techniques like flashcards, labeling objects around your home, recording yourself, and participating in language exchanges. This variety keeps your brain active and helps reinforce your memory from different angles. [5]

Engage with the Language Daily: Consistency is key to language learning. Engaging with English every day helps reinforce what you've learned and keeps the language fresh in your mind. Here are some ways to incorporate English into your daily routine:

Read: Dive into English books, articles, and blogs on topics you enjoy. This not only builds vocabulary but also helps you understand context and usage.

Watch and Listen: Movies, TV shows, podcasts, and music in English are excellent tools. Try to choose content with subtitles initially and gradually move to without.

Speak and Write: Practice speaking with native speakers or fellow learners. Writing daily, whether it's a journal entry, a social media post, or emails, helps solidify your learning.

Immerse Yourself in the Language: Immersion is one of the most effective ways to learn and retain a new language. Surround yourself with English in as many ways as possible.

Travel and Live Abroad: If possible, spend time in an English-speaking country. Daily interactions and real-life experiences will force you to use and remember the language.

Language Exchange Partners: Find a language exchange partner or join a language learning group. Regular conversations with native speakers or other learners create a natural learning environment.

Switch Your Devices and Apps to English: Change the language settings on your phone, computer, and favourite apps to English. This simple switch forces you to navigate everyday technology in your target language. [6]

By consistently applying these techniques—writing, repeating, associating, picturing, reviewing with spaced repetition, and using words in context—you will build a stronger, more lasting English vocabulary and become more confident in your language skills.

Besides, above mentioned methods and strategies there are also a number of apps out there to remember new vocabulary. These ones aren't based on spaced repetition, so they may not be scientifically optimised to learn new words. But they're still pretty good and they might work well for you.

Expanding and retaining vocabulary is a key challenge for language learners, but modern apps have revolutionized how we approach this task. Today's best vocabulary apps combine proven memory techniques, interactive content, and engaging designs to help users remember new words systematically and pleasurably.

Spaced Repetition Systems (SRS)

Digital flashcard apps like Anki, Memrise, and Brainscape use spaced repetition to help you review words at optimal intervals, making it easier to transfer them from short-term to long-term memory. These systems show you difficult words more often and familiar words less frequently, maximizing learning efficiency. Let's have a close look at some of above mentioned and other leading apps and discuss how they support vocabulary retention.

1. Anki: Anki is a highly customizable flashcard app that uses a spaced repetition system (SRS) to maximize long-term retention. Users can create their own flashcards with definitions, example sentences, images, and audio, or download pre-made decks tailored to different proficiency levels. Anki's SRS algorithm ensures that difficult words appear more frequently, while familiar ones are reviewed less often, making learning efficient and personalized. It syncs across devices, allowing for convenient study anywhere, though its interface can be challenging for beginners.

2. Memrise: Memrise stands out for its use of mnemonics, native speaker videos, and gamified learning. The app offers thousands of courses, many created by users, and leverages spaced repetition to reinforce vocabulary over time. Memrise is particularly effective for visual and auditory learners, as it immerses users in real-life language and provides immediate feedback through quizzes and self-tests. While it excels at vocabulary building, it offers less focus on advanced grammar or conversation practice.

3. Wordela (formerly Vocab1): Wordela uses advanced AI and adaptive learning algorithms to tailor vocabulary practice to individual needs. It offers curated word lists for various subjects and proficiency levels, step-by-step courses, and a massive database of words in context. Features include progress tracking, expert word lists, and interactive games, making it ideal for exam preparation or professional development. The app supports multiple devices and users, making it suitable for both individuals and families.

4. Quizlet: Quizlet allows users to study vocabulary through flashcards, games, and quizzes. It supports multimedia content, enabling learners to add images and audio to their cards. Quizlet's collaborative features let users share sets and compete in real-time games, making vocabulary practice social and engaging. Its versatility makes it popular among students and teachers alike. [6]

5. Other Notable Apps:

Duolingo: Uses gamification and daily challenges to encourage consistent practice, though it is more general than vocabulary-specific.

Vocabulary Builder: Offers structured word lists, pronunciation guides, and self-tests, ideal for offline study and exam prep.

VocabMagic: Focuses on mnemonic techniques and fun cartoon characters, making it especially useful for test-takers and visual learners.[7]

Why These Apps Work

These apps are effective because they employ memory science principles such as spaced repetition, active recall, and contextual learning. Features like multimedia flashcards, mnemonics, and real-life examples help learners form strong mental associations, making new words easier to remember and use. Progress tracking and gamification keep users motivated and engaged, turning vocabulary building into a rewarding habit. Whether you are a beginner or an advanced learner, vocabulary apps like Anki, Memrise, Wordela, and Quizlet offer powerful tools to boost your word bank and improve retention. By integrating these apps into your daily routine, you can make vocabulary learning more efficient, interactive, and enjoyable—ensuring long-term success in mastering any language

In conclusion, it is significant to mention again that new techniques for remembering English words have transformed vocabulary learning into a more effective and enjoyable process. By using strategies such as spaced repetition, learning words in context, creating associations, and visualizing meanings, learners can improve both their short-term and long-term memory. Methods like the WRAP technique and the use of digital tools make vocabulary practice more interactive and personalized. Most importantly, these innovative approaches encourage active engagement with the language, helping students not only remember new words but also use them confidently in real-life situations. Embracing these modern methods can lead to faster progress and greater success in mastering English vocabulary and becoming excellent professionals of the chosen spheres. When employees master a language, it increases competence, makes their job easier, and builds confidence. It also gives them the mental and creative space to develop new ideas or pursue additional learning and development opportunities.

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