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One goal that all of my learners have in common is to expand their vocabulary. Different sources give different methods for ESL learners to expand their vocabulary, and most of them revolve around reading and using outside sources as the best way to learn new vocabulary.

A Colorín Colorado ESL article encourages increased reading in order to expose learners to different words in different contexts. The article mentions that the *level* of readings should also be considered; using different levels of readings will not only increase the learner's vocabulary, but also increase their fluency. This article then goes on to discuss the different strategies that learners can use once they encounter a new word. These strategies include using a dictionary, context clues in which the word is found, as well as breaking up the word to figure out the word's meaning. A ThoughtCo article that I read also mentions using resources like dictionaries and thesauruses to not only learn new words, but also learn synonyms for those words. This article mentions the importance of finding similar words, which can help in remembering new vocabulary. It also discusses vocabulary trees and vocabulary lists; this grouping technique allows learners to learn many new words, while also creating specific contexts for them.

Additionally, this ThoughtCo article discussed the importance of technology integration when learning English. They mentioned using TV shows and movies as a way to practice English comprehension and learning idioms. This use of technology is prevalent in today's world where nearly everyone has a computer at their fingertips. The use of technology when learning new English vocabulary is what forms the basis of a paper in the Journal of Adult Education titled *Enhancing ESL Vocabulary Development Through the Use of Mobile Technology*. Here, the importance of technology inside and outside of the classroom is stressed. The paper discusses the importance of technology not only in learning English, but also technology's role in everyday life. The paper

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discusses the different aspect of teaching new vocabulary, including teaching specific strategies and providing diverse language sources to learn new vocabulary. In contrast to the other articles that focus mainly on the sources of the new vocabulary and the traditional methods of learning, this paper explores the next step using something that we all have: cell phones. This adult education paper lists different types of apps (compatible with all major smartphone providers) that learners are able to install. It details specific dictionary apps (e.g. dictionary.com app) that acts as a thesaurus in addition to a dictionary. It then touches on translation apps, like Translator with Speech, as well as multipurpose apps that take a more interactive approach. One such app is the English LaunchPad app which includes flashcards and quizzes. This specific paper concludes with emphasis on addressing the needs of the learners and their goals. This learner-oriented approach and its importance is also touched on in the aforementioned ThoughtCo article.

A paper by Claire Sibold, titled *Building English Language Learners' Academic Vocabulary*, discusses vocabulary instruction and the different types of vocabulary. This paper discusses the Three Tier Model for vocabulary words— something that isn't mentioned in the other three sources. Tier 1 vocabulary encompasses simple words like “banana” or “running”; Tier 1 words are common words. Tier 2 vocabulary includes academic words (“analyze”) and multiple-meaning words (“check”). The Tier 3 category includes field-specific vocabulary that isn't used in everyday conversation. Examples of this type of vocabulary is “fluorine” or “stethoscope”.

The organization of vocabulary into these three categories helps when planning an ESL session and ensures that learning is targeted to a specific level. This paper continues with strategies for teaching vocabulary. Although it focuses on elementary-age students, there are a few helpful tips that are applicable to adult learners, as well. For instance, the paper mentions that repetition is

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key when learning new vocabulary, not only for pronunciation, but also to remember the vocabulary. The paper also discusses a “Talk-through” approach to learning new vocabulary (something that I’ve been using in my tutoring). This approach encompasses discussing definitions of words and giving synonyms. The introduction of synonyms when discussing new vocabulary is mentioned in the previous ThoughtCo article and the Journal of Adult Education paper.

A lot of what these ESL sources say are things that I’ve integrated into my tutoring sessions. I always incorporate some type of reading so the learners are exposed to vocabulary they wouldn’t normally find on their own. When new vocabulary arises, the use of synonyms is usually my go-to approach, as mentioned in the ThoughtCo article, as well as the *Enhancing ESL Vocabulary Development Through the Use of Mobile Technology* paper. However, using synonyms doesn’t always work; in cases where synonyms won’t suffice, the learner uses a translator to look up the word in their native language. All of the learners that I’ve worked with have smart phones with translators installed. The translators provide a convenient and accurate way to translate a new English word they learned, and to translate a word from their language into English.

The learners that I work with at the Literacy Center have larger goals, with English being a tool for reaching those goals. In the cases where learners want to use English in their respective professions, I try and implement as much Tier 3 vocabulary as possible, given that they are ready for it. This ensures that they not only learn English, but learn English that is applicable to what they want to do. I also revisit previously learned vocabulary to incorporate repetition into learning. Expanding vocabulary is key to learning English, so working on vocabulary development in every session is crucial.

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