

Teaching Academic Vocabulary: A Recent and Old Approach

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Abstract : An obvious, but ill-addressed hindrance to reading comprehension in academic English is poor vocabulary. Unfortunately, dealing with the problem is usually delayed until university entrance. It is the contention of this paper that the chore should be confronted much earlier and by using a very old-fashioned method. This presentation is accompanied by vocabulary lists for advanced level university students with explanations concerning the content and justification for the 500-word lists: how they change over time in accordance with evolving styles of academic writing. There are also sample quizzes and methods to ensure that the words are “absorbed” over time. There is a discussion of other vocabulary acquisition methods and conclusions drawn from the drawbacks of such methods. The paper concludes with the rationale for beginning the study of “academic” vocabulary earlier than is generally acceptable.

Keywords : academic vocabulary, old-fashioned methods, quizzes, vocabulary lists

Conference Title : ICTEL 2022 : International Conference on Teaching, Education and Learning

Conference Location : Amsterdam, Netherlands

Conference Dates : September 15-16, 2022