



Know many words but can't speak? **This is why!**

We all know we need words to speak a language. If we don't learn words, how can we speak?

Sometimes we have a lot of ingredients in the fridge but we still don't know what to cook. It's the same in the English language, you know many words but when you want to speak you don't know how to say something.

Why is that?

You have many many words in your brain, and if you see them somewhere (in a book, in a movie etc), you **recognize** them. But when you want to **use** them you **can't**. Because those words are **passive** in your head, **not active**.



Active words :

All the words that you know and you can use when you are communicating.

Passive words :

All the words that you have learned before, and if you read or hear them you know the meaning, but you cannot use them while speaking or writing

What is the problem?

Language learners usually focus on learning more vocabulary. But it's **not** a matter of '**number of words**'. It's about whether they are **active** or **passive**.

Language learners need to learn how to activate the passive vocabulary.



Know many words but can't speak? **This is why!**



4 steps to take in order to learn new words and activate them :

1) Have your own personal dictionary

Take a notebook and next time you see / hear a new word, write it down.



2) Write two or three sentences with the new words

It's important to learn new words in context. Because one word in English can have several meanings and different uses.

Example : Shift

- 1) Can you **shift** the table to the other side? = to move
- 2) She **shifted** to fourth gear and drove faster. = to change
- 3) She was on the night **shift**. = a period of work during the day

3) Write down some collocations with that word

Collocation :

A group of words that often go together.

Collocations with “ Shift “

Adjectives : a day shift / an early shift / a late shift

Verbs : to work in shifts / to do shifts

Make some sentences with these collocations.

I'm doing the early shift this week.

Some doctors work in a night shift.

Others work in a morning shift.



Know many words but can't speak? **This is why!**



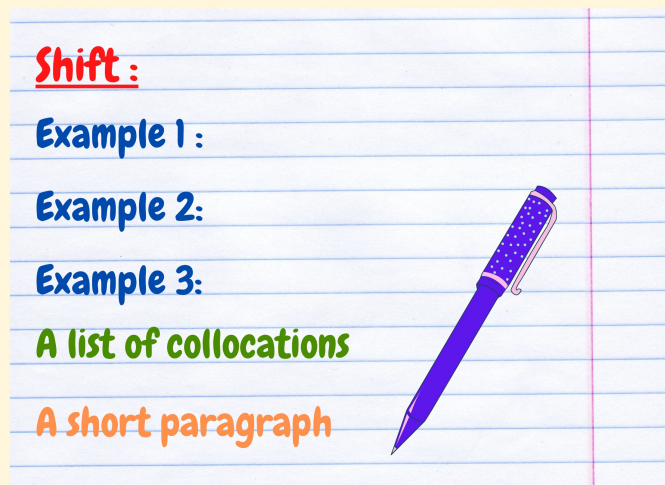
4) Write a paragraph with the word that you have learned and its collocations

Here is a short paragraph that I have written using the word “ shift “ and its adjective and verb collocations :

There is a clinic near my house. In this clinic doctors **work in shifts.**

Yesterday, I wanted to go to the doctor, but I couldn't. Because I was **doing the night shift. I really hate **doing late shifts** .**

So, the page in your dictionary would be like this:



Remember that learning never ends. You should flick through your dictionary, and review your notes!

There are no shortcuts in learning!
You have to spend time if you
want to really learn something.

