

## استخدام الصور لاكتساب اللغة الانجليزية لغير المتحدثين بها

### *Using Images for English Acquisition to Non-Native Speakers*

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## الملخص:

هدفت الدراسة إلى التعرف على واقع استخدام الصور في اكتساب اللغة الانجليزية للأشخاص غير المتحدثين بها، وكذلك تسهيل استخدام هذه الصور كأداة في عمليات التعليم. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة فقد اعتمدت الباحثة على المنهج الوصفي. وتوصلت الدراسة إلى مجموعة من النتائج أبرزها: تعتبر الصور وسيلة فعالية لاكتساب اللغة الانجليزية لغير الناطقين بها، ويستطيع المتعلمين لها فهم الموضوع والطرح المقدم لهم من خلال الصور.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** استخدام الصور، اكتساب اللغة الانجليزية، تعليم اللغة الانجليزية، غير المتحدثين بالانجليزية

## Abstract:

The study aimed to identify the reality of using images to acquire English Language for non-native speakers and facilitate using this to tool in learning the language. For achieving the objectives of the study, the researcher relied on the descriptive method. Therefore, the study reached to a set of results, the most important is: Images are considered an effective way to acquire English for non-native speakers. Also, Learners can understand the theme and the narrative presented to them through images.

**Keywords:** Using Images, English Language Acquisition, Teaching English, Non-native speakers of English

## ***Introduction:***

The study focuses on using images for English acquisition to non-native speakers. Also, it articulates the importance of images for learning English. Besides, it discusses the issues related to non-native speakers in learning English as a language. Moreover, the picture activities related to English learners which can help them learn this language is also incorporated. The use of Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM) has been briefly described also in this study. Generally, the aim of the study is to facilitate the non-native speakers in English acquisition using images.

A major aim of English language comprehension is to explain how people understand or comprehend what speakers want to say. The term “English Acquisition” refers to the way an individual learns his first language, i.e. through involvement in real communication and without any formal teaching (De Villiers & De Villiers, 2017). When we learn something, we hypothesize rules, and then these rules are used for communication. Explicitly, such terms focus exclusively on native speakers of the English language. However, non-native speakers are also highly prevalent. The number of native speakers of English is highest, nonetheless, there are many more non-native speakers who are also inclined to learn English. Native-speakers can learn and comprehend English easily and effectively.; however, non-native speakers need different techniques and strategies to learn the language (Almuhaisen et al., 2020). Generally, the language of different speakers depends on the listener and its reliability. People could treat the input similarly, thus, it becomes beneficial to adjust the way one approaches the contextual needs and the properties of sources (Crossley et al., 2020).

One of the strategies that can be used to make English acquisition easier is through images. Images are considered a powerful tool for

interacting with children. Picture-based interaction helps in easy entry into the text (Almuhausen et al., 2020). Learners can understand the theme and can easily comprehend the narrative presented to them through images. Images aid in identifying and naming similar objects in English which enables the learners to generate descriptions effectively. Trainers can display the images to the learners using tablets or mobile phones. They can help learners to identify different objectives and characters in the image (Elhamdi & Hezam, 2020). The learners, then, must be asked about their thoughts and opinions about the images. In order to facilitate the process of English acquisition through images, trainers can ask different questions from learners, such as describing the image, actions taken in the picture, occupation of people in the image, and their thoughts on these images. These ways help the student to understand and comprehend the images, thus facilitating English acquisition (Brysbaert et al., 2021).

### ***Study Problem:***

Non-native speakers of English learners usually encounter difficulties while communicating with other people effectively. Besides, they face some troubles in learning English language vocabulary. These problems reduce their motivation in social interaction and productivity.

The Questions of the Study: Because of the mentioned problem, the researcher reached to the main question:

- Does using images for English acquisition to help non-native speakers to learn English effectively?

From the above main question, the researcher deduced the following sub questions:

1. What are the most difficulties which non-native speakers face when speaking in English?

2. How do images affect English learners to know the exact vocab?
3. What kinds of images do teachers use in training English?

### ***Method of Study:***

The researcher relied on the descriptive method to identify the reality of using images to acquire the English language for non-native speakers. Therefore, this method is the most suitable for analysing the subject of the study.

### ***The Objectives of the Study:***

1. Explaining how people understand the English language through speakers of English.
2. Clarifying how images help people to communicate without needing a teacher or a book.
3. Showing the techniques and tools of using images in learning English to non-native speakers to facilitate acquisition of the language.
4. Highlighting the best models and easiest ways of using images for English acquisition for trainers.

### ***The Importance of the Study:***

Many non-native speakers of the English language are inclined to learn it and use it effectively. Therefore, image use is a powerful tool that gives learners a wide space to know words that help them to understand and interact with texts and conversations.

### ***Native and Non-Native Speakers***

In the present era of globalization, world language knowledge has become significant for good interaction and communication. English is

regarded as the world language which is crucial to be competitive and used to communicate on the global level (Antonova et al., 2019). The status of English is a world language because of the huge number of native speakers around the world, and it is also an important language because of its simplicity in grammar, vocabulary, and structure. Globally, there are approximately 380 millions Native speakers with more than 700 millions non-native speakers of English, resulting in large parts of communication today taking place in the English language. English language knowledge is significant for various jobs and education. Thus, learners should have experience of acquiring English language as fast as possible (Ali & Anwer, 2021).

A native speaker of English is the one who learned English as the first language in childhood. This suggests that English for such speakers is a bio-developmental language which cannot be changed afterwards even after learning or training in life. This implies that no one can become a native speaker of another language other than his first language. However, one can become a native speaker of more than one language if they have acquired both the languages in childhood. On the other hand, non-native speakers of English are the people who have learned English as a second or third language, but they have a different language as their first one. Even after practicing, English can never become a native language of non-native speakers (Chamba & Gavilanes, 2018).

### ***Problems faced by Non-Native Speakers***

There are certain language problems faced by non-native speakers of English. These problems create psychological issues with the speakers as they are unable to communicate with others effectively. This reduces their motivation level and productivity. It becomes imperative for the non-native

speakers to learn English as quickly as possible. Some of the problems faced by non-native English speakers have been discussed below:

### **1) Pronunciation**

In verbal communication, pronunciation plays a vital role which should be highly effective and attractive. Thus, pronunciation is a significant aspect in the process of verbal communication. Speakers of a language deeply and strongly influence the sound of alphabets. For example, in the Japanese language there is no sound of 'r'. Therefore, they use alternative sound as per their convenience, and instead of pronouncing 'r' they pronounce 'l' sound (Afzal, 2018).

### **2) Accent**

Non-native speakers cannot easily understand and speak English in the same accent as native speakers. They find it challenging to adopt the same accent. At times, when the non-native speakers learn an English accent, it becomes so strong that it diminishes the understanding of some words. For example, Malay English teachers who have Malay as their native language speak English with a strong Malay accent (Wu et al., 2020).

### **3) Grammar**

Many non-native English speakers have grammatical errors while speaking and writing in English. This is certainly because English is not their first language. They sometimes cannot understand how English works. Therefore, English grammar is different from grammar of other languages (Afzal, 2018).

### **4) Fluency**

Non-native speakers of English communicate in their own language; therefore, it becomes a challenge to talk in English fluently. Those speakers

lack confidence to speak in English, thus, their English fluency is low. Moreover, the tendency of non-native speakers to make mistakes while communicating in English compels them to avoid talking in English (Wu et al., 2020).

### ***Overcoming Challenges faced by Non-Native Speakers of English***

The problems encountered by non-native speakers of English can be solved using the following factors:

#### **1) Monitoring how you speak**

It is necessary to pause for a few seconds between sentences. When you use idioms in a sentence, try explaining that idiom before proceeding. Clarifying cultural aspects to people who speak other languages is a significant for making the non-native learn English.

#### **2) Using Images**

Providing visual aids to non-native speakers helps them in the process of understanding the meaning rapidly and effectively. A written version of a quiz should be provided to the speakers so they can learn and enhance their English vocabulary. Encourage the speakers to use and describe images and visual aids in their assignments.

#### **3) Encouraging the Collaboration between Cross-Cultures**

Encouraging the non-native speakers to interact with native speakers of English for English acquisition. Active participation and contribution of the learners must be ensured by the trainers or teachers so that students may effectively learn English. The speech of the students within the cross-cultural groups should be monitored and coached.

#### **4) Advice Students to Use Available Resources**

Non-native students of English should be assisted by faculty teachers for guidance. Academic resources must be used often so that the students can effectively learn English. Speakers who find difficulty in learning English must use recorded lectures and resources. Also, Encourage these students to learn along with the other classmates.

#### ***Most Effective English Acquisition Method***

Among all the ways described above, the most effective method of English Acquisition is using images for non-native speakers. Real-life images are crucial for non-native speakers for enhancing their confidence and building literacy skills (Antonova et al., 2019). According to the Affective Filter theory, affective factors such as motivation, stress, and self-confidence prevent the English learners from acquiring English as a second language. Therefore, studies indicate that visual aids or images can reduce the level of stress or anxiety and enhance confidence among learners who wish to acquire English as a second language (Nitu & Dahiya, 2017).

Images help to explain concepts and phenomena that cannot be properly described by teachers or textbooks. Studies also showed that individuals learn best from pictures and words because they can be better stored in their minds as opposed to verbal cues. Images are helpful in engaging learners, especially, non-native speakers of English. Textbooks that lack visual aids are not effective for learning any language. Thus, images hold utmost importance in the process of learning any language (Badalova, 2021).

#### ***Importance of Images for English Acquisition***

In the present era, learners are surrounded by different visual media in their everyday lives. Learners have access to technology and the Internet,

which enable them to access information in both visual and textual forms. The images can be used in a classroom environment as a pedagogical strategy focused on engaging learners who are grown-up in a technological environment. Images have become readily available and easily incorporated into teaching materials through digital technology (Huang et al., 2017). Also, images can help in teaching which has become a core of disciplines like art history, all the courses can benefit from the use of images. It is considered an effective way of demonstrating abstract concepts of data. Not only this, instructors reported that the use of images has increased the interactivity and discussion among students in the classroom environment. The visual literacy skills of the learners can be developed with teaching through images, which contributes to their overall lifelong learning and critical thinking skills. Some other benefits of using images for English acquisition have been listed below:

- Images are easier to remember
- Learning through images is fun
- Learning through images is fast
- Visuals can be used for native and non-native speakers
- Visuals are helpful for children of all ages
- Images help people learn about several different objects
- Images enhance one's vocabulary

### ***Finding Images***

Google Image Search can be used to find several images over the Web, which can be a highly useful tool to find relevant images. However, this method of finding images has certain problems.

Google shows images on the basis of the text appearing and the image file names, which results in several unrelated results that are irrelevant and do not go with the subject. Additionally, images over the Web may have rights restrictions and may have incorrect or incomplete data. There may be problems with image resolution with most of the images over the Web. There are several other resources which provide high-resolution images, are downloadable, and contain reliable information related to the images. These resources are Digital Image Database at JHU, ARTstor, Image Research Guide, government websites, Accunet/AP Multimedia Archive, etc (Egelström, 2018).

### ***Images Activities for English Acquisition***

#### **1) Identify the Image**

Appropriate image should be chosen to practice language items such as clothes adjectives, colors, prepositions, the present continuous etc. The trainer should then describe the image and the learners should guess those images inside it

#### **2) Memorizing the Details of the Image**

A true and false session with the images should be conducted where the learners tell whether a certain object is present in the given image or not. The learners can also read the statements related to the image in order to memorize the details of the given image.

#### **3) Image Dictation**

The trainers should take the dictation of the image with the help of image description without showing the picture. The learners should then draw the image accordingly.

The importance of images for English acquisition would ultimately help the non-native speaker as English is a new language for them. The techniques of learning English can be used for different purposes for understanding and comprehending the objects and their properties. This would eventually enhance the English vocabulary of the learners and make them proficient in English (Leśniewska & Pichette, 2016).

### ***Model Used for English Acquisition***

#### ***Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM)***

One of the famous learner's models, 'Picture Word Inductive Model', was developed by Emily Calhoun which has been widely tested and used. According to this model, inquiry-oriented language is a strategy that uses images of objects and actions to extract words from the listening and speaking vocabularies of children. This model aids in the development of primary or early-stage vocabulary, writing, and reading skills through the use of images. Based on PWIM, writers and readers are given detailed and complex images including nouns, objects, adjectives, or verbs. The learners are then given a few minutes to analyze and then describe the image. After this, the trainer writes the name of the object which has to be repeated by the learners. Content properties, phonetics, and structures are used to categorize the words. This model helps in improving the vocabulary of students and spelling of the words. The model also enables the learners to transfer spoken words viewed in the picture to the words. This improves the reading and writing skills of the learners. PWIM focuses on the writing skills and developing reading habits, for non-native speakers and other learners. By teaching spelling of different words through images, the learners are able to build inductive thinking skills (Meliasari et al., 2018).

## ***Types of Images used for English Acquisition***

As per science, the human brain is an image processor rather than a word processor. This proves that learning through images or visual aids help in the learning process effectively as opposed to other learning methods. Therefore, learning and acquiring English for non-native speakers through pictures is easier to remember and comprehend (Ermita et al., 2019). When images are used the learning process becomes fun. There are certain types of images used for English acquisition, especially for non-native speakers. These types have been described and discussed below:

### **1) Picture Books**

Pictures or images are generally seen in children's books, but being a non-native speaker, one has to learn English just like native speakers learn their mother tongue. Imitating the way native learners learn is a good strategy that can be used by non-native speakers. A simple short verbal narrative is given with every picture of a book. It becomes easier to remember what the reader has read as the images tell the story. Picture books are not specifically for children, however, picture books for all ages are available now. It is significant to read the narrative of the picture book so that it becomes easily understandable.



*Figure 1: Picture inside a children book*

## 2) Comic Books

English vocabulary can be best learned from comic books. These kinds of books not only help the non-native speakers learn English but are also quite entertaining. The non-native speakers can learn various different phrases and vocabulary. Moreover, They can learn the vocabulary of their favourite subject. For example, if an individual has interest in Crime and Criminal, then the individual can read crime related comics such as Detective Conan. Acquiring English through picture books and comic books is quite similar.

However, comic books have a shorter narrative, and the picture or image demonstrates an action.



*Figure 2: Picture from a Comic Book*

## 3) Pictures

Non-native speakers of English can acquire different images of a word. Google Images and Giphy are some of the websites from which people can get pictures (however you might find related or unrelated images). These websites allow the individuals to find hundreds to thousands of pictures or images by just typing the related subject. You can also use other websites to find professional and beautiful pictures. Google allows

people to check other related words given by their suggestions. This also increases and improves your English vocabulary.

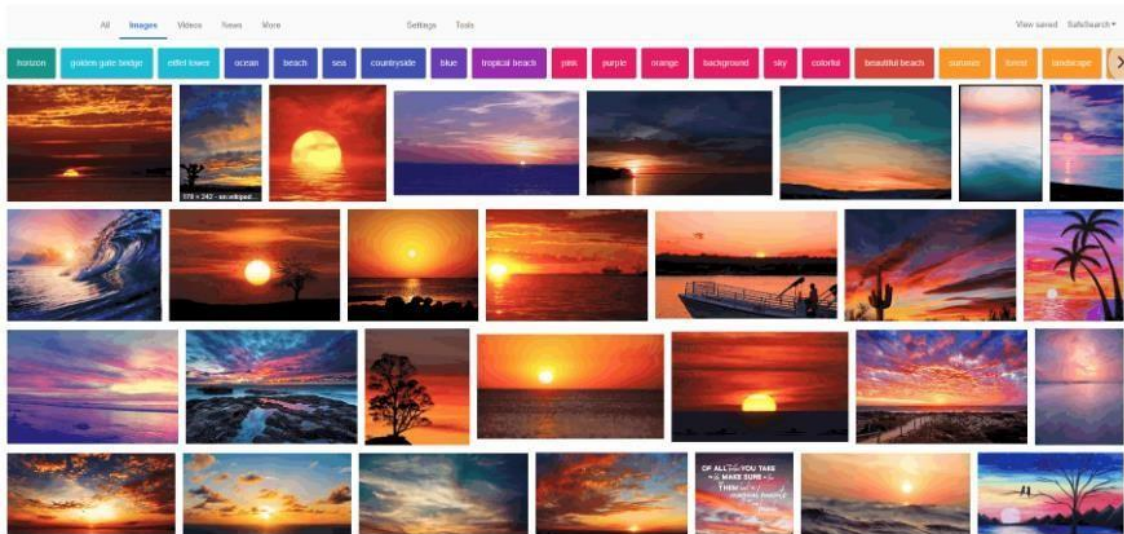


Figure 3: Google Image for the word 'Sunset'

#### 4) Flashcards

One of the widely applied methods for learning English is flashcards. Flashcards generally have two sides. One side has a question or a picture and the other side has the new words along with its pronunciation. Thus, they are helpful in summing everything needed to learn English. This is a faster and easier way to learn and memorize different words of English. Flashcards can be bought or created. In fact, the learner should remember the picture on the flashcard and attach the word in his mind. So, Practicing and using the new words daily can help the learner to memorize the words learned through flashcards.

#### 5) Infographics

Infographics are graphical visual representation of data, information, or knowledge for presenting the information clearly and efficiently. This kind allows the learners to come across new words in a logical manner linked in an array of information with related pictures. Therefore This aids the English

learners to get new words quickly. In fact, infographics can be found on different subjects.



*Figure 4: Infographic of a Rescue Plan*

## 6) Vocabulary Sets with Images

Vocabulary set is a group of vocabularies that are derived from the same topic. They are designed like flashcards. and also both are convenient and efficient for learners. There are various vocabulary sets that can be found on different online websites. Trainers can make the vocabulary set for the learners, especially for non-native speakers of English, so that they can learn English in a convenient way (De Villiers & De Villiers, 2017).

### **Conclusion:**

Images tool in learning the English language for non-native speakers is considered the most effective method of English acquisition without depending on teachers and textbooks directly and completely. Therefore, It is helpful for people in verbal communication to be able to interact with others.

### **Results:**

- Images are considered an effective way to acquire English for non-native speakers.
- Learners can understand the theme and the narrative presented to them through images.
- While learning English, non-native speakers face different problems such as pronunciation, accent, fluency, and grammar.
- Some of the ways of overcoming the challenges of learning English are monitoring how you speak, using images, encouraging the collaboration between cross-cultures, and using available resources and materials.
- Among all the solutions, using images for English acquisition for non-native speakers is the most effective way. because it is easier to remember, have fun, and it enhances one's vocabulary, etc.
- Some types of images that can be used to acquire English for non-native speakers are picture books, comic books, infographics, flashcards, vocabulary sets, and pictures.

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