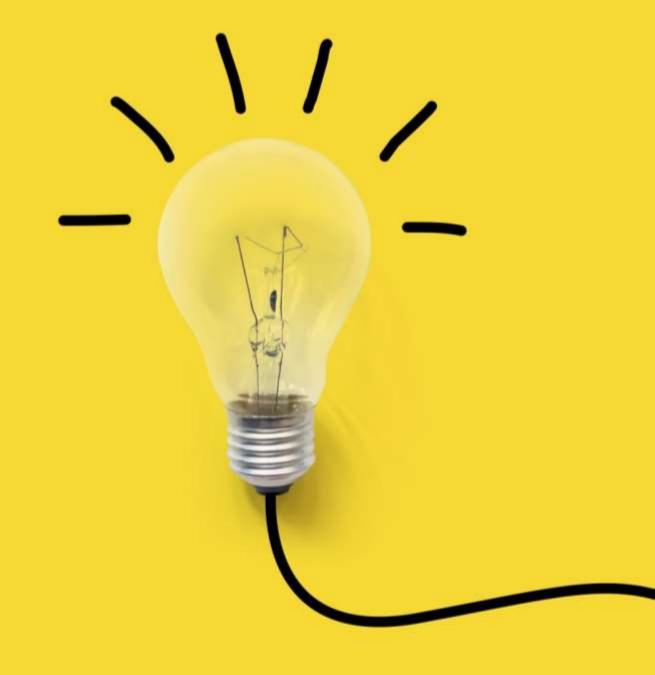# Vocabulary Learning User Interviews

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Intro to UX Design

User Research: Task 1.2

Vocabulary Learning User Interviews

Hi, [name of interviewee]. My name is Jay, and I'm going to be walking you through this session today. We're conducting interviews to better understand how people approach learning a new subject and vocabulary. The session should take 15 - 20 minutes.

The first thing I want to make clear right away is that this is not a test. You can't do or say anything wrong here. In fact, this is probably the one place today where you don't have to worry about making mistakes. If you have any questions as we go along, just ask them. And if you need to take a break at any point, just let me know.

OK, let's get started. I'd like to ask you just a few quick questions for a project we're working on about education and learning new vocabulary.

1. When did you last learn new vocabulary?
2. What methods do you use to learn new vocabulary?
3. What is most helpful to you in learning new vocabulary?
4. Can you tell me about a time when it was frustrating or difficult to learn new vocabulary? Is there anything that would have made it easier to learn the new vocabulary?
5. How much time during a typical week would you like to devote to learning new vocabulary?

1. When did you last learn new vocabulary?
    Yesterday. I keep a document in Google docs to list new words I learn.

2. What methods do you use to learn new vocabulary?
    I have a print dictionary and a dictionary app on my phone. I use those to look up new words when I see them in reading or when someone uses a vocabulary word I don't know.

3. What is most helpful to you in learning new vocabulary?
    I keep my words and definitions in Google Docs to review them. I also like to find opportunities to use the new vocabulary in sentences when speaking or writing. It depends on how interesting I find the word and opportunities where I can use the word.

4. Can you tell me about a time when it was frustrating or difficult to learn new vocabulary? Is there anything that would have made it easier to learn the new vocabulary?
    When I did a vocabulary of the day it was frustrating because there was often vocabulary I wasn't interested in learning. When I am interested in a word, then I feel motivated to learn it and use it. If it is just a random word, I may not be interested in it.

5. How much time during a typical week would you like to devote to learning new vocabulary?
    About ten minutes a day. I am a senior in high school, so I don't have time to learn new vocabulary beyond what I need for my classes or that truly interest me.

Nathaniel: Male | Age 19 | High School Senior

Doing

- I look words up in a dictionary I keep near my desk or by using a dictionary app on my phone.
- I keep a Google Docs list of words and definitions that I can refer to easily on my laptop.
- I like to find opportunities to use new vocabulary in writing and speaking.

Thinking

- I spend about 10 minutes a day learning new vocabulary because I don't have much time outside of my high school classes.
- I like to think about when I can use new words in writing or speaking.

Feeling

- I tend to be motivated to learn new vocabulary by how interested I am in the new word.
- I'm not interested in learning random vocabulary words like in 'word of the day' flashcards or apps.
- I feel a word needs to be relevant to the situation I am in for me to learn it.

1. When did you last learn new vocabulary?
    I was an English Literature major in college, so I built up a pretty good English vocabulary from a lot of reading and writing. At this point in my life, I'm typically not learning general new vocabulary. But for work, last week. My new vocabulary these days are medical and scientific terms in my role working with physicians and scientists.

2. What methods do you use to learn new vocabulary?
    I have access to medical and scientific dictionaries, so I am looking up vocabulary when preparing documents based on curriculum we are developing or for workshop presentations.

3. What is most helpful to you in learning new vocabulary?
    Using the words in the context of emails, documents, and presentations. I find the contextual experience of conversing with medical and scientific professionals aids in retaining new vocabulary.

4. Can you tell me about a time when it was frustrating or difficult to learn new vocabulary? Is there anything that would have made it easier to learn the new vocabulary?
    When there are many new terms to learn for a medical or scientific discussion new to me. Being able to review terms within the context of their typical use is helpful.

5. How much time during a typical week would you like to devote to learning new vocabulary?
    I work long hours with many meetings during a week. I don't have time to learn new vocabulary beyond what is required for specific tasks I am working on that week. New vocabulary is very contextual and task-specific for me right now.

Erica: Female | Age Early 40s | Director of Medical Education Program

Doing	Thinking	Feeling
• When I come across new words for work, I look the terms up in medical and scientific dictionaries. • I mostly use new vocabulary in writing professional emails and documents, making presentations to the medical and scientific communities, and in meetings when discussing medical or scientific curriculum.	• Learning new vocabulary is not the main purpose for me at this point in my life. I am learning new medical and scientific vocabulary for work. • I am often thinking about when and where it is appropriate to use new vocabulary in my writing and speaking to medical and scientific groups.	• I can sometimes feel overwhelmed when I need to learn many new complex medical and scientific terms. • I find it is helpful to focus on the contextual use of new vocabulary to retain the meaning and appropriate use.

1. When did you last learn new vocabulary?
   Today. I am always looking for new words to use in my writing. I have been writing for most of my life, so I've built up a good bank of words over the years. Nonetheless, I like to keep my writing fresh and not use the same words when I can find a different word to say the same thing. Especially in describing characters, places, emotions, action, and the like. I want to elicit the most emotional response from the reader I can. I'm also a voracious reader, so if I come across a new word, I make a point to learn it.

2. What methods do you use to learn new vocabulary?
   As a writer I have dictionaries at the ready, as well as books on writing that include the many different words you can use to describe any manner of things to make your writing more interesting. I often look vocabulary up on Internet dictionary sites because it is convenient. I'm mostly thinking in terms of synonyms I could use in place of word first pops into my head.

3. What is most helpful to you in learning new vocabulary
   Using new vocabulary in my writing. Once I have used it in a story it stays with me better than any other context.

4. Can you tell me about a time when it was frustrating or difficult to learn new vocabulary? Is there anything that would have made it easier to learn the new vocabulary?
   Just learning vocabulary as part of Grammar in school didn't interest me much. That was harder than learning new words I read in stories. I guess it is all about story for me.

5. How much time during a typical week would you like to devote to learning new vocabulary?
   Most of my time is spent writing, so I'm only looking up new vocabulary when I need to find a different word for a story. I guess it depends on the story I am writing. When I'm not writing, I'm often reading. Then it depends on if I come across a new word or not.

Angela: Female | Age Mid 50s | Fiction Writer

Doing	Thinking	Feeling
• I mostly use new vocabulary in writing fiction stories. • I am particularly focused on looking up synonyms in dictionaries or on the Internet to keep my writing fresh (as opposed to repeating the same words throughout a story). • I also like using books on words for writers that help me locate different ways of describing a character, scene, action, or emotion.	• I like to think about using new vocabulary to enhance my storytelling. • Often when I write, I think about what word might fit better in a story and that leads me to look up vocabulary. • I like to think about how a new vocabulary word might help best describe a character, feeling, or action.	• I feel that learning new vocabulary for me mostly needs to be connected to the craft of writing. • I am looking for vocabulary that will elicit the most emotional response from a reader.