



## THE SILENT MAJORITY: ANALYZING THE PROFILE OF "PASSIVE" EFL LEARNERS

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### **Abstract**

In the 21st-century English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, a significant segment of the student population remains "passive" physically present but communicatively withdrawn. This article analyzes the profile of these learners, moving beyond the label of "quietness" to explore the cognitive and cultural underpinnings of their passivity. By applying the research of **Khujakulov** on lexical and derivational systems, the paper argues that passivity often stems from a lack of "linguistic confidence" in navigating complex grammatical structures. The study proposes that a shift in the teacher's linguistic persona can transform this silent majority into active participants.

**Keywords:** *Passive Learners, EFL Profile, Student Engagement, Contrastive Linguistics, Uzbek EFL Context, Lexical Competence.*

### **Introduction**

The "silent majority" in EFL classrooms refers to learners who rarely volunteer, avoid eye contact during discussions, and prefer receptive tasks over productive ones. While traditional pedagogy often dismisses these students as unmotivated,



modern research suggests that their "passivity" is a complex profile shaped by psychological, cultural, and linguistic factors. In the context of Uzbekistan's education system, where respect for authority is a core value, silence can often be mistaken for a lack of understanding. However, as educators, we must analyze whether this silence is a choice or a byproduct of a "linguistic barrier" related to the mastery of English derivational and semantic systems.

### **Main Part: The Profile of Passivity**

An analysis of the passive learner profile reveals a high level of receptive competence coupled with low productive confidence. These learners often possess a strong theoretical grasp of grammar but struggle with the "lexical-semantic" application of the language.

According to Khujakulov (2021), the study of lexical units particularly in specialized fields like folk medicine demonstrates the difficulty learners face when translating culturally dense concepts. When a student cannot find the exact English derivational equivalent for an Uzbek medicinal term, they may choose silence to avoid "linguistic inaccuracy." This aligns with the findings of Khujakulov (2022), who notes that the derivational potential of words is a hurdle that can lead to communicative paralysis if not explicitly taught.

Furthermore, the passive profile is often a reflection of the teacher's own Linguistic Persona. If the teacher does not model a "booster" voice using confident reporting verbs and assertive language the students may mirror this hesitation. By integrating Khujakulov's (2023) insights on the translation of folk medicine terms, teachers can create "safe zones" for active learning. By using familiar cultural concepts as a bridge, the silent majority can be encouraged to participate in contrastive analysis, shifting their role from passive observers to active linguistic researchers.



## Conclusion

The silent majority is not a group of "lost" learners, but rather a group of "cautious" ones. Analyzing their profile reveals that their silence is often a strategy to maintain academic face. By applying the derivational and lexical frameworks established in the works of Khujakulov, EFL teachers can provide the necessary tools for these students to find their voice. Building a 21st-century teacher profile involves recognizing these silent cues and transforming the classroom into a space where cultural lexis and linguistic theory meet to empower every learner.

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