

Opportunities Teachers' Room

HELPING STUDENTS LEARN VOCABULARY

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1 Language Awareness

One of the problems for many students in language learning is dealing with the sheer bulk of the language. It is vital firstly for students to realise that they can communicate with only a fraction of this language and secondly for them to direct their own learning, so that they learn language which will be useful for them as individuals.

Even within a traditional classroom situation the functions and vocabulary which are important for each student will vary according to their own interests, personality and previous knowledge. This means that a learner-centred approach to learning words or 'chunks' of words is needed, rather than one in which the teacher dictates important words and functions to be learned. As Carter and McCarthy point out: 'learning words in another language cannot easily be divorced from motivational factors such as how important or useful lexical items are perceived to be by the learners themselves' (Carter/McCarthy 1988).

In addition, students need help in processing and remembering language and increasing their own personal lexicon. Often they go about this learning in a disorganised and haphazard way. For example, many students write down new words but have no system for storing them. Others waste a lot of time and effort by trying to learn lists of words before exams or by trying to learn low-frequency words. They easily becoming demotivated when language is forgotten (and 80% of new words will be forgotten in only 24 hours (Victori Blaya, M. 1994).

As teachers we must try to develop our students' vocabulary learning skills. 'Rather than providing students with large amounts of lexicon to be learned, teachers should present them with strategies and methods learners can use to learn vocabulary by themselves' (Victori Blaya, M. 1994 p.17). Development of such strategies should go hand in hand with activities that increase learners' awareness of language, of important lexical and functional features and of how words and expressions in English match or correspond with those in their own language(s).

One interesting place to start is to get students to consider how they deal with words in their own language. Every day students are bombarded with an avalanche of words and expressions, many of which they do not know. However, they deal with this fact with no problem, often in more than one language. This experience must be useful when they come to deal with words in a foreign language.

Activity 1 - Awareness of Words

Answer the questions about how you use your own language(s).

- 1** Does anybody know all the words in your language?
- 2** How many do most people know and use?: 90% 80% 60% 50%
30% 10%
- 3** When you listen to people do you always understand all the words they are saying?
- 4** In which situations are you more likely to come across new words or expressions?
- 5** When you do not know word does it usually mean that you cannot understand?
- 6** What do you normally do when you are reading?
 - a** guess the rough meaning from the context
 - b** ask someone the meaning
 - c** use a dictionary
 - d** ignore the word
- 7** What do you usually do when you are listening?
 - a** guess the rough meaning
 - b** ask someone the meaning later
 - c** ask the person who is speaking to explain to you
 - d** look it up in a dictionary
 - e** ignore the word
- 8** Do you ever get mixed up with words?

When going through the questionnaire above you can comment that nobody knows all the words in any language and that most people only use a small fraction of the existing words in a language, much less than 10%. In English there are varying estimates of the size of people's vocabulary (from 12,000 for 'average' people to between 15,000 and 23,000 for 'educated' people) (Crystal.D. 1988 p. 44). This is out of a total of about two million words in the language (Crystal. D. 1988 1 p.32).

The other questions highlight the fact that in our own language even though there are lots of words that we do not understand, we usually cope perfectly. Most of the time we ignore words or guess the rough meaning from the context. Both these skills are vital when learning a foreign language and will be looked at further when dealing with listening and reading.

Other awareness activities can focus on feelings about language, aiming to develop a 'feel' for words. They can also compare their own language(s) with English when looking at texts, especially songs and

poems. Cultural differences can also be touched upon when looking at language and seeing that sometimes there is no direct translation. The activity below focuses on students' affective reactions to words and expressions. It is important to give them examples of them that you either like or dislike, before getting them to do the activity. One interesting area in English involves the common use of onomatopoeic words (words that resemble the sound of an action or object) : e.g. crash/sizzle/crunch/whisper/cuckoo

Activity 2 - A feel for words

Think about the questions below and discuss them with the rest of the class.

- 1** Are there any words in your language that you particularly like the sound of?
 - 2** What words in your language do you not like the sound of?
 - 3** What words in English do you like the sound of? E.g. tickle/crocodile/crunch
 - 4** What words in English do you not like the sound of? E.g. yellow
 - 5** Are there any expressions that you like in English? E.g. OK./Do it./
 - 6** Are there any expressions that you think sound strange in English? E.g. 'Come on, baby!'
-

Other activities can make students aware of the similarities between words in their language and in English and how they can use these cognates. Awareness of other lexical features such as compounds and wordbuilding is also useful to help students when processing new vocabulary in texts.

2 Priorities

It is vital to prepare students to organise and store their vocabulary and functions using vocabulary books and function banks. When students have chosen how to organise their vocabulary books it is important to make them real, personalised records of words and expressions, rather than meaningless lists. One way is to get students to think consciously about their personal interests and relate this to vocabulary learning. The activity below at the same time provides input for you about topics and tasks that could be done with students.

Activity 3 - Your priorities

Answer the questions.

1 What vocabulary areas are interesting for **you**?

- a sport (What sports do you like?)
- b hobbies (What are your hobbies?)
- c fashion/clothes
- d nature/animals/plants
- e music (What kind do you like?)
- f technical (computers/machines/cars)

Any others?

2 Which situations are interesting for **you**? (to know expressions/vocab)

- a travel (e.g. visiting cities/sightseeing)
- b shopping
- c meeting new people
- d going out (cinema/discos, etc)
- e meals/eating out
- f parties

Any others?

The use of personalised, individual records can be followed up by getting students to review the words they have written in their books. The activity below firstly illustrates the concept of 'important' words and then gets students to apply it to their vocabulary books.

Activity 4 - Important Words

1 When you have read the text, classify all the new words in it like this:

- ***** A five star word. Really important new word for me to use. I must put it in my vocab book with lots of information.
- *** A three star word. Important new word for me to be able to understand. Useful for me to put it into my vocabulary book.
- * A new word but not very important for me. Not worth putting in my vocabulary book.

2 Choose two or three pages of your vocabulary book. Classify the words in it. Are there any one star words?

When you go through the first part of the activity above you can discuss the classifications, taking into account diversity of interests and levels. There are no right answers; for some students some words will be new and for others not. Also, words will vary in importance for students, according to their own personal interests. Similarly, when students look through their own books their criteria must be personal.

The two previous activities are vital to forge the link between motivation and learning mentioned earlier (Carter and McCarthy 1988). They are also important in convincing students that their learning is **individual** and that they are responsible for it. At the same time, the individual nature of vocabulary records allows for the natural diversity of the classroom in terms of level, aptitude and learning style. In fact, by storing words in this way students are working out their own, individual lexical syllabuses rather than using other people's lexical syllabuses, however scientifically these are developed in terms of frequency and use (see Willis and Willis 1988).

3 Monitoring Learning

Because of the importance of the vocabulary learning process it is important to make sure that it is actually working. The two activities below aim to raise awareness of how to organise vocabulary books and function banks.

Activity 5 - Monitoring Vocabulary Books

Look at the girl's vocabulary book. Which of the pieces of advice would be useful for her?

- a You should give better example sentences. E.g. Alligators are very dangerous reptiles.
- b You should not put translations.
- c You should only choose words that are useful for **you**. Some words, like 'appoint' are probably not very useful.
- d Check your example sentences for mistakes. (e.g. I'm agreed with you.)
- e Don't worry about putting the part of speech (noun/verb/adjective)

N **alligator** caiman - I have an alligator.
N **afraid** miedo - She has afraid.
A **alike** semejantes - They are alike.
N **antique** antigüedad - That is antique.

N **apt** acertado - He apt it.
V **appoint** nombrar - I appoint you.
V **attain** lograr - I attain it.
A **also** tambien - It also are green.
A **angry** enfadado - I'm angry.
A **agreed** estar de acuerdo - I'm agreed with you.
A **astonishing** increíble - This is astonishing.

The above example from an elementary level student shows a lot of effort and is excellent. However, there is some useful advice for her.

a - The example sentences she uses do not give enough context for them to be useful.

c - The most important because she is writing down all the words she comes across and not choosing words that are important for her. For example, a word like **apt** is not very useful for a 12 year-old. There are problems to be dealt with.

d - Some of the example sentences have simple mistakes in them.

The advice in **b** and **e** is **not** very useful. It is a good idea to put the translation of words and it can be very useful to put the part of speech.

A similar activity for function banks could involve students re-organizing the poor example below. At the same time as developing awareness, the activity could provide useful revision of expressions from a situation you have just done with a class.

Activity 6 - Monitoring function banks

Look at the functions bank below. Write out the same functions yourself, doing these things.

- 1 Put a title at the top that shows what the situation is.
- 2 Put the expressions in the order that you would use them. Write them neatly and correctly. Use a situation flow chart
- 3 Say who would say the expressions: customer/shopkeeper
- 4 Put translations underneath the expressions in your language.
- 5 Write down useful vocabulary related to the situation (toothbrush/toothpaste/shampoo, etc)

Functions Bank

Can I help you? I'm just looking. How much is it?

Goodbye. Good morning.

Here you are. Thank you. I'd like a toothbrush.
That is one pound eighty pence.

Having done activities like those above, you can get students to look at each other's vocabulary books and comment on them in terms of neatness, organization, information included about the words. It is also useful to get students to review their own books and the way in which they are storing vocabulary and functions.

Activity 7 - Self-assessment of storage (vocabulary books and functions banks)

- 1 How many words do you normally write down in a lesson?
20 10 5 0
- 2 Do you always include a translation and an example sentence?
- 3 Do you mark words N (noun), V (verb), A (adjective)?
- 4 Where do you write down important expressions from lessons?
- 5 Do you give translations of expressions in your language?
- 6 Assess your vocabulary book and function bank.

Rating Scale

3 Neat and well organised. They are very clear for me and help me check and remember words and expressions. They have got lots of words and expressions that are very important for me.

2 Quite neat and organised but I sometimes have problems finding words and expressions. Some of them are not very useful for me.

1 Disorganised and untidy and it is difficult to find words and expressions. I have only written down a few useful words and expressions.

- 7 How could you improve your vocabulary book and function bank?
-

When going through the questionnaire above it is worth pointing out that five words per or two or three expressions lesson are probably realistic numbers for most students. Other answers can also be

discussed in class and the self-assessment recorded in students' learner diaries.

4 Using Vocabulary Books

In addition to monitoring, it is also important for vocabulary books and function banks to be used actively throughout a course, or there is the danger that they become a kind of 'black hole' where vocabulary and functions disappear never to be used or seen again.

The activities suggested below include: giving students time in the lesson to fill in vocabulary books and function banks (1); carrying out quizzes amongst students (2); student-generated puzzles (3); work on pronunciation problems like consonant clusters (4); work on pronunciation problems involved with specific functions and again having consonant clusters (5); work on connotation (6); revision of key functions (7).

Activity 8 - Using vocabulary books and function banks

1 You have finished reading. Now put important words in your vocabulary book and expressions in your function bank.

2 Use your vocabulary book to write a quiz for your partner.

Example What's the meaning of 'otter'? How do you say '.....' in English?

3 Use your vocabulary book to work out a puzzle for your partners.

Example anagram dwinwwo (window)
 word square
 mini-crossword

4 Look through your book and make a list of words that are difficult to pronounce.

Example sausage/crisps

Tell the rest of the class. Practise saying the words with your partner.

5 Make a list of expressions in your function bank which are difficult to pronounce.

Example What's the time?

6 Look through your books and mark words which are positive and negative.

Example brilliant ++++++++ (GOOD) disgusting ----- (BAD)

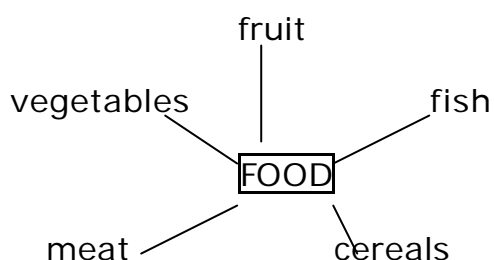
7 In pairs, look through your function bank. Work out a dialogue using the functions. Act out your dialogue in front of the rest of the class. They must try to guess **where** the situation takes place, who the people are and **what** is going to happen next.

5 Brainstorming

The next stage is to develop learners' ability to handle vocabulary and functions in texts. Brainstorming is a very useful technique which can be used before skills activities to introduce a topic or task and present new vocabulary or functions. It also develops students' abilities to check their own knowledge of language and increase this knowledge on their own.

Activity 9 - Brainstorming Words

1 We are going to look at the topic of food. Complete the network below. Use your dictionary to help you add new words.



Once students have done guided activities like the one above, it is possible to get them to brainstorm around a topic area using their own semantic maps (Gairns and Redman 1986). Students in pairs or groups think of areas associated with the topic and when they do not know a word they can use dictionaries. Then they tell the rest of the class what words they have thought of and these can be put on the board.

Activity 10 - Mind map

Look at the mind map below. Do your own about the topic of this module.

Terminator	Alien	Casablanca	Brad Pitt	Demi Moore
Twister				John Travolta
favourite films			actors/actresses	
Independence Day			Sharon Stone	

CINEMA

making films

director
producer
cameraperson

going to the cinema

- * inviting somebody
- * buying tickets
- * talking about film
- * going out after

For another example see Ellis and Sinclair 1989 p.36.

6 Systematising Vocabulary

New vocabulary is always best presented in context, particularly within reading texts. There are however lexical features which can be introduced explicitly to students and this is perhaps best done with the use of diagrams and schemata (Lindstromberg 1985) and where students have to actively work on and classify lexis. The activities below look at the following features: compound nouns (1); superordinates (small) and hyponyms (tiny) (2); connotation (3); cognates (4); collocation (5); wordbuilding (6); phrasal verbs (7); antonyms (8). See McCarthy for a review of ways of classifying and organising vocabulary (1990 chapter 7).

Activity 11 - Working on vocabulary

1 Match the two halves of these words from the text.

- a** green **1** level
b rain **2** house effect
c acid **3** hole
d ozone **4** rain
e sea **5** forest

Check in the text and see if the words are
a one word **b** two words **c** joined by a hyphen

2 Complete the word map using the adjectives below.

enormous / little / tiny / massive / gigantic / large / miniscule / minute

big

small

(Adapted from Lindstromberg 1985)

3 Are the words from the concert review positive or negative? Match them with the diagram.

all right / brilliant / boring / interesting / awful

+ + + + POSITIVE +
 o NEUTRAL
 - - - - - NEGATIVE

(Adapted from Lindstromberg 1985)

4 Which of the words from the text are similar or the same in your language?

old / house / horrible / cold / street / bar / stranger / telephone / different / message

5 Which of the words below go together? Complete the table.

	MAN	WOMAN	CHILD
handsome			

pretty			
--------	--	--	--

(adapted from Rudzka et al. 1981)

6 Complete the table with words from the text.

verb	noun	adjective
Succeed		successful
Horrify	horror	
Interest		

7 Match the phrasal verb with the synonym.

- a** get on with **1** survive
b break off **2** attack somebody verbally
c get at **3** finish a relationship
d get by **4** have a good relationship with somebody

8 Match the opposites.

- a** fat **1** old
b tall **2** thin
c young **3** blonde
d dark **4** short

7 Pronunciation of Words

As well as looking at and practising features of lexis, sounds can be introduced and related to words that the students have seen in the unit or module. See *The Pronunciation Book* Marks and Bowen (1992) for lots of ideas about presenting and practising sounds and using symbols.

A focus on vocabulary and sounds can be done at the same time using games like those below. In addition to focusing on important sounds, spelling, dictionary use and use of phonemic symbols are all also practised.

The **Words and sounds** game below can be done in the following way:

- 1 Write three vocabulary categories on the board.
- 2 Divide students into groups of three or four.

3 Tell them you are going to give them a sound and that they have to find a word containing this sound for each of the three categories. The first team to do so successfully will gain two points. Encourage students to use dictionaries and their vocabulary books.

4 Check the team's answers and write them up on the board. Then get suggestions from other teams who score a point if their words are correct. Go over incorrect words.

5 Continue with other sounds. The team with the most points at the end is the winner.

Activity 12 - Words and sounds

Find words related to the topics below with the sound /I/ in them. When you have finished, tell your teacher the words. The first group to get the three correct words gets one point. Use your dictionaries to help you.

	nationality	animal	sport
/i:/	<i>Greek</i>	<i>sheep</i>	<i>skiing</i>
/I/			
/a:/			
/e/			

Now find words for the next sound /a:/.

Adapted from: *The Pronunciation Book* p.37 Bowen,T. and Marks,J. (1992)

Example words from activity above: /I/ **I**talian / **h**ippo / tennis /a:/ **A**rgentinian / **l**lama / **b**asketball /e/ French / hen / **t**ennis

As well as focussing on sounds, it is also useful to make students aware of stress patterns when revising words.

Activity 13 - Word stress

Add as many words with the same stress patterns to the table below. Use your dictionaries to help you (stress marked by 'before the stressed syllable: 'Switzerland / I'ran / 'Scotland).

Switzerland O o o	Iran o O	Scotland O o
dictionary elephant	attack	table

Adapted from *The Pronunciation Book* p. 60 Bowen and Marks (1992)

8 Functional Language

In the same way as with the presentation and practice of vocabulary, sounds and word stress, presentation of functions must involve students in some kind of active working out of rules and should be linked with students' function banks.

Students can be encouraged to think about how communication is structured, the style employed and the exponents of the functions that are used. Cross-cultural comparisons can also be made when looking at situations of communication such as telephoning, shopping, meeting people etc. This can help to develop students' awareness of the differences between the two languages. The example below provides a good opportunity to discuss the differences between telephoning in English and in students' own language.

Activity 14 - Focus on functions

Listen to the dialogue again and match the words with the stages.

- | | |
|--|--|
| a person answers and gives number | 1 Goodbye. |
| b caller asks to speak to person | 2 Could I speak to Ms Smith, please? |
| c answerer says person is not in | 3 Ludlow 2765 |
| d caller asks for message | 4 Thanks very much. Goodbye. |
| e answerer says yes | 5 I'm afraid he's not in. |
| f caller gives message | 6 Of course. |
| g answerer takes message | 7 Call 98763 urgently. My name's Lee. |
| h caller thanks and says goodbye | 8 Call - 9-8-7-6-3 O.K. |
| i answerer says goodbye please? | 9 Could you take a message |

Which expressions show that this is a formal conversation?

How would the conversation be different in **your** language?

Work on functions also needs to be linked in with pronunciation, particularly a focus on the use of un-stressed words and prominent syllables.

An activity can be done focusing on key words from functional expressions. Students listen to the expressions read out by the teacher and write down the key words. They then listen again and write out the complete expressions. When they store the expressions in their function bank, they can underline or highlight with colour the key words.

For the activity below these expressions could be used. The key words are in bold.

- 1 **What time** does the **train** to **London** leave, please?
 - 2 **How long** do I have to **wait** in **Newport**?
 - 3 **What time** does it **get** to **London**?
 - 4 **How much** does a **return** ticket **cost**?
 - 5 Are there any **cheap offers** on?
-

Activity 15 - Key words

Listen to the expressions and write down the key words.

Example

1 what time / train / London / leave / please

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

Listen again and write down all of the words.

Write down the expressions in your function bank underlining the key words.

Unstressed syllables are one of the biggest problems for many learners, both receptively and productively. A simple way of focussing on this is for students to listen to key functions when they are presented and to write down the number of words. They then listen again and write down the words in the sentences. You can then write these up on the board and indicate contractions and unstressed syllables, mentioning the use of /ə/ (schwa). You can then practise the functions chorally before going on to speaking practice in pair or groups. Finally, students can write down the examples in their function banks and mark unstressed syllables for future reference.

For the activity below, functional exponents could be as follows.

- 1 Could you tell me how to get to the station, please? (11 words)
- 2 Go down this street. At the end of the street, turn left. (12 words)
- 3 It's near to the river, in front of a big hotel. (12 words)
- 4 Go over the bridge and the cinema's on your left. (11 words)
- 5 Walk through the park and when you can see the lake, you're nearly there. (14 words)

Activity 16 - How many words?

Listen to your teacher say the sentences. How many words are there in each one? Contractions are two words. E.g. it's = it is

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

Listen again and write down the expressions. Then put them into your function bank.

A final activity related to the presentation and practice of functions is marking intonation patterns. This is particularly useful for signalling the 'polite rise' and making students aware of its importance in terms of politeness in English. This is best done with taped dialogues as it is difficult when reading things out to produce the correct intonation pattern.

Activity 17 - Intonation arrows

Look at the short conversations below. Mark the intonation (&= up)
((= down)

A Excuse me?

B Yes, can I help you?

A I'm looking for a battery for my radio.

A Umm ... could you tell me the way to the station, please?

B Yes, go along this street for about 300 metres.

A Is this seat free, please?

B Yes it is.

A Where are the toilets please?

B Down the corridor. Second door on the left.

Write out new expression for you in your function bank. Mark intonation with the arrows.

9 Memorising Language

The next stage in helping students to deal with vocabulary and functions is that of actually memorising key words and expressions. As mentioned in the introduction to this section, unless language is recycled and reinforced it can disappear from a learner's short-term memory with incredible rapidity. While a considerable amount of recycling and reinforcement can be built into classroom materials the memorising of language has to be an individual process, based on learner's individual lexicons.

In terms of memory there are no magical solutions, as the way in which we remember depends very much on individual learning styles. For example, an activity that is useful for a visual learner is not so useful for a learner who responds better to auditory stimuli.

Perhaps the most important thing is to get students to think about how they remember best and then to employ these strategies. As Thompson points out: 'Good memory entails prior experience and practice, availability of meaningful associations, and efficient encoding and retrieval strategies. In addition, it is important to remember that it entails individual awareness of what truly does and does not

improve memory performance and willingness to experiment with different ways of memorising.' (Thompson 1987 p.54)

The activity below encourages students to do this, to choose strategies that may suit them as individuals and then to try them out

Activity 18 - Memory Strategies

Which of these strategies do you use to remember words? Are there any other strategies that you want to try out?

VISUAL

- a** Read through a page of your vocabulary book. Then try to imagine the words on the page.
- b** Write out example sentences.
- c** Write out the word several times.
- d** Draw more pictures or images of words in your vocabulary book.
- e** Imagine pictures of words. E.g. river (imagine a river you know)

ORAL

- a** Say words to yourself that have the same sounds in them, like *boat* and *coat*.
- b** Imagine dialogues with words and expressions in them.
- c** Repeat words silently or aloud to yourself again and again.
- d** Associate words with music.
- e** Record the new words yourself on a cassette. Listen to the words.

ANALYTIC

- a** Think about the similarities or differences between English words and words in your language (e.g. sugar/azúcar)
- b** Break words into different parts and think about how they fit together.
- c** Think about the origin of a word (e.g. bungalow=Indian)

SELF-TESTING

- a** Use your vocabulary book to test yourself. Use the translations and cover the English words and expressions.
- b** Go through your vocabulary book and highlight or underline any words that you have forgotten.
- c** The day after you have studied vocabulary test yourself mentally on your way to school.
- d** Cover part of a word or expression. Try to remember the rest.
- e** Write new words on pieces of paper and put them in a bag. Take out pieces of paper and check if you can remember the words.

GROUPING

- a** Go through your vocabulary book and make new groups of words in terms of topics.
- b** Use colours to help you classify words. Example: Go through your vocabulary book and underline adjectives in blue, prepositions in green, verbs in red, and nouns in yellow.
- c** Write down words or phrases from your vocab book using a network or table.
- d** Associate words or expressions with specific situations. For example: going to a restaurant.

PHYSICAL RESPONSE/FEELINGS

- a** Think about what feelings you associate with a word. E.g. river (calm/peaceful)
- b** Mime physical activities. E.g. cutting wood/writing a letter
- c** Say expressions and mime the gestures and facial expressions you would use. E.g. I'm sorry. (shrugging shoulders)

Choose a new strategy and try it out with the words from a lesson in your coursebook.

For similar activities see: Ellis and Sinclair 1989 pp 34-38 and McCarthy 1994 pp 12-13.

Having done the questionnaire and found out several strategies that are useful for a lot of the students in the class, it is possible then to practise the strategies in the class. Rather than focusing on one or two strategies however, it is always a good idea to allow students to choose which strategy **they** want to use in order to remember something.

Games for developing memory can be played to give students opportunities to develop specific strategies. Before doing the games, get each student to choose two or three strategies for memorising. One memory game involves telephone numbers. Ten numbers are written on the board and students have to remember as many as possible in two minutes. They then try to write them down. After the game you can discuss the strategies that students used and which were most successful. Similar activities can be done with pictures or texts from the coursebook. Students are given time to memorise and then the book is closed.

In addition to the individual strategies mentioned above, there are also mnemonic techniques which can be taught to students. These include the pegword method, the keyword method, the loci method, word chains and narrative chains (see Thompson 1987 pp 43-49).

Perhaps the simplest to teach is the keyword method, which links the L2 with students' L1.

Activity 19 - The Keyword Method

- 1 Say the word you want to learn to yourself. E.g. can/cannot
- 2 Think of a link with a word in your language. E.g. 'canino'
- 3 Imagine a picture and a sentence. E.g. The dog **can** speak Latin.

10 Self-assessment

Another important area in helping students handle new vocabulary and functions is regular self-assessment of what they have actually learnt.

Activity 20 - Self-assessment of progress in vocabulary

1- How many words have you learned during this module? Check through your vocabulary book to help you work it out roughly.

(a/w- faces - v. happy /q. happy/not very happy)

a:

b:

c:

more than 30
less than 10

between 10 and 30

2 Review your vocabulary learning this term. Test yourself with the words in your vocab book. Write down words that you are not sure about. Use this checklist to help you:

- * Can understand it when it is written?
- * Can I understand it when it is spoken?
- * Can I use it with the correct meaning?
- * Can I use it in the correct situation?
- * Can I pronounce it correctly?
- * Can I spell it?

(Questions adapted from Ellis and Sinclair 1989 p. 28)

3 Are there any specific vocabulary areas which you need to improve on? Use your learner diary to help you.

E.g. animals names of trees names of fish clothes

Use your dictionary and make a vocab network with the new words (with pictures if possible). Then test yourself on the new words.

In the same way, self-assessment can be done for functions.

Activity 21 - Self-assessment of progress in functions

1 How many phrases and expressions have you learnt in this module? Say them to yourself and then look through your notebook and check if they are correct.

2 How many of the expressions from this module have you used yourself in class or in your written work?

3 Which two expressions from the module do you think are the most important? Why?

Reflection

1 Were you an organised learner at school? How many of your learners need help in organising their vocabulary, grammar or function notes?

2 What memory strategies do **you** find most useful? Use activity 60 to find out about your students' strategies.

3 Which three activities from this chapter do you think would be most useful for your students? Why?

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