

Make Time for Vocabulary



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My top ten

1. Make time for vocabulary
2. Include direct instruction
3. Choose appropriate vocabulary
4. Repeat, reuse and recycle!
5. Teach lexical sets and other look-alikes separately
6. Encourage learner autonomy
7. Include fluency activities for vocabulary
8. Scaffold instruction
9. Make it meaningful
10. Make it fun!

Before we start...

How many words does...

- The average pre-college advanced ESOL learner know?
- The average fluent speaker entering college know?
 - The average 5 year old native speaker know?

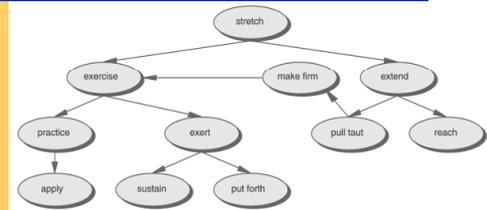
Vocabulary is ...

- Breadth (#of words and phrases)
- Depth - how much learners know about using the words they are familiar with and making connections to other words they know.

Vocabulary is...

- Productive
- Receptive

A semantic map - shows depth



From: *The Role of Vocabulary Instruction in Adult Basic Education* by Mary Curtis

What does it mean to know a word?

Talk at your table...

Vocabulary includes

- Single words
- Set phrases
- Variable phrases
- Phrasal verbs
- Idioms

How do we learn vocabulary?

- Usually think reading – but results not great – useful but “fragile”
- Why? If reading in familiar area, can cope with new words, but don't learn them (won't be able to use in unfamiliar area)
 - Frequency of more than the most common 2,000 is not great –
 - Limited vocabulary inhibits reading

#1 Make time for Vocabulary!

- Spend time on vocabulary instruction
 - Highlight words in texts, write on board
 - Let class know when this is your focus -studies show this is more effective

#2 Include direct instruction

- In communicative language learning, focus on direct instruction in vocabulary went out of fashion.
- Recent research is showing a renewed interest in the topic.

#2 Include direct instruction

Courses that include direct vocabulary instruction
= better results

#3 Choose appropriate vocabulary

- 2,000 most common
 - Comprise 90% of informal conversation
 - Comprise 80% of academic readings
 - Consist of common function words and basic nouns verbs
- These are the words to teach beginners and intermediates

Selecting words

- The 2,000 words
- [The Brown Corpus](#)
- <http://www.wordsift.com/wordlists> The GSL wordlist
- <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/~alzsh3/acvocabulary/wordlists.htm#gsl>

#3 Choose appropriate vocabulary

- For higher level learners, emphasize 570 additional families (e.g. runner, runs, running)
 - Brings academic comprehensibility to 90%
 - Consist of words that are predominately abstract words that appear in many contexts
- [The academic word list](#)

Words in Academic Texts (Nation 1990)

	Number of Words	Text Coverage
High frequency words	2000	87%
Academic Vocabulary	800	8%
Technical Vocabulary	2000	3%
Low Frequency words	123,200	2%
TOTAL	128,000	

#3 Another way of classifying vocabulary

- Tier 1 – the basic 2000 words
- Tier 2 Abstract words that appear in many contexts.
- Tier 3 Infrequent words that appear in specialized contexts

Which type should we focus on in transitioning learners???

Tier two words

- More commonly used in written language
- Tend to be abstract words
- Often used in academic contexts
- Examples of tier two words:
 - prevent
 - reliable
 - contemporary

Sublists of the Academic Word List

- Each sublist contains 60 words
- Shows the word and its family
- Sublist 1 contains the most common words in the AWL. Sublist 2 contains the next most common words, and so on.

Example of Sublist One

- *Approach*
 - ❖ approachable
 - ❖ approached
 - ❖ approaches
 - ❖ approaching
 - ❖ unapproachable

Selecting words

- <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist/>
- <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist/Publications/awlsublics.rtf>

#3 Choose appropriate vocabulary

- Phrasal verbs
- Common idioms
- Collocations

The 15 most common (Liu 2003)

#3 Choose appropriate vocabulary

- Approach high and low frequency words differently
 - Spend class time on high frequency words
 - Teach strategies for low frequency words
 - Using word part analysis
 - Flashcards
 - Dictionary use (promotes learner independence)
 - Guessing from context – with caution

Using word part analysis

1. Draw learners attention to word families
e.g. success, successful
 2. Focus on the most common affixes
[20 most common prefixes](#) account for 97% of all prefixes
6 suffixes account for 78% of all suffixes
which are???
- s / es **ed** ing*** ly **er / or))ion / tion*

Your guesses on guessing

#3 Choose appropriate vocabulary: Assess before you teach!

- <http://www.er.uqam.ca/nobel/r21270/levels/>

Paul Nation

<http://www.nifi.gov/readingprofiles/resources.htm>
Graded word lists

#4 Reuse, recycle and reinvigorate

- Provide 6-10 exposures to words on your syllabus
- Never assume because you're "taught it" that it is learned!
- Create a lexical syllabus for your class to keep yourself organized

#4 Repetition over intervals is necessary

- Space the number of repetitions of the words because spacing repetitions results in longer lasting memory.
- Review the words a few minutes after first looking at them, then an hour or so later, then the next day, then a week later and then a couple of weeks after that.
- Add "cognitive depth" to each repetition

#5 Teach opposites at separate times

- Studies show this is more effective
- Same is true for words that look similar or have similar meaning
- Be cautious about teaching lexical sets (all the colors, articles of clothing)

#6 Encourage learner autonomy

- Encourage learner autonomy
 - Learners can set specific goals (I will learn 10 new words every week)
 - Give strategies for learning vocabulary outside the classroom (word cards, mnemonics)
 - Read, listen and speak outside of class

#8 Scaffold instruction

1. Introduce the word and directly define it.
2. Give some examples, and get some from learners.
3. Matching, Fill-in-the blanks, multiple choice
4. Yes/no/why
5. Classifying, ranking, sorting
6. Written/oral discussion prompts

#8 a - Begin with a clear definition and example (Beginner/Intermed)

- For concrete vocabulary, use pictures to define
- For words that cannot be given with pictures, use a simple, direct definition. E.g. A tenant is a person who pays rent.
- Then give an example: e.g. Monica is a tenant. She pays \$1200 a month for rent.

Beg/Int

#8 a - Begin with a clear definition and example

- Constitute
 - To make up or form something
 - Women *constitute* 70 percent of the student population at the college.
 - Twelve months constitute a year

Advanced

Should we elicit definitions?

Ask a question that promotes understanding of this meaning

- What constitutes good study habits for a student?
- (Note at this point, they do not need to say the word in their answer, merely to respond to the meaning)

Advanced

Ask a question that promotes understanding of this meaning

- Do you like **bananas**?
- How many of you are **tenants**?

Beg/Int

Next...Manipulate words

- Need to move words from short term memory to long term
- Create more "hooks" to the word via different types of tasks: identifying, matching, classifying
- Move from controlled to freer practice

Controlled practice: Identifying/Matching

- Word search puzzles (see example of a word search with pictures (beginners))
- Concentration games (beginners)
- Higher levels: make matches from nouns/ and verbs that collocate (e.g. make/do)
- Multiple choice, fill ins

Rank and Sequence

- Show a picture of a really dirty apartment.
- Mrs. Jones needs to clean her house? What should she do first. Tell why. (Beginner)
- Or use the same picture for intermediates (pick up, put away, throw out)

Expanding/reviewing (adding previous words

- Come up with a way to sort the list

Constitute

Specific

Process

Approach

Benefit

Involve

Economy

Occur

Distribute

Requirement

Advanced

Categorize:

- Beginners:

Which one doesn't belong? Tell why.

- Apple Pear Orange Broccoli
- Pizza Hamburger French Fries Apple
- Milk Cheese Yogurt Bread

AT your table: Make 2 sets for a Categories activity for intermediate learners.

Beating the odds

Advanced

Thirty-seven year old LC is a New Zealand **registered** nurse. So are more than 40,000 other New Zealanders. But few nurses have **struggled** through a three-year nursing course with English as a second language and given birth to two children in that time. All this makes LC a particularly special nurse.

When LC and her husband arrived in New Zealand, they were **sponsored** by a family in Plimmerton and by their church. LC worked hard to learn about New Zealand and to learn English. Later, while she trained to become a nurse, and before **registration** as a nurse, she had two children. During this time, the **sponsorship** provided her with much needed support.

Example of a fluency task (with text as a stimulus) Classifying...

3. Group these jobs into those that you think require registration (like nursing) and those that do not.

teacher	doctor	shop assistant
lawyer	plumber	bus driver
cleaner	engineer	computer programmer

Notice how often the target word is used in the short example of student discussion

- S12 ... so bus driver also need reg...registration because of competence so at first I think teacher, doctor, and lawyer is a very specific occupation so um it um at first they have to go to the university and polytech so they need require **registration** so ah in my opinion er I bus driver ... if we want to be bus driver only we have ah licence and then we can ah get as a driver so I don't forget **registration** so I mistaked ah Japanese guess
- S10 maybe it is not **registration**, maybe it is not **registration**, I think maybe it is only bus driver licence ...

Develop a sorting task with a vocab word from the passage.

- sponsor
- struggle
- support
- registration

Intermediate sorting including phrasal verbs

- Decide who should do each of the following
- Which of the following house chores should a seven year old girl do? Tell why or why not.
- **Make the bed**
- **Take out** the trash
- **Put away** her toys
- **Pick up** her younger brother's toys

Less structured practice

- Example and non example
 - Asking a co-worker, "how much is your rent?" constitutes understanding of American social customs
 - Exercising and eating a balance diet constitute a good approach to your health.

Make 2 examples/non examples for one of these advanced words

Involve	Approach
Occur	Specific
Distribute	Requirement

Advanced

Makes sense?
***Example/non example**

- Decide if the sentence makes sense.
- I moved to a small apartment. There is no room for all my things. I have **too** much stuff!
- Thanks for the birthday gift – I like it **too** much.

Beg/Int

Try a “makes sense” with beginner or intermed. vocabulary

- Intermediate set:
Too rent tenant allow broken
fix included
- Beginning set:
produce next to need aisle shopping
yogurt juice

Express opinion

- Beginners, surveys that employ target vocabulary: Do you like?, (foods) How do you get to class (bus, subway, walk, car)
- Intermediates: In your house, who: does the dishes? makes the beds? takes out the trash?
- Higher levels: Yes/No why

Yes/No Why?

- Is memorizing 100 words a week good **approach** for learning vocabulary?
- How would you **approach** your employer to ask for a raise?

Yes/No Why

- Make two yes/no why questions with one of these advanced words

Involve	Specific
Occur	Requirement
Distribute	

What courses do you think college students should be required to take? Tell why.

Physical Education	Music
Biology	Computer programming
Physics	English Composition
Foreign Language	American History

Reducing the scaffolding further

- Read a short text, and ask discussion questions.
- Note: the words do NOT have to appear in the passage, but rather in the questions

Does eating alone make you fat???

- Dr. Amber Hammons and researchers at the University of Illinois found that children and teens that ate meals with their families were more likely to eat healthy foods and less likely to be overweight. They were also less likely to develop poor habits for losing weight such as skipping meals, taking laxatives or eating very large portions of food.
- How many family meals is enough? Not many, says Dr. Hammons. Sitting down together as a family for **three** meals a week saw this benefit.

Reading a text and asking a discussion question...

What other **benefits** can you think of that eating from eating as a family?

- Write two additional questions using this vocabulary:

Constitute	Benefit
Economy	Distribute
Occur	Approach
	Requirement

Fluency tasks can increase vocabulary

- Both writing and speaking
- Focus on a variety of fluency activities to promote use of what learners “know.”
- Negotiating meaning with other learners helps to learn vocabulary
- Design tasks that require use of target vocabulary

Fluency Activities for Vocabulary

- For vocabulary instruction, **shared information tasks** work better than gap fill
- Fluency activities: notice – retrieve-generate the vocabulary

Possible Fluency tasks

- 432
- Classifying
- Ranking
- Analyzing
- List Causes
- Role play

4-3-2 for speaking

- Take a partner. One partner is A, one is B
- Partner A: tell your partner about a problem you once had in your house or apartment. Include how you solved the problem. (3 minutes)
- Partner B: Listen, but do not interrupt. Write 3 important points you heard. Share with partner, but do not have a discussion.
- Partner A: find another B, tell in 2 minutes. Partner B same task as before.
- Partner A: find another B tell in 1 minute. Partner B same task as before.

Role play --- Say it

- (photo and story)
- (see hand out on Castaways)

Expanding/reviewing (adding previous words)

- Ask or make statements about the picture

Constitute	Specific
Process	Approach
Benefit	Involve
Economy	Occur
Distribute	Requirement



Expanding/reviewing (adding previous week's words)

- Conversation Game

Tenant	Ever
Lease	Education
Too	Tax
Allow	Might (verb)
Broken	Fire station
Fix	Borrow

Other techniques for reviewing?

- Incorporate previous vocabulary into partner find
- Anything else??