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# Teaching Vocabulary Learning

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Confidence in teaching.

Joy in learning.

Better  
Learning

# Today's Agenda

**Voca-what?**

**Words in numbers**

**Written Vs. Spoken**

**Retaining issues and tips**

**Strategies**



# Voca-what?

**Activity 1.**  
**2 minutes.**

**Discuss in groups of 3 and provide your  
best definition of vocabulary**

# Vocabulary, what is it?

**Simplest definition... *the words of the language***

**Not only simple words... but**

- *Lexical chunks*
- *Phrasal verbs ( look up)*
- *Collocations (fast food)*
- *Whole phrases (once in a while)*
- *Full sentences (What's the matter?)*

*Grammatical items (the, that, what, is)*

# Etymology

**VOCABULARIUM – list of words with explanation.**

**From VOCABULUM –word.**

**From VOCARE – to name, call.**

**Related to VOX – voice**

**PIE root: \*wekw- speak**

Wilkins, David A.  
(1971)

**“While without grammar  
little can be conveyed,  
without vocabulary  
nothing can be conveyed”**

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# How many words...

- **Up to 5000**
- **Around 20000**
- **79.7%**
- **3000**
- **10**



# How many words...

- number of words we may teach in a lesson
- number of word families known by native 5 yr old
- high frequency words needed for productive use of English in speaking and writing
- amount of written text covered by the 2000 most frequent words

**word families known by university graduate**

# How to choose?

## **English Vocabulary Profile**

British  
English

American  
English

Choose level:

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> A1               | <input type="radio"/> A2 only |
| <input type="radio"/> A1-A2            | <input type="radio"/> B1 only |
| <input type="radio"/> A1-B1            | <input type="radio"/> B2 only |
| <input type="radio"/> A1-B2            | <input type="radio"/> C1 only |
| <input type="radio"/> A1-C1            | <input type="radio"/> C2 only |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> A1-C2 |                               |

[Browse A-Z](#)

OR

Enter a word or phrase

start

ADVANCED SEARCH



☐ Hide culturally sensitive words

Search

[English Profile Home](#)

[About English Vocabulary Profile](#)

[Word of the Week](#)

[Help](#)

[Feedback](#)

## Search results for A1-C2 (14 matches)

Core results:

- start verb BEGIN **A1**
- start verb MAKE HAPPEN **B1**
- start verb BUSINESS **B2**
- start verb SWITCH ON **B2**
- to start with **B2**
- start (sth) off or start off(sth) **B1**
- start out **C1**
- start noun BEGINNING **B1**
- from start to finish **C1**
- for a start **C1**
- make a start **C2**
- start noun ADVANTAGE **C2**

start was also found at:

- set/start the ball rolling **C2**
- get off/start on the wrong foot **C2**



British  
English

American  
English

Choose level:

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> A1               | <input type="radio"/> A2 only |
| <input type="radio"/> A1-A2            | <input type="radio"/> B1 only |
| <input type="radio"/> A1-B1            | <input type="radio"/> B2 only |
| <input type="radio"/> A1-B2            | <input type="radio"/> C1 only |
| <input type="radio"/> A1-C1            | <input type="radio"/> C2 only |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> A1-C2 |                               |

[Browse A-Z](#)

OR

Enter a word or phrase

ADVANCED SEARCH



- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Category       | phrasal verbs ▼ |
| Part of speech | --Any-- ▼       |
| Grammar        | --Any-- ▼       |
| Usage          | informal ▼      |
| Topic          | Relationships ▼ |
| Prefix         | --Any-- ▼       |
| Suffix         | --Any-- ▼       |

Clear filters

☐ Hide culturally sensitive words

Search

Search results for A1-C2 (4 matches)

Core results:

- hit it off **B2**
- sleep with sb **C2**
- stand up sb or stand sb up **B2**
- stick together **B2**



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## hit it off INFORMAL

**B2** If people hit it off, they like each other and become friendly immediately.

**Dictionary example:**

*Carla and Nina didn't really hit it off.*

**👤 Learner example:**

*They hit it off immediately.*



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# Written and Spoken Vocabulary

|             |                                      |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>The</b>  | <b>ranks eighth in spoken corpus</b> |
| <b>I</b>    | <b>most frequent word</b>            |
| <b>Yeah</b> | <b>9 x more frequent in spoken</b>   |
| <b>Well</b> | <b>2° in spoken, 7° in written</b>   |



# Written and Spoken Vocabulary

|             |                                      |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>The</b>  | <b>most frequent word</b>            |
| <b>I</b>    | <b>2° in spoken, 7° in written</b>   |
| <b>Yeah</b> | <b>ranks eighth in spoken corpus</b> |
| <b>Well</b> | <b>9 x more frequent in spoken</b>   |





# Written and Spoken Vocabulary



Richards, Jack C. And Rodgers, Theodore S. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*, 2014

# Written and Spoken Vocabulary



CLC currently contains

- over 50 millions words,
- taken from Cambridge exam scripts submitted by over 220,000 students,
- from 173 countries

# Written and Spoken Vocabulary



We use it to:

- Ensure the language taught is natural, accurate, and up-to-date
- Select the most useful, common words
- Focus on certain groups of learners
- Analyse spoken language – to teach effective speaking and listening strategies

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# Retaining Vocabulary

**provide and use a variety of learning styles and techniques, depending on individual learner's preference but also on vocab type**

**“Learning is only stable and lasting when it involves the person as a whole on a visual, acoustic and physical level.”**

**(Asher's Theory of Total Physical Response)**

# Retaining Vocabulary

**1 a** When you learn new words, it is important to write them down to help you remember the meaning. But what is the best way to remember the meaning?

Is it best to:

- write a translation?
- write an example sentence in English?
- write an explanation in English or your own language?
- draw a picture?

Department store

Dog

I'm afraid

Cricket

under



# Retaining Vocabulary

**1 a** When you learn new words, it is important to write them down to help you remember the meaning. But what is the best way to remember the meaning?

Is it best to:

- write a translation?
- write an example sentence in English?
- write an explanation in English or your own language?
- draw a picture?

**The answer will be different for different words. Look at these examples:**

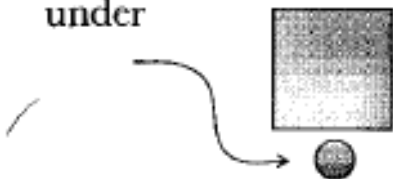
Translations:      department store = 백화점

dog = كلب

Example sentences:    *I'm afraid* we haven't got the book you want.

Explanations:      *Cricket* is a strange English ball-game.

Pictures:      under



# Learnability issues

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO  
LEARN, OR TO KNOW,  
A WORD?**



# Learnability issues

**To know a word is to learn:**

**FORM** (pronunciation for spoken or spelling for written)

**WORD STRUCTURE** (basic free morpheme and common derivations)

**SYNTACTIC PATTERN** of the word in a phrase and sentence

**MEANING:** referential, affective and pragmatic

**LEXICAL RELATION** with other words (synonymy, antonymy, etc.)

**COMMON COLLOCATIONS**

Faerch, Haastrup and  
Phillipson, 1984: 100

«Rather than make the simplistic opposition between ACTIVE and PASSIVE vocabulary, we should think of vocabulary knowledge as a continuum between the ability to make sense of a word and ability to activate the word automatically for productive purposes»

# Learnability

- **Pronouncability**
- **Orthography**
- **Length**
- **Morphology**
- **Derivational Complexity**
- **Grammar – part of speech**

# Learnability

**Once we're aware of the fact that so many different aspects influence the degree of difficulty involved in learning a word, we become able to more meaningfully reconsider the quantity and pace we want to apply to vocab teaching, as we can appreciate that the effort used to learn a word varies.**

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# Strategies

## **Discovery strategies**

# Strategies

- 1 a** When you learn new words or phrases there is certain information that you need to know. To find it, you can ask questions like these:

What does this word/expression/phrase mean?

What's a '.....'?

How do you spell it?

How do you pronounce it?

Is it a noun, a verb (or could it be either?), an adjective, etc.?

How do you use it in a sentence?



# Strategies

## **Consolidation strategies**

- **Social strategies - practice**
- **Memory strategies -**
- **Pictures/imagery**
- **Related words**
- **Unrelated words**
- **Grouping**
- **Word's orthographical or phonological form**
- **Cognitive and metacognitive strategies**



«It has become more apparent that what it takes to guess the meaning of an unfamiliar word is not necessarily what it takes to store it in one's memory, perhaps because the most immediate need – comprehension – has been met»

# Strategies

**Integrate new words with the old**

**Provide a number of encounters with a word**

**Promote a deep level of processing\***

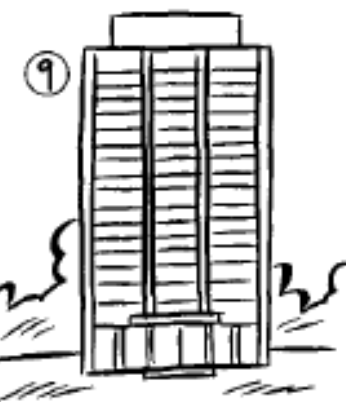
**Facilitate imaging and concreteness**

**Use a variety of Techniques (semantic mapping, dictionary work, scales, diagrams, etc.)**

**Encourage independent learning strategies**

**1 a** Match the names of types of accommodation in the box with the pictures.

a block of flats   terraced houses   a castle   a detached house   a tent  
a cottage   semi-detached houses   a caravan   a bungalow



**C With a partner, write down one advantage and one disadvantage for each type of accommodation. Then compare your ideas with another pair's.**

|                      | <i>Advantage</i> | <i>Disadvantage</i> |
|----------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| a block of flats     | .....            | .....               |
| terraced houses      | .....            | .....               |
| a castle             | .....            | .....               |
| a detached house     | .....            | .....               |
| a tent               | .....            | .....               |
| a cottage            | .....            | .....               |
| semi-detached houses | .....            | .....               |
| a caravan            | .....            | .....               |
| a bungalow           | .....            | .....               |



**d** Walk round the class. Find people who have lived or stayed in at least two of these types of accommodation. Which did they prefer and why?

| Name | Two places stayed in | Which preferred? | Why?                |
|------|----------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Anna | tent; caravan        | tent             | could carry on back |



ANY  
questions?



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