

Teaching vocabulary

Vocabulary learning =

- Relational process
- Making friends with the words

A word is like a person we've met.

We can be impressed by:

- A look
- A movement
- A chance remark
- A tone of voice
- The setting

Our perception is affected by:

- The sound of the word
- The kinetic sensation of lungs, throat, mouth, and nose
- The shape and the position on a page
- The circumstances of meeting the word

Why do we forget?

- **Decay theory** = (Lack of practice and revision)
- **Cue-dependent forgetting** (the fact persists in our memory but we are not able to recall it)
- Any significant (disruptive) **mental activity before or after learning**

Better results are achieved when

- We can easily assign meaning to the word
- We learn words:
 - in groups
 - through rhyme
 - through meaning
 - at the beginning of the lesson
 - by revising at the end of the lesson

Other impressions

- Associations:
 - A) conventional (collocations, metaphors)
 - B) literary
 - C) the word has for you personally

Presenting new vocabulary

- Visual techniques
- Verbal techniques
- Translation

Visual techniques

- **Visuals:** flashcards, photographs
blackboard drawings, wallcharts,
realia, pictures, objects ...
- **Miming and gestures:** demonstration,
acting ...

Verbal techniques

- Definition
- Description
- Examples or illustrative situations
- Context
- Synonyms
- Opposites
- Hyponyms (e.g. table, chair, bed, sofa = furniture)
- Associated ideas (collocations)

Translations

- By other students
- With a dictionary
- By a teacher

Danger!

- Translations may not always convey the exact sense of an item
- The spirit and the atmosphere of an English lesson may be lost

Training vocabulary

- Brainstorming round an idea (e.g. spider-grams)
- Multiple choice
- Matching
- Odd one out
- Writing sentences
- Dictation
- Gap-filling (e.g. with a box of answers)
- Sentence completion
- Translation
- ...

Testing vocabulary

- The same activities as training!