

# Helping Students Develop Vocabulary by Building Awareness of Vocabulary Patterns

(180 minutes)

## I. Welcome and Introduction

## II. What elements of language should be taught? Word Frequencies and Collocations

## III. We just don't say it that way.

## IV. Lexical chunks and how they can be identified

## V. Activities to build skills in chunking

### Listening and Reading

- Memorization of unanalyzed chunks
- Reading Aloud by teacher
- Speed reading and extensive reading
- Matching/Word Associations
- NPR news cloze exercise
- Other types of cloze
- Identifying chunks in text

### Speaking/Pronunciation

- 4/3/2 technique
- Poems/Chants

- Read and look up technique
- Recording and re-recording
- Games (Collocation Jeopardy, Charades, 20,000 Pyramid)

### Writing

- Lexical Notebooks
- Free Writing
- Delayed Copying
- Dictate and Dash

## VI. Wrap Up Activity and Discussion

- What do you already do to help learners see or hear language correctly chunked?
- What changes might you make?
- How can these ideas be used for various language levels and age levels?
- Final Questions

### Summary Points

What should teachers pay **more** attention to? (adapted from Lewis)

- Different kinds of multi-word chunks
- More listening at lower levels
- More reading aloud at higher levels
- The use of a good L1 dictionary as a resource for active learning
- Probable rather than possible English
- Use of student notebooks to show patterns and aid memory
- Language students may encounter outside of the classroom
- Help Ss turn input into intake by helping them notice natural patterns in vocabulary
- Learning activities which emphasize vocabulary do not replace other types of learning.

What should teachers pay **less** attention to?

- Sentence grammar – single sentence fill in the blanks or transformation practices
- Lists of uncollocated nouns
- Random recording of “new words”

### Notes:

## II. What elements of language should be taught?

What patterns exist in language?

What is more important in language teaching: grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation?

How many words do you think you know?

How many words does a non-native speaker need to know?

How do we decide which vocabulary words are most important to teach?

### III. We just don't say it that way

#### Example #1

- a. Failing the driver's test was a strong disappointment for me.
- b. Getting on a diet will help you.
- c. I fell down and my skin became blue.

#### Example #2 (from Lewis, Implementing the Lexical Approach)

Change:

### End of the World is Nigh Impossible to Predict

**Example #3** {Email from Jonas, native French speaker, age 25}

Hello Uncle Bernie,

Just a short mail to thank you very much for the nice Mariners cap you offered

me. I really love it. I've already had it a lot of times on my head.

Here in Lausanne everything is ok even if I'm still unemployed. Summer time is nearly there and festivals are going to start here and there. I heard you received a medal for your work. Well done!

Say hello to all the family Jonas

#### **IV. Lexical chunks and how they can be identified Scrambled (from Lewis)**

How it long will take?  
I'll for responsibility full happens take.  
I more any can't take.  
Nobody the of parents your can place take.

*What does "take" mean?*

#### **Fully Fixed**

"Good Morning"  
(not: "Nice Morning")  
"Merry Christmas" (not: "Happy Christmas")  
"Happy Birthday"  
(not: "Merry Birthday")  
"Not too bad"  
"I'll just have to take a chance."  
"You're telling me."  
"You're making a mountain out of a molehill"

#### **Semi-Fixed**

Can you pass \_\_\_\_\_, please?  
I haven't seen you + \_\_\_\_\_.  
What was really \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_.  
Take medicine

#### **Grammatical, but non-native (from Nation)**

I desire that the window be closed.  
The closing of the window would satisfy me.

Please close the window.

**Random (but grammatical)**  
Colorless green  
ideas sleep furiously

## V. Activities to Build Skills in Chunking

**Matching Activities** (see Lewis, Implementing the Lexical Approach, for many more ideas)

In both activities, the topic is healthy lifestyles.

**Activity 1:** Match the words from List A with words in List B.

- |               |                        |
|---------------|------------------------|
| List A        | List B                 |
| 1. daily      | a. a balanced diet     |
| 2. short-term | b. your weight         |
| 3. regular    | c. an exercise program |
| 4. healthy    | d. routine             |
| 5. to follow  | e. weight-loss         |
| 6. to control | f. targets             |
| 7. to eat     | g. food                |

8. to set  
h. benefits

How successful was that?

**Activity 2:** Match the words from List A with words in List B.

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| List A        | List B         |
| 1. to balance | a. fit         |
| 2. to keep    | b. your weight |
| 3. to lose    | c. carefully   |
| 4. to watch   | d. your diet   |
| 5. to eat     | e. weight      |
| 6. fresh      | a. diet        |
| 7. daily      | b. lifestyle   |
| 8. balanced   | c. routine     |
| 9. healthy    | d. exercise    |
| 10. regular   | e. fruit       |

Why was Activity 2 more successful than Activity 1?

Tips for creating matching activities:

- The collocations are strong rather than weak.
- The order of the examples is roughly from easiest to most difficult.

- Limit ambiguity.
- Some pairs are chosen to emphasize strong collocation (which is stronger? Daily routine? Daily exercise?)

### Other Word Association Activities

#### Deleting Examples

1. Delete the word does not have a strong association with the first word.

	PAY	a debt	a meal
	a bill	a ticket	the
taxi	<b>STRONG</b>	language	cheese
	intelligence	accent	
	indication		
	<b>SHORT</b>	email	letter
	mail	note	
	message		
	<b>FRIEND</b>	new	near
lost	close	dear	long-

2. Delete the words in italics which does not have a strong association with the underlined word.

She got *full*/*maximum*/*top* grades on the test.

We have to *take*/*make*/*write* a vocabulary test every Friday.

Failing the driver's test was a *strong*/*big*/*bad* disappointment for me.

*Getting on/Taking on/Going on* a diet will help you.

I fell down and my skin *became/turned/looked* blue.

Just a short *note/mail/correspondence* to thank you very much for the cap you *offered/gave* me.

I heard you received a *medal/an award/a trophy* for your work.

3. Related verbs: *speak, talk, say, tell*.

Did you enjoy the presentation?  
You have to \_\_\_\_\_ us all about it.

She's very lonely because she has no one to \_\_\_\_\_ to.

Can you \_\_\_\_\_ me what time it is?

How many languages do you \_\_\_\_\_ ?

I couldn't hear that. What did she \_\_\_\_\_ ?

### Partnership Charts

ADJECTIVE	NOUN
extreme	cold
perfect	condition
incredible	discovery
lead	poisoning
wrong	decisions
	destruction

VERB	NOUN
tell	The truth
speak	a language
say	-----
explain	
discuss	

VERB	ADVERB
look	closely
think	clearly
smile	

NOUN	NOUN
television	program
math	problem
movie	
department	
police	

VERB	Prep	Word Partnership
break	off	their engagement
break	off	a piece of break
break	off	
put	on	

NOUN	VERB
damage	occurred
gap	widened
car	
plane	

**From: Cambridge English for Schools, Book 3, 1997**

**(Complete text)**

Dr. Owen Beattie was a scientist at a university in Canada. He wanted to know why so many men died in the Franklin Expedition.

Dr. Beattie began to think about the first men who died on the expedition. They were all young and they died after only six months at sea. Twenty more men died the next year. There was something very strange about this and there was only one way to discover what it was.

In 1984, Dr. Beattie went to Baffin Bay with a team of scientists. There, they opened the graves of the three Franklin sailors. Because of the extreme cold and ice, the bodies were in perfect condition. Beattie took small samples of hair and skin and then put the bodies back into the graves.

Back at the university, Beattie made an incredible discovery. From the hair and skin, he found that the three men died from lead poisoning. They had nearly 100 times more lead in their bodies than normal.

But where did the lead come from? Beattie looked closely at some of Franklin's food tins and found the answer. In those days, tins were closed with lead. Usually, this was not a big problem, but these tins were not made correctly. Lead was inside the tins. It was not the ice and cold that killed the men. It was the 8,000 tins of food that they were eating.

Lead also affects the brain. It makes it difficult to think clearly. Up in the Arctic, we can now understand why John Franklin made so many wrong decisions.

**(Identifying chunks)**

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### **Cloze #1**

Dr. Owen Beattie was a scientist at a university in Canada. He wanted to know why so many men died in the Franklin Expedition.

Dr. Beattie began to \_\_\_\_\_ the first men who died on the expedition. They were all young and they died after only six months \_\_\_\_\_. Twenty more men died the next year. There was something very strange about this and there was only one way to discover what it was.

In 1984, Dr. Beattie went to Baffin Bay with a team of scientists. There, they opened the graves of the three Franklin sailors. Because of the extreme \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, the bodies were in perfect \_\_\_\_\_. Beattie took small samples of hair and skin and then put the bodies back into the graves.

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### **Cloze #2 (C-cloze)**

Dr. Owen Beattie was a scientist at a university in Canada. He wanted to know why so many men died in the Franklin Expedition.

Dr. Beattie began to th \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_ the first men who died on the expedition. They were all young and they died after only six months a \_\_\_ s \_\_\_\_\_. Twenty more men died the next year. There was something very strange about this and there was only one way to discover what it was.

In 1984, Dr. Beattie went to Baffin Bay with a team of scientists. There, they opened the graves of the three Franklin sailors. Because of the ex \_\_\_\_\_ co \_\_\_\_\_ and i \_\_\_\_\_, the bodies were in pe \_\_\_\_\_ co \_\_\_\_\_. Beattie took small samples of hair and skin and then put the bodies back into the graves.

Back at the university, Beattie made a \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ di \_\_\_\_\_. From the hair and skin, he found that the three men died from lead poisoning. They had nearly 100 t \_\_\_\_\_ m \_\_\_\_\_ lead in their bodies th \_\_\_\_\_ normal.

But where did the lead come from? Beattie lo \_\_\_\_\_ cl \_\_\_\_\_ at some of Franklin's food tins and found the answer. I \_\_\_\_\_ th \_\_\_\_\_ da \_\_\_\_\_, tins were closed with lead. Usually, this was not a big problem, but these tins were not made correctly. Lead was inside the tins. It was not the ice and cold that killed the men. It was the 8,000 tins of food that they were eating.

Lead also affects the brain. It makes it difficult to th \_\_\_\_\_ cl \_\_\_\_\_. Up in the Arctic, we can now understand why John Franklin made so many wrong decisions.

### **Dictate and Dash Version**

Dr. Beattie was a Canadian scientist who studied the mysterious deaths in the Franklin Expedition in 1847.

He wondered why these young men died after only six months at sea.

In 1984, Dr. Beattie went back to Baffin Bay and opened the graves of some of the sailors.

Because of the extreme cold and ice, the bodies were in perfect condition.

The scientists took hair and skin samples to examine.

They discovered that the men had died of lead poisoning.

After examining the food tins, the scientists discovered that the tins were defective and lead was inside the tins.

Because of Dr. Beattie's investigation we now know that the sailors died of lead poisoning.

### **NPR Cloze Example**

This is member-\_\_\_\_\_ 94.9 KUOW Seattle. It's \_\_\_\_\_:00.

Good morning

### **Top Story**

Condoleeza Rice is traveling through Central Asia talking about U.S. \_\_\_\_\_ bases there.

I'm Renee Montaigne. It's Tuesday, October 11th and this is Morning Edition from NPR News.

♪ (music) ♪♪

## Headlines

1. The Secretary of State's Central Asian tour begins in Kyrgyzstan and will include Afghanistan. She may stop in Pakistan to tour the devastation left by a \_\_\_\_\_ earthquake there.

2. Plus Iraqis vote on a new constitution this Saturday. Experts predict it will pass; the question is how it defines the roles of regional and central governments on \_\_\_\_\_ issues like oil.

3. New York Times reporter Judith Miller is due back \_\_\_\_\_ . We'll have a report.

It's the birthday of Patty Murray. The senator \_\_\_\_\_ Washington State \_\_\_\_\_ .

The news is next.....

### **Read and Look Up Example**

Set Up: Bernice is going to Spokane for a statewide conference for public school teachers and administrators. Before she leaves, she is telling Christine, one of the teachers at her school, that she will miss graduation because of the conference.

Bernice: Christine, I've been meaning to tell you that I won't be here on Friday for your class graduation. We'll need to talk about how to handle some of the announcements I usually make.

Christine: That's too bad, but thanks for letting me know. Where are you going? WAESOL isn't this weekend, is it? I didn't think it was on Friday.

Bernice: Right. WAESOL's the next Saturday. This is a statewide conference sponsored by OSPI and it's in Spokane. The conference is on Friday and Saturday, and I'm presenting on Saturday.

Christine: Great. What are you presenting on? It's not about grammar, is it?

Bernice: No, it's about lexical stuff – you know, collocations.

Christine: Oh, of course. You're really into that. We never have enough time to cover that too much in class, but I'd like to do more with it. Sounds good. Now, what about graduation? Should I make the announcements that you usually do?

Bernice: No, you've got enough on your mind that day. I think I'll write out the information and

have Deborah explain it to the class. She can help you model the final activity, too. She's done that before, hasn't she?

Christine: Yeah, that'll be fine. We'll manage fine without you.

Bernice: I know you will, but I'm sorry to miss the graduation. This has been a great group of students. I'll say my goodbyes to them before I go. We can talk more later about some of the details.

Christine: Yeah, I've got to get back to class now. We're down to the wire, you know.

Bernice: Sure. See you later.

**(Notes to the teacher: This technique should be after the students have had a chance to hear the dialogue, practice it chorally (with backchaining, perhaps), and even practice it together without using this technique.)**

### **Collocation Jeopardy** (from Janis van Zante and Robin Persiani, TESOL 2005)

Students: In groups of 3, with 1 judge and two players or groups of 5, with 1 judge and 2 teams of 2.

Cards:

Sample topic cards

**Expressions with  
"make"**

Sample question cards

**"to earn a salary at work"**

Answer: "What is "to make money"?"

Possible expressions and answers

	<b>Information for question cards</b>	<b>Expressions for answer key</b>
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<b><i>make</i></b>	to earn a salary	make money
	to pull the sheets and blanket up neatly	make the bed
	to telephone someone	make a call
<b><i>take</i></b>	to have free time in the middle of work	take a break
	to sleep during the day	take a nap
<b><i>have</i></b>	to eat a meal in the evening	have dinner
	to give birth	have a baby

## Selected Resources for Teaching Collocation

### Publications

Biber, Douglas, et al, Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English, Edinburgh Gate: Pearson Education Limited, 1999

Biber, Douglas, Conrad, Susan, and Leech, Geoffrey, Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English, Edinburgh Gate: Pearson Education Limited, 2002

Hill, J. and Lewis, M. LTP Dictionary of Selected Collocations,

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Bernice Ege-Zavala Director, School of Teaching ESL bezavala@seattleu.edu

Hove: Language Teaching Publications, 1997

Kaplan International, Lexicon Building Notebook, Kaplan, Inc., 2001

Lewis, Michael, Implementing the Lexical Approach: Putting Theory into Practice,  
Hove: Language Teaching Publications, 1997

Lewis, Michael, editor Teaching Collocation: Further Developments in the Lexical Approach,  
Hove: Language Teaching Publications, 2000

Nation, Paul, Learning Vocabulary in Another Language, Cambridge:  
Cambridge University Press, 2001

Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002

## **Websites**

Academic Word List <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/lals/research/awl/>

General Services List: <http://jbauman.com/aboutgsl.html>

Sample Activities: <http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Square/3472/lexapproach.html#exercises>

British National Corpus: <http://view.byu.edu>

The Compleat Lexical Tutor: <http://www.lextutor.ca>