Teaching and learning vocabulary more effectively:
the Lexical Approach

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Activity 1: Word combinations

	problem	amount	shame	man
major	v	?	x	x
great				
big				
large				

v - works   ? - questionable   x - doesn't work

(Based on McCarthy 1990)

Word combinations

	problem	amount	shame	man
major	v	?	x	x
great	v	v	v	v
big	v	v	x	v
large	?	v	x	v

v - works   ? - questionable   x - doesn't work

(Based on McCarthy 1990)

Why?

'major problem' ✅

BUT

'major shame' ❌

Collocations

Definition:

- words that often occur together (Lewis 1993)

- a marriage contract between words; some words are more firmly married to each other than others (McCarthy 1990)

Types:

- some are fixed, e.g. blonde _____

- some are semi-fixed, e.g. _____ your teeth

The Lexical Approach - explained

- popularised by Michael Lewis in the 90s (1993, 1997)
- inspired by research of second language acquisition and corpus linguistics
- language consists of prefabricated chunks (lexis and grammar)
- teachers should encourage ss to record + learn new language as phrases rather than individual words
- emphasises word combinations that are possible *and* highly likely

The Lexical Approach - criticism

- Can premature lexicalisation cause fossilisation?

- Do ss have to learn thousands of fixed and semi-fixed phrases?

- Can such an approach to language learning result in a condition of "all chunks, no pineapple"?

- How can students incorporate these phrases naturally?

(Adapted from Thornbury, 2010)

The Lexical Approach and I

Do:

- elicit the full collocation from the ss

- record new lexis as collocations/phrases

- provide alternatives - *brutal/horrific/terrible* crime

- practise pronunciation of the chunk

- note the context

The Lexical Approach and I

Don't:

- teach individual words

- define a word with its synonym, synonyms are not usually interchangeable (Selivan n.d.)

wash/clean

clean + your teeth ✔

wash + your teeth ✘

Checking for collocations

1. Oxford Collocations Dictionary

2. Cambridge Dictionary Online

3. Just the word (jtw)

4. Netspeak

Checking for collocations

1. **Oxford Collocations Dictionary**

   on Amazon

ability *noun*

1 skill/power to do sth

ADJ. exceptional, extraordinary, great, outstanding, remarkable, uncanny | inherent, innate, natural ◇ *It's important to discover the natural abilities of each child.* | proven | academic, acting, artistic, athletic, creative, intellectual, linguistic, mathematical, musical, psychic, reading, technical | mental, physical

... OF ABILITY level ◇ *She showed a high level of ~ as a runner.*

VERB + ABILITY have, possess | retain | demonstrate, show ◇ *Both players demonstrated their ~ to hit the ball hard.* | acquire, develop, enhance, improve | lack | lose ◇ *I seem to have lost my ~ to attract clients.* | affect, hamper, hinder, impair, impede, limit, undermine | appreciate, recognize ◇ *Fox's abilities were soon recognized.* | doubt, question | overestimate, underestimate

PREP. ~ in ◇ *She showed great ~ in mathematics.*

PHRASES to the best of your ~ ◇ *We will keep you informed to the best of our ~.*

2 speed with which sb learns

ADJ. high ◇ *The school does nothing for children of high ~.* | limited, low | average, mixed ◇ *It is much more difficult to teach a mixed-ability class.*

VERB + ABILITY assess, measure, test

ABILITY + NOUN level | range

PHRASES a range of ~, a range of abilities ◇ *I taught a wide range of abilities.*

Checking for collocations

2. Cambridge Dictionary Online

http://dictionary.cambridge.org/

Checking collocations

3. Just the word (jtw)   http://www.just-the-word.com/

- corpus derived tool (corpus - language database)
- based on the British National Corpus
- type 'advice'–> shows the most common collocations

(Based on Selivan, n.d.)

Checking collocations

4. Netspeak   http://www.netspeak.org/

- uses google as the corpus
- type '... advice' or 'advice…' –> gives most common words before or after the word
- type 'give advice' –> shows how frequently words occur together - 393,000; 'put advice' - 580.

(Based on Selivan, n.d.)

Collocations

	problem	amount	shame	man
major	v	?	x	x
great	v	v	v	v
big	v	v	x	v
large	?	v	x	v

v - collocates   ? - questionable   x - doesn't collocate

(Based on McCarthy 1990)

Activity 2: Checking collocations

Check 'large problem' in:

- Oxford Collocations Dictionary

- Cambridge Dictionary Online http://dictionary.cambridge.org/

- Just the word http://www.just-the-word.com/

- Netspeak http://www.netspeak.org/

Checking collocations

'large problem':

- Oxford Collocations Dictionary - x

- Cambridge Dictionary Online - x

- Just the word - x

- Netspeak - v (36,000)

Quizlet

1. **What is it?**
   - a free online tool
   - record vocabulary
   - a term on one side, a definition on the other side
   - practise vocabulary - various games

Quizlet

2. How to sign up?

- go to https://quizlet.com/
- go to 'sign up with email'
- enter your details
- click on 'or continue to free Quizlet'

Quizlet

Search Quizlet

Create a Study Set

Log In   Sign Up   **G** Google Sign In

Simple tools that let you study anything, for free

G Sign up with Google

f Sign up with Facebook

Sign up with email

Géographie
France

Live Map of what people are studying on Quizlet right now

Create a Quizlet Account

G   Sign up with Google

f   Sign up with Facebook

or
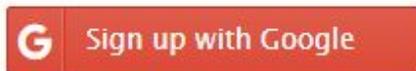
Birthday   Month ▼   Day ▼   Year ▼
Why do you need my birthday?

Username

Email

Password

Retype Password

☐ I agree to the Terms of Service

Sign Up

Already on Quizlet?

Login here to access your account.

TRUSTe ▶
Kids Privacy

View our full privacy policy

The Quizlet service is **free** and open to **all ages**. Please use it with respect and civility.

Quizlet will never share your email information with **any** third parties. We **hate spam** just as much as you do.

— *Andrew Sutherland*
Quizlet Founder

WELCOME TO QUIZLET

Add teacher superpowers to your account!

Or continue to free Quizlet

Quizlet Teacher

$24.99 per year

Get Started

"Totally awesome. This gives me real data to back up my gut instincts on what things my students can handle now and what things they still need

Quizlet

3. How to create a class?

- click on 'create a class'
- type in the name of your class
- find your school (University of Manchester)

Your Study Sets

Settings

YOUR CLASSES

+ Create a class

YOUR FOLDERS

+ Create a folder

QUIZLET NEWS

Welcoming Elaine to Quizlet!

Create a new class

Upper-intermediate

Class Description (optional)

☑ Allow your students to add study sets and new members

YOUR SCHOOL

University of Manchester

Don't see your school? Add your school

Manchester Business School, University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom

University of Manchester School of Nursing, Manchester, United Kingdom

University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom

The University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom

Quizlet

4. Confirm your email address

- go to your email account
- find the email from Quizlet
- click 'confirm your email'
- click 'continue to your homepage'

Quizlet

Hello teacherEwa!

Welcome to Quizlet! Please confirm your email address.

Confirm your email

Study Everywhere!
The Quizlet Team

Contact Us   Help Center

Thanks! Your email address has been confirmed!

Now add teacher superpowers...

Learn more about Quizlet Teacher
Only $24.99/year

Or continue to your homepage

Quizlet

5. How to record vocabulary by topic

- click on 'create a study set'
- type in a set title
- type a term
- add a image (from Quizlet or your computer)
- add a definition from http://dictionary.cambridge.org/
- set your language
- click on 'create'

Quizlet

Search Quizlet

Create a Study Set

Upgrade to Teacher

teacherEwa

- Latest Activity
- Your Study Sets
- Settings

YOUR CLASSES

- Upper-intermediate
- + Create a class

YOUR FOLDERS

- + Create a folder

QUIZLET NEWS

Welcome to Quizlet

Create a study set

Create a study set to share with your students.

Create a study set

Quizlet on the go

With the Quizlet app, your students can study anywhere.

Learn more

Teacher content

Browse study sets created by other teachers.

Get started

Search Quizlet

Create a Study Set

Create a new study set · Saved just now

Create

Set title · Add description

Unit 1 Sport

Visible to everyone
Change

Editable by just me
Change

Terms

Definitions

Import

English Change

English Change

Keyboard Shortcuts

1 play tennis

Add... 🎤 ⓐ

2 a lucrative deal

(especially of a business, job, or activity) producing a lot of money

Add... 🎤 ⓐ

3

Add... 🎤 ⓐ

4

Add... 🎤 ⓐ

📄 play tennis.jpg

⬇ Show all downloads... ✕

Quizlet

6. How to add students

- click on 'share'
- ask your Ss to follow the link (put the link on Blackboard)
- Ss have to sign up for Quizlet
- make your students admins - they can add sets and edit definitions

Unit 1 Sport 🐱 2 terms by teacherEwa ●

STUDY

Flashcards	Learn	Speller	Test

PLAY

Scatter	Space Race

TOOLS

- ✏ Edit
- 👥 Add to Class
- 🖼 Add to Folder
- ➡ Share
- 🖨 Print
- ⋯ More

List	Class Progress NEW!	Info

Original Alphabetical

play tennis		☆ ◀)) 🎤 ✏
a lucrative deal	(especially of a business, job, or activity) producing a lot of money	☆ ◀)) 🎤 ✏

✏ **Add or Remove Terms**

Quizlet

Search Quizlet

Create a Study Set

teacherEwa

Unit 1 Sport 2 terms by tea

STUDY

Flashcards

Learn

TOOLS

Edit
Add to Class
Add to Folder

Share
Print
More

List Class Progress NEW!

Original Alphabetical

play tennis

Share this set

f Share on Facebook

Share on Twitter

Share on Google Classroom

Share link via email **Send Email**

a lucrative deal

Short URL

https://quizlet.com/_1ov8pf

Quizlet

Search Quizlet

Create a Study Set

EwaEdwards ▼

- ⏱ Latest Activity
- 💬 Your Study Sets
- ⚙ Settings

YOUR CLASSES

- 👥 Group 3 Gateway Term 1 2015
- 👥 IELTS Graduation
- 👥 Language Leader Upper-Int
- + Create a class

YOUR FOLDERS

- + Create a folder

QUIZLET NEWS

👥 **Group 3 Gateway Term 1 2015**

University Language Centre University of Manchester · Manchester, United Kingdom · Edit

+ Add a set   + Add members

10 sets   12 members

Class Options ▼

🔍 Filter these sets   Latest   Alphabetical

This week

Film and Literature   25 terms

👤 added by EwaEdwards   ✕ Remove

Last week

Transport in the future 5.2   10 terms

👤 added by moteb_salem_ghamdi   ✕ Remove

Search Quizlet

Create a Study Set

EwaEdwards ▼

- Latest Activity
- Your Study Sets
- Settings

YOUR CLASSES
- Group 3 Gateway Term 1 2015
- IELTS Graduation
- Language Leader Upper-Int
- + Create a class

YOUR FOLDERS
- + Create a folder

QUIZLET NEWS

Welcoming Elaine to

Group 3 Gateway Term 1 2015
University Language Centre University of Manchester · Manchester, United Kingdom · Edit

+ Add a set

+ Add members

10 sets   12 members

Class Options ▼

Share this join link with your students

Anyone with this URL can sign up and join your class automatically

https://quizlet.com/join/G2Kkegdvm

EwaEdwards ● CLASS ADMIN

fawazalsharidah CLASS ADMIN

✕ Remove

hasonah134 CLASS ADMIN

✕ Remove

khyreyah CLASS ADMIN

✕ Remove

MAJEDALSAYFI CLASS ADMIN

✕ Remove

maryam-m-m CLASS ADMIN

✕ Remove

Quizlet

https://quizlet.com/

Quizlet

How do I use it?

- to pre-teach vocabulary (matching activity)
- to record target/emergent vocabulary (instead of the board)
- to practise vocabulary (playing vocab games)
- to test my students
- as homework - ss complete definitions/add lexis

Quizlet

Benefits of Quizlet?

- it's a great way to record vocabulary
- all students have instant access to the target language
- ss can practise anywhere on their phones
- fosters autonomous learning —> ss can edit definitions, add phrases, create their own sets
- ss can improve their pronunciation and spelling
- it's motivating, fun and engaging

Quizlet

Possible issues with Quizlet?

- can be time-consuming for the teacher/students

- not all students have smartphones/computers

- won't appeal to all students (and teachers!), not everyone is keen on recording vocab online, some prefer teaching/learning on paper

Learning Vocabulary

- Is recording + practising vocabulary enough to commit new lexis to long-term memory?

- Research suggests that we need to be exposed to a phrase many times in different contexts to be able to use it effectively

Reflection

What have you learnt?

What have you found interesting/relevant?

What are you going to try out?

What is not interesting/not relevant?

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References

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