Creating Opportunities for Self-Directed Vocabulary Learning

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English Language Programs

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Guiding questions

Setting the scene

- Who is your 'anchor' student?
- What is self-directed learning (SDL) ?
- Why should we talk about SDL in second language learning?
- Why is vocabulary a good place to start encouraging SDL inside, and outside, our classes ?

Exploring our practice

- What vocabulary learning resources and activities promote SDL?
- What do students feel about "taking the lead" in their vocabulary learning

What is self-directed learning (SDL)?

Please share 5 characteristics of self-directed learners in a small group. Be prepared to say 'why' these characteristics stand out for you?

Definition

- "In theory, learners are assumed to have a **degree of autonomy** which enables them to play an **active role** in their own learning and to accept responsibility for "**planning**, **implementing**, and **evaluating** a learning experience." (Brockett and Hiemstra, 1991, p. 24)

Why should we talk about SDL in second language education?

- 21st century learning: 4C's communication, creativity, collaboration, critical thinking
- SDL – an integral part of adult education and lifelong learning
- Goals of our teaching
  - encourage independent learning (motivation, self-discipline, curiosity) beyond the classroom

How can we foster our learners' readiness for SDL?

Please speak with a friend/colleague.

- Are you and your learners ready and willing to undertake SDL?
- What values could we promote in our teaching to encourage SDL in our learners?

Possible values to Encourage SDL

- Teachers encourage students to …
  - want to take increased responsibility for their own learning
  - be willing and capable of learning from and with others
  - participate in evaluating their own learning
  - exercise self-discipline
  - understand their own learning style/preferences and be willing to try out other learning styles
  - know when and how to ask for help and/or direction
- What values do you promote in your students?

Della-Dora, D., & Blanchard, L.G. (Eds.). (1979). *Moving Toward Self-Directed Learning*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

How can your teacher support you more in your learning?

"correct me when I make mistakes so that I can remember it deeply"

"more opportunities to practice"

"provide materials that will make me interested in academic subjects"

"give us feedback to assignments"

"teach us vocabulary learning strategies"

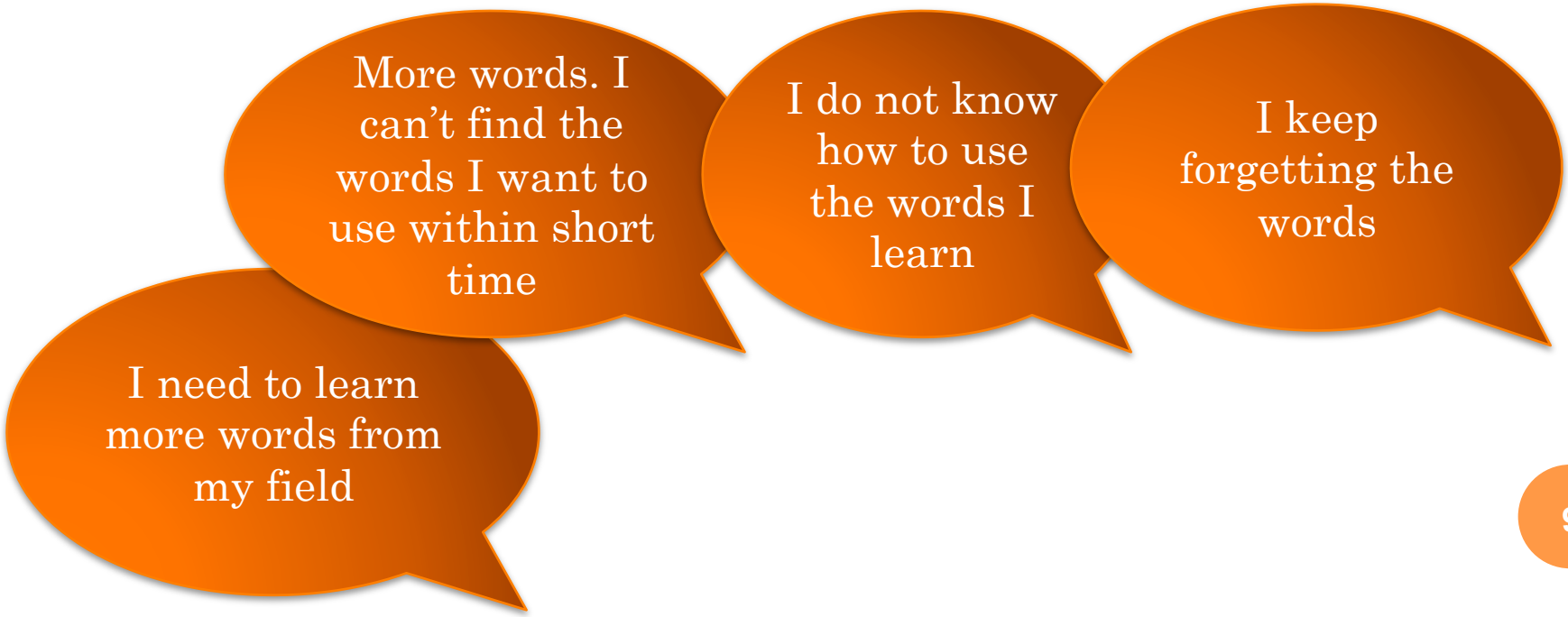
"do more practice exercises in class"

"encourage me to learn"

Why is vocabulary a good place to start?

Student need analysis

- What students **want** to learn to achieve their individual learning goals (social, linguistic proficiency, academic/professional)



Why is vocabulary a good place to start?

Student need analysis

- What students **lack** in terms of what they will need to achieve their goals
  - Extensive reading (and listening) practice
  - 2008 debate: Cobb vs McQuillan and Krashen
  - "Light & Narrow Reading": simplified reading material by the same author or on the same topics

Why is vocabulary a good place to start?

Student need analysis

- What the research says about what students **need to know** to achieve an appropriate level of proficiency
- Vocabulary size (Douglas, 2013)
  - 98% coverage for independent work, general readers would need to know 8,000 to 9,000 word families and listeners would need to know 6,000 to 7,000 word families. (p. 156)
  - 95% target would work for teacher supported texts (p. 157)

Exploring our practice

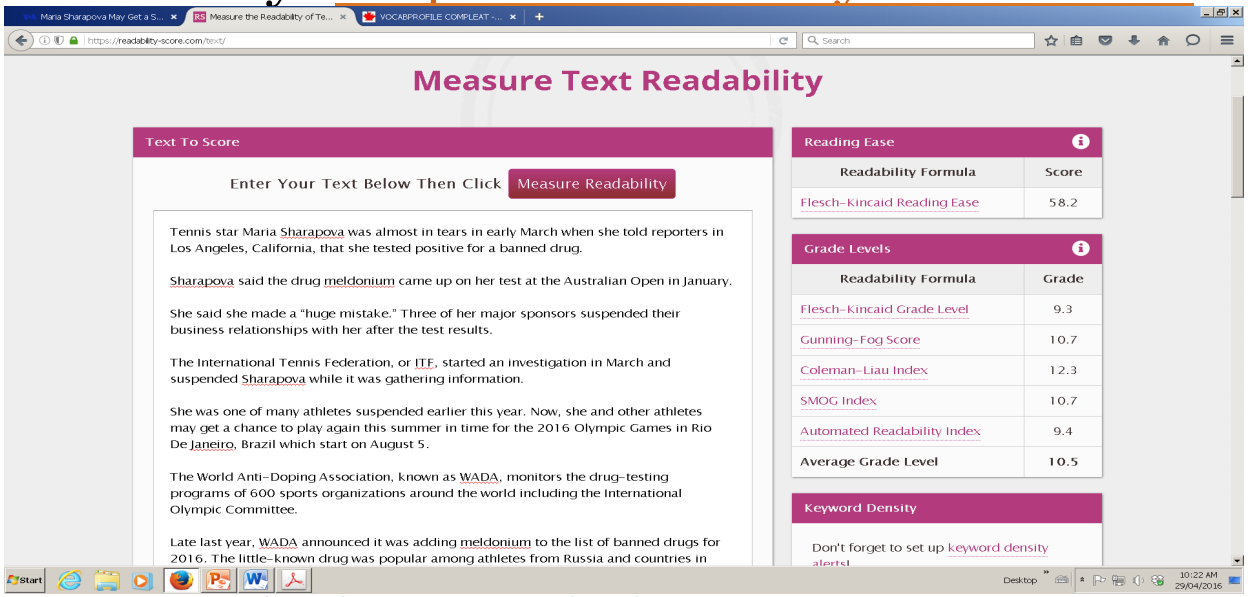
- "Light or Narrow Reading" (simplified reading material by the same author or on the same topics) seems a good way forward
- Focused way to bridge the gap between
  - the in-class teacher-guided intensive (reading/ listening) skills development/practice AND
  - the self-directed extensive skills development/ practice. Practice that is student planned, implemented, and evaluated

Choosing "Light & Narrow" Texts

- Simple English Wikipedia - https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page
- VOA Learning English - http://learningenglish.voanews.com/content/sharapova-drug-test/3232039.html

Analyzing "Light & Narrow" Texts (UoT)

- Readability https://readability-score.com/



- ELD Vocabulary Website http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/eld/improve-your-vocabulary

Analyzing "Light & Narrow" Texts (Non UoT)

- Readability https://readability-score.com/
- Lex Tutor Vocabprofiler http://www.lextutor.ca/vp/

AWL and Concordance Practice

- University of Nottingham
  - AWL Highlighter http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/alzsh3/acvocab/awlhighlighter.htm
  - Concordance exercises http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/alzsh3/acvocab/index.htm

AWL and Concordance Practice: Student Exemplar

- Common collocation:
  - Susceptible to;
- Part of speech:
  - Adjective
- Main meaning:
  - Meaning as an Adjective:
    - "Likely or liable to be influenced or harmed by a particular thing";
    - "(Of a person) easily influenced by feelings or emotions, sensitive";
    - "(susceptible of) Capable or admitting of";
- Meaning from the text I read:
  - Used as an Adjective
  - "Likely or liable to be influenced or harmed by a particular thing";

Advanced Speaking and Listening 10 Vocabulary

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Nataliya Bork — Comments — Share

driving a propeller drive the propellers

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Vocabulary	Part of Speech; Word Family	Definition	Collocations www.lextutor.ca; www.americancorpus.(	Sample Sentence	Translati into my Native Languag	Picture/Concept Map from www.visualthesaurus.co	Suggestions fro Instructor and classmates
5	propeller (n)	propel (v) propellant (n) propelling (n)	a device that causes a ship or aircraft to move	driving a propeller drive the propellers	The propellers of a helicopter are stopped sudenly			
6	estimation (n)	estimate (n,v) estimatable (adj)	your opinion of someoneor something	estimation of; in estimation; the estimation is	In my estimation a lot of banks will have the same problems			
7	recipe (n)		a way of doing something that will produce a particular result	a recipe for disaster; the recipe books; her recipe for life	The recipe calls for fresh thyme.			
8	computation (n)	compute (v); computational(adj); computer (n)	to calculate an answer or amount by using a machine	Arithmetic computation; computation into Criticism; computation to a large extent	The computer explains the computation algorithm			

Ray | Andy | Mido | Marina | Renee | Bob | Mingfei | Doreen | Fuge | Johnny | Jared | Alarashani Hana

Vocabulary Learning Plan

My semester goals for vocabulary learning are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time bound)

This is what I am going to do to help me learn and remember more words:

This is how much time I want to try to spend learning vocabulary each day:

This is how I am going to choose the vocabulary to learn:

This is how I am going to learn and review vocabulary:

I am going to mainly focus on

Spelling_____ Pronunciation____ Word Meaning____
Collocations_____ Word Use_____ Other (please specify)_____

Student ideas

- **This is what I am going to do to help me learn and remember vocabulary:**
- "record/use vocabulary log"
- "review vocabulary I do not know"
- "write down all the new words from the lectures I listen to"
- "use English-English dictionary"

Average time dedicated to vocabulary learning per week:

20-25 minutes

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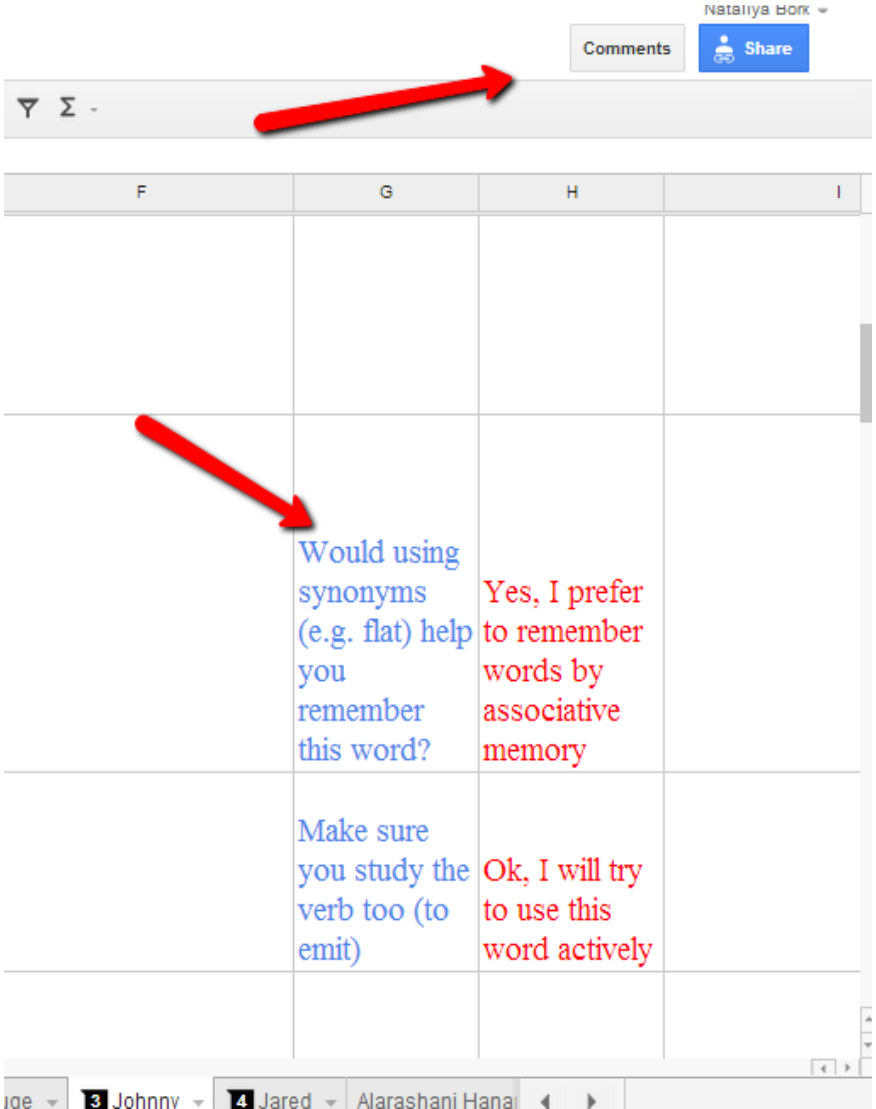
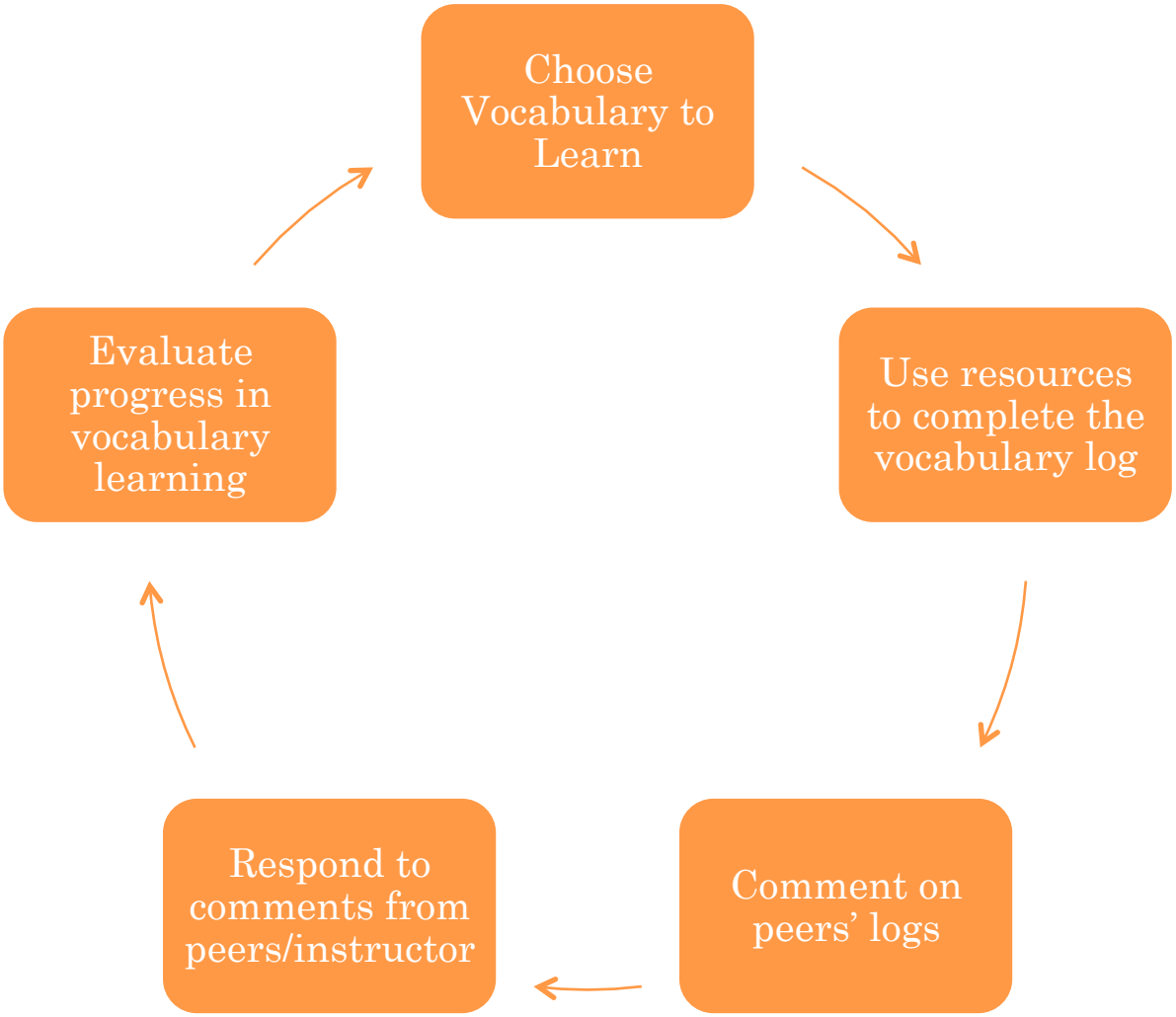
Online Collaboration and Self Evaluation



J	K	L	M
I do not remember this word	I have seen this word, I do not remember what it means	I know the meaning/mea of this word	I can confidentl use this word in speaking and writin
v			
	v		

Vocabulary Learning Process



Student Voices

"I **improved** the amount of my vocabulary. I remember words every week, especially in class, I can learn the parts of the words, the collocations and meaning.

"I think now **I can find my own ways of vocabulary learning** because now I have different methods that are provided by my teacher"

"I think vocabulary always is the difficult goal to achieve. The area that I still need to work on is new words learning. If I can not understand the words, I will not continue reading the article. I **will use the method** that we learn from the classes to help me."

"I think **my goal** helped my vocabulary skill development because I learned many vocabulary and how to use them. I made word family sheets"

Student Voices

"I studied very hard, and I can **learn how to study** vocabulary."

"**It's difficult** to complete my goal of memorizing vocabulary on time because sometimes I think this is a boring task, and I reluctantly do it everyday. In order to overcome this, I won't translate the words in Chinese words, but try to explain them in English sentences by myself, which will help me to remember the words much better"

"I always **use Quizlet** to review words, and use **Lextutor** to check if a word is academic."

"I **achieved my goal** of learning new vocabulary. I made new word list and made word cards everyday. **This connects with my language strength."**

Questions to Encourage Metacognition (and SDL)

- Before
  - Is this task similar to previous task?
  - What do I want to achieve?
  - What should I do first?
- During
  - Am I on the right track?
  - What can I do differently?
  - Who can I ask for help?
- After
  - What worked well?
  - What cold I have done better?
  - Can I apply this to other situations?

Retrieved from http://www.innerdrive.co.uk/Release_Your_Inner_Drive/9-questions-to-help-develop-metacognition/

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