

Vocabulary Matrix: Understanding, Learning, Teaching

A dynamic guide to the methodology of vocabulary instruction which contains clearly written theories and keeps a compelling focus on practical teaching applications

- The complex matrix within which words exist is made accessible as readers are led through the life-cycle of a word
- Supported by corpus-based evidence and real classroom data, the book explores what words mean, how they relate to other words and how they function in different ways within society
- An invaluable resource for all language teachers, particularly those who are pre-service or have recently started teaching

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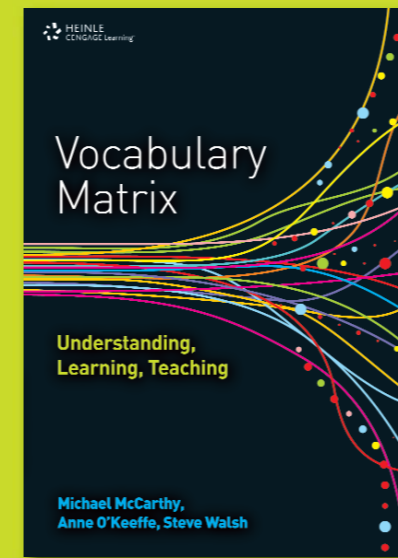
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Vocabulary Matrix

Vocabulary Matrix: Understanding, Learning, Teaching is an innovative resource for language teachers who are pre-service or have recently started teaching. This dynamic guide to the methodology of vocabulary instruction offers clearly written theories and keeps a compelling focus on practical teaching applications. The complex matrix within which words exist is made accessible as readers are led through the life-cycle of a word. Supported by corpus based-evidence and real classroom data, the book explores what words mean, how they relate to other words and how they function in different ways within society.

Key features:

- User-friendly chapter structure with three distinct sections covering:
 - A. existing knowledge
 - B. problems for learners
 - C. classroom practice
- A set of instructive Tasks for individual study and reflection. These contextualise theoretical and pedagogical concepts covered in the book. Many of these can be adapted for reuse with students.
- Task Commentaries talk the reader through the answers to the questions posed in the Tasks
- Vocabulary Files with illuminating teaching points and factoids
- A full 10-question review at the end of each chapter
- Review Commentaries and a complete Answer Key at the end of the book
- A glossary of all key terms to further aid self study



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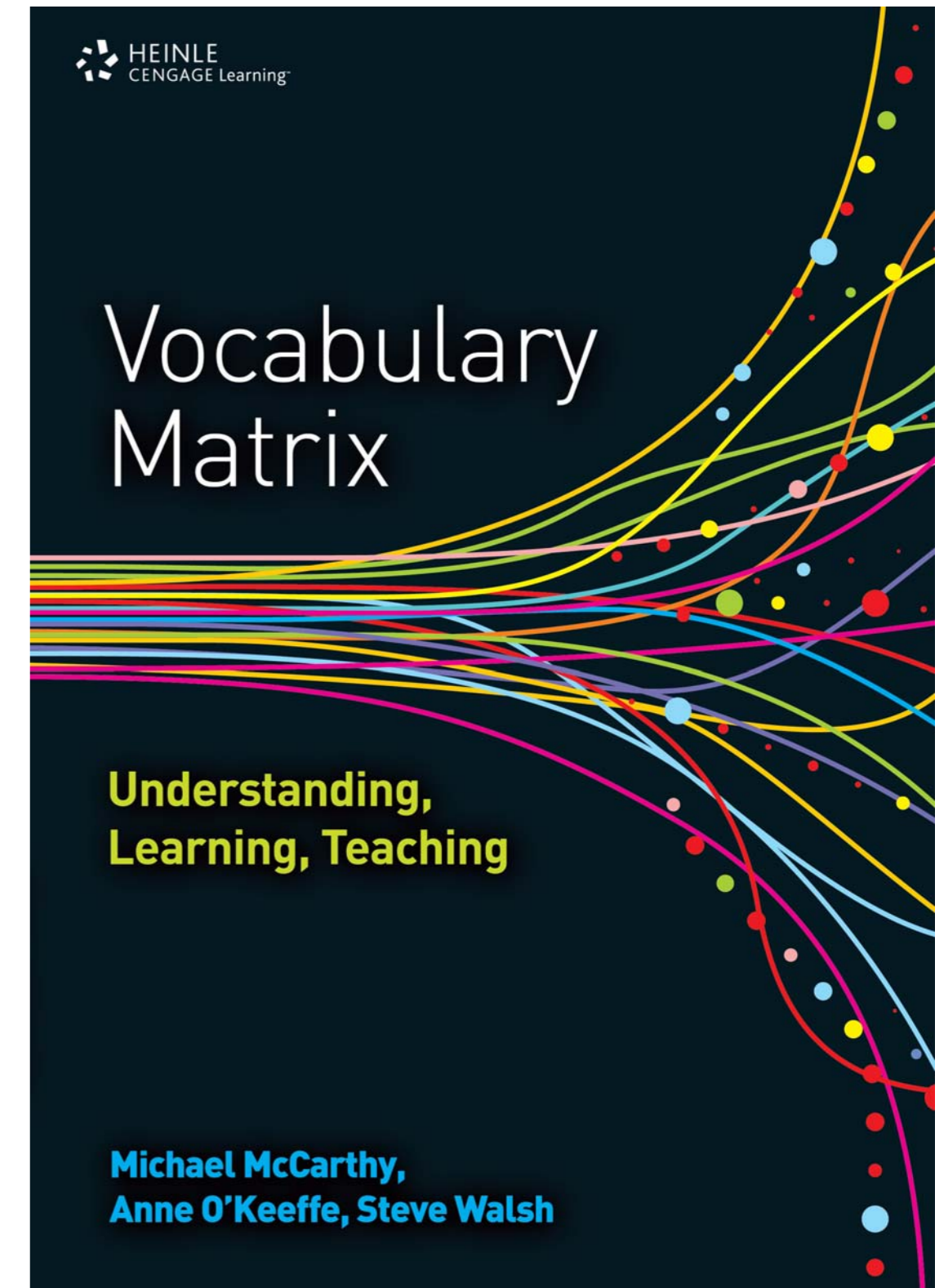
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Each chapter in Vocabulary Matrix is divided into 3 parts:

A UNDERSTANDING

PART A What do we know about this?

The first section of the chapter provides the background information and theory relating to each topic

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Multi-word items

PART A What do we know about this?

As we have already seen in Chapters 1 and 2, when we start to describe words, we see that a 'word' can be represented in any number of ways:

- single items or basic roots: *table, door, lamp*
- compounds where two or more words are combined: *tabletop, door-handle, lampshade*
- lexical chunks with relatively fixed meanings: *at the end of the day, so on and so forth, to and fro*

B LEARNING

PART B What are the problems for learners?

The second section in the chapter identifies the problem the learner will have in relation to this aspect of vocabulary.

PART B What are the problems for learners?

There are several difficulties for learners associated with multi-word items:

- 1 Transparency of meaning. We've already seen that the meanings of some multi-word items are straightforward and literal, while others are more difficult to predict, even from context. For example, many phrasal and prepositional verbs have to be learnt as their meaning cannot be worked out, even from context. Examples include *to be out on a limb, to be on the ball*.
- 2 Fixedness. Some items are totally fixed and cannot be changed at all, while others can generate similar expressions (as in greetings, for example, *see you, see you later, see you next week* and so on). For learners, it is difficult to learn the extent to which an item is fixed or variable.

C TEACHING

PART C How do we teach it?

The last section of each chapter provides a discussion of how we can apply the theory relating to each topic.

PART C How do we teach it?

Context and level

Teaching multi-word items will obviously depend on both context and level. With advanced learners, a more inductive approach can be adopted, whereby learners are left to work things out on their own. With lower levels, teachers will need to offer more support and guidance and check form, function and pronunciation.

Form	What grammatical features need to be observed (for example, the use of prepositions, verb form, and so on)?
Function	What does the item mean and how can meaning be checked?
Pronunciation	What is the most natural pronunciation, which key words need to be stressed, which can be 'thrown away', unstressed?

Take the very common phrase *at the end of the day*, for example. Learners will have encountered all of these words individually before, but what special features do they need to notice in this phrase? First of all, the phrase is a lexical chunk.

The book also includes the following sections:

Tasks

- Tasks throughout each chapter contextualise the theoretical and pedagogical concepts which are covered
- Many of the tasks can be adapted for use in the class
- A commentary for each task is provided in the chapter or at the end of the book

TASK 1

Complete the table below. Say what the function of each affix is and add one more example for each.

Affix and function	Examples
-ly (makes an adjective)	
non-	
in-	
re-	
-ing	
de-	
-s	

TASK 2

Give three examples of compounds for each combination below (15 words in total):

noun + noun
adjective + noun
verb + noun
verb + verb
verb + particle

TASK 3

To what extent do you feel a need to **deconstruct** words like the following in order to ascertain their meaning? What about learners? What strategies might be useful for teaching learners how to deal with such words?

<i>Reproduce</i>	<i>Irrefutable</i>
<i>Unforgettable</i>	<i>Photogenic</i>
<i>Unimaginable</i>	<i>Irresponsibility</i>

Vocabulary File

- These boxes contain useful information and teaching points and can be found in every chapter

VOCABULARY FILE

Another advantage of lexical chunks is that they can be used to generate other phrases which have similar meanings: *see you later* → *see you soon* → *see you in a bit* → *see you next week*, and so on.

VOCABULARY FILE

As well as thinking about context and level, and in relation to both, teachers need to pay attention to vocabulary selection, focusing on high frequency words and giving learners strategies to deal with low frequency words. This is where a corpus can be extremely useful in deciding on which words to teach and to which level.

Review

- There is a 10 question review section at the end of each chapter to aid self-study
- The Answer Key and Review Commentaries are provided at the back of the book

Glossary

- A glossary of all key terms can be found at the back of the book for easy reference and self-study

Glossary

acronym an acronym is a word made by using the first letters of several words to make a new word which we pronounce as a whole word. Examples include *Esso* (Standard Oil), *laser* (Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiations) and *radar* (Radio Detection And Ranging).

affix an affix refers to the additional elements which we add at to the beginning or end of a word. For example, the word *unproblematic* is made up of the root *problem*, the prefix *un-*, and the suffix *-atic*. By combining these various elements, we can change both the form and meaning of a word; in this case, from the noun *problem* to the adjective *unproblematic*.

anchor words these are the words in a text which have fixed meanings and which help to hold the text together.

antonym/antonymy/antonymous an antonym is a word which has the opposite meaning to another word. *Hot* and *cold* are antonyms in that they are antonymous to each other.

clipping a clipping is a shorter form of a longer word which is normally used instead of the long form. Examples include *phone* for *telephone*, *gas* for *gasoline*.

cognate cognates are words which are similar in two languages or more languages because they come from the same source, for example *hospital, police, restaurant*. A false cognate or 'false friend' refers to a word that appears to be similar in form and meaning in two or more languages but is not, for example *sympathetic* is a word in English and in French it does not mean the same thing.

cognitivist refers to theories of SLA which argue that learning a second language is essentially a cognitive activity which takes place within the human mind.

co-hyponym when words share the same quality, we call them co-hyponyms, for example, *sheep, cows, horses, dogs, cats* are all co-hyponyms because they share the quality of being animals.

► **superordinate** ... how words form

To download a complete sample unit go to <http://elt.heinle.com> and go to the Vocabulary Matrix site in the 'Books for Teachers / Methods and Approaches' section.