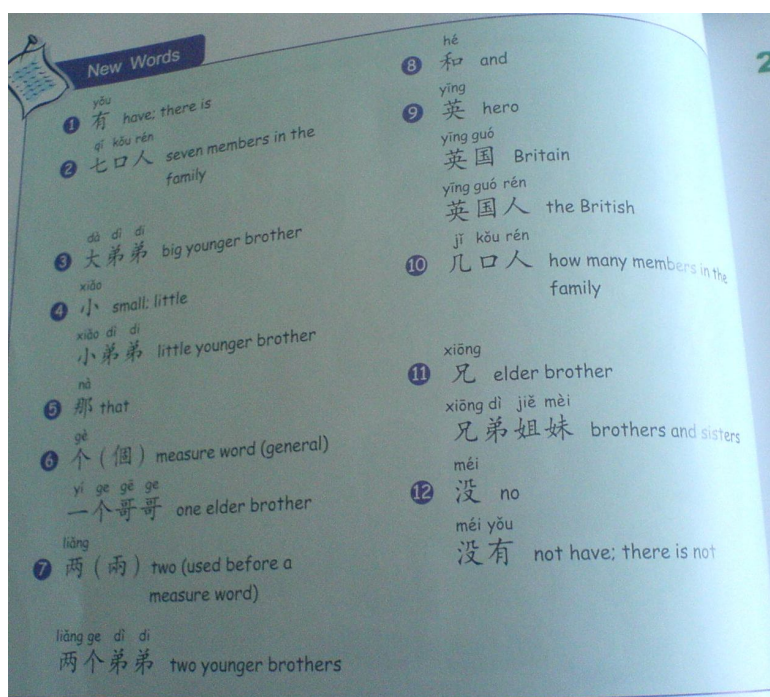
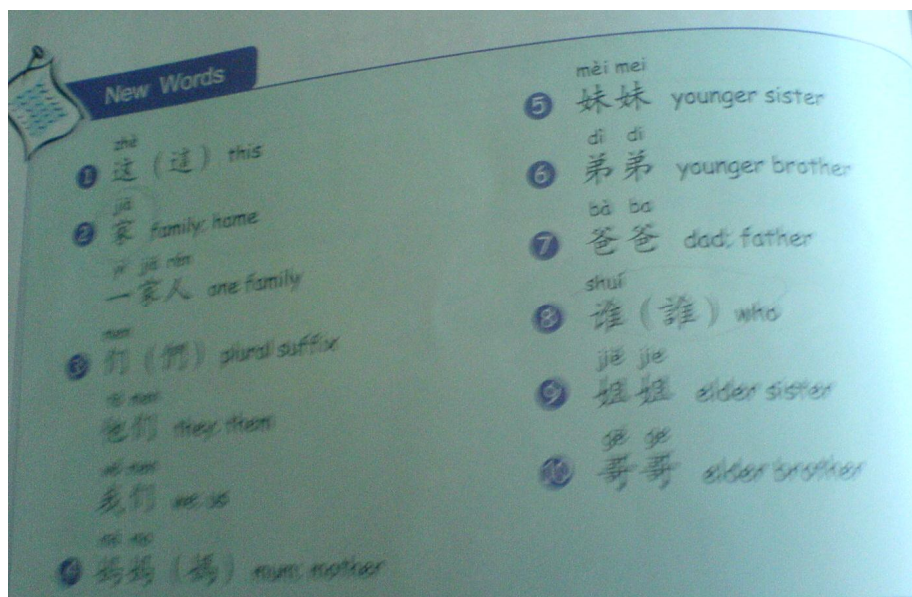


Vocabulary Activity Set

Target Students: 1st semester Chinese language learners in U.S. high school settings

Objectives: Students will be able to pronounce the words related to family members correctly, and use them in real communication contexts.

Target Words: The vocabulary used for this activity set is from the vocabulary lists of Lesson 7 and 8 in a first-year Chinese book *Chinese Made Easy*. The topic of this unit is family members. Here is the copy of the vocabulary lists from the book.



Homework before the class:

1. Students will be asked to listen to the CD for the pronunciation of each word, make a list of the words that they feel hard to pronounce, and bring the list to the class.
2. Students will be asked to bring to class a family photo. An old family photo with

as many family members possible is preferred.

Activities:

1. The teacher will collect students' lists of the words they have difficulty to pronounce, and place each list on the overhead projector. Students will be encouraged to read these words together, and the pronunciation will also be modeled by the teacher.
2. Students will work in groups to classify all the words on the vocabulary lists based on the standards they set up. For example, they may want to develop a semantic map based on the meanings of the words, or they may choose to group the words based on their grammatical functions, say, part of speech. Each group will present their final product to the rest of the class.
3. Students will complete dialogues using the words related to family members (See Handout 1 for detail)
4. Students will work in groups. Each of them will show the photo he/she brings to the group. The rest of the group will point to the people in the picture and ask who they are. They can refer to dialogues they just completed (Activity 3) for the models of questions and answers.
5. Information gap activity. Students will be divided into groups of four. They will complete a family tree of Jennifer's based on the different information on each person's card. (See Handout 2 for details)

Extension/Homework

Students will be asked to write a short paragraph to describe Jennifer's family based on the family tree they have completed.

Self-reflection

Recall my experience of learning English as foreign language, vocabulary was explicitly taught, practiced, and recycled in class, but in a problematic way. When we started a new unit, we first went to the vocabulary list of that unit, and read aloud each word either following the teacher or the tape. Then the teacher would move on to explaining the grammatical behavior of some of the words, or reminded us the other meanings of one word. After that we did some decontextualized exercise, such as sentence translation to practice the words that were just explained by the teacher. When I started working as a teacher, most of my class time was still spent on explaining the meaning and/or the grammatical behavior of the new words, and using rather decontextualized exercises to let students practise them. Based on my experience as a language learner and teacher, I don't believe that vocabulary is something neglected in foreign language classrooms, at least not in the EFL classrooms in China. In the above mentioned experiences, vocabulary was explicitly taught, practiced, and recycled, but the key problem is that all the practice is decontextualized. Although studies show that decontextualized vocabulary lists are preferred by beginning learners, it doesn't mean that classroom vocabulary activities need to be decontextualized. Instead, vocabulary activities have to move from the decontextualized level to the contextualized level, and from input to output, because only by doing so can students be able to use the words correctly and appropriately in their spoken and written communication.

Handout 1.

Choose the words from the box below to complete the dialogues to make them grammatically and logically correct. The answer of each blank is not exclusive.

弟弟, 妹妹, 妈妈, 爸爸, 姐姐, 小弟弟, 小妹妹, 哥哥, 姐姐

(younger brother, younger sister, mum, dad, sister, little younger sister, little younger brother, elder brother, elder sister)

-- 他是莉莉的_____吗?
-- 不是的, 她是莉莉的_____
(-- Is he Lily's _____?
--No. She is Lily's _____)

--他是丽丽的_____吗?
--是的。
(--Is he Lily's _____?
-- Yes.)

--这是莉莉的_____吗?
-- 是的。
(-- Is this Lily's _____?
-- Yes.)



莉莉

-- 这是谁?
-- 这是莉莉的_____
(-- Who's this?
-- This is _____)

-- 这是谁?
-- 这是莉莉的_____
(-- Who's this?
-- This is _____)

Guess Who is Who ?

Student A

Jack 和 Mellissa 有三个孩子。(Jack and Mellissa have three kids.)

George 是 Amanda 的爸爸。 (George is Amanda's Dad.)

Adam 是 Jennifer 的哥哥。(Adam is Jennifer's big brother.)

Phillip 是 Williams 的爸爸。(Phillip is Williams; Dad)

Rosemary 是 George 的妻子。 (Rosemary is George's wife.)

Jennifer 是 Williams 的女儿。(Jennifer is Williams; daughter.)

Jessica 是 Martin 妹妹。(Jessica is Martin's little sister.)

Amanda 是 Mellissa 的姐姐。(Amanda is Mellissa's elder sister.)

