

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is agreed upon as being crucial by all language instructors; however, equally agreed upon is that vocabulary alone does not result in communication. For instance, an ungrammatical utterance with authentic vocabulary can be utterly incomprehensible. The sentence, "you did the dog food get the from store," becomes hard to impossible to understand due to the ungrammatical nature of the sentence. But even worse could be, "Did you get the dog food from the store," when, "Did you get the dog food to the store," is meant.

An issue in vocabulary is what is vocabulary. Can a relative clause be treated as a lexical unit, can an idiom be treated as a lexical unit, and can word order be treated as a lexical unit, where a lexical unit is a lexeme or lexemes attached to a meaning? In frame semantics multiword expressions are treated as lexical units. With this in mind the old sentence building frames can be expanded to include more than one lexeme or word, including idioms or collocations.

An example of this is with the following sentence frame: Die Kinder / Heute / nicht gern / aufstehen. A good rendering of this could be: Die Kinder stehen heute nicht gern auf; however, other renderings could work as well. Notice, however, that 'Die' and 'Kinder' are put together as a collocation. This is common with languages which have gender assignments to nouns. It is atypical to see a sentence frame with an element such as 'nur alle Jubeljahre' as in a possible frame of: Die Kinder / nur alle Jubeljahre / nicht gern / aufstehen.

The following activity is developed for a first semester college level German language course in a unit on food. It incorporates several idioms and collocations into the sentence building frame to help students learn these multiword expressions or polyword expressions more easily, that is the multiword expressions are learned as a unit rather than inductively through trial and error. This is beneficial due to the nature of language teaching being limited in time and exposure.

Vocabulary Outline

Aim: The aim of this activity is to improve students knowledge of food and food culture. It is aimed at beginning German students (GER506). The goal of the activity is to build upon pre-existing knowledge such as common nouns and verbs concerned with food and add to that while reiterating what would have already been seen, using an n+1 approach as suggested by Kraschen. The students would already be able to ask the following questions before beginning this activity: 1) What is your name and 2) what is your favorite food.

1. The activity should begin with a review of nouns and verbs learned previously from a prior day or homework. The review or pre-learning activity would work well as a group interview where the students had to find at least three other students and ask them for their name and their favorite food. The students then could volunteer to report to the instructor what they found others favorite foods were. This would give the instructor an opportunity to provide feedback and offer ideas to the students.
2. With this completed the students would then get into groups of 3-4 with the handout for the main activity. On this handout the students would be given a set of frame elements in a certain order, for instance, the first set of frames would include going to the store/backery/restaurant/etc., with the second frame giving elements concerned with things that could be done in these places, and then a third frame in which elements of leaving the place are mentioned. The goal is to use these frames and the elements therein to produce their own story of an individual (whomever they choose the story to center around) going on a food related journey.
3. Once the groups finish their work, the instructor would ask for volunteer groups to read their stories.

0-3mins	Introduce the pre-learning activity while handing out the worksheet, while doing this go over what the activity will involve
4-10mins	The students will interview each other
10-15mins	Allow the students to volunteer on what they found in their interviews while providing feedback
15-18mins	Introduce the new activity while assigning groups and handing out the main activity worksheet
18-28mins	Have the students work on the activity while moving from group to group
28-35mins	Have volunteers read the stories the student groups came up with

Vocabulary Handout (1) Thomas Checkley

Dein Name _____ Datum _____

Befragte Person

Lieblings Essen

Vocabulary Handout (2) Thomas Checkley

Note: each group member receives a handout. The activity is done in the present tense.

Directions: For each part (teil) your group must use at least one component from each element. For example in der erste Teil a person, place, mode of transportation, a verb, and an adverb must be used; however, more than one element can be used if you wish.

Der erste Teil: Bspw. "Herr Rielsing und Frau Schwarz laufen zu Fuß mit einem gemäßigten Tempo zum ihren Lieblings Cafe."

Die Person(en): Herr _____ / Frau _____ / Eine Person Der Ort(e): das Cafe / die Dönerbode / das Restaurant / der Lebensmittelladen Der Verkehr: mit dem Bus fahren / Fahrrad fahren / zu Fuß laufen / mit dem Auto fahren / mit dem Wagen fahren Verben: gehen / laufen / rennen Adverbien: schnell / langsam / mit einem (sehr) gemäßigten Tempo / schnell wie der Wind

Der zweite Teil:

Die Person(en): Herr _____ / Frau _____ / Eine Person Das Essen: Hamburger(s) / Die Suppe / das Gemüse / der Döner / das Schnitzel / der Salat Die Getränke: der Orangensaft / das Cola / das Mineralwasser / das Bier / der Wein Verben: essen / trinken / einkaufen\ Adjektive: lecker / weiß / hässlich / schön

Der dritte Teil:

Die Person(en): Herr _____ / Frau _____ / Eine Person Der Ort(e): nach Hause / ins Büro / der billige Laden Verkehr: zu Fuß / mit dem Bus / Fahrrad / mit dem Wagen Wann: jetzt / später / danach
