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„TEACHING VOCABULARY TO LEARNERS WITH
SPECIAL NEEDS“

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Abstract

Curriculum Vitae

1. Introduction

Although lexis represents an important pillar of language teaching and learning and although the number of lexical items learners have to learn and to remember in the course of second language acquisition is quite large, research into this area has been neglected. However, having recognised the difficulties a large number of language learners experience with vocabulary learning and remembering, my personal interest in finding ways to facilitate and enhance retention has increased. Moreover, when I started to give private lessons to learners with special needs in general and to one learner (who, later on, was diagnosed as dyslexic by means of professional screening) in particular, it became obvious that the problems regarding retention of words these learners were struggling with could no longer be disregarded and had to be tackled. Considering the fact that for the aforementioned dyslexic learner 'traditional' approaches to vocabulary learning (e.g. learning isolated words from word lists) had been inefficient, since she kept mixing up different word forms and meanings, their spelling and pronunciation, and generally speaking did not manage to retain, access and recall vocabulary, it was imperative to discover and to fall back on alternative approaches and strategies to vocabulary teaching and learning, which led to the three basic questions or principles the entire teaching project actually is based on, namely:

1. Is it possible to enhance vocabulary retention already during the presentation phase by applying different presentation techniques?
2. In how far does the personal effort put into a word (deep processing) by the learner enhance retention of this word?
3. What role does recycling play with regard to retention of lexis?

A large number of different vocabulary teaching techniques and strategies – involving multi-sensory approaches - were collected, used and evaluated according to their effectiveness in the course of the lessons with this dyslexic learner and the teaching project presented in the empirical part of this thesis is based on the above presented principles (or, questions) and on the private tuitions carried out over a period of approximately four months of intensive study.

The approaches to and the strategies and techniques of vocabulary teaching and learning applied in the teaching project are based on the theories discussed in the first part of this thesis. Therefore, the theoretical part of this thesis, on the one hand, consists of various elements of lexis that have to be considered with regard to vocabulary teaching and learning, and, on the other hand, contains a broad selection of vocabulary presentation, recycling and testing techniques and strategies whose usage aims at enhancing language learners' retention of and accessibility to words.

Naturally, since the main objective of the teaching project is to find ways to maximise and facilitate retention, one chapter of the theory part is entirely dedicated to the mental lexicon

and the workings of the mind (e.g. long- and short- term memory, theories of forgetting, etc.) as well as to factors that are meant to enhance retention and those that tend to inhibit it. Furthermore, dyslexia and its implications for language/vocabulary learning are discussed as well.

In chapter four a large number of vocabulary presentation techniques, recycling and testing activities are introduced and illustrated by examples.

Chapter five constitutes the empirical part of this thesis and therefore is concerned with the three principles mentioned above and the presentation of the teaching project, which is founded on these principles. Finally, the results as well as the implications of these findings on language teaching and learning are discussed.

Although the teaching project is focussed on a learner with a learning impairment, the theoretical considerations regarding the various elements of lexis, the mental lexicon, vocabulary presentation, recycling and testing techniques, etc. are also essential for learners without special needs as well as for language teaching in general.

2. Vocabulary – The lexicon

Teaching and learning of vocabulary is essential to any foreign language learning process, since without words neither the speaker nor the receiver is able to communicate properly. I would even go as far as to claim that a language's lexis is even more important than its grammar, considering that it is possible to make oneself understood despite using grammar incorrectly, while in many cases very much effort is needed to circumscribe certain words' meanings. Considering the enormous amount of vocabulary learners of a second (or, foreign) language have to accumulate in the course of their study of a certain language, the relevance of vocabulary learning and teaching becomes obvious; however, a large number of learners struggle with vocabulary learning, regarding it as tiresome, tedious and annoying and are irritated at the rate at which newly acquired vocabulary is forgotten. In this context, I would like to refer to what I. S. P. Nation (2001: 23) calls the "'learning burden' of a word [,which] is the amount of effort required to learn it." Words differ with regard to their complexity and therefore have different grades of difficulty – or, to quote Nation (2001: 23):

[d]ifferent words have different learning burdens for learners with different language backgrounds and each of the aspects of what it means to know a word can contribute to its learning burden. The general principle of learning burden (Nation, 1990) is that the more a word represents patterns and knowledge that learners are already familiar with, the lighter its learning burden.

Considering the various problems learners of a second/foreign language struggle with regarding vocabulary acquisition, retention and accessibility, it is imperative to look at the

specific problems inherent in the English lexicon, to examine the diverse techniques of teaching and learning new lexis and to observe their effectiveness.

Before doing this, however, it is vital to take a closer look at what it actually means to teach and learn a new word and which features are involved in this process, since "[t]eachers should be able to estimate the learning burden of words for each of the aspects of what is involved in knowing a word, so that they can direct their teaching towards aspects that will reveal underlying patterns so that later learning is easier" (Nation 2001: 24).

2.1 What a word consists of

Actually, neither the teaching nor the learning of new lexis is as simple as it may seem to be on a surface level, since quite a large number of factors have to be considered in this extremely complex process. Therefore, the following subsections are concerned with what a word consists of, how individual words are related, and in which ways words can be presented to the learner.

2.1.1 Form: written and spoken form of a word

Each word has a written and a spoken form and if the aim of foreign language acquisition consists of mastering the four skills – listening, speaking, reading, writing – both aspects are essential for a language learner, since both oral and written communication is crucial to any efficient communication in L2. Thus, a "learner has to know what a word sounds like (its pronunciation) and what it looks like (its spelling)" (Ur 1991: 60). The importance of the correct pronunciation of words becomes obvious if one considers the misunderstandings that may be caused by an incorrect or sloppy pronunciation, regarding, for example, phonemes in words like "*bad, bat, pad, pat*" or vowels in words like "*sat*" and "*set*" as well as in "*in fact*" and "*infect*" (Gehring 2010: 122). Needless to say, there are many more English words that have to be pronounced carefully so that the intended meaning is brought across by the speaker and can be appropriately decoded by the receiver. Thus, Gehring (2004: 40) in his book *Englische Fachdidaktik: Eine Einführung* states that "die größten Dekodierungsschwierigkeiten entstehen durch die Aussprache", since learners' "phonologische Fertigkeiten" involve "[m]it ungewohnten Klangbildern rezeptiv und produktiv umzugehen, Laute zu identifizieren und sie ohne Gehemmtheit zumindest authentizitätsnah zu verwenden."

Furthermore, considering that a word not only has a spoken but also a written form, it is obvious that the latter, too, has to be introduced to the learners. With regard to English orthography, it has to be emphasised that it sometimes – or, more often than not – is rather difficult for learners to link the spoken form of a certain lexical item with its written

counterpart, since sounds in many cases are represented only insufficiently by letters (cf. Gehring 2004: 40f). If one takes, for instance, words such as *yacht*, *comfort*, *taught*, *weird* or *Worcester*, it becomes evident that their written forms do not indicate any appropriate clues regarding their spoken forms; on the contrary, the orthography of such words may be rather misleading. Similarly, the correct spelling of newly acquired lexis often represents a huge problem for foreign language learners, since they either tend to mix it up with previously learned similar word forms (e.g. *see – sea – say*) or – if an L2 form very much resembles an L1 form – the L2 spelling is confused with the L1 form.¹

Another aspect I would like to briefly comment on concerns the presentation of a new word's form, which can be done in various ways: a teacher can either introduce the written form of a word prior to its spoken form, or the other way round. The sequence of presentation, however, very much depends on in what way learners are to be acquainted with the word and often is already predetermined by the skill by means of which it is introduced. Therefore, if the teacher decides to introduce new lexis by means of reading, it is evident that the learners first come across its written form; if, however, the teacher decides to pre-teach a word, it depends on the teacher if the learners get to know its written or spoken form first. Thus, to a great extent it is the teacher's choice how to present a new lexical item to language learners and much thought should be spent on the order and sequence of the presentation of new vocabulary. This suggests that teachers not only have to consider *how* to present certain words to the learners but also *in what order* to introduce the lexis, which with regard to a word's form means: written form or spoken form first? I would like to argue that it probably is of vital importance to introduce the spelling and the pronunciation of a word closely linked, since it may be claimed that this way these two aspects of one and the same word are more strongly connected in a learner's mind.

2.1.2 Meaning(s) of a word: denotations and connotations, grammatical function

As Tricia Hedge (2000: 112) puts it in her introductory sentences of the chapter on the lexical system of English, "in order to understand better the task involved in learning the vocabulary of the English language we need to look at two aspects of meaning" of a word: while "[t]he first concerns the link between meaning and the world to which words refer [...]" [t]he second involves the sense relations that exist among words".

This section of the thesis, however, is only concerned with what Hedge (2000: 112) calls "the link between meaning and the world to which words refer" or with what Norbert Schmitt (2000: 22f) defines as "the relationship between a word and its *referent* (the person, thing,

¹ For a more detailed discussion of problems regarding word forms cf. Hatch & Brown 1995: 378ff

action, condition, or case it refers to in the real or an imagined world)", since I have dedicated a whole subchapter (cf. section 3.1.2) to these rather broad and essential aspects of meaning regarding the various relations between words themselves.

Now I would like to briefly discuss what is meant by a word's *denotation* and *connotation*. The denotation of a word concerns "what it refers to in the real world [...] [, which] is often the sort of definition that is given in a dictionary" (Ur 1991: 61). To put it in other words, the "*referential* or *denotative* meaning" of a word represents its "reference to an object, action, or event in the physical world" (Hedge 2000: 112). This means, for example, that the noun *apple* denotes a rather round edible healthy fruit that grows on trees and that is sold in supermarkets or other markets; people from different countries, however, may visualise different kinds of apples and therefore have diverging associations depending on which sorts of apples either are more common in a specific country or preferred by the individual who is in the process of acquiring the English word *apple*.² Thus, it can be seen that even denotative meanings of a word can greatly differ depending on who uses them and on which concept of a word a specific person has in mind. Concepts may differ in different languages, but they may also be non-existent, which implies that there even does not exist a proper word for a certain concept; this idea is best illustrated by the often-cited example of the Inuits' possession of over one hundred different words for the concept of snow, which indicates that the number of different words that exist for a certain concept reflects the importance of this concept for the inhabitants of a country or a specific group of people. Another example given by Hedge (2000: 112) refers to the fact that while "English has two words for a large area of water, 'sea' and 'lake' [...] [,] Swedish has one, *sjö*, presumably because some Swedish lakes have wide channels to the sea and it is difficult to distinguish where the lake ends and the sea begins".

The second aspect of meaning I would like to touch upon here is *connotation*, which "relates to the attitudes and emotions of a language user in choosing a word and the influence of these on the listener or reader's interpretation of the word" (Hedge 2000: 112) and "[...] which may or may not be indicated in a dictionary definition" (Ur 1991: 61). Gairns and Redman (1986: 18) use "*affective meaning* [my emphasis] to cover the attitudinal and emotional factors which can be expressed in an item of vocabulary" and in fact equate it with the term *connotation*. Two words may be synonymous, may "have a similar or identical denotation but a different *connotation*", which means that "the emotional or other overtones attached to [...] [their] use may differ." (Palmer, 1976 qtd. in Gairns & Redman 1986: 18) To illustrate this, I would like to present the following striking example: if we compare the expressions "a single woman" and "a spinster", it is to be noticed that the latter carries "a

² For further examples of denotation cf. Hedge 2000: 112f and Ur 1991: 60

series of evaluative and emotional associations", while the first is neutral; however, they denote the same kind of person: "an unmarried adult female" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 18). Gairns and Redman (1986: 18) argue that there are "three main areas of connotation", namely: "Firstly, certain items intrinsically have a positive or negative connotation" (cf. the above example of *spinster* vs. *single woman*); secondly, there are "items which vary in affective meaning depending on the speaker's attitude or the situation" (cf. also Hedge 2000: 112). Connotations may differ due to an individual's or a certain group of people's attitudes towards a specific item or may be more generally agreed on, as it probably is the case with the following words: *superficial*, *silly*, *egotistic*, *mean*, *opportunistic*, *deceitful*, *dishonest*, *fraudulent*. While it may be claimed that at least most people have negative connotations regarding the above listed words, it may also be argued that adjectives such as *honest*, *sincere*, *frank*, *generous*, *nice*, *open-minded*, *open-hearted* carry positive connotations. Concerning the following words, however, the connotations may either be positive or negative depending on the attitudes of an individual or of a group of people or on the context in which they are used: *proud*, *passionate*, *insane*, *emotional*, *normal*, *fervent*, *God-fearing*, *devout*. The last example corresponds to the third of Gairns and Redman's (1986: 18f) main areas of connotations, namely to "*socio-cultural associations of lexical items*", since negative as well as positive connotations or associations with certain items or words often are culture-bound. Since speakers or writers may apply "associations of words [...] to influence the reader [or listener]", it is essential to also make language learners aware of the power that lies behind certain words in order to "help [them] to develop appropriate awareness of connotative meaning in the target language" (Hedge 2000: 112).

Finally, I would like to refer to the third aspect of meaning to be discussed in this section, namely the grammatical function of a word, which represents an important source of information as to a word's meaning and function. Scott Thornbury (2002: 15) states that neither knowing the form nor the meaning of a word ensures that one actually knows a word, since "part of knowing the meaning of [...] [a word] is knowing its grammatical function." Take, for example, the word *mean(s)*: only if we know its grammatical function, only if we know if *mean* is used as an adjective or as a verb or – if *means* is used as a noun or a verb in its third person singular form – do we know its meaning, which is either 'gemein', 'bedeuten' or 'Mittel'. It therefore is advisable to always indicate a word's grammatical function together with the word itself as is done in most dictionaries, which is possible, for example, by presenting a word within an appropriate context (e.g. example sentences, scenarios, etc.).

2.1.3 How to link form, meaning(s) and functions of a word

If we disregard onomatopoeic words for a moment, there is no obvious connection between a word's form and its meaning(s); thus, their linkage first has to be established, which can be done by means of various techniques and strategies. The written form of the adjective *blind*, for example, does not provide any indications regarding its denotative meaning, namely 'not able to see', nor concerning its function; therefore, a linkage between the word's spelling and its meaning has to be made by using, for instance, visual aids such as drawing or showing combined with example sentences or scenarios: a teacher, for instance, could try to elicit the meaning of *blind* from the learners by drawing a person who is walking with a stick and wearing an armband with the words *blind* on it, or by imitating a blind person walking with a stick and repeatedly utter the phrase *I'm blind. Please help me across the street!* It is more than likely that the learners will recognise the meaning as well as the function of *blind* and therefore connect the word's meaning with its written and spoken form, since these aspects have been presented together. Depending on the level of the learner, its other meanings and usages can be either co-introduced or presented at a later stage.

In the above example, the spoken and the written form are presented prior to the word's meaning but nevertheless very closely linked and without much time in-between. However, it is equally possible to introduce a word's meaning prior to its pronunciation and spelling. Thus, the learners could be asked to read a text in class and then either attempt to scan the text for the corresponding L2 word of German 'Affe'. Likewise it is possible to ask learners if they know what an L1 word means in English and to present the meaning of, for example, 'Affe' before its written and spoken form *monkey*.

Here, too, form and meaning are introduced rather simultaneously; it is also possible, however, to teach these aspects separately. A teacher could, for instance, ask the learners to read a text in class and to look up the meanings of the unknown words in the dictionary at home.

Generally speaking, I personally regard it as unadvisable to let elapse much time between the presentation of a word's meaning and its form and I prefer a rather simultaneous introduction, because this way it is possible for the mind to store form and meaning together. Thus, a close and strong link between form and meaning is provided and these aspects of a word therefore can be retained and retrieved together.

This assumption is as well supported by Nation (2001: 48), who stresses that "[t]he strength of the connection between the form and its meaning will determine how readily the learner can retrieve the meaning when seeing or hearing the word form, or retrieve the word form when wishing to express the meaning"; furthermore, he refers to Baddeley (1990 qtd. in Nation 2001: 48), who "suggests that each successful retrieval of the form or meaning

strengthens the link between the two" and concludes that "[i]t is thus very important that the learners not only see the form and meaning together initially, but have plenty of spaced repeated opportunities to make retrievals."

2.2 Organisation of the lexicon and its relevance to vocabulary teaching and learning: A word's relation to other words

As already indicated above, each word stands in various relations to other words and can by no means be looked at in isolation. This is, by the way, one reason why learners should not be presented with isolated word lists. In order to understand what a word means and how it is used, it is essential to take a closer look at it in several respects. In the following sub-chapters the various aspects a single lexical item can be related to are examined. Moreover, these sections at the same time refer to aspects of a word that can be used for its presentation or its connection to other words related to the word to be taught or learned.

2.2.1 Word classes

Words fulfil different functions in a sentence or a text. In section 2.1.2 I have already touched upon grammatical functions of words – here, I would like to present the various different word classes and their functions.

Thornbury (2002: 3f) lists "eight different **word classes**", which are: "nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, determiners." Whereas "nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs" are called "**content words** [...]" [since they] carry a high information load", words such as "prepositions, conjunctions, determiners and pronouns" are "**grammatical words** (or **function words**)" (Thornbury 2002: 4), because they "mainly contribute to the grammatical structure of the sentence" (Thornbury 2002: 3-4). Furthermore, it is to be stressed that the number of content words keeps changing all the time, since new concepts are introduced and added continuously, whereas the amount of function words remains the same (cf. Thornbury 2002: 4). Thornbury (2002: 3) states that "[t]he last time a pronoun was added to the language was in the early sixteenth century. (It was *them*.)"

Regarding the presentation, retention and accessibility of new lexis, it certainly has to be emphasised that classifications of words aid and facilitate the retention as well as the accessibility of words, which means that it is easier for the learners to retrieve words that have previously been classified in one way or another (cf. Haß et al. 2006: 116ff). Thus, Haß et. al. (2006: 117) state that it is presumed that "die [...] Ordnungskriterien sowohl bei der Speicherung als auch beim Abrufen von Wörtern eine besondere Rolle spielen könnten." The

criteria provided by Haß et. al., however, mostly correspond to those I am going to present in this chapter and therefore are not explicitly listed here.³

Subject pronouns, for example, can be stored together as one category, and therefore, if one of them is retrieved it is likely that others are triggered as well. Thus, I personally regard it as essential to present pronouns together and not in isolation from each other, since this would probably impair not only their storage as one unit but also their interdependency regarding their retrieval.

2.2.2 Word families

Put simply, word families are words that "share the same base or **root** (e.g. *look*) but take different endings: *looks, looking, looked*" (Thornbury 2002: 4); or, as Nation (2001: 8) puts it, "a word family consists of a headword, its inflected forms, and its closely related derived forms." Inflections are formed by means of so-called "add-ons (called **affixes**)", which are used "to make a verb past (**looked**), for example, or a noun plural" (**books**) (Thornbury 2002: 4). The next sub-chapter is concerned with word formation, therefore I am not going to talk about affixes and stems in detail now. What is important here, however, is the difference between *inflections* and *derivatives*: the above mentioned "different grammatical forms of a word are called **inflexions**", since "[a]dding affixes serves a grammatical purpose. [...] A word that results from the addition of an affix to a root, and which has a different meaning from the root, is called a **derivative**" (Thornbury 2002: 4). Norbert Schmitt (2000: 3) simply states that "[i]f the purpose of the affixes is grammatical, then the resulting word is called an *inflection*. [...] However, if the affixes change the word class of a stem, the result is a *derivative*." Thus, *reader, readable, reread, unreadable*, for instance, do not share one and the same meaning but are derivatives of the same stem, namely *read*. A word family, therefore can be said to include the "base word plus its inflexions and its most common derivatives" (Thornbury 2002: 4). The word family of the base word *read* therefore comprises *reads, reading, read, reader, readable, reread, unreadable*.

With regard to vocabulary teaching it is essential in this context to emphasise that "[r]esearch suggests that the mind groups these different forms of the same word together" (Thornbury 2002: 5). Thus, since "there [actually] is evidence that the mind groups the members of a word family together, [...] [we are given] a psychological justification for using word families as a unit for counting and teaching (Nagy et al. 1989)". On Haß et. al.'s list of criteria related to retention and accessibility of lexis, *word families* are ranked first (cf. Haß et al. 2006: 117). Though, their understanding of what a word family consists of seems to be more generous, since even *driving license* is included in the word family of *drive* (cf. Haß et al. 2006: 117).

³ Cf. For the detailed list of the criteria provided by Haß et. al. cf. Haß et. al. 2006: 117

2.2.3 Word formation: affixes, stems and compounding

Word formation involves either adding affixes to stems or forming compound words, which is called *compounding*. *Affix* is the super-ordinate term for *prefix* and *suffix*. Both prefixes and suffixes are morphemes and

are never words but always [merely] parts of words. Thus, *un-* is like *pre-* (*prefix*, *predetermine*, *prejudge*, *prearrange*), and *dis-* (*disallow*, *disobey*, *disapprove*, *dislike*), and *bi-* (*bipolar*, *bisexual*, *bivalved*); it occurs only before other morphemes. Such morphemes are called **prefixes**. [...] Other morphemes occur only as **suffixes**, after other morphemes. English examples of such morphemes are *-er* (as in *singer*, *performer*, *reader* [...]), *-ist* (in *typist*, *copyist*, *pianist*, [...] *linguist*) and *-ly* (as in *manly*, *bastardly*, *sickly*, *friendly* [...]), to mention only a few. (Fromkin & Rodman 1993: 43)

Even though affixes cannot occur on their own, they nevertheless have certain meanings attached to them; thus, for instance, the prefix *bi-* means *two*, like in the noun *bicycle*, which has two wheels or, for example, the suffix *-er*, which indicates that somebody does something, like in *teacher*, who is a person who teaches.⁴

The role of affixes with regard to vocabulary teaching becomes obvious if we consider that being familiar with the meanings of (common) English prefixes and suffixes may help L2 learners to infer the meanings of otherwise unknown words and moreover may facilitate retention and accessibility of certain (otherwise difficult) words. Thus, working with affixes and stems is meant to raise learners' language awareness. In this context I would like to refer to my own collection of English affixes taken from Ohanian (2002: 60ff) composed to work on with upper-intermediate to advanced learners and especially with learners with special needs.⁵

The second type of word formation is *compounding*, which describes the process of "combining [...] two or more independent words, as in the case of *second-hand*, *word processor*, *paperback*, and so on" (Thornbury 2002: 5). Such words are extremely common in every language (e.g. German: *Küchenmesser*, *Taschenlampe*, *Batterieladegerät*, *Buchregal*; Italian: *asciugacapelli* ("hair drier"), *asciugamani* ("towel")), are called *compound words* and belong to the category of *multiword units*.

Thornbury lists three more types of word formation, namely the process of *blending*, *conversion* and *clipping* (cf. Thornbury 2002: 5f). "Two words can be **blended** to form one new one (called a **blend**): breakfast + lunch = brunch, information + entertainment = infotainment. Or a word can be co-opted from one part of speech and used as another, a process called **conversion**" (Thornbury 2002: 5). Furthermore, Thornbury (2002: 5) states that "[t]ypically nouns are converted into verbs [...] as in *The shell impacted against a brick*

⁴ For a more detailed discussion of affixes cf. Ohanian 2002: 60ff and cf. Fromkin & Rodman 1993: 43ff

⁵ Cf. Teaching prefixes and suffixes (cf. Ohanian 2002: 60ff)

wall; *Let's **brunch*** tomorrow. But other parts of speech can be converted as well: *she **upped*** and *left* (preposition → verb); *a balloon flight is an absolute **must*** (verb → noun)."

In my view, a certain awareness of the above mentioned types of word formation helps the learners to understand how words are created and moreover certainly is of use when it comes to inferring unfamiliar words in texts and guessing unknown words by means of looking at the context in which these words appear.

2.2.4 Multi-word units (lexical chunks)

Schmitt (2000: 2) defines so-called multiword units (or lexical chunks) as being 'item[s] that functions as a single meaning unit, regardless of the number of words [...] [they] contain [...]'. In order to illustrate the above definition by means of an example, I would like to refer to Thornbury's (2002: 6) example sentence: "*I like looking for bits and pieces like old second-hand record players and doing them up to look like new.*" He then argues that "we could count *looking for, bits and pieces, record players, doing... up* and *to look* as single lexemes, along with *I, like, old, them*, etc." (Thornbury 2002: 6). Schmitt (2000: 99) names six common types of multiword units, which "include compound words, phrasal verbs, fixed phrases, idioms, proverbs, and lexical phrases."

In this respect, the implications on the teaching and learning of lexis are rather evident, since it becomes quite clear that it is essential for teachers and course book designers to make learners aware of the importance of studying whole lexical or multiword units, for example, by means of presenting verb phrases, noun phrases, verbs plus prepositions etc. (- as opposed to isolated words discussed in section 4.1.3.7).

2.2.5 Collocations⁶

The importance of collocations in a language is reflected by the huge amount of collocation dictionaries and articles on this topic that exist. The *Oxford collocations dictionary for students of English* (2002: vii), for example, in its introductory part defines collocation as "the way words combine in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing." Moreover, it is stressed that "[...] to a native speaker these combinations are highly predictable; to a learner they are anything but" (*Collocations dictionary* 2002: vii). In this context, Hedge (2000: 114) emphasises the "[s]yntagmatic relations [...] between words as they occur in sequence" and states that "[i]n the English language there are words which co-occur with high frequency", which are called *collocations*. Nation (2001: 56) argues that

[c]ollocations differ greatly in size (the number of words involved in the sequence), in type (function words collocating with content words (*look* with *at*), content words

⁶ For a detailed discussion of *collocations* cf. Nation 2001: 317ff

collocating with content words (*united* with *states*)), in closeness of collocates (*expressed* their own honest *opinion*), and in the possible range of collocates (*commit* with *murder, a crime, hara kiri, suicide ...*).

As we can see, the frequency with which nouns and adjectives (e.g. *a strong link, a heavy burden*), noun and verb collocations (e.g. *the evening wore on, a clash broke out*), verb and noun collocations (e.g. *to take quotes, to express optimism*) or noun and noun collocations in multiword units (e.g. *contract worker, population density*) co-occur, is a decisive feature of collocations (cf. Hedge 2000: 114). Although collocations are common elements in each language, they cannot simply be translated literally from one language into another, since the outcome in most cases would sound rather artificial to native speakers' ears. However, collocations "have varying degrees of exclusivity" (Schmitt 2000: 77), which is illustrated by both Schmitt (cf. Schmitt 2000: 76f) and Gehring (cf. Gehring 2010: 44f) by means of referring to the adjective *blond*, which "[...] occurs most exclusively with the word *hair* and a few other animate nouns like *woman* or *lady*. But it never occurs with words like *paint* or *wallpaper*, even though there is no reason semantically why they should not fit together" (Schmitt 2000: 77). Thus, it can be claimed that because "*blonde* has such an exclusive relationship with *hair*, they [...] collocate strongly" (Schmitt 2000: 77). On the other hand, an example of a weak collocation would be *nice*, which "commonly occurs with almost any noun [or verb] that one would want to associate with pleasantness" (Schmitt 2000: 77) (e.g. *a nice boy/girl/cake/book/, to feel/look/smell/seem nice*).

In "Pedagogical implications of the lexical approach" Lewis (1997: 256) adds another element to this issue by arguing that "some pairs or groups of words co-occur with very high frequency, depending perhaps on the text-type of the data" without providing any further explanations regarding these data.

Concerning the teaching and learning of collocations – or "word partnerships" (as Lewis calls them) – I strongly agree with the Lexical Approach, one of whose "essential elements [...] [is t]he recognition, generation and effective recording of collocations" (Lewis 1997: 257). As it is - or rather should be - the aim of each and every foreign language learner to reach a certain degree of authenticity, it is vital to make them familiar with the various collocations of the English language. In the ELT classroom, this may primarily take place through exposing them to authentic usage of the target language, for example by means of authentic dialogues as well as authentic reading texts such as newspaper articles or books.

2.2.6 Homonyms, homophones and homographs

According to McCarthy and O'Dell (2001: 42-43), who in *English Vocabulary in Use. Upper intermediate* dedicate a whole chapter to homonyms in order to make learners aware of their existence, state that "[h]omonyms can be subdivided into homographs and homophones. Homographs are words which are written in the same way but have different meanings and may be pronounced differently. [...] Homophones [,on the other hand,] are words with different meanings which are pronounced in the same way but are spelled differently." They offer many "examples of homographs with differing pronunciations [,such as:] I **read** in bed each night. I **read** War and Peace last year. [or:] The **wind** blew the tree down. **Wind** the rope round this tree." as well as "examples of homophones [...] [:] air/heir, wait/weight, weather/whether." (McCarthy & O'Dell 2001: 42f)

Hatch and Brown (1995: 49), however, provide slightly different definitions of the above mentioned terms, since according to them "[h]omonyms [are] [...] sometimes called *homographs* [...] [and] are variants that are spelled alike but which have no obvious commonality in meaning. The classic example is the word *bank*, which could mean a financial institution or the bank of a river or a tier or row of objects (such as a bank of seats at a baseball game)."

If we compare McCarthy and O'Dell's definition to the one provided by Hatch and Brown, it becomes obvious that they are quite diverging: while the first one designates the term *homonym* the super-ordinate term of *homograph* and *homophone*, the second one seems to put *homograph* and *homonym* on the same level, using the two terms interchangeably (cf. Hatch & Brown 1995: 49f; McCarthy & O'Dell 2001: 42f).

On the topic of *homonyms* Thornbury (2002: 8) states that

[w]ords that share the same form but have unrelated meanings are called **homonyms**. For historical reasons, English is rich in **homonyms**: *well, bat, shed, left, fair*, etc. [...] Another potential source of confusion are the many words in English that sound the same but are spelt differently: *horse* and *hoarse, meet* and *meat, tail* and *tale*, [...] These are called **homophones** (literally 'same sound'). There are also words that are pronounced differently but spelt the same: a **windy** day, but a long and **windy** road; a **live** concert, but where do you **live**? [...] These are called **homographs** (literally 'same writing')."

Considering Thornbury's definitions here as well, it can be noticed that again a difference is made between *homographs* and *homonyms*, but this time the latter is not described as being the super-ordinate term of *homophones* and *homographs*.

Teaching English as well as Italian to both teenage and adult learners has already made me aware of the learners' problems with distinguishing, for example, between *meet* and *meat, tail* and *tale, made* and *maid*, etc. when they are asked to write them down and primarily weaker learners often tend to mix up the different forms. The same, however, is true

of *homographs*, since learners often confuse the pronunciation of words that share one and the same spelling but are pronounced differently. Thus, I regard such language awareness-raising activities focussing on the English language itself that are provided in the first part of McCarthy and O'Dell's *English Vocabulary in Use* quite appropriate and immensely useful to learners of the English language (cf. McCarthy & O'Dell 2001: 4ff).

2.2.7 Polysemes

The term *polyseme* stands for "a single word form with several different but closely related meanings" (Gairns & Redman 1986:14). Thus, "[i]n English [...] we can talk about the 'head' of a person, the 'head' of a pin, or the 'head' of an organisation" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 14).

Laufer (1997: 26) in "The lexical plight in second language reading" addresses one of the major problems many language learners experience with polysemes:

It often happens that students know one meaning of a polyseme or a homonym and are reluctant to abandon it even when, in a particular context, its meaning is different. For example, *since* was interpreted as 'from the time when' though it meant 'because'; *abstract* as 'not concrete' instead of 'summary'; *state* as 'country' instead of 'situation'. The mistaken assumption of the learner in this case was that the familiar meaning was the *only* meaning.

However, even though learners may be familiar with the various meanings of a polyseme, "[t]o use [and to retrieve] the potentially vast amount of encyclopaedic knowledge in real time requires that it be organized and controlled in some way [...]" (Schmitt 2000: 28).

An experiment by Swinney (1979) showed that when subjects were exposed to *polysemous* words (more than one meaning sense), such as *bug*, both the insect meaning and the spy listening device meaning were brought up to the subconscious. Context seems to be what sets the parameters of what actually reaches conscious thought. Context works in two ways: it limits what encyclopaedic knowledge is finally activated, and it fills the gaps in our encyclopaedic knowledge for future use. (Schmitt 2000: 28)

Schmitt (2000: 28) here puts emphasis on the role of context by claiming that the various meanings of one and the same word are "brought up to the subconscious" but it is decided by the context in which the lexis occurs which meaning enters the realm of the conscious. In this respect, Schmitt's argumentation and the role of the context are reminiscent of psychoanalysis and the role of the censor that decides which things are allowed to enter a person's consciousness and which have to stay subconscious.

In my view, it is not possible to teach all the various meanings of polysemes to learners when they are first introduced to the form. Learner age and level are decisive factors here, since in many cases it would not be worth the effort or simply would not work to introduce, for instance, 12-year-olds to concepts that cannot yet be grasped by them.

Confusion would most likely be the main result. However, I regard it as essential to focus on the various meanings of a word with learners of a higher proficiency level and who are able to understand what the different senses are.

2.2.8 Hyponyms

The term *hyponym* indicates "a relationship whereby one word includes others within a hierarchy, so that we have superordinate words and subordinate words" (Hedge 2000: 116). To illustrate the nature of hyponyms by means of an example, one can say that *knife* and *scalpel*, *dagger*, *carving knife*, *pocket knife*, *bread knife* etc are in a hyponymous relationship in which *knife* is the superordinate term and *scalpel*, *dagger*, *carving knife* etc. are its subordinate terms (cf. Hedge 2000: 116). Or, as Ur (1991: 62) puts it: *hyponyms* are "items that serve as specific examples of a general concept; [thus,] *dog*, *lion*, *mouse* are hyponyms of *animal*", and "co-hyponyms or co-ordinates [are] other items that are the 'same kind of thing'; *red*, *blue*, *green* and *brown* are co-ordinates."

Regarding the teaching of lexis, hyponymous relationships can be used to illustrate the meanings of words and to introduce various subordinate terms together with a superordinate term so that the learner's mind is able to store all these related words together and to retrieve them together later on; in other words, if one of the subordinate terms is accessed, more related ones should be triggered as well without much conscious effort on the learner's part. Considering the above contemplations, related terms should be presented as such to the learners whenever it is possible – in fact, since the various units in course books are designed to focus on certain topics (or speech acts), hyponymous relationships are introduced to learners of English already at beginner levels. A chapter that focuses on animal names, for instance, introduces the superordinate term *animals* or even *beasts* together with the various types of animals such as *horse*, *cow*, *dog*, *pig*, etc. Visual representations of co-hyponyms together with their superordinate term can be very useful in this context.

2.2.9 Synonyms and Antonyms

Synonyms and antonyms represent two main categories by means of which lexis is introduced, recycled and tested in language classes, since by presenting similar or opposite meanings of a word, the mind is able to store them and later to retrieve them together.

Synonyms are "words that share a similar meaning" (Thornbury 2002: 9) but it is essential, however, to keep in mind that we nevertheless cannot use them interchangeably without altering the meaning of a sentence or a text to a certain extent. Thus, Gairns and Redman (1986: 15) emphasise that even though "[...] groups of words that share a general sense and so may be interchangeable in a limited number of contexts" do exist, these

individual synonymous words "[...] on closer inspection reveal conceptual differences"; in this context, collocations play an important role, since synonymous words may mean more or less the same but nevertheless cannot be collocated with the same words. However, in order to prevent learners of English from using unusual collocations, most dictionaries of synonyms (and antonyms), such as the *Oxford Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms*, include possible collocations and present the synonyms and antonyms in contextualised sentences and phrases and moreover indicate the register of the listed words, which is another distinctive feature of synonyms and antonyms. To illustrate this by means of an actual example I would like to refer to the entry one finds under the word *fat* in the above mentioned *Oxford Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms* (2007: 166):

fat adjective **1** *a fat man*: **obese**, overweight, plump, stout, chubby, portly, flabby, paunchy, pot-bellied, corpulent; informal tubby; Brit informal podgy.
2 *fat bacon*: **fatty**, greasy, oily. **3** *a fat book*: **thick**, big, chunky, substantial, long.
OPPOSITES thin, slim, lean.
noun **1** *whale fat*: **blubber**, fatty, tissue, adipose tissue, cellulite. **2** *eggs in sizzling fat*: **oil**, grease, lard, suet, butter, margarine.

This dictionary entry shows that synonyms have to be chosen carefully with regard to their possible collocates and to the register in which they are used: for example, one cannot call a *bacon pot-bellied** without evoking laughter; furthermore, the expression *podgy* is used in informal situations whereas *corpulent* or *overweight* are of a rather formal register. However, if one bears in mind the fact that "few (if indeed any) synonyms are synonymous in every respect [and that s]ome forms are better than others for a particular use in particular circumstances" (Hatch & Brown 1995: 19), synonyms as well as antonyms are an essential source of vocabulary work in general and of vocabulary teaching in particular. In order to enhance learners' vocabulary as well as their notions of style and register, I myself always recommend getting a dictionary of synonyms and antonyms and make them aware of the various possible words one can choose from in order "to avoid using the same word again and again when speaking or writing" (*Oxford dictionary of synonyms and antonyms* 2007: preface). Other reasons for the usage of this type of dictionary would be the wish to find "a more modern or more formal equivalent that would be better suited to [...] [one's] audience and purpose" and "to find out how [...] [one] can express something better" (*Oxford dictionary of synonyms and antonyms* 2007: preface).

Now I would like to briefly talk about antonyms, which can be defined as words which mean the opposite [...] [and w]e can usually identify the feature on which the two words contrast. For example, hot and cold refer to the poles of a temperature dimension; one is positive and the other is negative. Long and short refer to poles of a length dimension. [...] Thus, their meanings differ in terms of having or lacking qualities for a (distinguisher) semantic feature." (Hatch & Brown 1995: 20)

Opposites used in the teaching project are, for example: *dark* and *light*, *leave* and *stay*, *whisper* and *scream/shout*, *day* and *night*, *big* and *small*, *happy* and *sad*, etc. Although it is true that some of the antonyms are quite obvious examples, others can rather be referred to as "apparent opposites [...] [that] are really extreme points on graduated scales"; in this respect, "pairs like *big – small*, [...] *happy – unhappy*, and *long – short* are the opposite ends of scales" (Hatch & Brown 1995: 20)⁷.

Gairns and Redman (1986: 24) argue that antonyms can be subdivided into four main subcategories, namely "*complementarity, converseness, multiple taxonomy and gradable antonymy*". The first subcategory, "[c]omplementaries (also 'binary antonyms' or 'binary taxonomy') [...] are forms of antonyms which truly represent oppositeness of meaning. [...] [I]f one of the pair is applicable, then the other cannot be. They are said to be mutually exclusive: e.g. X is *male* Y is *female*" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 25) and "clear-cut" (Hedge 2000: 115). Converseness, on the other hand, "is a relationship where one term implies the other, as with *import* and *export*, *parent* and *child*, and *trainer* and *trainee*" (Hedge 2000: 115). Primarily "[f]amily and social relations provide many examples of converses, as do space and time relations" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 26).⁸

The third subcategory of antonyms Gairns and Redman (1986: 27) refer to is called "multiple incompatibles", or "multiple taxonomy": "[t]hese are sets of miniature semantic systems which are of interest to teachers and learners as they are easily memorable [...] Some of these are closed systems [...] while others are open systems [...]."

The seven days of the week, the names of the twelve months, the four seasons, etc. are examples of closed systems, while types of vehicles, flowers, tools, etc. are examples of open systems and at the same time are also "examples of superordinates and hyponyms. *Vehicles: car, bus, lorry, van, etc. Flowers: lily, daffodil, pansy, geranium, etc. Tools: screwdriver, hammer, saw, chisel, etc.*" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 28).

Gradable antonyms "(also 'gradable opposites', 'polar opposites' [...])" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 26) are the last subcategory and "a notoriously difficult area" (Hedge 2000: 115): here it "is possible to create a scale of items, for instance, *boiling, hot, warm, lukewarm, tepid, cool, cold, and icy (of water).*"

In order to further illustrate the problems learners – and teachers – may have with antonymy in general and gradable antonyms in particular, I would like to refer to an excellent example provided by Gairns and Redman (1986: 26f):

Sue's house is *big*.

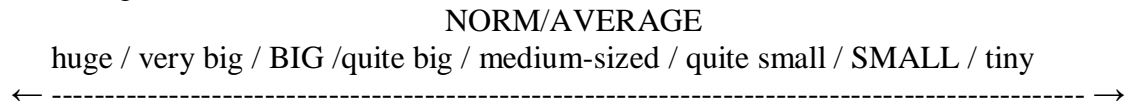
Mary's house is *small*.

Are 'big' and 'small' opposites? Most of us would use opposition to teach these two

⁷ For a more detailed discussion of synonyms and antonyms cf. Hatch & Brown 1995: 19ff

⁸ For further examples of converses cf. Gairns and Redman 1986: 25f

adjectives [Yes, I definitely use it!], but they are not opposites in the same way as 'male' and 'female' are. In the first place, Sue's house is 'relatively' big, compared with her old house, considering how many people live with her, in relation to her income and status; Mary's house may be 'relatively' small in the light of the same factors. In fact, Sue and Mary might live in identical houses next door to each other, but the sentences are obviously subjective and depend on the speaker's opinion. Secondly, 'big' and 'small' form part of a scale of values which will include some of the following:



A further problem regarding the usage of antonyms with language learners is the fact that "[w]ords have different opposites in different contexts", which becomes evident by looking at the following example provided by Hedge (2000: 116):

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| soft water | hard water |
| soft material | rough material |
| soft music | loud music |
| soft colour | bright colour |

The application of synonymous and antonymous pairs contributes a lot to learners' expansion and successful usage of vocabulary, and therefore - as can be seen in the empirical part of this thesis - a rather extensive usage of synonyms and antonyms is made throughout the entire vocabulary teaching project.

2.2.10 Lexical fields

Thornbury (2002: 10) describes "[w]ords that have [...] [a] kind of thematic relationship [...] [as] belong[ing] to the same **lexical field**." Considering that the units in course books nowadays are focussed on topics, lexical – or semantic – fields are useful devices for collecting various words of a specific topic. Moreover, by means of collecting topic-related words a certain connection between the individual words is established so that the learner's mind is likely to store them together; furthermore, the common storage of words belonging to the same lexical field should make it easier for learners to access and retrieve them as a whole.

Activities regarding topic-related words range from collecting semantically related items on the blackboard (brainstorming) to drawing word field diagrams of any shape. I personally appreciate the usage of diagrams and brainstorming activities with learners of any level and during the recycling or testing phase one can literally watch how one word keeps triggering other words from the same semantic field. As suggested by Hatch and Brown, the use of diagrams is especially recommendable in the case of teaching topics such as *family members* (cf. Hatch & Brown 1995: 33ff); moreover, the collection of lexis related to one

lexical or semantic field is the obvious thing to do with words that stand in a hyponymous relationship to each other: thus, one could take, for example, the word *birthday* as the superordinate term and ask the learners to find as many corresponding subordinate terms as possible (within a certain amount of time). The various words (e.g. *birthday cake, guests, birthday party, presents, surprise, etc.*) can either be collected on the blackboard or jotted down individually by each learner on a piece of paper. In order to maximise the number of words collected, learners may additionally consult a monolingual dictionary and then, by means of thinking of L1 words that belong to a certain word-field, translate the L1 words into English.

2.2.11 Style, register and varieties

By arguing that "[s]ome of the more amusing errors a learner can make in a foreign language arise from a lack of awareness of the appropriacy of items", Gairns and Redman (1986: 20) touch upon an essential area of vocabulary acquisition, namely style and register, and use "*style* in a very broad sense to include level of formality (i.e. slang, colloquial or informal, neutral, formal, frozen) as well as styles such as humorous, ironic, poetic, literary, etc." To illustrate this, they present the following example of synonymous terms for *children* indicating their different styles in brackets: "*children* (neutral), *offspring* (formal, sometimes humorous), *nippers* (colloquial, often humorous), *kids* (colloquial), *brats* (colloquial, derogatory)" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 21). Although all of the above listed words refer to the same persons, they cannot be used interchangeably and their usage very much depends on the circumstances and situations of spoken or written discourse.

Within the context of "Registerzugehörigkeit" Haß et al. (2006: 128) emphasise that "*slangy, casual, intimate, neutral, formal*" are "ganz entscheidende wichtige Informationen für unsere Schüler, die sich im Ausland durch zu elaborierte Redemittel lächerlich machen [...] oder aber durch unangemessenen *slang* negativ auffallen [können]." What is noticeable here, however, is the way the term register is used by Haß et al. and by Gairns and Redman: while the latter make a clear distinction between *style* and *register*, Haß et al. seem to use *register* to refer to both.

With regard to *registers*, Gairns and Redman (1986: 21) call these "varieties of language defined by their topic and context of use; the language of medicine, education, law, computers, etc. come into this category" and provide the following examples of varying registers: "e.g. 'minor' is the legal term for 'child' [;] 'insolvent' is the banking term for 'penniless' [;] 'cardiac arrest' is the medical term for 'heart attack'".

Thornbury (2002: 11), too, distinguishes between style and register and refers to register as being "a variety of the language as used in specific contexts, such as legal English,

academic English, or technical English" and adds that "[d]iscrepancies in style and register are as disconcerting as unusual collocations", while for him style of language is concerned with informal, formal, spoken, written, etc. usage of language (cf. Thornbury 2002: 11f).

Another term that is closely linked to *register* and *style* is *varieties*, which refers to the various varieties of English, such as American English, British English, or Australian English (cf. Thornbury 2002: 11f). Varieties of English are also indicated in dictionaries of English by abbreviations such as

| | |
|--------|-----------------------|
| AmE | American English |
| AustrE | Australian English |
| BrE | British English |
| CanE | Canadian English |
| CarE | Caribbean English |
| IndE | Indian English |
| IrE | Irish English |
| NZE | New Zealand English |
| PakE | Pakistani English |
| SAfrE | South African English |
| ScotE | Scottish English |

taken from the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1995: short forms and labels).

In order to make learners aware of the existence of different styles, registers and varieties of the English language, it probably is also useful to refer to the German correspondences, since each language does have variations in the above mentioned categories. Differences between American and British English are already presented to learners at a rather low level – thus, British and American English terms such as *lift* (BritE) vs. *elevator* (AmE), *caravan* (BritE) vs. *trailer* (AmE), *block of flats* (BritE) vs. *apartment house* (AmE), etc. as well as spelling variants such as *programme* (BritE) vs. *program* (AmE), *centre* (BritE) vs. *center* (AmE), etc. are already introduced to lower level learners (cf. Heindler et al. 2000: 45; Heindler et al. 1999: 14f).

3. The mental lexicon: Retention and accessibility

3.1 The mental lexicon

Foreign language learners accumulate a large quantity of lexis and – in the optimal case – are able to remember as well as to recall or retrieve the words that are stored in their brain. If the vocabulary were not structured in our minds in some way, prompt retrieval most likely would not be possible. As already indicated by its name, the mental lexicon can be defined as "the memory system in which knowledge of a vast number of words, accumulated in the course of time, has been stored" (Coady & Huckin 1997: 210). Gairns and Redman (1986: 87) emphasise the efficient organisation of the mental lexicon and the speed at which stored words are retrieved (cf. Gairns & Redman 1986: 87f). Studies show that "at a very basic level, there appears to be a phonological system, a system of meaning relations and a spelling system" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 88). Further studies in this area seem to prove that "semantically related items are 'stored together' [...] [and m]ost researchers [...] appear to agree that items are arranged in a series of associative networks"⁹ (Gairns & Redman 1986: 88). Taking into consideration these findings, there are various (interrelated) ways of storing vocabulary in the mental lexicon, for instance storage according to categories such as word families, lexical fields, synonyms and antonyms, or even according to sound patterns (homophones, etc.), etc.

Thus, when we try to retrieve one lexical item, other items – or even whole phrases – that have been stored together with this item in our mental lexicon are triggered as well. Because of the fact that our mind tends to group interrelated lexis together, teachers should try to facilitate the learners' acquisition of new lexis by offering connections to previously stored vocabulary items or by presenting new vocabulary within a certain context so that the various individual words do not have to be stored in isolation, which definitely would render retention as well as the later retrieval more difficult for the learners; our brain is organised by networking and we should try to facilitate memorisation and retrieval of vocabulary by providing the necessary networks (cf. Aitchison 1994: chapter 5).

Finally I would like to refer to two more factors given by Gairns and Redman (1986: 88) that influence storage, namely "*word frequency*" and "*recency of use*": regarding both terms, it actually is quite logical that words that are encountered more frequently and words that have been used more recently can be retrieved and accessed more easily than words that are of rather infrequent use and moreover have not been used recently. Nowadays course books are organised topic-wise and the lexis used for a specific topic (or a didactic unit) is introduced within this context. The topic-related new words are used frequently and recently (or, are recycled and

⁹ For a more detailed explanation of the studies mentioned here cf. Gairns & Redman 1986: 87ff

repeated) in the course of the unit and therefore it is rather easy for learners to remember and to retrieve these words while working with them and shortly afterwards. However, it often is the case that some words are forgotten subsequently, simply because the focus has shifted to other words related to another topic or didactic unit.

3.2 Long- and short-term memory

Much effort on both the teacher's and the learners' part is required to gradually expand the learners' vocabulary knowledge and – above all – to store it in the learner's long-term memory, "[t]he relatively permanent part of the memory system" (Hedge 2000: 410). Thus, in this context it is also essential to look at the way long-term as well as short-term memory work, which is going to be this sub-chapter's focus.

James E. Zull (2002: 78) in *The Art of Changing the Brain* examines the process of teaching and learning from a biological angle and states that

[p]art of having a good memory is to recall things long after they happened. But there is also value in remembering things only for a short time. We may need information for just an instant to solve a problem, but then it is actually an advantage to *forget* that information and briefly replace it with something else that is important for solving the problem. This is using memory to accomplish a task rather than as an information source, and this type of memory is called *working memory*, or *short-term memory*. In a way, it is more about forgetting than about remembering, since we need to empty the short-term memory space in order to put something else in there.

Thus, the "work [for the short-term memory] begins with remembering a few things for a short time, for seconds to minutes or sometimes a few hours. The purpose of remembering [in this context] is to [...] develop [...] an idea or [to] [...] [solve] a problem. This is the working part" (Zull 2002: 180). Brand and Markowitsch (2009: 70) limit the time-span for remembering things in short-term memory even more, namely from forty seconds up to a few minutes. Another characteristic feature of short-term memory concerns its limitations regarding its "Aufnahmekapazität: zeitgleich können ca. sieben (+/- zwei) Einheiten gehalten werden; nach Ansicht anderer Autoren sogar nur vier Einheiten" (Cowan 2001 qtd. in Brand & Markowitsch 2009: 70). We use our short-term memory, for instance, when we want to remember the shopping list until the shopping has been done (cf. Zull 2002: 180ff). Interestingly enough, "[s]hort-term memory capacity is one of the best predictors of both eventual vocabulary and grammar achievement." (Ellis, N.C. 1996 qtd. in Schmitt 2000: 129).

The tasks of short-term and of long-term memory differ as well. The question, therefore, is how our systems of remembering things for just an instance and for a long period of time work. Zull (2002: 181) argues that "working memory and long-term memory involve different pathways in the brain [...] [and that i]t is possible to hold quite a bit of information for a while, if we work hard and pay attention to it, but that information can disappear [...] never find[ing] its

way into long-term memory." The example scenario he then provides will certainly be well-known to everybody: "In school, cramming for exams is the classic example of this breakdown between working and long-term memory" (Zull 2002: 181). If, however, certain topics for a maths test, for instance, are successfully remembered from one day to the next, this can be called an achievement of long-term memory (cf. Brand & Markowitsch 2009: 70).

Long-term memory - unlike short-term memory – is practically unlimited regarding both time and capacity (cf. Brand & Markowitsch 2009: 71). On the other hand, it may be the case that certain things are directly stored in long-term memory, for example, if strong emotions are involved (cf. Zull 2002: 70ff, 181). The connection between memory (or retention) and emotions will be discussed in a separate section, however.

The aim of "vocabulary learning is to transfer the lexical information from the short-term memory, where it resides during the process of manipulating language, to the more permanent long-term memory" (Schmitt 2000: 131). Brand and Markowitsch (2009: 70) describe this process (that by no means is passive) by emphasising that information has to be bestowed with attention, more deeply processed and/or connected with previously stored information in order to get into long-term memory (cf. Brand & Markowitsch 2009: 70).

In order to describe the process that is required for information to be committed to long-term memory I would like to provide a brief excerpt from Brand and Markowitsch's (2009: 72f) model of memory processing:

Zuerst werden Reize bezüglich ihrer Bedeutung für das Individuum gefiltert; wichtige Reize werden rasend schnell und multipel von verschiedenen Hirnregionen verarbeitet, unwichtige Information gelangt erst gar nicht zu den Gedächtnis verarbeitenden Hauptstrukturen des Gehirns. [...] Inhalte, die mit Aufmerksamkeit bedacht werden, können eingespeichert werden. Als Prozess der Einspeicherung versteht man z.B. die Bildung von Assoziationen zwischen den zu lernenden Reizen und Inhalten des Langzeitgedächtnisses. [...] Auf die Einspeicherung [...] folgt die Konsolidierung, d.h. Festigung. Die Assoziationen zwischen dem Lernmaterial und bestehenden Gedächtniseinheiten werden stabilisiert, was eine längere Abspeicherung wahrscheinlicher macht. Sind Informationen eingespeichert und konsolidiert, sind sie im Langzeitgedächtnis abgelegt. Abgespeicherte Inhalte können grundsätzlich erinnert, also abgerufen werden (Prozess des Abrufs gelernter Informationen).

This model of how long-term memory works is crucial regarding the understanding of how efficient memorisation of lexis works and has vital implications on teaching strategies and techniques. Thus, I am now going to briefly sum up and highlight the points relevant to the teaching of vocabulary (cf. Brand & Markowitsch 2009: 73). The process of storing new information refers, for instance, to connecting the new stimuli and information, respectively, with the ones already stored in long-term memory; therefore, it is obvious that the storage – as well as the retrieval at a later stage – can be facilitated by strategies such as a structured organisation of complex materials. In the case of isolated words, for example, categories according to content- or

phonemic-related similarities or differences may be helpful. Moreover, the names of these groupings are extremely relevant for a successful retrieval of these words at a later stage. Thus, the teacher should see to a clearly structured presentation of the lexis, provide a range of mnemonic devices learners can choose from and furthermore motivate learners to develop such structural clues on their own.

After the storage phase, consolidation takes place; now, associations between new and previously stored information are consolidated and stabilised so that long-term storage becomes more likely. However, experts do not agree on the duration of the consolidation phase, which is claimed to last either a few hours or even months and years. If information finally is successfully consolidated, it is possible to retrieve it. According to Brand and Markowitsch (2009: 73ff) several types of retrieval do exist. The first type mentioned by Brand and Markowitsch (2009: 73f) is retrieval without any cues ("der freie Abruf"), which is the most difficult one considering that no external cues are available to facilitate retrieval of and access to the word in question; the second type concerns retrieval that is facilitated by means of external (visual or verbal) cues or cues to which the learner has already been introduced during the presentation stage of lexis and which therefore should have been internalised and applied by the learner independently. Learners may, for example, remember all the words within the context of a certain lexical field worked with earlier in the learning process. A further strategy of retrieval would be the usage of so-called "Eselsbrücken" ('mnemonic aids') applied during the consolidation phase of a certain word (Brand & Markowitsch 2009: 73). Furthermore, Brand and Markowitsch (2009: 73f) emphasise that the usefulness of mnemonic cues "hängt ab von der Komplexität des zu erinnernden Inhalts, dem Alter der Erinnerung und von der Häufigkeit des vorherigen Abrufens der Information", which is quite logical, since words that are not retrieved or accessed on a regular basis are prone to be forgotten or replaced by other – or 'newer' – words that are more frequently retrieved. In this respect, the importance of regular recycling of new vocabulary and of its repeated retrieval in order to 'guarantee' retention becomes obvious, since each retrieval of a certain word strengthens its consolidation and the more often a word is retrieved and accessed, the more likely is it that it can be recalled and retrieved by learners when required (cf. Brand and Markowitsch 2009: 73f):

[...] eine gewisse Erinnerungsarbeit [ist] nötig, um sich schlicht und einfach an die Existenz und die äußere Form eines Lexems erinnern zu können, und das verlangt in aller Regel wiederholendes Lernen, denn das einmalige Hören oder Lesen einer Vokabel garantiert nicht, daß (sic) sie behalten werden. Das weist auf den Anteil hin, den die Häufigkeit der Begegnung mit einer Vokabel an ihrem Behalten hat. (Multhaup 1995: 136)

The reason for this rather detailed account of how new information is stored in and retrieved from long-term memory together with strategies that enhance these processes is that this knowledge is particularly intertwined with the principles according to which the case study presented in the

empirical part of this thesis was carried out (cf. section 5) and actually is the basis on which I the corresponding assumptions or principles are founded. In order to demonstrate the significance of the actual usage of various vocabulary presentation techniques and of the role of recycling of newly acquired lexis (repetition) regarding memorisation (retention) as well as retrieval of new lexis, I recorded the effects the various techniques and strategies can have on the learning progress of a learner with special needs. I am going to refer to this crucial issue again later on in this thesis

3.3 Theories of forgetting

Even though memorising and forgetting seem to be opposite pairs, they are closely related to each other and represent different poles on one and the same continuum. Forgetting and memorising are interdependent, since, on the one hand, without the process of memorising forgetting could not take place and, on the other hand, memorised things are also prone to being forgotten. The process of forgetting, however, is completely natural within every learning progress.

I have already talked about the importance of forgetting with regard to short-term memory; now I am going to talk about various theories on and ways of forgetting but not about possible strategies to prevent or to minimise it, since these have already been focussed on above (cf. sections 3.1 and 3.2) and will be focussed on later on in sections 3.4 and 3.6, which are concerned with the immediate implications the theories of forgetting have on teaching.

This subchapter on forgetting, however, is equally relevant to the principles my teaching project is based on as the one on short-term and long-term memory above, since it includes specific findings and theories that form the basis of the assumptions on which the teaching project is based.

In spite of the "organisational networks in the memory", we all are familiar with the phenomenon of having forgotten certain things (or L2 lexis) that "we thought [...] [were] well established in our long-term memory" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 89). Thus, the question arises why we forget.

The so-called "*decay theory*" holds that lexical items have to be recycled on a regular basis since otherwise they will be forgotten and "gradually fade in the memory and ultimately disappear" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 89). In this respect, the decay theory supports my Principle 3 (cf. 5.1). The phenomenon of forgetting words that actually once were well known to us because of lack of usage is called *attrition* (cf. Schmitt 2000: 129f).

The second theory of forgetting listed by Gairns and Redman (1986: 89) is called "*cue-dependent forgetting*" and is opposed to the first one, since here it is assumed that "information does in fact persist in the memory but we may be unable to recall it. In other words, the failure is

one of retrieval rather than storage." The *cue-dependent forgetting theory* is backed up by various experiments in which subjects first had to try to recall previously learned vocabulary without any cues and then with the help of certain retrieval cues, and the "experiments showed that recall was considerably strengthened by appropriate retrieval cues, thus suggesting that the information was not permanently lost but only 'misaid'" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 89)¹⁰.

Even though the *decay theory* and *cue-dependent forgetting* are in opposition regarding the above mentioned diverging views on forgetting, the latter as well appears to be supporting Principle 3 (cf. 5.1) of my teaching project, since my assumption runs that recycling of newly acquired lexis is essential to both the retention and the accessibility of a word and that – if regular recycling and practice does not take place – the new vocabulary will not be memorised or stored. Moreover, *cue-dependent forgetting* supplies further evidence of the importance of providing learners with different types of cues – already during the presentation phase of the lexis – in order to facilitate the retention as well as the retrieval of newly acquired words; thus, this claim corresponds to the assumption my Principle 1 is based on (cf. 5.1). Additionally, the above described experiments correspond to the ones I have carried out within my own vocabulary teaching project, because whenever vocabulary testing took place, the learner first had to fill in as many lexical items as she could remember on her own and subsequently I tried to elicit the still missing ones from her by means of appropriate retrieval cues. Interestingly enough, the results of my project also support the theory of *cue-dependent forgetting*.

Since each individual learning process is followed by the so-called '*post-mentalen Erregungen*' in our brain, which are crucial for storage and consolidation, it is argued that "any significant mental activity undertaken before or after periods of learning can also account for poor learning and retention. The activities undertaken prior to learning may have a detrimental effect on our ability to absorb new input, while activities undertaken after periods of learning can interfere with the effective consolidation and retention of new input" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 89f).

Regarding the pace at which we forget and the amount of what we forget I have to say that I have come across two diverging but similarly formulated claims by Thornbury and by Gairns and Redman. Gairns and Redman (1986: 90) state that "it is generally believed that of the information we forget, eighty per cent is lost within twenty-four hours of initial learning.", whereas Thornbury (2002: 26) claims that "[i]t has been estimated that up to 80 per cent of material is lost within 24 hours of initial learning, but that then the rate of forgetting levels out." In my view, these two statements have two different messages, since Thornbury's formulation does not include the phrase "of the information we forget", which occurs in Gairns and Redman's formulation. Actually, these five words are of huge importance and make a difference, since they

¹⁰ For a more detailed explanation of the experiments cf. Gairns & Redman 1986: 89

indicate two completely dissimilar amounts of forgetting: while Thornbury's message is that we forget eighty per cent of all the things we learn within twenty-four hours (cf. Thornbury 2002: 26), Gairns and Redman state that from the one hundred per cent of what we forget eighty per cent are forgotten within twenty four hours after the learning process (cf. Gairns & Redman 1986: 90). Schmitt (2000: 130), too, maintains that experiments show that "when learning new information, most forgetting occurs soon after the end of the learning session. After the major loss, the rate of forgetting decreases." In this context, I would like to refer to Schmitt's (2000: 131) illustrations¹¹ of both the "typical pattern of forgetting" and the "pattern of forgetting with expanded rehearsal" (cf. page 29 of this thesis for figure 1), which clearly show the necessity of recycling that takes place shortly after new vocabulary is presented to learners or learned. Schmitt's (2000: 130) concept of "expanded rehearsal" largely corresponds to Peter Russell's "revision schedule" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 86) presented in 3.6 below.

It can be noticed from all the above mentioned assumptions that forgetting is fast first and then occurs at a slower pace. Once again, these results highlight the importance of recycling and practice of newly acquired lexis, since without these follow-up activities the mere presentation of new lexical items is useless because they will soon be forgotten.

Another interesting claim is made by Schmitt (2000: 129) who states that research shows that "most of the forgetting occurred with words that were only known receptively; productive words were much less prone to forgetting." This suggestion illustrates once again the importance to decide whether lexical items that are to be presented to learners have to be known actively or merely passively and to accordingly select the corresponding recycling activities.

¹¹ For Schmitt's illustrations of the "Typical pattern of forgetting" and the "Pattern of forgetting with expanded rehearsal" cf. figure 1 on page 29 of this thesis or Schmitt 2000: 131.

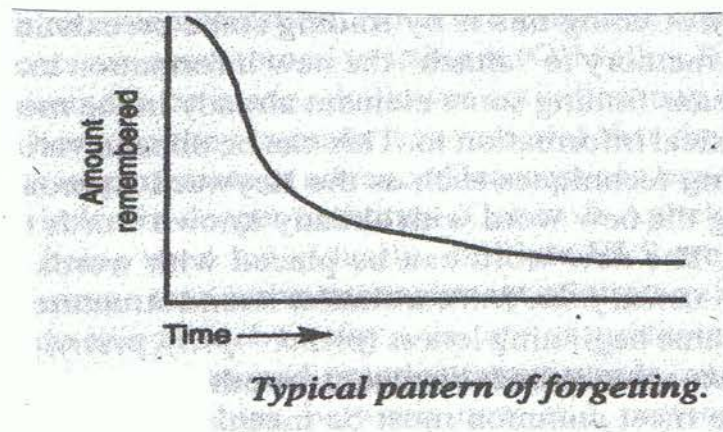
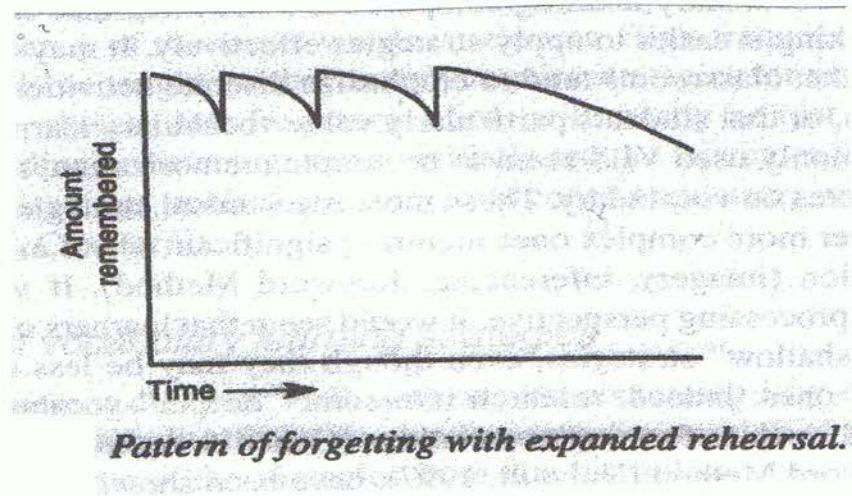


Figure 1 From: Schmitt, Norbert. 2000. *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: CUP. 131.

3.4 Enhancement of retention

This subchapter is concerned with ways of enhancing learners' retention of new vocabulary that are important with regard to the teaching project presented in the empirical part of this thesis. The various techniques and strategies of both enhancement and retention, however, are going to be discussed separately.

3.4.1 Enhancement of retention: presenting, retrieving, eliciting, repeating and recycling

Already during the presentation of new vocabulary it is essential to put emphasis on the new words to be learned. How this is done to a large extent depends on the source by means of which the learners are to encounter the new lexis (e.g. form prior to meaning, meaning prior to form, form and meaning together, written prior to spoken form, spoken prior to written form, etc.¹²); the vital thing, however, is *that* it is done, since by paying attention to a certain lexical item the teacher signals its importance. Nation (2001: 63) defines "noticing" as "[t]he first process encouraging learning [...]" and argues that "learners need to notice the word, and be aware of it as a useful language item [...]" Moreover, learners should feel a certain need for a lexical item or be eager to get to know a word, and they should realise that "the word fills a gap in their knowledge of the language (Schmidt & Frota, 1986; Ellis, R.1990 qtd in Nation 2001: 63)." Besides factors such as intrinsic or extrinsic motivation (that will be discussed later on in this chapter), to a large extent it depends on the teacher to present new lexis in a way that contributes to retention and that helps learners to store and to retrieve it. Even though pre-teaching of important words that will come up in a text to be read, for instance, may often be time-consuming, it is worth the effort on both the teacher's as well as on the learners' part if it is done efficiently and in a way that aims at enhancing retention and that helps learners to commit the new vocabulary to long-term memory. (The various techniques of presentation will be discussed later on.) This implies, however, that teachers should be familiar with how long-term and short-term memory work, with the relations of words to other words, with the various strategies that can be used for presentation and with the effects these may have, etc. and at the same time makes obvious the importance of these aspects of language (discussed in this thesis) to language teaching. Besides the various techniques that can be applied for vocabulary presentation, the role of mnemonic devices is another important aspect in this context. The prompts – or cues – that are used by the teacher during the presentation phase – for example, in order to lead the learners to the correct meaning of words – can be used for later elicitations of these words. New vocabulary may either be introduced by means of a more teacher-centred or learner-centred strategy – what is crucial to both, however, is that the learners should be involved

¹² For a more detailed discussion of presentation of form cf. section 2.1.1 in this thesis

into the process of presentation, since the personal effort put into each and every learning process is another vital factor contributing to retention. (The different strategies of learner involvement will be discussed later on.) The central message here is that teachers should spend time on contemplating *how* they are going to present *which* lexis to the learners in order to reach *which* didactic objectives so that already during the presentation phase the foundations for retention are laid.

Finally, I would like to refer to some further aspects taken from neurological research on learning that should be considered during the presentation of new lexis in order to enhance retention (cf. Brand & Markowitsch 2009: 69ff). First, it is essential to ensure that the learners' attention is focussed on the relevant materials to be acquired. In the context of vocabulary presentation, the teacher, for instance, may decide to pre-teach a selection of words essential for the topic that is going to be worked on or for the understanding of the text that is going to be read. Moreover, in order to enable the learners to recognise the essence of a certain didactic unit or topic, the teacher should give them a brief overview of the materials to be learned – Brand and Markowitsch (2009: 81) call this "[p]riming" and state that this "unbewusste Verarbeitung [...] [führt später] zu einer besseren Wiedererkennungslleistung [...]". Moreover, it is argued that "Überblick und Vorstellung der Struktur der Lerninheit [fungieren] als externe Einspeicherungshilfe im Sinne einer Organisation der Lerninhalte. Diese Organisationselemente können zudem beim späteren Abruf als Hinweisreize genutzt werden" (Brand & Markowitsch 2009: 81). Finally, it is emphasised that when presenting new input teachers should try to make references to and link it with already known materials or topics, which favours long-term storage as well as better accessibility (cf. Brand & Markowitsch 2009: 82f).

As already mentioned above, the presentation of vocabulary is strongly linked with elicitation or retrieval, since cues or mnemonic devices applied during the presentation phase can be used in order to elicit – or to trigger – the corresponding words during the repetition and production phase. As already argued above in the subchapter on long-term and short-term memory as well as in the one on theories of forgetting, the frequency at which recall, repetition and recycling of words take place are decisive for retention and accessibility.

The retention of newly acquired words to a large extent depends on the attention dedicated to them, since if words are merely presented without further recalls and follow-up activities during which learners have to work with them, the majority of them will be forgotten immediately. Nation (2001: 67) refers to retrieval as being "the second major process that may lead to a word being remembered [...]" (Baddely, 1990: 156 qtd. in Nation 2001: 67) and argues that if the presentation of a certain word is followed by retrieval, "[...] then the memory of that word will be strengthened." Nation's assumptions are supported by the theories on long-term and short-term memory, by the theories on forgetting presented in this thesis as well as by actual research on

teaching and learning. In order to illustrate the nature of retrieval I would like to once again refer to Nation (2001: 67) who describes retrieval as being either "[...] receptive or productive. Receptive retrieval involves perceiving the form and having to retrieve its meaning when the word is met in listening or reading [...], [whereas p]roductive retrieval involves wishing to communicate the meaning of the word and having to retrieve its spoken or written form as in speaking or writing." However, "[r]etrieval does not occur if the form and its meaning are presented simultaneously to the learner" (Nation 2001: 67). The reason for retrieval being so crucial to the retention of newly acquired words lies in the nature of how our brain works, and it is assumed that "each retrieval of a word strengthens the path linking form and meaning and makes subsequent retrievals easier (Baddely, 1990 qtd. in: Nation 2001: 67)" or, in other words, "'oil the path' for future recalls (Thornbury 2002: 24)". Actually, words should be retrieved repeatedly without letting go by much time between the various encounters with the words – thus, a carefully and efficiently structured spacing of encounters is crucial. The term *spacing* in this respect refers to the distribution of "memory work across a period of time" rather than "mass[ing] it together in a single block (Thornbury 2002: 24)" and "[e]ach time learners rehearse a word, they should try to revive as many previously formed associations as possible (Coady & Huckin 1997: 219)". Within the context of repetition of newly acquired vocabulary, Nation (2001: 68) introduces the term "creative or generative use" and states that "[g]enerative processing occurs when previously met words are subsequently met or used in ways that differ from the previous meeting with the words [...] [,since] new meeting with the word forces learners to reconceptualise their knowledge of that word." If learners encounter a word only within one single context, they may not be able to make sense of it or apply it in different contexts.

3.4.2 Enhancement of retention: active learner involvement: personal effort and depth of processing

Another factor enhancing retention concerns the degree of personal effort put into a word, or, the depth of processing, which means that "the more one manipulates, thinks about, and uses mental information, the more likely it is that one will retain that information (*depth [levels] of processing hypothesis*)" (Schmitt 2000: 121). Depth of processing is essential to vocabulary learning in general and has important implications on the vocabulary presentation as well as on the repetition process. Thus it can be argued that teachers should ensure that learners have to 'use their brain' during vocabulary work instead of being mere passive recipients (cf. sections 3.1.4 and 3.1.5 for active learner involvement strategies). It definitely makes a difference if learners put personal effort into a certain word (e.g. try to infer its meaning from the context, use their knowledge of L2 to arrive at a word's meaning or form, split up words, etc.), since this way it will be easier for them to access and to retrieve the word in question. On the other hand, if teachers

provide learners with ready-made vocabulary lists so that learners do not have to put any effort into the meaning-searching process or into form-related questions, studying as well as committing the vocabulary to long-term memory will be more demanding and difficult for them, since there are no cues for them to hold on to or to facilitate retention and/or retrieval of these words. In this context, Gairns and Redman (1986: 90) put emphasis on the importance of "meaningful tasks" that "enable them to be more self-reliant", since they "require learners to analyse and process language more deeply, which helps them to commit information to long-term memory."

Since one of the principles that the teaching project is based on (cf. Principle 2 in section 5.1) is concerned with the assumption that retention of vocabulary is enhanced by putting personal effort into the words to be learned, these contemplations are crucial for this thesis and will be looked at more closely later on in the empirical part. However, to illustrate the impact meaningful activities and deep processing have on retention I would like to refer to a related experiment described by Wilson and Bransford (Bransford 1979 qtd. in Gairns & Redman 1986: 90f) in which

three different groups of subjects were used. The first group were given a list of thirty words and told that they would be tested on their ability to recall the words. The second group were given the same list of words and told to rate each word according to its pleasantness or unpleasantness; they were *not* told that they would be tested on their ability to recall the words. The third group were given the list and asked to decide whether the items on the list would be important or unimportant if they were stranded on a desert island. They too were *not* told that they would be tested on these items. The result of the test showed a similar degree of recall between groups one and two, while group three recorded the highest degree of recall.

This experiment is of particular interest regarding the fact that in the vocabulary teaching project (presented in section 5 of this thesis) similar procedures were used with one and the same learner. The findings, however, are going to be presented in the empirical part later on.

The results of this experiment as well as the above related assumptions let us arrive at two major conclusions, namely that firstly the mere intention to study new vocabulary does not guarantee retention and secondly that retention of new lexis is facilitated and enhanced by deep processing and moreover by some kind of classification or category that unifies the individual words (cf. Gairns & Redman 1986: 91). Considering the positive impact depth of processing and personal effort may have on any vocabulary learning process, it should as well play an essential role in ELT and teachers should aim at actively involving learners into the meaning-searching process.

3.4.3 Enhancement of retention: motivation

Besides depth of processing, motivation is another significant aspect that enhances – albeit only indirectly – learners' retention of new lexis. Curiosity and thirst for knowledge are crucial factors regarding each individual learning process and largely influence the rate of efficiency and the rate at which learning takes place.

In order to intrinsically motivate learners to study English, they need concrete reasons (e.g. travelling, understanding lyrics from their favourite pop groups or internet sites, etc.) for using the English language as well as the awareness that vocabulary is required to communicate successfully in the foreign language. An appropriate choice of topics learners are genuinely interested in is another factor maximising motivation. Such realisations lead to what is called *intrinsic motivation*, which differs from the so-called *extrinsic motivation*, which comes from the 'outside' (e.g. learners study to please parents, teachers, to pass an exam, etc.). Ur (1991: 280) defines *intrinsic motivation* as "the generalized desire to invest effort in the learning for its own sake" and states that it is "largely rooted in the previous attitudes of the learners: whether they see the learning as worthwhile, whether they like the language and its cultural, political and ethnic associations"; *extrinsic motivation*, on the other hand, is described as having its source in the "influence of some kind of external incentive, as distinct from the wish to learn for its own sake or interest in tasks" (Ur 1991: 277).

Haß et al. (2006: 186) differentiate between the so-called "operationellen Motivation (auch Primärmotivation genannt)" and the "funktionellen Motivation." For Haß et al. (2006: 186) *operational motivation* is characterised by the fun learners experience through foreign language acquisition, while *functional motivation* contains rather practical considerations and moreover is divided into four subcategories, namely "intellektuelle Motivation", "instrumentelle Motivation", "integrative Motivation" and "emanzipatorische Motivation". According to Haß et al. (2006: 187) "intellektuelle Motivation ("intellectual motivation")" is concerned with "der Bereitwilligkeit der Lernenden, Regularitäten in der Grammatik oder Wortbildung zu finden, Sätze analytisch zu betrachten, etc." The second and third subtypes Haß et al. (2006: 187) refer to are the "instrumentelle Motivation ("instrumental motivation")", which is characterised by the "Erwartung, mit Fremdsprachenkenntnissen erfolgreicher zu sein (Englisch im Beruf, für akademische Zwecke, etc.)" and the "integrative Motivation ("integrative motivation")", which takes place if the learner wants to become an integral part of the culture in which the target language is spoken - considering the reasons for studying the target language, these two types of motivation are closely linked with what has been called intrinsic motivation above (cf. Haß et al. 2006: 187). The last subtype of functional motivation listed by Haß et al. (2006: 187) is "emanzipatorische Motivation ("emancipatory motivation")", which is said to be developed by means of the "individuelle Wertschätzung der eigenen Fähigkeiten und Kompetenzen [...]" and

which is characterised by so-called "Ich kann" messages that are, by the way, also incorporated in the GERS 'Gemeinsamer Europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen').

Dörnyei (2003: 10) refers to Schumann, who investigated L2 motivation "from a neurobiological point of view" and consequently presented a theory of motivation whose

key constituent [...] is *stimulus appraisal*, which occurs in the brain along five dimensions: *novelty* (degree of unexpectedness/familiarity), *pleasantness* (attractiveness), *goal/need significance* (whether the stimulus is instrumental in satisfying needs or achieving goals), *coping potential* (whether the individual expects to be able to cope with the event), and *self- and social image* (whether the event is compatible with social norms and the individual's self-concept).

To sum up, it can be said that motivation is a major feature of success in language learning and should not be underestimated by teachers, who may, for instance, make sure that learners recognise the importance of speaking a foreign language as well as enable learners to study the language in question by means of meaningful and interesting tasks.

3.5 Difficulties concerning retention of lexis

The following sections are concerned with factors that are likely to 'disturb' or inhibit retention of new words and that are common sources of mistakes, since by identifying these 'troublemakers' teachers may react and counteract more quickly and effectively.

3.5.1 Factors that render a word difficult to learn and to remember

There are words that we tend to learn and retain better and with less effort than others, and there are a number of reasons for this. Thornbury (2002: 27) argues that "[e]asiest of all are those that are more or less identical, both in meaning and in form, to their L1 equivalents." Concluding from my own learning experience, however, I may add a further category of words to Thornbury's (2002: 27) "easiest of all" words, namely words that are similar – again, in both form and meaning – to words in any other foreign language we have studied, which in my case would be Latin, Italian and French. When teaching I often make cross-references to Latin (or even Italian) in order to try to facilitate retention for those learners who also speak these additional languages.

However, not all English words correspond to similarly sounding or spelt words in other languages – words that look or sound like words in another language but that do not share the same meaning are called 'false friends' and make vocabulary learning even harder.

Following Thornbury I would like to discuss further elements of lexis that tend to render vocabulary learning and retention extremely difficult and that impede the learning progress (cf. Thornbury 2002: 27ff). The first inhibiting factor is *pronunciation* and "[r]esearch shows that words that are difficult to pronounce are more difficult to learn"; learners particularly struggle

with words that "contain sounds that are unfamiliar [...] [or with] words with clusters of consonants, such as *strength* or *crisps* or *breakfast* [...]" (Thornbury 2002: 27). Further difficult words in this respect would be some cardinal and ordinal numbers (e.g. *thirteen*, *twentieth*, *sixteenth*, etc.), irregular past tense forms (e.g. *thought*, *taught*, *bought*, etc) and words with generally unusual pronunciations, such as *clothes* or *comfortable*.

Not only the correct pronunciation but also the correct *spelling* of certain words may be difficult to remember, and irregularities or "[s]ound-spelling mismatches [...]" can contribute to a word's difficulty" (Thornbury 2002: 27). Thus, learners have to put more time and effort into retaining words whose spelling and pronunciation are not regular or obviously do not match (e.g. *yacht*, *Worcester*, *foreigner*, etc.).

Interestingly enough, "[l]ong [or complex] words seem to be no more difficult to learn than short ones [...]", although on a surface level it may appear to us that the contrary is true – however, Thornbury (2002: 27) argues that the assumption that *long words* are more difficult to retain simply is a non sequitur, since the reason why learners tend to struggle with especially long and complex words is not the words' length or complexity per se, but is a direct result of the lack of encounters with these words: "high frequency words tend to be short in English, and therefore the learner is likely to meet them more often, a factor favouring their 'learnability'." Considering the well-known fact that retention is not possible without regularly repeated recycling activities and without being exposed to new lexis on a regular basis, Thornbury's argument sounds quite logical.

A further obstacle in vocabulary acquisition is related to certain grammar rules attached to a word, particularly if these rules deviate from the L1 rules. To illustrate this claim with an actual example I would like to refer to German and English/Italian grammatical differences related to reflexive verbs: the corresponding Italian verb (*cambiare*) for the German reflexive verb *sich verändern* is not reflexive and therefore most learners are irritated and fall into the trap of applying the German grammatical rules to the foreign language: thus, the phrase *Er verändert sich sehr*. is often translated incorrectly as *Lui si cambia molto**. The whole affair becomes even more confusing when the above sentence is put into the 'passato prossimo' (past tense), since *sich verändern* wants the auxiliary verb *haben* to form the past tense, whereas *cambiare* wants the auxiliary verb *essere* ('to be') Thus, they tend to say *Lui si ha cambiato** instead of *Lui è cambiato* ("He's changed").

Further examples of lexis whose correct usage is problematic for learners regard participle constructions (e.g. *The girl sitting on the bench is brushing her hair.*, *Annoyed by the noise, the girl closed the window.*), the distinction between verbs that are followed by gerund or infinitive and their meaning differences (e.g. *She avoided looking at him. He stopped to smoke a cigarette.*

He stopped smoking cigarettes), or the correct use of prepositions with phrasal verbs (e.g. *to look for/at*).

Meaning itself may pose another obstacle for learners, since most words do not have one single meaning but more – often completely unrelated – ones. Take, for example, *since*: normally beginners will encounter *since* in its function as a preposition that is used for "mentioning a time or event in the past and indicating that a situation has continued from then until now" (*Collins Cobuild Learner's Dictionary* 2003: 1027) (cf. Thornbury 2002: 28); later on, however, they are told that *since* may also be used as a conjunction in causal sentences, synonymous with *because*. As Thornbury (2002: 28) states, it may be problematic and troublesome "to accept a second, totally different, meaning" after having lived 'for ages' with the conviction that *since* means – *only* means – 'seit' and is used for time indications. With regard to word meanings as 'troublemakers' it has to be added that "[u]nfamiliar concepts may make a word difficult to learn" (Thornbury 2002: 28), since it simply is much harder and more complicated to acquire words with whose underlying concepts we are not familiar, since we tend to fall back on visualisations in order to aid retention; however, if we are unable to conjure up an image of the concept represented by the word we ought to learn and to remember, its actual acquisition and retention can be quite irritating and demanding. This claim becomes obvious if we try to learn and to remember, for instance, specialised vocabulary belonging to a field that is completely unknown to us.

"Range, connotation and idiomaticity" are the last learning-inhibiting elements Thornbury (2002: 28) refers to. The acquisition of a new word involves knowing its connotations, collocates, register as well as its range of usage. Again, culture-bound differences play an essential role, since a word may have positive or neutral connotations in one language and negative ones in another. A German who calls an Englishman 'eccentric' most likely does this with pejorative intentions in mind, whereas the Englishman may not feel insulted at all (cf. Thornbury 2002: 28).

3.5.2 Types of mistakes

It is estimated that lexical mistakes "outnumber other types of error by more than three to one" (Thornbury 2002: 28) and these can be further subdivided into two types, namely mistakes regarding form and meaning. This distinction is especially relevant to the teaching project presented in the empirical part of this thesis, since there, too, the various mistakes of the learner were classified according to form- and meaning-relatedness. Thus, I consider it essential to discuss this categorisation here as well.

"Form-related errors include mis-selections, mis-formations, and spelling and pronunciation errors. A mis-selection is when an existing word form is selected that is similar in sound or spelling to the correct form [...]" (Thornbury 2002: 29). The learner with whom the

teaching project was carried out, is especially susceptible to mis-selections; thus, she, for instance, tends to continually confuse *build* and *bill* with *buy*, *buy* with *pay*, *tall* with *tell*, *told* with *tall*, *telephone* with *television*, *maid* with *made*, etc. The second type of form-related mistakes Thornbury (2002: 29) mentions are mis-formations, which "often result from misapplying word formation rules, producing non-existent words [...] [or] combinations." With regard to my learner mis-formations are rather seldom – presumably because she is very self-conscious and insecure concerning her English language skills and therefore hardly makes any attempts at constructing sentences or phrases on her own and generally avoids experimenting with words and phrases.

The third subcategory of form-related errors concerns spelling mistakes, which "result from the wrong choice of letter [...], the omission of letters [...], or the wrong order of letters (*littel**)" (Thornbury 2002: 29). Spelling-related errors pose a huge problem for my learner and occur frequently. Actually, this type of mistakes has led to me supposing that she could possibly suffer from dyslexia. Illustrative examples of this learner's spelling-related mistakes would be: *raods** instead of *roads*, *withe** instead of *white*, *tall* instead of *tell*, *wispher** instead of *whisper*, etc. Moreover, she as well keeps struggling with the pronunciation of similarly written or pronounced words – these kinds of pronunciation mistakes "may result from the wrong choice of sound [...], addition of sounds [...], omission of sounds [...] or misplaced words stress [...]" (Thornbury 2002: 29). Generally speaking, quite a considerable number of English language learners have problems with distinguishing between long and short sounds (e.g. *live* vs. *leave*) as well as with choosing or producing English sounds (e.g. *bad* vs. *bed*; *bird*, *heard*, *girl*) for which there are no German equivalents.

"Meaning-related errors [, on the other hand,] typically occur when words that have similar or related meanings are confused and the wrong choice is made. [...] Many 'wrong word' mistakes are in fact wrong collocates. For example: *I have fifteen years experience as a particular professor* (rather than *private teacher*)" (Thornbury 2002: 29). Similarly difficult – at least for German-speaking learners of English – seems to be the appropriate usage of *do* and *make* (e.g. *I am making* my homework* instead of *I am doing my homework*) (cf. Thornbury 2002: 29). The wrong usage of *do* in this example clearly relates to an incorrect application of an L1 'rule' to L2; another example of wrong vocabulary usage caused by over-reliance on the mother tongue is illustrated by the following example: the corresponding Italian word for the English word *parents* is *genitori*, whereas *parenti* actually means *relatives*; thus, in order to prevent learners from mixing up these terms, it is important to make them consciously aware of this meaning difference.

A further source of mistakes regards connotations "of related words, causing wrong-choice errors such as: *I have chosen to describe Stephen Hawking, a notorious scientific of our century*"

(Thornbury 2002: 29). Here the learner probably either has mixed up the adjective *notorious* with *noteworthy*, or he or she has consulted a bilingual dictionary and instead of *famous* has chosen

notorious without being aware of its negative connotations. Guided dictionary work in the language classroom may prevent learners from making such mistakes and therefore is essential.

It is extremely important for teachers to analyse learners' mistakes and to identify the nature of common mistakes, because only then is it possible to make learners aware of possible traps in order to prevent them from making them from the very beginning.

3.6 Implications of the above considerations on vocabulary teaching and learning

Taking the above provided information on the mental lexicon, on short-term and long-term memory as well as on forgetting as a starting point, I am now going to discuss its immediate consequences for teaching and learning of lexis.

Already during the presentation of new lexis teachers may enhance learners' retention by providing them with a structured organisation of the words to be introduced, for instance, by grouping words according to certain categories (e.g. phonological, meaning, spelling) and therefore imitating the workings of the mind and facilitating retention and retrieval (cf. also section 3.4.1 for 'priming' and 'noticing'). Moreover, in order to make access to and recall of new vocabulary easier for learners, teachers should offer them retrieval cues to fall back on when a certain word has to be retrieved.

Certainly, one of the most important aspects to be considered concerning retention and memory regards the rate of forgetting and the factors that are said to minimise it. Teachers should always bear in mind that each retrieval of a word strengthens its consolidation and therefore enhance the likelihood of its successful recall and retention. In this respect, the direct implications for teachers are that it is imperative to recycle new lexis within the shortest possible time-span, since words are not automatically transferred from short-term to long-term memory but require a fair amount of attention drawn to them, deep processing, emotions attached to them or linkage with already existing knowledge in order to be likely to be retained for a longer period of time. The appropriate spacing of recycling activities is a further essential factor in this context, since the more often associations connected with a certain word are recalled, the more likely is it that the learner can access them when trying to retrieve the word in question. As can be seen later on in the empirical part of this thesis, during the correction phase of the activities used in the teaching project, already existing retrieval cues, or previously formed associations, for the individual words were repeatedly called upon in order to try to help the learner to internalise them and therefore apply them independently. However, since rigid time-tables at school do not always allow immediate

recycling activities twenty-four hours or so after the presentation of new lexis, the role of homework assignments is crucial. If new lexis should be memorised – or, rather, transferred to long-term memory – the teacher must by all means make sure that the learners work with it shortly after its presentation, which can be done in various ways (e.g. using the newly acquired words by means of writing, gap-fills, matching activities, speaking etc.). On the basis of the rate at which we forget, the "principle of *expanding rehearsal*" (Schmitt 2000: 130) was developed. Both Schmitt (2000: 130) and Gairns and Redman (1986: 94) refer to a so-called "revision schedule" provided by Peter Russell (1979) that is meant to "ensure that new material is permanently recorded":

- 1 A five-minute review five to ten minutes after the end of a study period
- 2 A quick review twenty-four hours later
- 3 A further review one week later
- 4 Final reviews one month later and then six months later

I may add here that in the case of learners with special needs even more reviews are necessary in order to enhance retention, as can be seen in the empirical part of this thesis. Gairns and Redman (1986: 94), however, argue that in a typical classroom setting such a procedure is hardly feasible – "unless teachers [and learners] are fortunate enough in having course designers who have integrated systematic lexical recycling into the prescribed syllabus." Actually, they tackle a problem that most likely is well known to every teacher, namely lack of time. It is true that crammed syllabuses generally do not allow a thorough and repeated recycling of lexical items; in this context, however, I would like to stress that besides sticking to a prescribed syllabus it also is a teacher's duty to make autonomous decisions on his or her learners' behalf. Thus, if the learners' retention of a specific set of lexical items is regarded as particularly important, a teacher – at least according to my view – should spend as much time and effort on recycling as is required to ensure its memorisation.

Incidentally, even though each unit in a course book focuses on a different topic (e.g. family members, animals, birthday, school subjects, etc.) and therefore on different vocabulary, previously introduced words are used and repeated in the subsequent units and therefore recycled as well.

One way of gaining more time for the recycling of difficult words in typical classroom settings is to minimise the time spent on "some easier words [that] may [otherwise] be overlearned (in the sense that more time is spent on them than necessary)" so that more time can be spent on "more difficult abstract words [that] are often underlearned", as suggested by Landauer and Bjork (1978 qtd. in Schmitt 2000: 130).

To sum up, it can be claimed that the successful long-term retention of lexis is mainly dependent on the rate at and on the frequency with which recycling, repetition and retrieval take place.

3.7 Dyslexia and language/vocabulary teaching and learning

Since the teaching project is focused on vocabulary teaching and learning with a dyslexic learner, it is vital to provide general information on dyslexia and to look at those aspects of this specific learning impairment that make it difficult for dyslexics to acquire foreign languages as well as to give an overview of remedial teaching and learning techniques. The focus of this section clearly lies on introducing and showing up teaching and learning strategies meant to facilitate and support dyslexics' language learning skills, because it would go beyond the scope of this thesis to relate each individual hypothesis on dyslexia in detail. The section on definitions and on theories of the origins of dyslexia therefore merely relates the various findings in a rather generalised way.

3.7.1 Definitions of dyslexia and its origins

Defining dyslexia is by no means a simple task, since there are different factors and symptoms involved in this learning impairment to which different researchers draw different degrees of attention. A rather general and straightforward definition provided by the International Dyslexia Association (The International Dyslexia Association "Fact Sheet No. 62: Dyslexia Basics" 2000:1) refers to dyslexia as being a "language-based learning disability" with a variety of symptoms connected with "difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading [...], spelling, writing and speaking." While this definition only includes a rather superficial account of symptoms of dyslexia and disregards its origins, the following one aims at describing this learning impairment by also referring to its causes:

Dyslexia is one of several distinct learning disabilities. It is a specific language-based disorder of constitutional origin characterized by difficulties in single word decoding, usually reflecting insufficient phonological processing. These difficulties in single word decoding are often unexpected in relation to age and other cognitive and academic abilities; they are not the result of generalized developmental disability or sensory impairment. Dyslexia is manifested by variable difficulty with different forms of language, often including, in addition to problems with reading, a conspicuous problem with acquiring proficiency in writing and spelling. (Bogdanowicz 1999: 821; Borkowska 1998: 42; Cieszynska 2001: 11; Krasowicz-Kupis 2008: 53; Lyon 1995: 9; Ott 1997: 4; Reid 1998: 3; Tomaszewska 2001: 30 qtd. in Nijakowska 2010: 7).

The above definition indicates that dyslexia runs in families, that it is inherited, and that it therefore is a genetically based learning disability. The "Research definition used by the National Institutes of Health" (The International Dyslexia Association: "Fact sheet No. 62: Dyslexia

Basics" 2000: 2) stress the "neurological origin[s]" of dyslexia as well as the "deficit in the phonological component of language" and the resulting problems "in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge."

The origins of dyslexia have not been completely clarified yet, but there is evidence that dyslexics' development and functions of the brain differ from those of non-dyslexics, which means that "[m]inimal brain damage [...] or alterations in brain structure [...] to these areas of the brain that are typically allocated the role of mediating the processes of reading and spelling may constitute the underlying causes of dyslexia" (Nijakowska 2010: 37); furthermore, the above assumptions may constitute the reasons why dyslexics use different regions in the brain in order to process language than non-dyslexics do: as far as decoding of language is concerned, the part of the brain dyslexics and non-dyslexics use for reading differs significantly, which means that while the latter continuously make use of the same part of the brain when reading, the former tend to use different parts; thus, it might be argued that "people with dyslexia are not using the most efficient part of their brain when they read" (www.dys-add.com/define.html (23 Mar. 2012)).

Moreover, neurological research has shown that obviously a certain "gene on the short arm of chromosome no. 6 is responsible for dyslexia [...] [,which makes] dyslexia highly heritable" (www.dys-add.com/define.html 2012 (23 Mar. 2012)). Dyslexics obviously show a domination of the right-hemisphere in the brain, which probably is one of the reasons why they "often have significant strengths in areas controlled by the right-side of the brain, such as artistic, athletic, and mechanical gifts, [...] creative problem solving skills [...] [, etc.]" (www.dys-add.com/define.html (23 Mar. 2012)). In this context, it is imperative to stress that dyslexia can by no means be attributed to a lack of intelligence, since dyslexics (more often than not) show above-average (cognitive) abilities in other fields that do not involve language processing and it moreover "occurs in people of all backgrounds and intellectual levels" (The International Dyslexia Association 2000: "Fact sheet no. 62: Dyslexia Basics").

3.7.2 Symptoms and warning signals of dyslexia

Dyslexia has to be regarded as a life-long learning impairment resulting in difficulties with phonological processing and concerns both the acquisition of L1 as well as of L2 or of any foreign language, because it is assumed that all language learning is based on "basic language learning mechanisms" (Nijakowska 2010: 69). The claim that "L1 skills form a foundation for the development of L2 skills" (Nijakowska 2010: 80) is supported by several studies carried out with dyslexic learners (cf. Nijakowska 2010: 80ff).

Generally speaking, dyslexics suffer from problems regarding reading, writing and spelling, and demonstrate a "below-standard print processing at the level of single words, more precisely, inaccurate and/or slow decoding of attempted words as well as incorrect word encoding (spelling)" (Nijakowska 2010: 4), but the degree to which dyslexics struggle with language processing varies and also depends on external factors, such as how early dyslexia is identified, appropriate teaching and learning methods, existence of coping strategies, etc., discussed later on in this chapter.

One of the most obvious symptoms of dyslexia probably regards the dyslexics' lack of phonemic awareness, which is said to be the most significant "core and causal factor separating normal and disabled readers" and which results in an inability to "distinguish or manipulate sounds within spoken words or syllables" (www.dys-add.com/define.html (23 Mar. 2012)). Thus, dyslexics, for example, will not be able to tell apart and define sounds they hear ("phoneme segmentation", "phoneme matching"), to delete sounds in order to create different words ("phoneme deletion"), to identify the number of sounds a certain word consists of ("phoneme counting"), to substitute sounds with other sounds in order to form different words ("phoneme substitution"), to combine various sounds into one lexical item ("blending"), or to come up with several words that rhyme (www.dys-add.com/define.html (23 Mar. 2012)). The lack of phonemic awareness leads to difficulties regarding the recognition of the "relationship between letters and the sounds they represent in words", which means that dyslexics are not able to relate written language to spoken language, or, letters with their corresponding sounds, which automatically implies spelling and reading problems (www.dys-add.com/define.html (23 Mar. 2012)).

Considering that vocabulary teaching and learning directly involve reading and spelling as well as remembering words, it is vital to refer to types of mistakes typically made by dyslexics with regard to these skills. As far as reading is concerned, amongst others, dyslexics may show the following symptoms:

- [They] can read a word on one page, but won't recognise it on the next page.
 - [They] know phonics, but can't – or won't – sound out an unknown word.
 - [They display] slow, labored, inaccurate reading of single words in isolation (when there is no story line or pictures to provide clues)
 - [Substitution of similar words:]
 - when they misread, they often say a word that has the same first and last letters, and the same shape, such as *from* – *form*, or *trial* – *trail*.
 - they may insert or leave out letters, such as *could* – *cold*, or *star* – *stair*.
 - they may say a word that has the same letters, but in a different sequence, such as *who* – *how*, *lots* – *lost*, *saw* – *was*, or *girl* – *grill*.] [...]
 - Reading comprehension may be low due to spending so much energy trying to figure out the words. [...]
- (www.dys-add.com/symptoms.html (23 Mar. 2012))

Generally speaking, it can be claimed that dyslexics' problems with spelling are much more serious than with reading (cf. (www.dys-add.com/symptoms.html) (23 Mar. 2012), and illustrative examples of spelling errors would be:

- [...] They sometimes flunk inventive spelling. They have extreme difficulty with vowel sounds, and often leave them out.
- With enormous effort, they are be able to 'memorize' Monday's spelling list long enough to pass Friday's spelling test, but they can't spell those very same words two hours later when writing those words in sentences.
- [They] [c]ontinually misspell[...] high frequency sight words [...] such as *they*, *what*, *where*, *does* and *because* – despite extensive practice.
- [They] [m]isspell[...] even when copying something from the board or from a book.
- Written work shows signs of spelling uncertainty – numerous erasures, cross outs, etc. (www.dys-add.com/symptoms.html) (23 Mar. 2012)

Concerning memory, it may be claimed that especially rote-learning of "non-meaningful facts" or, in other words, of "facts that are not personally interesting and personally relevant", represents an enormous obstacle for dyslexic learners (www.dys-add.com/symptoms.html) (23 Mar. 2012). In this respect, I would like to refer to the teaching project, which is focused on vocabulary teaching and learning with a dyslexic learner, presented in the empirical part of this thesis, where the results of rote-learning of isolated word lists as a vocabulary teaching/learning technique are confronted with those obtained by other, multi-sensory techniques.

Having presented the main difficulties dyslexics have to face regarding language acquisition, it remains to be said that detecting one or more of the above related problems in a child or an adult does not automatically imply that this person is suffering from dyslexia. Only through professional screening is it possible to find out if a person is suffering from dyslexia or from any other type of learning disability. Professional screening involves evaluating "intellectual ability, information processing, psycho-linguistic processing, and academic skills [...], takes into account the individual's family background and overall school performance" (The International Dyslexia Association: "Fact sheet no. 62: Dyslexia Basics"). However, if a person shows one of the above discussed warning signals, it is imperative to act, since "[e]arly identification and treatment is the key to helping dyslexics achieve in school and in life", since appropriate teaching and learning strategies and techniques (- which are going to be discussed in the following section –) clearly may improve an individual's achievements in language acquisition (The International Dyslexia Association: "Fact sheet no. 62: Dyslexia Basics").

3.7.3 Appropriate remedial teaching and learning strategies

Since dyslexia is chronic and does not simply 'go away', persons suffering from dyslexia need to be supported by trained professionals or teachers who are familiar with teaching and learning strategies meant to facilitate language acquisition in order to teach dyslexics how to cope with

their difficulties and how to use coping strategies effectively. Difficulties dyslexics are struggling with may be overcome provided that identification takes place early in the course of a child's school career and that "systematic, explicit, and intensive instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension strategies" is made available (www.dys-add.com/teach.html) (23 Mar. 2012).

First of all, following the Multi-sensory Structured Learning Approach, today it is generally acknowledged that dyslexics need a "multisensory, structured language approach", which involves teaching language by means of addressing as many different channels of perception as possible (auditory, visual, tactile, kinaesthetic) in order to provide them with a huge number of mnemonic cues to fall back on when trying to access or to retrieve a certain lexical item's spelling, pronunciation or meaning. In this context, the so-called Orton-Gillingham (OG) Multisensory Method or the Orton-Gillingham Instructional Approach, a widely used and generally approved of approach to language teaching with dyslexic learners, has to be highlighted. The development of the OGMM dates back to the 1930s when teachers tried to come up with innovative ways of teaching written L1 to dyslexic learners (cf. www.dys-add.com/teach.html) (23 Mar. 2012); Nijakowska 2010: 123ff). The OG Multisensory Method includes language-awareness raising strategies combined with techniques that address as many sensory channels as possible. Thus, one aspect of the approach aims at showing letter-word relatedness and interactions of letters in words as well as to dissect lexical items to make dyslexic learners aware of the individual parts words consist of (e.g. affixes, roots, stems) (cf. www.dys-add.com/teach.html) (23 Mar. 2012). Language awareness raising activities are of huge importance, since by focusing on and making learners aware of the various elements a certain word consists of, they are able to recognise and to detect particularities and to understand certain language rules that otherwise would have remained hidden and obscure. (Incidentally, this is not only true of dyslexics, but also of non-dyslexic language learners.)

The following list sums up the various elements teaching methods regarding reading and spelling should contain so that dyslexics' learning progress is enhanced:

multisensory, direct and explicit (rules do not have to be guessed or inferred by students), systematic, highly structured, sequential, cumulative, synthetic, phonetic, phonics-driven and, finally, [...] sufficient practice and consolidation, and [teaching] preferably [should be] conducted in small groups or individually" (Nijakowska 2010: 124f).

As mentioned in the above quotation, practice – or, recycling – definitely is a highly significant factor with regard to retention of vocabulary: considering that also learners without special needs require a certain amount of recycling so that lexis is committed to long-term memory and can be accessed and retrieved, it is not surprising that much more and intense recycling is needed by dyslexic language learners to retain vocabulary. Therefore, learners with special needs "require a

lot of repetition and practice until they are ready to come up with the answer unaided. Self-dependence is achieved in a step-by-step fashion, beginning with guided practice, through supported practice, to independent practice" (Nijakowska 2010: 25f). Language teaching to dyslexics actually should consist of repetition and even over-learning in order to enhance automaticity and to enhance retention and to facilitate access (cf. Nijakowska 2010: 126).

A further essential factor concerns time-limits to complete activities, which for dyslexic learners should be expanded, since they have to put much more effort into language-related tasks than non-dyslexic language learners.

Finally, I would like to refer to the teaching project presented in the empirical part of this thesis that was carried out by means of multi-sensory and language-structure-based vocabulary teaching and learning strategies in order to examine in how far retention and accessibility can be enhanced and facilitated by their actual and conscious usage.

3.7.4 Appropriate testing formats and classroom accommodations

In order to support dyslexic learners' achievements in tests as well as during language lessons in general, a number of classroom accommodations, or specific educational arrangements, have to be made.

Regarding testing, testing formats as well as time-limits and assessment should be re-considered in order to help dyslexic foreign language learners to tackle at least some of their difficulties. Firstly, since dyslexics "do not perform well under time pressure [...] [, and because] [i]t also takes them longer to read the questions, compose the answer in their head, and get [...] [them] down on paper", they should be given enough time to complete the tasks in their own pace and therefore no time-limits should be set. Secondly, teachers should consider not grading and disregarding spelling mistakes, since otherwise learners with special needs are doomed to failure and non-achievement (cf. www.dys-add.com/teach.html (23 Mar. 2012). Moreover, teachers should not highlight incorrect spelling but "cross the misspelled word and provide the correct spelling [...] so that it is the correct form that is focused on [...]" (Nijakowska 2010: 151). Thirdly, which testing formats should be used with dyslexics is a further important aspect to be considered. In this respect, it is advised to "avoid or reduce essay tests" and to instead apply formats such as matching or gap-fill (with word banks) exercises and activities that involve supplying short answers only (cf. www.dys-add.com/teach.html 2012 (23 Mar. 2012). To sum up, in order to enable dyslexics to succeed in tests, it is obligatory for teachers to provide "explicit instruction in preparation strategies, such as the use of mnemonic devices, multisensory structured studying, summary information charts, mock examinations, time management and task organisation" (Nijakowska 2010: 150).

Besides reconsidering testing formats, teachers may facilitate dyslexics structuring language learning by 'priming' (cf. Brand & Markowitsch 2009: 81, or cf. section 3.4.1), which involves a brief description of what is going to be learned prior to every new topic, and by connecting new input to already existing knowledge (cf. section)

Apart from the above mentioned adjustments, further accommodations in and outside the classroom involve using technological tools in order to facilitate language acquisition for learners with special needs. One essential aspect regarding the usage of CDs, DVDs, television, radio, CD-Roms, etc. in language teaching and learning regards the amount of exposure and practice/recycling, since learners may independently fall back on the above mentioned tools and therefore decide for themselves how much recycling and exposure to the foreign language they need. With regard to vocabulary learning, for example, learners may do (interactive) vocabulary recycling activities offered in the Internet or on CD-ROMs accompanying practice books, etc. which additionally often are designed in order to address both the visual and the auditory channel and therefore provide learners with multi-sensory experiences accompanying the lexis, which is meant to enhance both retention and access to the words in question. Moreover, the correct solutions are supplied immediately so that learners are able to check their mistakes independently.

Dyslexia is a learning disability into which much research has been done; however, up to now these findings have had only little or no impact on language classrooms at school, which makes it extremely difficult for dyslexic learners to overcome or to minimise their difficulties regarding language acquisition, which more often than not results in (feelings of) non-achievement, bad marks and frustration. Thus, the gap between research on dyslexia and the implementation of their findings and answers to successful language learning should be closed, for example, by training teachers in strategies and methods how to tackle language impairments and to facilitate language acquisition for dyslexics.

It may be argued that despite the fact that language classes at school normally consist of a larger number of learners without special needs than learners with special needs, teachers should apply a variety of different teaching strategies that address as many sensory channels as possible and that include different approaches to words; in this way they not only facilitate dyslexics' retention of and access to words but also help non-dyslexics, who also benefit from a multi-sensory exposure to the vocabulary in question.

4. Teaching vocabulary

4.1 Presentation of new lexis

This chapter, on the one hand, is concerned with the various elements that are significant for the presentation of new lexis to foreign language learners, and, on the other hand, with the large number of techniques and strategies a teacher may apply already during the presentation phase in order to actively involve learners and to facilitate and enhance storage, retention and the later retrieval of this lexis. In this respect, it has to be mentioned that mnemonic devices play an important role at all stages of vocabulary work, since at the presentation stage they are introduced as mnemonic aids meant to enhance retention of the new lexis and during the recycling (or, testing) stages the same mnemonic cues are used in order to access and recall the words in question. The different presentation techniques discussed in this chapter are strongly connected with the teaching project, because there they were applied and examined due to their validity and effectiveness with regard to enhancement of retention.

4.1.1 Receptive vs. productive lexis

When a teacher presents new vocabulary to learners, he or she has to make certain decisions regarding the words to be presented and one essential question he or she has to ask himself or herself is which words the learners have to master actively and which ones they merely have to recognise, to know passively. This distinction between receptive and productive lexis is crucial to further language activities, since it largely determines the way both the teacher and learners use the lexical items in question. To put it simply, less effort is put into vocabulary that is to be known only receptively, while deeper processing is required with words that the learners have to use actively and produce independently.

"Being able to understand a word is known as *receptive knowledge* and is normally connected with listening and reading. If we are able to produce a word of our own accord when speaking or writing, then that is considered *productive knowledge* (*passive/active* are alternative terms)" (Schmitt 2000: 4). It is possible to know a word passively, to understand its meaning(s) when we encounter the word in written or oral communication without being able to retrieve it from our mental lexicon when we want to produce it actively.

Thus, a teacher should decide beforehand which words learners have to know in which ways. In this context, I would like to refer to the table taken from I. S. P. Nation's book *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language* (2001: 27), which provides an excellent overview on the

various aspects that are involved in knowing a word receptively and/or productively (see page 50 for figure 2).¹³

However, it also is true that words that at first are known only passively get into the realm of active knowledge, for example, through repeated exposure. Melka (1997 qtd. in Schmitt 2000: 117) emphasises that "receptive and productive mastery should be seen as poles of yet another continuum", while Meara (1990, 1997 qtd. in Schmitt 2000: 117) holds the view that "words are receptively known until they reach a point or threshold where they 'jump' to being fully productive." As mentioned above, not each individual passively known lexical item will be also known actively, which is also indicated by the fact that a learners' passive vocabulary knowledge is bigger than their active knowledge. Melka (1997 qtd. in Schmitt 2000: 119) claims that the difference between the amount of receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge "is rather small" and "one estimates that 92 % of receptive knowledge is known productively", while Takala (1984 qtd. in Schmitt 2000: 119) "suggests that the figure may be even higher". However, I personally consider the above figure rather high and due to my teaching experience would suggest a lower one; however, I cannot prove this claim by indicating any sort of contrasting figures.

4.1.2 Number of new words

A teacher cannot simply provide the learners with as many new words as he or she would like to or as are included in a didactic unit, tell them to study them and assume that the learners will remember them. Research on vocabulary learning and teaching is not only concerned with techniques and strategies of acquisition and retention, but also with the size of vocabulary presented to learners in a single lesson or in the course of the various interdependent lessons that form a didactic unit. However, the appropriate amount of new vocabulary items learners should be presented with in an English lesson or in a didactic unit varies and depends on certain factors that I am going to touch upon in this subchapter.

Thornbury (2002: 75f), for example, lists the following factors as being decisive for the number of new words to be presented to learners:

- the level of the learners (whether beginners, intermediate, or advanced)
- the learners' likely familiarity with the words (learners may have met the words before even though they are not part of their active vocabulary)
- the difficulty of the items – whether, for example, they express abstract rather than concrete meanings, or whether they are difficult to pronounce
- their 'teachability' – whether, for example, they can be easily explained or demonstrated
- whether items are learned for production (in speaking and writing) or for recognition only (as in listening and reading). Since more time will be needed for the former, the number of items is likely to be fewer than the aim is only recognition.

¹³ For a more detailed discussion on receptive vs. productive knowledge cf. Nation 2001: 23ff

Table 2.1. *What is involved in knowing a word*

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|
| Form | spoken | R | What does the word sound like? |
| | | P | How is the word pronounced? |
| | written | R | What does the word look like? |
| | | P | How is the word written and spelled? |
| Meaning | word parts | R | What parts are recognisable in this word? |
| | | P | What word parts are needed to express the meaning? |
| | form and meaning | R | What meaning does this word form signal? |
| | | P | What word form can be used to express this meaning? |
| Use | concept and referents | R | What is included in the concept? |
| | | P | What items can the concept refer to? |
| | associations | R | What other words does this make us think of? |
| | | P | What other words could we use instead of this one? |
| grammatical functions | collocations | R | In what patterns does the word occur? |
| | | P | In what patterns must we use this word? |
| | constraints on use (register, frequency ...) | R | What words or types of words occur with this one? |
| | | P | What words or types of words must we use with this one? |
| | constraints on use (register, frequency ...) | R | Where, when, and how often would we expect to meet this word? |
| | | P | Where, when, and how often can we use this word? |

Note: In column 3, R = receptive knowledge, P = productive knowledge.

FIGURE 2

From: Nation, I. S. P. 2001. *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*.
Cambridge: CUP. 27.

Considering the above listed factors, it becomes obvious that it is not possible to make generalisations regarding the ideal number of words to be introduced at once. Naturally, the "level of the learners" (Thornbury 2002: 75) is one essential criterion, since beginners first have to get used to the foreign language's spelling and pronunciation rules, structures, etc.; for more advanced learners, who already are familiar with the foreign language and its rules and patterns, on the other hand, acquiring new lexis should be much easier. Moreover, it is more difficult to study words that do not have any correspondences with a similar word in the learners' mother tongue – thus, it also is crucial if the learners have to deal with a completely new form or a familiar one. Thornbury's second point also includes a further component, namely the question if the learners already are familiar with the English form, which in fact quite often is the case with words that are borrowed from the English language, such as *computer*, *multi-tasking*, *celebrities*, *mouse-pad*, *song*, *van*, etc. In this case, however, the correct English pronunciation often has to be adjusted, since the learners are used to an Austrian or German pronunciation variant (e.g. /multi/ instead of /malti/, etc.).

Thornbury's (2002: 75) third factor regards "the difficulty of the items" in terms of pronunciation and abstract vs. concrete words. As already mentioned before, learners have to get used to and internalise the rules of the English pronunciation and often have serious problems concerning English sounds – therefore, pronunciation is a vital factor with regard to difficulty; moreover, it is true that words that refer to specific objects are grasped more easily than abstract ones; thus, *apple*, *horse*, *desk*, *book*, etc. probably are easier to remember than words such as *familiarity*, *correspondence*, *retaliation*, etc. The next factor on Thornbury's list is closely linked to the previous one and regards the "teachability" (Thornbury 2002: 76) of an item, whether it is difficult or easy to clarify the meaning of a certain lexical item. "Concrete items which can be represented visually or demonstrated simply (e.g. to hit, a table) can inevitably be dealt with more economically than abstract items [...]" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 68). Thus, in this respect, the type of word and the concept it refers to are crucial. Thornbury's last point is concerned with whether a word has to be known passively only or mastered actively and passively, since it is easier to recognise a word than to retrieve it by oneself and to use it actively; furthermore, if a word has to be acquired for active productive usage by a learner, more focus has to be put on the word and more effort has to be put into it with regard to recycling.

In this context, I would like to refer to a further factor provided by Gairns and Redman (1986: 68) that is concerned with the learners' "language aptitude" or the learners' abilities and ways of managing the task of foreign language acquisition: "[l]earners who fail to adopt effective language learning strategies, or who have a poor memory for language items, or great difficulty with phonology, will probably be unable to absorb as many items as 'good' learners. They may need more training in learning skill" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 68). This factor is of huge

importance with regard to my teaching project, since it is focussed on teaching vocabulary to a learner with special needs and ways to support and optimise acquisition as well as retention of and accessibility to new lexis and it is definitely true that these learners need much more and various kinds of exposure to new vocabulary in order to memorise and to internalise it. However, the amount of time and practise required by special needs learners can hardly be provided within normal classroom settings, since – as Gairns and Redman (1986: 68) state in another point – school syllabuses and course books "dictate[...] the selection and number of items" and do not show consideration for individual learners' needs. The amount of exposure dedicated to lexis (as well as to other aspects of language teaching) is one – or even the most – essential factor regarding retention and accessibility of words; however, the amount of time for exposure and practice is restricted in a classroom setting and therefore 'poorer' language learners often are lagging behind.

Watching films in English and reading articles and books written in the English language therefore are significant sources of authentic exposure to the target language outside the classroom.

Homework, as well, "can play a very important role in vocabulary development. Workbooks or practice books accompanying major course books can compensate for restricted classroom time, and provide [...] an opportunity for learners to acquire vocabulary relevant to their personal needs" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 67).

Considering the above mentioned factors that influence the amount of words to be introduced to language learners, it becomes evident that it is difficult to recommend even an approximate number of words to be presented within a lesson or a didactic unit.

However, as already argued above (2.2.1 and 2.2.2), by introducing whole word families or lexical fields instead of individual unconnected words it is possible to maximise the amount of vocabulary that is presented in a lesson or a didactic unit, respectively (cf. Thornbury 2002: 76). For example, the amount of new words introduced by the course book *Headway B1 Part one* in reading texts on the average is approximately thirty, while activities primarily designed for vocabulary work may present fifty or more words on one topic (cf. McCarthy & O'Dell 1994).

4.1.3 Techniques of presentation (learner involvement vs. teacher-centred)

By looking at the various methods and strategies of as well as approaches to language teaching (e.g. the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Communicative Language Teaching, Total Physical Response, the Lexical Approach, etc.) that have been focussed on, applied and/or dismissed from the end of the eighteenth century onwards and are still in use to varying degrees, it becomes obvious that nowadays teachers have access to a huge spectrum of teaching techniques to choose from. However, since a detailed discussion of the

various teaching methods would go beyond the scope of this thesis, I am going to merely concentrate on the numerous techniques of vocabulary presentation that result from and that are applied and recommended by the different teaching methods and strategies without focussing the methods and strategies themselves.¹⁴

Besides reflections on receptive and productive knowledge and on the appropriate number of words to be taught, considerations regarding techniques of presentation of new lexis are indispensable. Considering the fact that learners' first contact with new lexis necessarily must happen by means of some kind of presentation, the importance of *how* vocabulary is introduced becomes evident. Thus, already during the introduction phase vocabulary teaching has to be meticulously contemplated and thoroughly planned by the teacher, and the teacher's decisions made at this crucial stage are determining regarding any further vocabulary work.

There are numerous ways by means of which both form and meaning of new vocabulary can be introduced and it therefore is the aim of this subchapter to present various techniques of vocabulary presentation. It has to be stressed here that this subchapter is primarily concerned with presentation that equals "pre-planned lesson stages in which learners are taught pre-selected vocabulary items" (Thornbury 2002: 75).

Before discussing the different types of presentation techniques, however, I would like to emphasise that these strategies may either be more learner- or teacher-centred as well as vary according to learner involvement. In this context, I would like to refer to section 3.4.1 in this thesis, which discusses enhancement of retention by means of active learner involvement and depth of processing and makes obvious that the more learners are involved, for example, in the meaning-searching process, the more likely it is that new words are retained. Since this claim also corresponds to Principle 2 in my teaching project and because I am convinced that active learner involvement should form an integral part of any vocabulary presentation, this feature is going to be taken into account here as well.

In the chapter called "Psycholinguistische Grundlagen der Wortschatzarbeit" of their book *Englische Fachdidaktik*, Haß et al. (2006: 115f) sum up the various aspects that absolutely should be taken into consideration by language teachers already during the *presentation phase* of new lexis in order to enhance and maximise later retention. Following Haß et al. (2006: 115f), I am now going to relate the various factors and subsequently discuss their degree of relevance and

¹⁴ For a detailed discussion and a historical survey of methods of and approaches to (English) language teaching cf. Richards, Jack C. and Theodore S. Rodgers..2001. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: CUP.
 Howatt, A. P. R. 1984. *A History of English Language Teaching*. Oxford: OUP.
 Schmitt, Norbert. 2000. *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: CUP.
 Zimmerman, Cheryl Boyd. 1997. "Historical trends in second language vocabulary instruction." *Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition*. Ed. James Coady and Thomas Huckin. Cambridge: UP. 5–19.

importance with regard to the teaching project and to the principles (cf. 5.1) the teaching project is based on (cf. Haß et al. 2006: 115f):

1. Number of sensory channels addressed (e.g. visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile, haptic, etc.)?
2. Impressive first encounter with the word, e.g. by means of extraordinary presentation on the teacher's part
3. Evoking emotions
4. Immediate relevance of a word for learners
5. Usage of structured presentation, e.g. according to categories, hyponyms, etc.
6. Schematic knowledge of learners
7. Linguistic knowledge of learners
8. Amount of exposures to the word (recycling)
9. Mnemonic aids
10. Opportunities to use lexis within a private context
11. Types of presentation (e.g. isolated word lists, drills, scenarios, embedded in concrete situations or contexts, linkage with visual aids, etc.)
12. 'Vocabulary-keeping'
13. Creative usage in new contexts

In my view, addressing as many sensory channels as possible is one of the most vital factors regarding presentation of lexis (cf. point 1 above), which is also reflected by my extensive usage of combinations of presentation techniques for almost each new word that is to be introduced (cf. section 5.4). The more channels are involved, the more mnemonic cues are available to learners when trying to recall a certain word. The second point on the above list is regarded as equally important, since the rate of retention is higher if we encounter things – and therefore also new words – in an 'extraordinary' way. In the following discussion of presentation techniques and in the teaching project, I actually tried to make each word 'special' in order to draw a clear dividing line between the different lexical items. 'Evoking emotions', the third point on the above list, is discussed separately in section 4.1.3.6 below, and represents an essential pillar of vocabulary presentation. 'Immediate relevance' of words (cf. point 4 above) is strongly linked to 'evoking emotions' and also is a significant factor, since it is only natural that we tend to retain those things (or, words) better that are relevant to us: a girl interested in animals is more likely to remember the names of pets than the names of car parts. Categorisation of vocabulary (cf. point 5 above) certainly is extremely helpful regarding vocabulary presentation as well as storage of new words and has been discussed in detail in section 3 on the mental lexicon. By classifying or categorising new lexis according to a certain topic learners may store and later on retrieve individual lexical items together (cf. also section 2.2.6 and 2.2.8). Drawing on schematic knowledge of the learners may be useful in general, since this way they are enabled to store already known together with new knowledge; however, it has been neglected in the teaching project, since other factors were prevailing. Language awareness raising activities, too, are discussed in a separate section (cf. 4.2.7) in this thesis and were used quite frequently, even

though mostly later on in the vocabulary learning process – and not during the presentation phase – when the learner repeatedly struggling with the spelling or pronunciation of certain words. Generally speaking, making learners aware of linguistic (ir)regularities should form an integral part of language teaching and learning, respectively. Considering the fact that one of the principles the teaching project is based on holds that without repetition (or, recycling) retention does not take place, point 8 in the above list ('number of exposures') is of enormous relevance for the teaching process in particular and for language learning in general (cf. section 5.1 for principles, cf. sections 3.4.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.2). The same is true of mnemonic aids (cf. point 9 in the above list), and in the teaching project all sorts of mnemonic cues were introduced together with the new words to be acquired and re-used later on during recycling in order to elicit the new lexis from the learner. 'Opportunities to use new lexis' (cf. point 10), unfortunately were non-existent during the project. As one of the assumptions on which the teaching project is based on (cf. 5.1) runs that already the presentation of new vocabulary is essential for retention, it is obvious that different types of presentation are discussed (cf. 4.1) and applied (cf. 5.4.1). Since – in the course of the teaching project – I suggested to the learner different ways of keeping vocabulary notebooks (cf. 4.2.6) and word cards (cf. 4.2.2) and because I consider it essential to provide learners with alternative ways of keeping and learning vocabulary, point 11 in the above list is also tackled in this thesis. Unfortunately, the last point in Haß et al.'s list (cf. point 12) was completely disregarded in the teaching project, regarding the fact that the learner simply would not have been able to use the English language creatively and independently.

Combinations of different vocabulary presentation techniques

Generally speaking, it is highly recommendable for teachers to fall back on an extensive repertoire of miscellaneous techniques of vocabulary presentation, since different learners react differently to different techniques. In order to ensure that various learner needs are covered, the teacher should see to it that he or she presents new vocabulary by applying as many techniques as possible. Thus, if a teacher, for example, wants to introduce the adjective *large*, he or she may fall back on a number of presentation techniques such as providing a synonym (*big*) and an antonym (*small*), board drawings (a big vs. a small person, animal, bed, etc.), (personalised) example situations accompanied by gestures indicating the meaning (e.g. "Yesterday I went shopping with my little niece because I wanted to buy her a new pullover. So we went to H&M. She tried on a lot of pullovers: they all were too big, because they were size large. Then she said to me: 'Aunt, I am a small girl, I do not need a *large* pullover. I need a *small* one.'"), providing a dictionary definition ("bigger [...] in number, amount, or size" (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* 1995: 794); "[a] large thing or person is greater in size than usual or average" (*Collins Cobuild Learner's Dictionary* 2003: 615) or example sentences ("*Los Angeles*

is the second largest city in the US. / The T-shirt comes in Small, Medium and Large. / This could create a large number of new jobs. / The town has a large population of elderly people." (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 1995: 794); *"The pike lives mainly in large rivers and lakes... He was a large man with a thick square head. [...] The gang finally fled with a large amount of cash ... There are a large number of centres where you can take full-time courses. [...]"* (Collins Cobuild Learner's Dictionary 2003: 615)).

An obvious advantage of the usage of numerous different techniques is "that the learners are getting extra 'free' listening practice, and, by being made to work a little harder to get to the meaning of a word, they may be more cognitively engaged (Thornbury 2002: 81)", which – as already mentioned several times before – will lead to a better retention rate than a teacher-centred presentation of the new words in which learners participate only passively (e.g. jot down the L2 word and its L1 equivalent).

Before talking about the various ways of presentation techniques in detail, I would like to refer to Nation (2001: 85), who emphasises the importance of the combination of visual and verbal presentation techniques:

Real objects, pictures, etc. are often seen as the most valid way of communicating the meaning of a word, but as Nation (1978b) points out, all ways of communicating meaning involve the changing of an idea into some observable form, are indirect, are likely to be misinterpreted, and may not convey the exact underlying concept of the word. An advantage of using actions, objects, pictures or diagrams is that learners see an instance of the meaning and this is likely to be remembered. If this way of communicating meaning is combined with a verbal definition then there is the chance that what Paivio calls 'dual encoding' will occur (Paivio & Desrochers, 1981). That is, the meaning is stored both linguistically and visually. Because objects and pictures often contain a lot of detail, it may be necessary to present several examples so that learners can determine the essential features of the concept or accompany the object or picture with focusing information.

The reasons for this rather lengthy citation are that I regard Nation's argumentation here as vital in more respects: firstly, he highlights the problems a mere visual meaning presentation of new lexis may lead to, secondly he stresses the importance of a well-contemplated combination of various presentation techniques in order not to confuse or mislead the learners, and thirdly he points out that it is essential to facilitate storage and retention by enabling learners to access and use linguistic as well as visual images of the new word.

Having commented on the various essential factors to be considered concerning effective vocabulary presentation provided by Haß et al. and possible combinations of presentation strategies, I am now going to discuss in detail the various presentation techniques that were applied in the teaching project and that I personally regard as very important. The following techniques actually overlap with the ones named by Haß et al., but they nevertheless are not

entirely founded on their list, since I fell back on many different sources and on my own ideas and experience as language teacher.

4.1.3.1 Translation

The very first technique of presentation I would like to discuss here concerns providing the L1 translation for an L2 word, which certainly is one of the – if not *the* - most simple and straightforward way of introducing new lexis to learners in monolingual classes. Incidentally, the Grammar Translation Method, which was "first introduced to teach modern languages in public schools in Prussia at the end of the eighteenth century [...] [and whose] primary goals [...] were to prepare students to read and write classical materials [...]" (Zimmerman 1997: 5), solely applied translations. Thornbury (2002: 77) argues that "[t]ranslation has the advantage of being the most direct route to a word's meaning – assuming that there is a close match between the target word and its L1 equivalent." However, this strategy may also be one of the trickiest and most inaccurate strategies of presentation, since concepts that are represented by words may differ enormously in different cultures and consequently also in different languages. Another problem of the usage of L1 translation in the ELT classroom concerns the fact that an "over-reliance on translation may mean that learners fail to develop an independent L2 lexicon, with the effects that they always access L2 words by means of their L1 equivalents, rather than directly" (Thornbury 2002: 77). Considering the fact that learners should be encouraged to 'think in L2' when using L2 instead of taking the long way round and arriving at the L2 word only by first accessing the corresponding L1 word, translation should not be the first choice when presenting new lexis.

Another factor why translation should not be overused is that learner involvement is minimised and *if* learners are involved in the meaning-searching process, they normally only have to provide the L1 translation. The usage of translation, however, is economic and it generally does not take much time to translate an L2 term into L1 – thus, it probably is recommendable to apply translation with vocabulary that merely has to be understood passively and that has not to be studied for active usage.

By 'defending' translation as a presentation technique, Nation (2001: 86) stresses that "[t]ranslation has the advantage of being quick, simple, and easily understood" and exactly touches upon the above mentioned criticism and apparent disadvantages of this strategy. Nation (2001: 86) does by no means deny these disadvantages of the usage of translation but he points out that these criticisms "all apply to most other ways of communicating meaning" as well and states that "there is no exact equivalence between a second language word and its second language definition [...] [and that p]ictures and demonstrations take time away from the second

language in the same way that using the first language to communicate word meaning takes time away from the second language."

4.1.3.2 Visual illustration of meaning and the keyword technique

This subchapter is concerned with all kinds of visual means of presentation, which are meant to enhance retention by offering learners a 'picture' to go with the form and meaning of words. The reason for including the keyword technique in this section is that it actually is a combination of verbal and visual techniques and works on the basis of visual images triggered by the form and/or meaning of a certain word.

Usage of visual aids: realia, pictures, drawings, gestures, mime, etc.

The next technique of vocabulary presentation I am going to describe here involves the usage of real objects, or so-called *realia*, as well as various ways of illustrating meaning by means of showing (e.g. board drawings, pictures, etc.). This strategy is closely related to the Direct Method, "the best known of several 'natural' methods introduced toward the end of the nineteenth century [...]" (Zimmerman 1997: 8). The Direct Method is opposed to the Grammar Translation Method and its name in fact is derived from the "priority of relating meaning directly with the target language without the step of translation" (Zimmerman 1997: 8). Although the impracticability of illustrations of meanings of abstract words is obvious and cannot be denied, the usefulness and the advantages of the actual 'showing' of the meaning of concrete lexis should not be underestimated, since in addition to the auditory channel the visual channel is used as well.

From my personal experience of teaching English and Italian to adults as well as to teenagers I may say that the usage of visual dictionaries has been welcomed by both age groups, has facilitated vocabulary learning to a great extent and moreover has raised the motivation to study new lexis. After all, human beings are accustomed to experiencing new things by using all their senses. Gairns and Redman (1986: 92) provide further evidence for the importance of using visual aids by claiming that

our memory for visual images is extremely reliable and there is little doubt that objects and pictures can facilitate memory. Equally obvious is that it is easier to conjure up a mental image of a concrete item than an abstract one; try, for instance, to 'image' the following: 'bottle', 'dog', 'truth', 'life'. You will probably have had no difficulty with the first two, but it is extremely difficult to supply a visual image for 'truth' and 'life'.

I personally hold the view that the usage of visualisations of concrete vocabulary is possible with most topics (e.g. clothes, means of transport, food, office equipment, facial expressions showing emotions etc.) and I actually tend to use them extensively. It is true that the usage of realia in the classroom is limited, since it would be problematic and probably not worth the effort to bring all kinds of animals in order to teach learners their names. However, illustrations of meanings can

range from realia to board drawings, pictures, and even to mime or gestures. Teachers who make use of mime or gestures only need their own face and body in order to illustrate the meanings of the words they want to convey to the learners. Thus, if a teacher intends to teach, for instance, the word *sad*, he or she simply has to imitate the typical facial expression of a sad person and probably add the gesture of wiping away tears. Moreover, this interplay of facial expressions and gestures can be used as retrieval cue later on during the recycling phase in order to elicit the word *sad* from the learners.

Considering the fact that human beings are especially responsive to physical touch (or contact) and action, teachers should encourage learners to imitate the teacher's body movements, which then would correspond to a "language teaching method [called 'Total Physical Response' (TPR), which is] built around the coordination of speech and action [...] [and which] attempts to teach language through physical (motor) activity" (Richards & Rodgers 2001: 73). TPR traditionally works with commands in L2 directed at the learners, who then carry out the corresponding actions. Thus, it is assumed that learners tend to link the spoken commands with physical action and therefore better retain the sound of the L2 words together with their meanings.¹⁵ A typical example of TPR is the game 'Simon says', which is widely used in beginner classes. Regarding TPR in the teaching project, it has to be mentioned that it was used in a modified version, since rather than mere commands to evoke the corresponding physical actions on the learner's part, the teacher tried to introduce (and to elicit) new lexis by means of accompanying sounds with corresponding body movements, which then had to be imitated by the learner (e.g. uttering the phrase *to pull into the boat* and simultaneously imitating the gesture of pulling somebody into the boat). This technique of presentation is also useful for the later elicitation of L2 words from the learner.

What is true of mime and gestures is also true of visual illustrations such as pictures, (board) drawings, overhead projector transparencies, drawings on index cards, etc. (cf. Thornbury 2002: 279). The production of such visual aids is not necessarily time-consuming, and if a teacher decides to spend time on producing visual aids such as flash cards, it will definitely be worth both the effort and the time, since visualisations certainly contribute a lot to learners' retention of words, to the fun factor in any language classroom and moreover can be reused with different learners. Furthermore, as already mentioned above, flashcards or other kinds of illustrations may be used for the elicitation of the newly acquired words from the learners during the period of repetition and recycling, respectively. use

Another way of bringing into play visualisations of new lexis is to let learners themselves draw pictures of the meanings of the new words. French Allen (1983: 28) summarises the advantages of learner-drawn pictures in five points:

¹⁵ For a more detailed discussion of TPR cf. Richards & Rodgers 2001: 73-80. and French Allen 1983: 21ff.

1. They cost little or nothing.
2. They are available even in places where no other pictures can be found.
3. They do not require space for storing and filing as pictures from other sources do.
4. Sometimes students who are poor language-learners can draw well. Exercises which require drawing will give such students a chance to win praise, and the praise may help those students to learn.
5. When someone has drawn a picture of a scene, he knows the *meanings* of the English words that the teacher will use while talking about parts of his scene. The meanings are in his mind before he is given the English word.

The keyword technique

In the context of visual aids I would like to refer to another presentation technique which at the same time functions as mnemonic device and retrieval cue and which is of such huge importance regarding teaching in general and my teaching project in particular that it simply has to be discussed separately: I am talking about the keyword technique, which in fact is a direct result of "our ability to produce mental images" and which "consists of associating the target word with a word which is pronounced or spelt similarly in the mother tongue, but is not necessarily related in terms of meaning" (Gairns and Redman 1986: 92). Having made extensive usage of this special kind of technique myself, its usefulness has significantly crystallized. Unfortunately, the keyword technique, or keyword method, seems to be generally underused in language classrooms, and "[i]n handbooks on foreign or second language instruction and in books on vocabulary teaching, [...] [it] is either not mentioned at all (Morgan & Rinvoluceri, 1986) or only marginally (Nation 1990: 166; Taylor 1990: 68; Wallace 1982: 62). Similarly, textbooks on memory research pay little (Baddeley 1990: 190) or no (Schwartz & Reisberg 1991) attention to the keyword method" (Hulstjin 1997: 210).¹⁶ Hulstjin (1997: 210) designates various possible reasons for the little attention that is paid to the keyword technique, but one major reason may be that it is considered an "'odd', 'unnatural' technique, 'not serious enough'". In this respect I have to emphasise that I very much agree with Hulstjin (1997: 210), who argues that "the keyword method [...] does not at all stand in the way of 'natural', 'authentic', communicative L2 instruction".

In order to illustrate my very personal motives for advocating the keyword technique, it must be pointed out here that I came across it in a completely 'natural' way: during my teaching project I often had to *spontaneously* come up with mnemonic devices in order to facilitate the learner's retention of certain words. In many cases I therefore applied the keyword technique without *consciously* applying it, which means that my brain conjured up images together with L1 words that were similar in sound to the L2 word to be remembered. Thus, my question is: how can a technique be called 'unnatural' and 'too complicated' for actual usage if the human brain

¹⁶ For a more detailed discussion of the keyword technique/method cf. Hulstjin 1997: 203 – 224.

unconsciously tends to fall back on devices that are characteristic of this technique? In order to illustrate this, I would like to refer to one example from my own teaching: the learner had serious problems remembering the word *call*, so I tried to find a way to facilitate retention and my mind immediately produced the male first name 'Karl'; incidentally, 'Karl' was the learner's neighbour at home and I therefore tried to provide her with two mnemonic devices at a time, namely the keyword technique together with personalisation: I told her to imagine being in her garden at home, seeing Karl in his garden and *calling Karl*. Then I repeated the words *call Karl* a couple of times and told her to *call Karl*, too. Later on, I always tried to elicit *call* from her by saying *Karl*, which worked quite well. From my personal experience, I therefore may claim that the usage of the keyword technique already at the presentation stage is recommendable, since the brain uses it unconsciously and naturally and its usage therefore does not involve much effort.

Mind maps

Finally, I would like to emphasise that the drawing of diagrams in order to illustrate the relationship and/or connection between words from the same word family, lexical field, etc., is a further way of visualisation that may facilitate the learners' organisation and storage of lexical items in L2, since they make obvious the existing connections between the various words and help learners to retrieve more than one word from a specific word family or lexical field, since all the words are stored together and interdependently in the mind of the learners.

Considering the vast possibilities and the enrichment the above described techniques of illustration may provide for language learners as well as for teachers, it would be a real loss not to make use of them and to deprive learners of potential learning-facilitating devices. Thus, course books nowadays are richly illustrated and contain a huge number of pictures and prompts that aim at strengthening the connection between word form and meaning as well as at making it easier for the learner to retain form and meaning of the concept in question.

4.1.3.3 Verbal illustration of meaning

As we have seen, there are many different ways of illustrating meaning; another possibility to present the meaning of a word in the target language involves the usage of words. Thornbury (2002: 81) observes that "[t]his is the principle behind dictionary definitions" and in this context lists a number of "[n]on visual, verbal means of clarifying meaning", which are:

- providing an example situation
- giving several example sentences
- giving synonyms, antonyms, or superordinate terms
- giving a full definition

However, a teacher may use a combination of various presentation techniques for one and the same lexical item and thereby provide learners with a wide range of possibilities how to store and to retain new lexis. Naturally, learner age and level of proficiency to a large extent determine which techniques to apply. Thus, if a teacher, for instance, chooses to use example sentences, he or she has to make sure that the lexis these sentences contain to clarify the meaning of a certain word are suitable for and comprehensible to beginners.

Providing **example sentences** gives the learners the opportunity to experience the new word in context, to see how it is used, with which other words (nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc.) it collocates, how the word 'behaves' in context, etc. Let me briefly refer once again to the above presented example sentences that shall demonstrate the usage spectrum of the adjective *large*: on being provided with various contexts in which the adjective *large* is used, the learners are able to get an idea of the appropriate usage of the word, of its collocations. Thus, they will recognise that a city as well as clothes, numbers, populations, amounts, rivers and lakes, etc. all can be called *large*. I very much agree with French Allen (1983: 47), who argues that "[o]ften an example sentence can help the student more than a definition", since definitions sometimes seem rather abstract and contain further words that are unknown to the learners. (I am going to talk about definitions in more detail later on in this subchapter.)

Another possibility of a verbal explanation of new lexis is the usage of **dictionary definitions**. Above I already have hinted at the abstract nature of (a large number of) dictionary definitions. In this context, I. S. P. Nation (2001: 83) refers to

McKeown (1993) [who] examined the effectiveness of dictionary definitions [...]. She found that if definitions were revised to use simpler language, focused on the typical underlying meaning of the word and encouraged learners to consider the whole definition, then learners were more able to write typical sentences using the new word and to explain aspects of its meaning. Unhelpful definitions were too general or vague, consisted of disjointed parts, and used words whose typical meanings took learners off on the wrong track."

The conclusion we can draw here from McKeown and other researchers' results is that "good definitions need to be specific, direct, unambiguous, and simple. The 'Goldilocks principle' may apply here – not too much, not too little, but just right" (Nation 2001: 83). When teachers decide to introduce new words by means of definitions they probably should be more self-reliant and produce definitions of their own instead of using the ones provided by dictionaries, even though "[d]efining English words by means of *simpler* English words is not easy" (French Allen 1983: 46). In this context, French Allen (1983: 47) points out the difference between learner's dictionaries and "standard dictionar[ies]" and argues that definitions provided in the former are much more useful and apply a simpler language than the latter (cf. French Allen 1983: 46f).

In order to illustrate her claim she provides the following two definitions of the verb *drown*:

1. From a learner's dictionary – **to drown**: to die by being under water for a long time.
2. From a standard dictionary intended for English speaking people – **to drown**: to be suffocated by immersion in water or other liquid; to sink and perish in water.
(French Allen 1983: 47)

The difference regarding level of difficulty of the words used in the definitions is obvious: while the second definition contains several words that will not be understood easily by a large number of learners of English (*to be suffocated by immersion, to perish*) and which most likely will bedevil and/or impede a proper understanding of the new word, the first one is very straightforward and simple.

The usage of **example situations** – or so-called **scenarios** – is a further way of introducing new vocabulary to learners verbally. In order to enhance retention, situational presentations often are combined with **personalisation**. Of course, this technique of vocabulary presentation can also be accompanied by visual aids. Considering that we tend to better remember things we are personally (and therefore emotionally) involved in, it is especially recommendable to make use of "situation[s] that come[...] directly from the experience of the people in the room – whether the teacher or students" (Thornbury 2002: 82). Above I already have provided one personalised example situation that introduces the adjective *large* and that describes a personal (although fictitious) experience of the teacher. Actually, it does not matter if the scenarios are real or merely made up – what is important here is that learners' retention of new lexis is facilitated by embedding the word in question into a context that serves as a vivid – and therefore memorable – illustration. The following personalised example situation, which is also accompanied by gestures, has been applied several times with beginners: "Imagine this [washing basin] is a boat in the sea. You [the learner], Sloppy [my dog] and me – we are all sitting in a boat. Suddenly you fall into the water and so I have to pull and pull and pull you into the boat." Afterwards the learners had to imitate my gesture of pulling somebody into the boat a couple of times. Actually, the retention rate of both *pull into the boat* and *fall into the water* has been high with each individual learner – most likely because of the combination of several techniques (example situation, personalisation, body movement).

A further useful way of introducing the meaning of new vocabulary is the usage of **synonyms** and **antonyms**.¹⁷ In this context, I would like to once again point out that "[i]t is rarely the case that two words will be synonymous on every occasion – if they were, there would be little need to have both words in the language. So, when we use the term synonymy we are actually talking about partial synonymy [...] (Gairns & Redman 1986: 23)". The same is true of antonyms, since "a variety of different forms of 'oppositeness'" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 24) does

¹⁷ For a more detailed discussion of synonyms and antonyms cf. section 2.2.9 in this thesis

exist as well.¹⁸ In the above provided presentation of the adjective *large* I have made use of the synonym *big* and the antonym *small* in order to clarify the meaning of the new word – strictly speaking, however, *big* and *small* are only so-called gradable antonyms on a scale (cf. Gairns & Redman 1986: 26f, Hedge 2000: 115f; cf. 2.2.9 in this thesis).

The following example by Gairns and Redman (1986: 23) renders evident how apparently synonymous words may differ regarding several aspects:

| | |
|------------------|--|
| flat = apartment | different dialect i.e. GB versus US |
| kid = child | different style i.e. colloquial versus neutral |
| skinny = thin | different connotation i.e. 'skinny' is more pejorative |
| conceal = hide | as transitive verbs, but 'hide' may also be intransitive, thus |
| | different grammar |

In sum it can be said that on the whole synonyms and antonyms are an indispensable means of vocabulary presentation that enables learners to store and to retrieve more words for a single concept together and moreover to avoid repeating the same word again and again, which is especially valuable regarding writing English texts. However, teachers should be aware – and also make their learners aware – of the possible difficulties that can arise when working with synonyms and antonyms.

I have already talked about the usage of **hyponyms** in vocabulary presentations in this thesis. In order not to repeat myself, I would like to refer to subchapter 3.1.2.8 for a more detailed discussion of hyponyms.

4.1.3.4 Use of dictionary (cf. also section 4.1.3.1 on translation)

New lexis does not necessarily have to be 'explained' by the teacher but may as well be clarified by other sources available to learners, such as dictionaries. The usage of dictionaries naturally has to be practised so that learners are able to successfully make use of this source and recognise the potential traps unskilled learners tend to fall into due to lack of training.

In fact, dictionaries are valuable tools for an independent and unlimited access to vocabulary. In this respect, the usage of dictionaries is a step towards autonomous learning and therefore should not be neglected in the course of language acquisition.

Actually, a wide range of meaningful ways to incorporate dictionary usage into vocabulary activities does exist and nowadays it is no longer disapproved-of to apply them. However, for some time the use of dictionaries was scorned because it was thought that "dependence on a dictionary might inhibit the development of more useful skills, such as guessing from the context [...]" or, in the case of bilingual dictionaries, that learners might "over-rely on translation, at the expense of developing a separate L2 lexicon" (Thornbury 2002: 60).

¹⁸ For a more detailed discussion of antonyms and the various forms of antonyms cf. section 2.2.9 in this thesis

Moreover, "in the late 1970s, many teachers were suspicious of the use of dictionaries, feeling that this was synonymous with laziness on the part of the student who was unwilling to use his own resources and guess the meaning for himself" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 79).

However, dictionary usage and guesswork from context are not mutually exclusive, since these simply are different strategies of vocabulary work and both have to be acquired by learners in the language learning process.¹⁹ In my view, the usage of dictionaries is not to be called into question, since learners may benefit enormously from consulting them if it is done appropriately; the question, however, rather is which ones they should consult when and how.

Nation (2001: 281) introduces a carefully structured list that "covers most purposes for dictionary use", which I would like to provide here as well. With regard to vocabulary presentation, *comprehension (decoding)* and *learning* are of particular interest:

Comprehension (decoding)

- Look up unknown words met while listening, reading or translating.
- Confirm the meaning of partly known words.
- Confirm guesses from context.

Production (encoding)

- Look up unknown words needed to speak, write or translate.
- Look up the spelling, pronunciation, meaning, grammar, constraints on use, collocations, inflections and derived forms of partly known words needed to speak, write or translate.
- Confirm the spelling, pronunciation, meaning, etc. of known words.
- Check that a word exists.
- Find a different word to use instead of a known one.
- Correct an error.

Learning

- Choose unknown words to learn.
- Enrich knowledge of partly known words, including etymology.

Regarding the introduction of new lexis many different variants of dictionary usage are possible. Teachers, for instance, may provide learners with a reading text containing a number of unknown words that learners have to clarify on their own accord by consulting a monolingual or bilingual dictionary. This can be done in groups or individually either in class or at home. A further idea to get learners accustomed to the regular use of dictionaries and at the same time to render their learning more self-governed and autonomous would be to tell them to leaf through a dictionary in order to find approximately ten words or phrases per week they want to learn (because they like the word form, the meaning, they consider a certain word useful, etc). Thus, they learn for their own sake and are allowed to determine themselves which words or lexical

¹⁹ For an example of a successful interplay of guessing from context and usage of dictionaries cf. section 4.1.3.6 on contextual guesswork or inferring or cf. appendix no.1 for "7 Steps for guessing from the context"

items they want to learn and moreover are likely to associate positive emotions with these words, which again should have a positive impact on retention.

In this context, I would like to refer to some exercises regarding dictionary usage provided by Haß et al. (2006: 173), which are ideal for the presentation of new vocabulary by means of dictionaries:

- Wer findet am schnellsten die deutsche Bedeutung von *evaporate*?
- Wie viele Bedeutungen hat das Wort *key*?
- Zu welchem Register gehört das Wort *bloke*?
- Was ist die deutsche Bedeutung für das Wort *head* im folgenden Satz:
'I'd like a good beer with a good head on it.'
- Is *gas station* britisches oder amerikanisches English?
- Welches ist die passende Übersetzung des folgenden Satzes:
'Die Arbeiter trugen Schutzkleidung.'
- Wie viele *phrasal verbs* (Verb + Partikel) mit *put* gibt es im Wörterbuch?

These suggestions for dictionary usage involve language awareness raising activities and certainly will liven up vocabulary work. It is possible to either use the above listed tasks for pre-teaching of important or new words that students are going to encounter in a text that is to be read or in a listening activity, etc. or to apply them after the learners have been introduced to the words' forms in texts or listening exercises. Haß et al. (2006: 173) actually claim that such or similar exercises are essential and moreover are fun "wenn sie motivierend 'verpackt' werden."

Nation (2008: 116) argues that "it is possible to use dictionaries to greatly strengthen vocabulary learning by using the [...] techniques" suggested by himself, which I would like to briefly describe here as well. The techniques Nation (2008: 116f) here refers to involve language awareness raising activities and are presented as tasks: "*Find the core meaning*", "*Look for related words*", "*Read and picture the example sentences*".

The first technique, "*Find the core meaning*", is concerned with "look[ing] through all the senses of the word to see if there is a shared core meaning. For example, *basic* may have six or more senses referring to basic problems, essentials, skills, food, non-luxurious accommodation, ideas, etc. All of these senses share the core meaning of 'main, simple and essential'" (Nation 2008: 116). The didactic objectives of this task according to Nation (2008: 116) are "[f]irst, [that] it involves deep and thoughtful processing that makes it a memorable event, and this helps learning [and s]econdly that it turns what may be several words in the first language into one word and thus reduces the amount of vocabulary to learn." The fact that learners negotiate words and their various meanings renders them more attentive to the target language and since they ultimately have to recognise that words have more than one meaning, will become more and more careful and hopefully will not ignorantly stick to the first meaning indicated (as most of them tend to do at the initial phase of consulting dictionaries).

The second technique listed by Nation (2008: 117), "*Look for related words*", "involves looking at different entries [...] [and] helps vocabulary learning because it relates unknown words to known words and draws attention to word parts" such as stems, affixes, derivatives, inflexions, etc. but also to word forms such as nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, etc. Related words, for example, would be "*divide – division – divisive; lose – loss – lost; arrange – rank – range; dictate – dictation – dictator – diction – dictionary – dictum.*"

"*Read and picture the example sentences*" is the third technique and involves visualisation of the new words in their respective context, the example sentences in which they occur. Nation (2008: 117) states that "[t]hese example sentences are usually carefully chosen to show both the meaning of the word and its typical use. Reading these example sentences will increase knowledge about the word, and forming a visual picture in your mind of the meaning of the sentence will help that word and its meaning be remembered."

Finally, I would like to refer to a special type of dictionaries, namely the so-called 'visual dictionaries' or 'picture dictionaries', which I personally regard as an excellent tool for language learners, since both the visual and the linguistic channels are addressed and stimulated.²⁰

As a rule, teachers should not discourage learners from using dictionaries but rather should incorporate dictionary usage into language teaching and there is no reason that I personally can think of why new lexis should not be presented to learners by means of dictionaries. It is logical, however, that this technique should not be overused and does not substitute the teacher as vocabulary source; additionally, it is also clear that learners at first need guidance, but the only way to acquire dictionary skills is to practise on a regular basis.

4.1.3.5 Contextual guesswork or inferring

Contextual guesswork in language teaching and learning is vital in many respects and a further way of presenting new vocabulary to learners that involves a huge amount of personal effort on the learners' part. Generally speaking, guessing from context is an extremely valuable skill – according to Schmitt (2000: 153) even a "key vocabulary learning skill" – that should be practised on a regular basis already with beginners, since it will be more difficult to get them accustomed to this specific strategy later on in the language acquisition process. Mastering the skill of guessing from context automatically gives learners more autonomy, independence and self-confidence regarding the target language, since this way they will learn, for instance, how to cope with texts that contain unfamiliar words and most likely will not give up reading when encountering them but will try to infer the unknown lexis. Considering the fact that language learners actually have to deal with all kinds of communicative situations in which they do not

²⁰ For a more detailed discussion of visual aids cf. section 4.1.3.2 on illustration of meaning by means of visual aids in this thesis

understand each word, the important role of contextual guesswork becomes obvious.

Moreover, context inferences may have a positive impact on retention in terms of depth of processing: because learners have to put (personal) effort into the meaning-searching process, they are more likely to remember the words whose meanings they have inferred. Another positive side effect of contextual guesswork is that learners who have succeeded in guessing an unknown word from the context will experience immediate positive feedback and feelings, which again has significant implications on their attitude towards the target language and towards their learning process and progress in general.

Having talked about the vitality of contextual inferring in language teaching, it is high time to define the term itself: contextual guesswork "involves making use of the context in which the word appears to derive an idea of its meaning, or in some cases to guess from the word itself. In the case of the latter, speakers of Romance languages and Germanic languages have an obvious advantage as so many words are almost identical, in form if not pronunciation, to words in their own language" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 83). However, this similarity can also be tricky, because not every L2 word that resembles an L1 word in form shares the L1 meaning (cf. Gairns & Redman 1986: 83). Thus, in this respect, it is indispensable to make learners as well aware of what Laufer (1997: 25) calls "deceptively transparent" words, which "look as if they provided clues to their meaning" but actually do not (e.g. to demonstrate to them that although the prefix *mis-*, as in *misunderstand*, generally means *wrongly*, there are also words that begin with *mis-*, such as *mister*, which do not share the above meaning of *wrongly*) (cf. Ohanian 2002: 64). Other examples of "deceptive transparency" concern the adjective "*infallible* [, which] looks as if it were composed of in+fall+ible and meant 'something that cannot fall'", or the noun "*shortcomings* [, which] looks like a compound of 'short' and 'comings', meaning 'short visits' (these are actual misinterpretations provided by students)" (Laufer 1997: 25). Laufer (1997: 25f) names five categories of "deceptively transparent words" that seriously interfere with successful guesswork and which are: words with a deceptive morphological structure, idioms, false friends, words with multiple meanings and 'synforms' (cf. Laufer 1997: 25). The group of "words with a deceptive morphological structure" mentioned by Laufer (1997: 25) concerns "words that look as if they were composed of meaningful morphemes [...] [,such as] *outline* [,which] was misinterpreted as 'out of the line', *nevertheless* as 'never less', *discourse* as 'without direction'."

If learners are not familiar with idioms, such as "*hit and miss*, *sit on the fence*, *a shot in the dark*, *miss the boat*", they inevitably will translate them "literally, word by word" and consequently will end up confused and will not be able to make sense of the sentence or passage in question (Laufer 1997: 25). The same is true of so-called "[f]alse friends", such as "[s]ympathetic [...] interpreted as 'nice' [...] [(German 'sympathisch'),] *tramp* as 'lift' (Hebrew 'trempe') [,] *novel* as 'short story' (Hebrew 'novela')" (Laufer 1997: 25). Similarly, words with more than just one meaning, or so-

called polysemes, are likely to throw learners into confusion, since it often is the case that "students know one meaning of a polyseme or a homonym and are reluctant to abandon it even when, in a particular context, its meaning is different. For example, *since* was interpreted as 'from the time when' though it meant 'because'; *abstract* as 'not concrete' instead of 'summary'; *state* as 'country' instead of 'situation'" (Laufer 1997: 26). The last and at the same time the "largest category of DT words" that are likely to impede learners' guesswork mentioned by Laufer (1997: 26) concerns synforms or "*similar lexical forms*": "pairs/groups of words that are similar in form. [...] Generally speaking, some synforms are similar in sound (*cute/acute, available/valuable, conceal/cancel, price/prize*); some are morphologically similar (*economic/economical, industrious/industrial, reduce/deduce/induce*)." Synforms are especially likely to confuse learners whose knowledge of one or both forms of a pair of synforms is not consolidated so that the two terms are mixed up when encountered in a communicative situation (cf. Laufer 1997: 26). In order to be able to guess unknown words in the first place, the presence of actually helpful cues is absolutely necessary. Nation (2001: 242) refers to a useful classification of cues, or of "knowledge sources", made by Carton (1971 qtd. in Nation 2001: 242):

- interlingual: cues based on L1, loan words in L1 or knowledge of other languages
- intralingual: cues based on knowledge of English
- contextual: cues based on the text or informants' knowledge of the world

Besides the actual presence of cues, it is also essential that a text used for contextual guesswork does not contain too many unknown words, since otherwise it most likely will be impossible for learners to make intelligent inferences. While Nation (2001: 233) argues that merely five to two percent of the words contained in a text should be unknown to learners so that successful guesswork is possible (cf. Nation 2001: 233), Laufer (1997: 31) states that the larger the learners' vocabulary is, the better the "lexical coverage of a text (3,000 word families, or 5,000 lexical items cover about 95% of text)" will be. Thus, it logically follows that the more lexical items are known to learners, the more cues they may fall back on are provided and the more efficient inferencing becomes (cf. Laufer 1997: 31f).²¹

The existence of useful and obvious clues undoubtedly is one major condition for successful contextual guesswork; however, it is not the only one. Schmitt (2000: 153ff) provides a list of seven main factors "that affect the likelihood of inferencing success" some of which I have already mentioned above:

1. The context must be rich enough to offer adequate clues to guess a word's meaning.
2. Readers are better able to use local clues in proximity to an unknown word than more global clues that are located further away.
3. Learners may mistake an unknown word for one they already know with a similar orthographic or phonological form.
4. Cognates can help guessing from context if they are used prudently.

²¹ For a more detailed discussion of various contextual clues cf. Laufer 1997: 28ff

5. Background knowledge about the topic and the culture being discussed aids inferencing.
6. Learners need to be skilled in guessing.
7. Guessing a word from context does not mean that it will be remembered.

Regarding point six in Schmitt's list I would like to emphasise that it is recommendable to provide learners with some kind of structure or instructions applicable to guessing from context. In this respect, I would like to refer to Thornbury's (2002: 148) list of seven "[r]ecommended steps for guessing from context" (cf. appendix no.1), which involves trying to recognise the grammatical function of a word by looking at its affixes and collocates, scanning the word's surroundings in order to find any cues regarding the function of the word within the sentence or within the context it appears, etc.

So far, the discussion of contextual inferencing has only focused on the process of guessing new lexis; following Schmitt's point seven in the above list, I would like to examine how contextual guesswork relates to retention of new vocabulary and which factors favour it. To put it with Nation's (2001: 236) words, "it is important to distinguish working out the meaning of a word from context and remembering the meaning of a word worked out from context." Research shows that the retention rate of words guessed from context is not particularly high. In concrete numbers, this means that only one word in ten or even twenty new lexical items (Herman & Anderson 1985; Nagy, Anderson & Herman 1987; Shu, Anderson & Zhang 1995 qtd. in Nation 2001: 236) and one in five inferred words (Horst, Cobb & Meara 1998 qtd. in Nation 2001: 237), respectively, are remembered to a certain degree.²²

One factor that indirectly contributes to retaining words guessed from context certainly is the "[i]mportance of the unknown word to understanding the text", since "[t]he more needed a word is, the more likely a learner will put effort into the guessing", which again should maximise the retention of the word in question (Nation 2001: 245). Another important – if not *the* most important – factor regarding contextual guesswork and retention concerns some kind of follow-up activities focusing the inferred lexis (cf. Nation 2001: 238, and cf. sections 5.1, 4.2).

In the subchapter on presentation of new vocabulary by means of dictionary usage above, I have already mentioned that guessing from context and the use of dictionaries in fact can be seen as complementary activities. In this context, Nation (2001: 251f) refers to "Laufer and Hill (2000: 58-76) [who] suggest that having words highlighted in their computerised text probably increased dictionary look-up and therefore learning" and to "Jenkins, Stein and Wysocki (1984: 767-787), [...] [who] found no direct effect of preteaching on comprehension, but there was a marked effect on the learning of the words from context."

²² For a more detailed discussion of research on contextual guesswork and retention of new lexis cf. Nation 2001: 236ff

In this context, I would like to present a list provided by Nation (2001: 252) containing some examples of "attention-drawing" to the new lexis that is to be guessed from context:

1. Drawing attention to the word
 - pretesting
 - preteaching
 - seeing a list before reading
 - highlighting (colour, bold, italics) in the text
 - having a list while reading
2. Providing access to the meaning
 - glossing
 - teacher defining through preteaching
 - teacher defining while listening to the text
 - hyper-text look-up
 - dictionary look-up
3. Motivating attention to the word
 - warning of a test
 - providing follow-up exercises
 - noting contexts while reading (e.g. filling in a notebook)

All of the examples in the list are assumed to enhance the actual learning and therefore retention of the new vocabulary and it is recommendable to use at least some of them when practising contextual guesswork with learners. However, it nevertheless "may be that training in guessing helps vocabulary learning simply because it encourages learners to give deliberate thoughtful attention to vocabulary items" (Nation 2001: 250).

4.1.3.6 Evoking emotions

Memory and emotions are closely linked and the fact that "a connection between feelings and formation of explicit memories" does exist and that "feelings that [...] [are] part of [...] [an] experience seem[...] to help [...] [us] to remember it", naturally has important implications on teaching and learning as well as on retention and accessibility (Zull 2002: 82).

To illustrate this connection between feelings and memory by means of an example the biologist and neuroscientist Zull refers to people suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder whose long-lasting extreme feelings may cause severe damage in their brain or memory, respectively (Zull 2002: 82ff). Thus, Zull (2002: 83) argues that the chemical cortisol, which is a direct product of permanent stress and which is released "into the blood [...] can damage cells in the hippocampus and even kill them", which means that "[e]xtreme stress can permanently damage our memory centers [...]".²³

Considering the negative impact stress may have on our memory, it can be inferred that feelings also may positively influence our memory system. Thus Zull (2002: 83) actually claims

²³ For a more detailed discussion of feelings and memory cf. Zull 2002: 69ff

that "tension [also] improve[s] memory" and that "short-term stress hormones" are considered to have a positive impact on memory and "improve[...] the work of the hippocampus and increase[...] long-term semantic memory".

This little digression into the field of neuroscience shall render obvious the connection between feelings and memory and how severely our feelings may influence our memory. Moreover, these findings should be consciously used by teachers to enhance learners' memory capacities and to create optimal learning conditions in an optimal learning atmosphere and, regarding vocabulary presentation, to try to evoke feelings that shall accompany the new lexis in order to enhance retention already during the presentation phase.

Having illustrated the importance of feelings or emotions, respectively, in learning processes, I would like to illustrate how teachers may evoke emotions in learners during the introduction of new words.

Earlier in this chapter, I have already referred to personalisation, which definitely is one way of evoking emotions in learners, since personal matters always are connected with feelings. Take, for instance, the above described personalisations coupled with example situations (or scenarios): by involving the learner into a scenario with my dog Sloppy (that is, by the way, known by the learner) and me, the learner automatically visualises the situation and emotionally reacts to it in one way or another (e.g. by laughing).

Finally, I would like to cite Caine et al. (2005: 96), who argue that "[t]eachers may not realize they are teaching when they affect the emotions of students, but in fact they are." The act of evoking emotions in learners cannot be regarded in isolation, since it is possible to do this with (nearly) all teaching techniques and activities in general and vocabulary presentation techniques and recycling strategies in particular. Thus, this subchapter has to be viewed as being a part of and belonging to all the various techniques and strategies described in this thesis. Emotions, in fact, cannot be separated from any learning process.

4.1.3.7 Isolated word lists and rote learning

All the above discussed techniques of vocabulary presentation have been contextualised in some way. Now, however, I would like to briefly talk about the decontextualised and well-known traditional vocabulary learning strategy of isolated word lists and rote learning.

Even though a large number of language teachers and researchers doubt the usefulness of learning vocabulary from isolated word lists that offer no context, learning new lexis from word lists is still wide-spread and even course books present new vocabulary in form of lists (although nowadays most course books tend to provide example sentences for most of the new words to be introduced). One reason why learning from isolated word lists has been attacked is strongly linked with the assumption that we have to see how a certain word relates to other words and how

it is used in sentences in order to *know* it and to be able to use it properly. The present call for contextualisation goes hand in hand with the focus on communicative language teaching. Nevertheless, it may be the case that "the value of list learning may have been underestimated", since according to Thornbury (2002: 33), for example, "[m]any students quite like learning words from lists." The question remains, however, if learners tend to favour studying words from lists due to a lack of alternative techniques of word study. It is true, though, that learning new lexis from word lists is "economical: large numbers of words can be learned in a relatively short time [...] Some researchers estimate that up to thirty words an hour can be learned this way. Having the mother tongue translation alongside not only deals with the meaning conveniently, but allows learners to test themselves (from L1 to English, and from English to L1) as well as to test one another" (Thornbury 2002: 33). One problem learners may experience when studying isolated words from lists concerns the actual usage of these words, since it is not certain if learners are able to put to work words they have encountered and studied in isolation only.

In this respect, Gehring (2010: 126) argues:

Dass das Auswendiglernen einzelner Wörter als einziger Strategie nur begrenzt sinnvoll ist, zeigt sich an den Wortnetzungen, die in Diskursen aufgerufen werden. Man verwendet in einer Unterhaltung ja nicht nur die Grundeinheit eines Wortes, z.B. *to break*, sondern auch Varianten (*break, broke, broken*), multiword-verbs (*break in on*), phrasal verbs (*break out*) und idiomatische Wendungen (*break the ice*), je nachdem, welche Formen der Kontext der Sprachverwendung abverlangt.

Gehring's reasoning supports one central assumption that is implied in each of the three principles (cf. 5.1) that the teaching project is based on, namely that presenting and studying already prepared word lists that contain words in isolation is much less effective concerning retention, accessibility and usage than a presentation of the new lexis embedded within a certain context.

Further criticism of isolated word lists regards the lack of mnemonic devices the lack of context goes hand in hand with – since there is no context with which to associate the new lexis, learners are not able to fall back on any contextual cues that could facilitate retention as well as access.

Another disadvantage of studying from isolated word lists regards the so-called "serial effect", which occurs when the various words themselves function as triggers for each other and which "is not of much use for real life vocabulary use, when words must be recalled independently of the context in which they were learned" (Thornbury 2002: 33). Thornbury (2002: 33) therefore argues that "better than lists [...] are word cards [...] [,since h]aving each word on an individual card means the sequence can be varied [...]".

4.2 Recycling and repetition

One of my key assumptions in this thesis is that retention of previously acquired vocabulary is not possible without follow-up activities or regular repetition and recycling activities, respectively (cf. sections 3.1 on mental lexicon, 3.2 on memory, 3.3 on forgetting, and cf. Principle 3 in section 5.1). This subchapter, therefore, focuses on the various recycling techniques and activities as well as on the usage of mnemonic devices that have already been introduced during the presentation phase or that have come up only during recycling itself and aims to show how these techniques and cues have been re-used in order to elicit the new lexis from the learner and to facilitate retention.

4.2.1 Prepared vocabulary activities:

The vocabulary recycling exercises applied in the teaching project range from gap-fills and translations on word and sentence level to reading comprehension questions, labelling and providing synonyms and antonyms. For further reference, a selection of the corresponding worksheets are put in the appendix, since a detailed discussion of each exercise would go beyond the scope of this thesis.²⁴

Gap-fills

Gap-fills account for a huge number of activities used in the teaching project. Mostly, they contain some cues, such as initial letters of words that have to be filled in or word banks, in order to reduce the range of possible words and to facilitate completion. Moreover, the gap-fills are contextualised by providing whole sentences taken, for instance, from the story in which the learner encountered the new vocabulary for the first time or by reproducing the whole story with gaps to be completed. Examples of prepared gap-fill exercises with cues would be:

18. Two d_ _ _ later Mr. Mo_ _ _ _ _ tel_ _ _ _ _ Duncan.
 19. "L_ _ _ _ _ Larry, the fa_ _ _ _ American roc_ _ _ _ , wants to b_ _ _ your
 c_ _ _ _ _ for his gi_ _ _ _ _ !"
 He wants to s_ _ _ the is_ _ _ _ tomorrow aft_ _ _ _ _ .
 (Worksheet 7)²⁵

Sometimes the L1 translation of the intended English word is indicated in brackets:

- It's Thu_ _ _ _ _ Sep_ _ _ _ _ 17th. Prince Sterling and his _ _ _ _ _ (Vater),
 K_ _ _ Nicholas are in the c_ _ _ _ _ . They are in the _ _ _ (groß) ro_ _ _ with the
 golden fi_ _ _ _ _ and the _ _ _ (groß) _ _ _ _ (Tisch).
 (3. Post-reading: gap-fill "A surprise for Prince Sterling")²⁶

²⁴ Cf. appendix for the worksheets that contain the various vocabulary activities

²⁵ For the complete exercise cf. appendix no. 3: Didactic Unit "Island for sale", Worksheets 6, 7 and 8

²⁶ For the complete exercise cf. appendix no. 4: Didactic Unit "Birthday", 3. Post-reading: Gap-fill (cloze)

Later on, after the learner had been working with the same words repeatedly, she had to complete prepared gap-fill exercises with an accompanying word bank from which to choose the appropriate word for each sentence.²⁷

Besides self-designed vocabulary exercises, activities accompanying the graded reader *Island for sale*, which include gap-fills in which two possible answers are provided, were made use of:

Dear Jane, Lana is an ugly place! It is an island/a country in Scotland but there is only an old castle/house here, and there is no water/electricity in the castle! So there is no hot water/electricity, no hot food and no lights! I do not like it at all! I want to go back home/house. Love, Roxanne.

(Hopkins and Potter (eds.) 2007: Section 1, Test 2)

In order to practise irregular past tense forms of verbs further contextualised gap-fill exercises with different degrees of difficulty were applied (first put L2 word into past tense, then translate L2 word into L2 and put it into past tense, then no cue is provided). Naturally, all the sentences are put within the context of the didactic unit "Island for sale"²⁸:

7.M Fill in the missing verbs in the past tense

a. Put the verbs in the brackets in the past tense and fill them in!

Yesterday Duncan _____ swimming in the sea. (go) [...]

"Roxanne is silly!" Jock _____ (think). [...]

(Didactic Unit "Island for sale", Worksheet 26)

Translation

Recognising the learner's enormous difficulties with comprehending the meaning of sentences in English, translation exercises were applied in order to help the learner to make sense of the L2 sentences and words, respectively. Illustrative examples of translation activities would be:

²⁹**7. G Translation – Übersetzung**

Translate the German sentences into English!

Übersetze die deutschen Sätze ins Englische!

a. Der hüpfende Larry schaut das Schloss an.

b. Es gibt kein Licht, kein heißes Essen und kein heißes Wasser im Schloss.

(Didactic Unit "Island for sale", Worksheet 17)

³⁰**7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2**

c. Find the English word! Finde das englische Wort!

etwas anschauen = to _____

beobachten = to _____

mit dem Auto ankommen = to _____

(Didactic Unit "Island for sale" and "Birthday", Worksheet 16)

²⁷ For Didactic Unit "Island for sale", Worksheet 12 cf. appendix no.5

²⁸ For Didactic Unit "Island for sale", Worksheets 26, 27, 28 cf. appendix no.6

²⁹ For Didactic Unit "Island for sale", Worksheet 17 cf. appendix no.7

³⁰ For Worksheet 16: "Vocabulary in progress test" cf. appendix no. 8

As can be seen in the above examples, translation into L2 was practised both by contextualising and by decontextualising the new lexis. In the first example, the learner had to translate whole sentences – taken from the graded reader *Island for sale* – into English, whereas in the latter, translation was part of a so-called "Vocabulary progress test" (see appendix no.8) in which the learner had to recall the corresponding L2 words for the L1 word without being provided with any sort of context or cue, since I wanted to check if she as well was able to access the words in isolation. The "Vocabulary in progress tests" were carried out repeatedly in order to observe the learner's learning progress regarding retention and accessibility of new lexis.

Providing synonyms and/or antonyms

Considering the teaching of synonyms and antonyms an essential part of language teaching, possible synonymous or antonymous words were introduced together with the new words already at the presentation stage of the new lexis. In this context, I would like to refer to the vocabulary sheet especially designed for the pre-teaching of essential vocabulary of the didactic unit "Island for sale", which I have put in the appendix (cf. appendix no. 2).

Besides synonyms and antonyms, this vocabulary sheet contains several other presentation techniques, such as drawings, gap-fills, L1 translation, etc.; however, since this point is concerned with synonyms and antonyms only, these other strategies are to be disregarded for the moment.

The synonyms and antonyms introduced by means of the vocabulary sheet in question include the following lexical items (cf. appendix no.2):

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| l_ _ _ e (verlassen) ≠ s_ _ y (bleiben) | arrive ≠ l_ _ _ e |
| to b_y ≠ to sell | l_ _ g _ = big ≠ sm_ _ _ |
| (Vocabulary sheet "Island for Sale") | u_ ≠ d_ _ n |

When introducing the lexis on the sheet, various different mnemonic devices or cues for each word (e.g. example situations/scenarios, example sentences, drawings, visualisations, gestures, miming, physical response, etc.) were also provided, which, however, are going to be discussed later on in the empirical part of this thesis.

It has to be mentioned in this context that these and other synonyms and antonyms were continually re-used in further recycling activities, for example, in the so-called "Vocabulary progress tests" (cf. appendix no. 8 for "Worksheet 16: Vocabulary Progress Test") which the following examples are taken from:

7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2

a. Find the opposite! Finde das Gegenteil!

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| light ≠ _____ | old ≠ _____ | shout ≠ _____ |
| cold ≠ _____ | day ≠ _____ | hear ≠ _____ |
| [...] | | |

b. Find a synonym! Finde ein Wort mit gleicher Bedeutung!

street = _____ large = _____ city = _____
 to telephone = to _____ little = _____
 ("Vocabulary Progress Test 2", Worksheet 16)

Labelling

Labelling objects is a way of combining visual representation with the written form and the meaning of a lexical item, or, to put it with Thornbury's (2002: 18) words: "labelling [...] is [...] mapping words on to concepts [...] so that the concept, for example, of dog has a name, *dog*."

Labelling was also made use of in the teaching project, where, for example, the learner was asked to label the various objects (e.g. *castle, door, window, road, trees, sea, boat, dog*, etc.³¹) in the picture on the title page of the graded reader *Island for sale*.

Matching

So-called matching activities are especially useful at the beginning of a didactic unit or when dealing with newly introduced vocabulary, since here the learner does not have to produce the new lexis actively, but is already provided with the words in question and merely has to make decisions on them (e.g. to match word forms with their respective meanings or visual representations). This way, the learner has to tackle the new lexis and work actively with it, which is meant to enhance retention and at the same time to pave the way for the learner's subsequent active usage of the vocabulary in question.

In this respect, I may refer to a matching activity prepared as post-reading activity within the context of the didactic unit "Island for sale"³², in which the learner had to match L2 words on the left with their L1 equivalents on the right.

Further matching activities can be found in the graded reader *Island for sale* itself.³³

In the following exercise sentences have to be completed by matching sentence halves:

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Leaping Larry | wants £ 5000. |
| 2 Mr Moneybags | in Roxanne's room. |
| 3 Duncan likes living | no hot water or electricity. |
| 4 Jock finds a mouse | has a lot of money. |

[...] (Collins, A. 2007: 8)

In the activity below characters in the story *Island for sale* have to be matched with certain statements:

A Duncan B Jock C Leaping Larry D Roxanne

³¹ Cf. appendix no. 9 for the title page of *Island for sale* and the corresponding labelling exercise

³² Cf. appendix no. 10 for Worksheet 11, Vocabulary Activities, 7. Post-reading activities: 7.A Match ...

³³ Cf. appendix no. 11 for "Island for sale", activities 2: 2.2 and 2.4.

- 1 'I don't like this island. I want to go back to California.'
- 2 'I haven't got any money for the electricity company.
I don't want to sell my island.'
- 3 'I like this island. I want to bring film companies here.'
- 4 'I want to catch rabbits. I love swimming in the sea!'
- (Collins, A. 2007: 9)

Ranking

Ranking activities may take several different forms and can be combined with various other strategies, such as evoking emotions. However, what all ranking activities have in common is that learners have to make decisions – mostly tinged with emotions – on the new lexis.

Here are some illustrative examples:³⁴

³⁵5.a While-reading task:

[...]

Pronunciation = A_____ How do you pronounce *girl*?

Spelling = R_____ How do you spell *helicopter*? H-E-L-...

Meaning = B_____ What is the meaning of the word *dog*?

Write down 6 words that are easy for you:

Easy spelling Easy pronunciation Easy meaning

Write down 6 words that are difficult for you:

Difficult spelling Difficult pronunciation Difficult meaning

(Didactic Unit "Island for sale", Worksheets 4 and 5)

³⁶7. D Language awareness raising activity

A verb is a _____ or a _____.

A noun is a _____ or a _____.

An adjective is an _____ or a _____.

- Find 5 verbs, 5 nouns and 5 adjectives in the story you like!
 - Find 5 verbs, 5 nouns, and 5 adjectives in the story you don't like!
- (Didactic Unit "Island for sale", Worksheet 14)

Besides the above presented examples, prompts, such as 'Write down ten new words you want to know/study'³⁷, were used in order to enhance learner autonomy.

All of the above ranking activities are so-called 'decision making tasks' and address the learners' personal attitudes and feelings towards the new lexis and literally force her to take a closer look at the English language as such: in the above presented activity "5.a While-reading task"(cf. appendix no.12 for Worksheets 4 and 5) the learner first is introduced to the terms *pronunciation*, *spelling* and *meaning* and then has to decide which words are easy or difficult for her to remember correctly and why. The second task, activity 7.D (cf. appendix no.12 for Worksheet 14), addresses the learner's personal attitude towards the new lexis and asks her to make

³⁴ Cf. appendix no. 12 for ranking activities on Worksheets 4, 5, 10, 14

³⁵ Cf. appendix no. 12 for Worksheets 4 and 5

³⁶ Cf. appendix no. 12 for Worksheet 14

³⁷ Cf. appendix no. 12 for Worksheet 10

emotional decisions on individual words; thus, this activity attempts to raise the learner's language awareness regarding grammatical forms, such as verbs, nouns and adjectives.

Reading comprehension questions and tasks

When dealing with reading texts, (pre-, while-, post-) reading comprehension questions are indispensable and quasi obligatory. The advantage of the usage of reading comprehension questions -besides checking on the readers' understanding of the text in question – is that learners have to use the new vocabulary – orally and/or in writing – in order to answer them. The task of answering reading comprehension questions certainly is more difficult for learners than activities such as 'matching', since they have to scan the text for possible answers, recognise the passage and the words that are needed in order to answer the questions successfully and furthermore use the new lexis actively. Reading comprehension questions can be further subdivided into 'open' and 'closed' questions. Typical examples of the former are 'general questions' that have to be marked as 'right' or 'wrong', whereas the latter require whole-sentence answers. Considering that closed questions do not require learners to actively use the new lexis, it has to be stressed here that in the teaching project open reading comprehension questions were primarily used. Illustrative examples of reading comprehension questions (for both didactic units "Birthday" and "Island for sale") applied in the teaching project would be:

³⁸2. Post-reading: Answer the following questions: Reading comprehension questions:

- a. When is the Prince's birthday?
 - b. Who is in the big room?
 - c. What is there in the big room?
- (Didactic Unit "Birthday": "Repetition of Unit 14")

In the following activity, the word(s) the answers shall begin with mostly are already provided:

³⁹7. E Reading comprehension questions

Answer the following questions! Form whole sentences!

- a. Where is Lana? → Lana is ...
 - b. Is it loud on Lana? Why? Why not?
 - d. Why does Duncan put on a lot of electric lights in all the rooms? → Because ...
- (Didactic Unit "Island for Sale", Worksheet 15)

However, in order to check on the learner's comprehension of a text, the teacher may also ask learners to scan the text for particular information on the characters, places, etc., by using prompts such as "Describe the people and animals in the story!"⁴⁰

³⁸ Cf. appendix no. 13 for the complete task: Didactic Unit "Birthday": "2. Reading comprehension questions"

³⁹ Cf. appendix no. 14 for Worksheet 15: 7.E Reading comprehension questions

⁴⁰ Cf. appendix no. 15 for Worksheet 13: "Describe people and animal in the story!"

4.2.2 Word cards and Games

Word cards were introduced quite early in the teaching project and already at the very beginning, a positive effect -concerning retention of the new lexis – was recognisable. The learner seemed to welcome the idea of learning vocabulary from word cards instead of studying them by means of traditional isolated word lists, which obviously had a positive influence on both retention and motivation.

The reason for calling this section 'word cards and *games*' is that in the teaching project the usage of word cards is linked with a game called 'Memory', since the learner first came into contact with word cards by means of this game, which was played repeatedly in class and at home. The prepared word cards consist of cards containing L2 words and cards containing their L1 equivalents. Prior to actually playing the game 'Memory', the various English and German words on the cards were shown to the learner, who then had to say aloud the different words written on the card together with their intended L1 and L2 equivalents, respectively.

A game such as 'Memory' certainly has the advantage of provoking a kind of competitive feeling in the learners and therefore is likely to maximise concentration as well. Since the learner managed to remember extremely well the position of the word cards on the table, the game provided her with a sense of success. While playing, she always had to pronounce the words on the cards and to try to recall their L1 and L2 meanings, respectively; thus, the correct pronunciation of the words in question was practised, retention was enhanced and access was facilitated. After having played the game, we again went through the word cards according to the above-described fashion and the success was enormous, since the learner in fact was able to remember at least twice as much words as before without requiring any kind of support.

However, not only word cards containing words in isolation, but also word cards that were meant to contextualise the new lexis at least on sentence level, were applied (e.g. gap-fill sentences on one set of cards, the individual words to complete them with on the other one). Again, this activity can also be regarded as a game and has the advantage that the learner can play it at home alone or with another person and additionally may experience the learning process as fun. Examples of such word cards would be:

| | |
|---|--------------|
| April comes _____ March. | after |
| The children drink _____. | orange juice |
| There are a lot of _____ in the castle. | servants |
| The children are _____ and playing games. | dancing |

(Gerngross et al. 2009: 108)

The below presented activity is an example of practising irregular past tense forms by means of word cards:⁴¹

⁴¹ Cf. appendix no. 16 for Worksheets 24, 25, 26: "Study the irregular past tense verbs with cards!"

⁴²**7. L Study the irregular past tense verbs with cards !**

a. Play a game I

Take the BLUE CARDS and put them face down on the table in front of you. Mix them. Then try to find the PAIRS!

What is a PAIR?

→ ONE PAIR = one card with the VERB in the PRESENT TENSE and one card with the VERB in the PAST TENSE.

for example: leave – left, take – took ...

Each time you LOOK FOR a VERB, say it aloud!

Each time you FIND a PAIR, look at it and say the VERBS aloud!

[...] (Worksheet 24)

Finally, it has to be mentioned that the success the learner experienced with learning vocabulary from word cards was so great that she actually has applied this strategy up to now and keeps writing new lexis on word cards and playing 'Memory' with them.

4.2.3 Drill exercises: repetition of sounds, words, sentences

A drill "is any repetition of a short chunk of language" and so-called "drill-and-repeat type methodologies" are used in order to "reinforce [...] [the vocabulary] in memory" (Thornbury 2002: 85). The usage of drills and pattern practice is typical of the audiolingual approach to language learning, which had its peak in the 1960s and which involves "learning of structure through the practice of patterns of sound, order, and form" (Brooks 1964: 142). In the teaching project drills were especially useful when the learner simply was not able to remember a word (correctly). In such cases, the learner, for example, was told to write a certain word five times and while writing to pronounce it repeatedly. The scope of this strategy was to make her remember both the written as well as the spoken form of the lexical item in question and moreover to store these two elements together in the mind.

Besides isolated word drills, drills of phrases or whole sentences, such as *The Prince wanted a very special party and he wanted twelve very special presents and he wanted twelve very special guests*, were applied.

Another reason for falling back on drills was to get the learner accustomed to the correct pronunciation of words when she had repeatedly mispronounced words. Thus, she, for instance, was asked to collect all the words (come across while reading *Island for sale*) that contained the /ei/ sound in her vocabulary notebook (e.g. *famous, later, late*, etc.) and to simultaneously say them aloud in order to internalise both their spelling and their correct pronunciation. Drills of this kind are also intended to raise the learner's language awareness.

In order to facilitate retention of and access to certain particularly difficult words, drills in combination with the keyword technique were applied. For example, the learner was told to

⁴² Cf. appendix no. 16 for Worksheet 24 and the corresponding word cards

repeat *call Karl* a number of times. The short phrase *call Karl* had been introduced as mnemonic device in order to enhance the learner's retention of the verb *call*, which she had not been able to remember. *Call Karl* is linked with the following short personalised example situation used to facilitate retention both of *neighbour* and *to call*:

Teacher: What's your neighbour's name?

Learner: Karl XYZ

Teacher: Okay, your neighbour's name is Karl. Close your eyes and listen: your mother is in the garden and suddenly she sees Karl in his garden. What does your mother do? She CALLS KARL! CALL KARL! CALL KARL! CALL KARL!

Repeat this sentence ten times! Sag den Satz nun selbst zehn Mal und RUFE – CALL – KARL ganz laut!

Learner: [screams ten times:] CALL KARL! CALL KARL! CALL KARL!

By combining various mnemonic devices – the keyword technique, drills, personalisation – the learner finally managed to remember the verb *to call* and even told her neighbour Karl how she actually achieved to retain the word by means of his first name.

Drills of this kind – either written or oral or both – can be very effective and may contribute a great deal to the learner's learning process and retention of new lexis, respectively.

4.2.4 Visual aids to enhance retention

Generally speaking, visualisations of any kind are indispensable tools for facilitating and enhancing learners' retention of new vocabulary and can be combined with almost every other mnemonic technique. There are many different ways of supporting learners' retention by means of visual images, ranging from simple board drawings or pictures to mere mental visualisations or gesture and mime. The keyword technique, for instance, which has been discussed in section 4.1.3.2 earlier in this thesis, is a technique that is based on merging verbal and visual strategies and therefore addresses both the auditory and the visual channel, which most likely leads to an enhancement of retention.

In the teaching project, visual images were applied already at the presentation stage or introduced later on during the recycling process. Sometimes the learner was asked to close her eyes and listen to me evoking mental images of certain vocabularies in order to produce a connection between a certain word and its meaning. The following example shows how the learner was supported in order to recall and access the verb *scream*, which previously had been introduced to her on the vocabulary sheet "Island for sale" (cf. appendix no.2) together with a drawing of a screaming woman:

T: Close your eyes and listen to me! Try to imagine the vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'.
Versuche, dir den Vokabelzettel 'Island for sale' vorzustellen. Ganz unten am Zettel ist eine Zeichnung von einer ...

L: Frau, die schreit?

T: Exactly. Concentrate! Can you see the English word for 'schreien'? Da ist eine

Sprechblase ...

L: Ich sehe die Frau, aber das Wort nicht ...

A further example of this strategy of mental visualisation concerns the adjective *special*, which could be elicited from the learner by telling her to close her eyes, visually imagine the story about Prince Sterling in the course book *More! 1* (Gerngross et al. 2009: 86f) and to focus on a certain picture showing the Prince saying: *I am a special Prince!*

Naturally, this strategy does not necessarily work the first time it is applied but has to be practised a couple of times so that the learner gets used to it. In the case of this specific learner the technique of mental visualisation was quite effective and the more often it was applied the faster she was able to get access to or to recall certain words.

Whenever possible, drawings were used in order to help the learner to recall word forms and at the same time to establish a close link between word meaning and its written and spoken form. Take, for example, the verb *leap*, which was introduced to the learner in the story *Island for sale* and whose meaning was clarified by means of drawing a river and an arrow across it, accompanied by a certain example situation. Each time the learner was unable to recall or access the verb *leap* on her own, this specific drawing plus scenario was fallen back on, which immensely facilitated the learner's access to the word later on.

Gesture and mime, too, are essential vocabulary teaching resources, for which no preparation is required and which can be applied rather spontaneously. Since it is natural for human beings to accompany speech by mime or gestures in order to emphasise what is being said, it is also 'natural' to facilitate retention of new words by accompanying them by corresponding body movements. Having introduced a number of new words to the learner by means of gesture and mime, these strategies were also used when trying to elicit certain words and their meanings from the learner later on. For example, gesture and mime (accompanied by example situations) were brought into play with the words *pay*, *bill*, *cheap*, *expensive*, *sad*, *happy*, *smile*, *upstairs*, *downstairs*, etc. In most cases one simply had 'to lift a finger' and the learner immediately produced the words in question. Thus, when repeating the above (as well as a number of other) words, it was not necessary to utter a single word to elicit them from the learner, since the process of elicitation took place merely by applying the appropriate gesture or mime for a specific word. Once, the mere act of taking off my pullover was enough to elicit the word *upstairs*, which means that she literally was 'conditioned' to reacting to certain movements of the hands or arms indicating *upstairs* or *downstairs*, etc.

Considering the positive effect visualisations have on the vocabulary learning and retention process and furthermore the fact that human beings are used to grasp things of the material world with their eyes, it would be illogical not to apply visual images to aid the learners' vocabulary acquisition process.

4.2.5 Verbal means to enhance retention

As already discussed earlier in this thesis in the chapter on vocabulary presentation, vocabulary work in the teaching project consisted of scenarios, or example situations and sentences, personalisation, synonyms and antonyms, etc. already during the presentation phase of the new lexis. Thus, it logically follows that these strategies were also used during the recycling stage, which means that previously introduced lexis was elicited from the learner by means of applying the same techniques – plus additional ones introduced only during the recycling phase.

Take, for example, the phrase *to pull into the boat*: the learner was introduced to this specific phrase by means of an invented scenario combined with personalisation and gesture, which ran like this: 'Imagine the following situation: you, my dog Sloppy and me, we are all sitting in a boat. Suddenly you fall into the water and I have to pull and pull and pull and pull you into the boat.' When trying to elicit the phrase *to pull into the boat* from the learner during the following recycling phase, the same example situation was presented with the result that the learner immediately provided the phrase without needing any further clues.

A further example of a scenario in combination with personalisation as well as gesture concerns the words *bill* and *pay*. Above it has already been mentioned how these words were elicited from the learner by using gesture; however, there was also an example situation to go with the appropriate gestures: 'You, your parents and your sister go to a restaurant. What's your favourite dish – was ist deine Lieblingsspeise? Schnitzel? Okay, you order a Schnitzel, your sister wants spaghetti, your father and your mother order fish. The waiter brings your meals and you all eat. When you have finished – wenn ihr fertig gegessen habt – your father says to the waiter: The bill, please! Then the waiter brings the bill and your father pays the bill. He pays the bill.' Thus, when trying to trigger *bill* and *pay*, this specific scenario plus appropriate gestures simply had to be called upon.

The extensive usage of synonyms and antonyms in prepared vocabulary recycling activities and tests has already been referred to in point 4.2.1 above; however, synonyms and antonyms were also used with regard to oral vocabulary repetitions. Thus, the learner quite often was incidentally asked if she knew another word for *big* or *road* or if she could remember the contrary of *small* or *leave*. If she was not able to recall the words in question, other strategies to facilitate access (e.g. visualisations, scenarios, etc.) were applied.

In general, providing word forms or meanings on the teacher's part was avoided, since it is essential to give the learner the possibility to come up with the words in question by herself and to make her put effort into the meaning- or word form-searching process.

4.2.6 Vocabulary notebooks

During the whole teaching project the learner was repeatedly made aware of alternative ways of organising a vocabulary notebook (than the standard word lists (English word – German translation) used in school). Thus, she was provided with an unruled notebook and with some ideas and suggestions how to use it, such as 'mind maps', 'words in context', collecting words that contained the same sounds, collecting words according to emotional criteria ('words I like', 'words I don't like'), etc.

An example of this would be the 'bad words' categorisation, which is meant to contain difficult words and words that the learner has problems with regarding recall and retention: the idea behind calling these words 'bad' is to free the learner from the blame of not remembering certain words and instead to blame the words themselves for being so difficult to remember (for example, because of their weird spelling or pronunciation), making the words themselves responsible for any difficulties the learner experiences with retaining them.

Moreover, the learner was asked to collect all the words that contained the sound /ei/, such as *famous*, *late*, *later*, *wait*, *waiter*, etc. in order to facilitate the pronunciation of these words and to make her store them together in her mind.

Furthermore, words may be grouped according to the learner's personal emotional response to these words, to categorise them according to emotional criteria (e.g. 'words I like', 'words I don't like', 'words I want to learn', etc.).

A further idea would be to tell the learner to collect all the new words from the didactic unit 'Birthday' and from 'Island for sale' that came to her mind by means of drawing 'mind maps' in order to establish certain networks between the individual words.

However, although the learner first seemed delighted by new ways of organising vocabulary notebooks, it seemed that she also regarded them as time-consuming and complicated. For example, knowing that she enjoyed drawing very much, she was asked to choose ten new words she wanted to learn, to write them into her new notebook, write an example sentence for each word and draw the meaning of the word – unfortunately, she never complied.

The reason for her 'aversion' to this kind of vocabulary organisation could also be connected with her discovery and fondness of word cards. From the moment of introducing to her the usage of word cards as an alternative vocabulary learning strategy, she obviously did not accept any other techniques of vocabulary acquisition or recycling – which is not bad, since this merely shows that she *must* have found a way of successfully remembering words which she moreover associates with fun and does not regard as tiresome or inefficient.

4.2.7 Language awareness activities

Considering that the learner repeatedly mixed up words and actually had severe difficulties with spelling, pronunciation and recognition of parts of speech, a way to make the English language more easily accessible and comprehensible to her had to be found – therefore, language awareness activities represented an integral part of the entire teaching project.

The following language awareness raising activity was carried out after having recognised that she was not able to determine or distinguish parts of speech (e.g. tell the difference between verbs and nouns) (cf. appendix no. 12 for "Worksheet 14"): in this specific exercise she at first had to find the German expressions for 'verbs', 'nouns', and 'adjectives' and afterwards find five verbs, nouns and adjectives in the story 'Island for sale' she liked and five she did not like. This means that she had to scan the text for different parts of speech and therefore to actively tackle the new lexis.

Another activity that involves focussing on verbs is concerned with the past tense as such and the formation, spelling and the pronunciation of its irregular verbs (cf. appendix no.17 for "Worksheets 18 – 23). On "Worksheet 18" (cf. appendix no.17) the regular formation of the past tense is explained and those irregular verbs the learner already had been acquainted with are indicated. After having gone through the explanation on formation, the learner was handed out "Worksheet 19" (cf. appendix no.17), which is concerned with practising both regular as well as irregular past tense verbs within the context of the story *Island for sale*:

⁴³**7.I The past tense: Time for practice!**

- a. Take the story 'Island for sale' and look for verbs that have a regular past tense form!
Write them down here!

Nimm die Geschichte 'Island for sale' und suche die Verben (Zeitwörter), die eine regelmäßige Vergangenheitsform haben! Schreib sie hier her!

For example: live → lived like → liked ...

- b. Now look for verbs that have an irregular past tense form! Write them down here!

Nun suche Verben, die eine unregelmäßige Vergangenheitsform haben! Schreibe sie hier her!

For example: are → were is → was have → ...

(Worksheet 19)

Further activities on the past tense involve so-called 'production tasks'⁴⁴, translations⁴⁵ and drill exercises⁴⁶, which involve guided analyses of verbs in the past tense and which can be found in the appendix of this thesis.

The above mentioned 'production tasks' involve re-writing the first pages of the story *Island for sale* using the past tense so that the learner gets the possibility to become familiar with the usage of the past tense in an actual text.⁴⁷

⁴³ Cf. appendix no. 17 for Worksheet 19

⁴⁴ Cf. appendix no. 17 for Worksheet 20 and 21

⁴⁵ Cf. appendix no. 17 for Worksheet 22: 7.J Translate the following sentences into English! Use the past tense!

⁴⁶ Cf. appendix no. 17 for Worksheet 23 7.K The irregular verbs – die unregelmäßigen Verben

⁴⁷ Cf. appendix no. 17 for Worksheet 20 7.I c. The past tense: Time for practice! Production task

Besides the above-described ways of making the learner aware of certain features of the English language, a number of other strategies to facilitate spelling or pronunciation, such as analysing components of words or explaining the function of certain affixes, was made use of. To illustrate this, I would like to refer to how I tried to help the learner to remember the correct spelling of *white* and *with*, which she continuously tended to confuse, never knowing where to put the letter *h*: *whith** and *with**; thus, I tried to make her focus on the forms of these words and to find similarities with their German equivalents *mit* and *weiß* by me writing down: *white* = *weiß* vs. *with* = *mit* and telling her: 'Look at the words! *White* und *weiß* beginnen beide mit dem Buchstaben *w*, und *with* und *mit* haben beide am Ende ein *t*. Versuch dir die Schreibweise so zu merken: *weiß* beginnt wie *white* mit *w*, da kommt das *h* am Satzanfang nach *w*, während *with* wie *mit* ein *t* am Wortende haben, und hier kommt das *h* am Wortende, nach dem *t*.' Admittedly, this explanation is rather lengthy and may as well be somewhat confusing, but it actually worked, since the following lesson, when asking her how to spell the English words for German 'mit' and 'weiß', the learner herself fell back on this mnemonic device and described it exactly the way it had been explained to her a week before – and from that point onwards she obviously appeared to remember the correct spelling of these words.

4.3 Testing vocabulary

4.3.1 Green phase testing: prepared vocabulary recycling activities and tests

First of all, it has to be pointed out that the aim of this teaching project was to show how certain teaching techniques and strategies may influence the process of vocabulary learning and *not* to grade the learner's learning process and progress, respectively. Thus, all the activities prepared to recycle the newly acquired lexis can as well be considered as vocabulary testing activities, since the most decisive element of testing – namely grading – is missing.⁴⁸ Therefore, I have called this point 'green phase' testing. During the entire project a huge number of different recycling/testing exercises were used to check on the learner's learning process and progress. However, some exercises were made use of repeatedly in order to observe the learner's learning progress regarding the lexical items in question.

The following sub-chapters are meant to give a brief overview of the various vocabulary recycling/testing activities prepared for and used in the various lessons to both facilitate retention of new lexis and to observe the learner's expansion of vocabulary.

⁴⁸ For a more detailed discussion of the linkage between testing and recycling of newly acquired vocabulary cf. 4.3.3 in this thesis

4.3.2 Designing vocabulary tests (related to the teaching project)

(cf. Nation 2008: 145)

The number of possible vocabulary testing activities seems infinite and teachers obviously may fall back on a huge repertoire. The most important thing to keep in mind, however, is that testing always should reflect learning, or, to put it with Haß et al.'s (2006: 124) words: "wie man übt, so testet man." I strongly agree with Haß et al. (2006: 124), who state that vocabulary (recycling) exercises may as well be used as tests. In this respect, it may also be claimed that vocabulary "testing can be seen as part of the recycling of vocabulary [...]. In fact, the only difference between many recycling exercises and tests is that the latter are scored" (Thornbury 2002: 129). This assumption, by the way, is of particular relevance for my own teaching project, since here, too, testing can be considered to equal recycling.

Generally speaking, testing – in the sense of recycling – should be part of each language lesson, since otherwise "the chances of retaining the new vocabulary are greatly reduced. The principle of distributed practice [...] argues that the spacing of these review phases should gradually be increased" (Thornbury 2002: 130).

Besides spacing of testing or recycling activities, teachers should also contemplate the contents and the methods of the testing – or, what to test and how to test it. In this context, I would like to refer to a useful and clearly arranged list of "purposes and features of vocabulary tests" provided by Nation (2008: 145) (see page 89 for figure 3). Since the aim of my teaching project was to evaluate various activities according to their usefulness and efficiency regarding vocabulary teaching and learning, "the reason for testing" was to "evaluate a learning activity"; in order to achieve this scope, Nation (2008: 145) suggests the application of the following testing formats: "form recognition, multiple-choice, translation, interview". Additionally, it is advised to test "each word [...] in two or three different levels of sensitivity" in order to have a "wide range of difficulty" (Nation 2008: 145). The testing in the teaching project partly was carried out according to Nation's suggestions and the same words were tested by means of different testing formats and strategies. The testing formats used, among others, include the following types: matching, sorting, ranking, providing synonyms/antonyms, translations from L1 to L2 (on word as well as sentence level), reading comprehension questions/tasks, gap-fills with and without initial letters (intralingual cues⁴⁹), gap-fills with L1 words to be translated into L2 (interlingual cues), gap-fills with and without word banks (intralingual cues), writing sentences, skimming the text for information, etc.

When testing or recycling newly acquired lexis, the various mnemonic devices or cues that already had been applied during presentation were used (e.g. if a word had been introduced by means of an example situation, this specific technique was also used when word in question

⁴⁹ For a detailed description of interlingual, intralingual and contextual cues cf. 4.1.3.6 in the theory part of this thesis

Table 9.2 PURPOSES AND FEATURES OF VOCABULARY TESTS

| Reason for testing | Selection of words to test | Test requirements | Useful formats and existing tests | Degree of difficulty |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Encourage learning | Choose from what the learners have been studying | Easy to make Easy to mark Learners are likely to be successful | Teacher labeling, Matching, Completion, Translation | Easy |
| Placement | Choose from a range of vocabulary levels | Good reliability and validity Quick to mark Easy to interpret Cover a wide range of levels | Vocabulary Levels Test* (monolingual or bilingual) Dictation Levels Test* Yes/No Matching Multiple-choice | A range of difficulty |
| Diagnosis | Choose from a range of vocabulary levels | Good reliability and validity Provide a lot of information Cover a wide range of levels | Vocabulary Levels Test* Dictation Levels Test* EVST—yes/no* | A range of difficulty |
| Award a grade (achievement) | Choose from what the learners have been studying | Good reliability and validity Method of testing matches the kind of learning required | Translation Matching Multiple-choice | Easy to moderate difficulty |
| Evaluate a learning activity | Choose from what the learners have been studying in the activity | Each word is tested in two or three ways at different levels of sensitivity | Form recognition Multiple-choice Translation Interview | A wide range of difficulty |
| Measure the learners' proficiency | Choose from a range of vocabulary levels | Good reliability and validity | Lexical Frequency Profile* Vocabulary Size Test* Translation | |

* an existing test or measure

Figure 3 From: Nation, I. S. P. 2008. *Vocabulary: Strategies and Techniques*. Australia: Heinle.145.

was elicited from the learner). However, since the objective of the teaching project never was to *grade* the learner but always merely was to *examine* the effects different presentation and recycling techniques – or mnemonic devices – have on retention and accessibility and if and how retention can be enhanced by certain teaching strategies, it has to be emphasised that there actually is no recognisable differentiation between recycling and testing in the project. To put it differently, after having presented new lexis to the learner, a range of recycling and testing activities, respectively. Oral examinations most of the time were carried out incidentally, whereas written verification took the form of previously prepared 'tests' (e.g. learner had to provide synonyms, antonyms, English words, translate L1 sentences or phrases into English, etc.). In order to check if the learner also was able to provide the intended words without any contextual clues, so-called 'vocabulary progress tests' were used in which the words were tested in isolation. In this context, it is imperative to point out once again that in the teaching project *testing* of previously acquired lexis *equalled recycling* of these words.⁵⁰ With regard to the principles that the teaching project is based on, this correspondence is of particular importance, since one of the major assumptions made here is concerned with the claim that retention is not possible without repetition or recycling of new vocabulary.

Validity of testing results is another reason for the usage of the same testing/recycling activities in my teaching project. In order to document the vocabulary acquisition and retention process/progress and to both guarantee the reliability of the results of the vocabulary examinations and to avoid as many interfering variables as possible, similar or constant testing procedures and conditions were applied. Thus, after each presentation of new vocabulary, the learner was provided with recycling activities that first had to be done on her own (without any time limits); after the learner had completed these tasks I went through them together with her so that mistakes were corrected or words and phrases she previously had not been able to remember or had left out were elicited by applying the corresponding mnemonic devices or retrieval cues. The mnemonic devices or cues – which were repeatedly reused – had either been introduced during the presentation phase or exactly during these first recycling/testing stages.

Additionally, it has to be stressed that I never simply provided the learner with any words she was not capable of accessing or remembering on her own; instead, some sort of mnemonic devices meant to facilitate further retention of and access to the words in question were applied, which means that the learner constantly had to put personal effort into the form- or meaning-searching process and never played the role of a mere passive recipient of new words.

With regard to the *spacing* of the various vocabulary testing/recycling activities it must be mentioned that it was modelled on what I previously have referred to as the "principle of

⁵⁰ Cf. section 4.3.2 in the theory part of this thesis, or cf. Thornbury (2002: 129), who supports this view by stating that testing actually may correspond to recycling

expanding rehearsal" (Schmitt 2000: 130) and on the "revision schedule" suggested by Russell (1979, qtd. in Gairns and Redman 1986: 94) (cf. section 3.6 in this thesis). At first these reviews were carried out within a rather short time-span (24 hours, 2 days, 3 days, 1 week) and then repeated after some time in-between (2 weeks, 3 weeks, 1 month) in order to check which words have been successfully retained and which have not – and why.

To summarise, we can say that the most significant point here is that the scope of testing in my teaching project merely was to show the linkage between certain vocabulary presentation and recycling activities and to document the learner's learning process and progress (and not to grade) and that therefore testing and recycling actually corresponded to each other and can be viewed as being equal here.

5. Case Study Report: Presentation and Analysis of my Teaching Project

5.1 Three Principles of effective vocabulary learning and teaching

Having referred to the techniques and strategies applied in order to enhance the learner's retention of lexis in the teaching project, I now would like to present the main principles this teaching project actually is based on and substantiated by:

- **Principle 1:** The presentation of new lexis is essential to its retention: the usage of various techniques shall render each word unique and therefore enhance retention. The usage of mnemonic devices and cues is indispensable.
- **Principle 2:** The learner's personal effort put into vocabulary work is essential to retention: the more personal effort the learner puts into a lexical item the more likely is it for the word to be retained.
- **Principle 3:** Recycling of newly acquired lexis is essential for retention of and accessibility to a lexical item: if words are not repeated and recycled on a regular basis, they are not retained. The usage of mnemonic devices and cues is indispensable.

These principles represent the three 'pillars' on which the teaching project is built and on which its analysis and reflection is going to be based.

Principle 1 emphasises the importance of the usage of vocabulary presentation techniques and the decisive role already the presentation might play regarding retention. It is assumed that the stress put on and the attention drawn to a word by the teacher during the introduction phase enhances the learners' retention, since this way importance is attached to it (for a detailed discussion cf. 3.4.1). As argued in the subsections 3.4.1 Enhancement of retention: presenting, retrieving, eliciting, repeating and recycling, 4.1 Presentation of new lexis and in particular in section 4.1.3 Techniques of presentation in the theoretical part of this thesis, it is of huge importance to involve learners into vocabulary work already at this initial stage of presentation cf. section 3.4.1). In this respect, the significance of what Nation (2001: 63) calls "noticing" and what is referred to as "priming" by Brand and Markowitsch (2009: 81) with regard to vocabulary presentation is considerable (cf. section 3.4.1). Moreover, mnemonic devices introduced during the presentation of new lexis may serve as elicitation cues during recycling and testing later on (cf. section 3.4.1).

Haß et al. (2006: 115f), too, point out the importance of vocabulary presentation, stressing the value of the "Quantität der Wahrnehmungen bei der Erstbegegnung" and the significant role of impressive first encounters with new words (cf. section 4.1.3).

Principle 2 is working on the theory that learner involvement – or, personal effort and depth of processing – is one of the most decisive factors regarding retention of lexis. In 3.4.2 Enhancement of retention: learner involvement: personal effort and depth of processing the importance of the learners' active participation in vocabulary work has been discussed by referring, among others, to Schmitt's (2000: 121) "depth of processing hypothesis", which stresses that "the more one manipulates, thinks about, and uses mental information, the more likely it is that one will retain that information" (cf. section 3.4.2).

Principle 3 is based on the assumption that retention of new lexis does not take place without its recycling and therefore emphasises the important role of follow-up activities in any vocabulary learning process. This claim is substantiated by research on memory in general and in particular by the *theories of forgetting* and *the implications* these may have on teaching and learning, respectively, discussed in 3.3 and 3.6 of this thesis. Retention of and accessibility to newly acquired lexis will not take place without any form of recycling on a regular basis, since it will either be forgotten ("decay theory") or it "does [...] persist in the memory but we may be unable to recall it [...] (cue-dependent forgetting theory)" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 89) (cf. section 3.3). The latter theory also makes obvious the importance of mnemonic cues that are assumed to facilitate the retrieval of stored words and of which extensive usage was made throughout the entire teaching project and which can be said to have contributed enormously to the learner's rate of retention (cf. section 3.3). Another vital factor to be considered here as well concerns the pace of forgetting, which is discussed in the subchapter on the theories of forgetting (cf. section 3.3) and which, once again, highlights the significance of recycling activities. These findings naturally have a huge impact on the teaching and learning of vocabulary and are reflected in various theories on recycling or revision, respectively, which are presented in section 3.6 of this thesis (cf. section 3.6).

5.2 The learner

In the first subchapter of the empirical part of this thesis I am going to outline why I have chosen to focus this thesis on a specific learner with special needs and to briefly summarise her particular problems concerning second language acquisition.

Data of the learner

In order not to compromise the learner in question, I am going to refer to her by her first

name only, which is Anna. Anna is twelve years old and at the time when the project was carried out attended the first form of an Upper Austrian secondary modern school ("Hauptschule"). According to her mother, she had already been struggling with the spelling of German words during elementary school and her spelling mistakes had always been serious and above average. When Anna started attending secondary modern school and therefore had to study English as a second language, she immediately was confronted with huge difficulties so that her mother contacted the institute of private lessons for which I have worked.

The learner's problems regarding L2 acquisition

Already during the very first private lessons with Anna I recognised her enormous difficulties regarding the English vocabulary, since she repeatedly was mixing up individual lexical items as well as letters of single words and moreover simply was not able to retain words and phrases of the second language no matter how hard she tried to. It is noteworthy here that the only vocabulary learning technique she had been familiar with was rote-learning from isolated word lists, which – as discussed in section on dyslexia is the most inefficient vocabulary learning technique for dyslexic learners. Particularly her spelling mistakes were conspicuous and reminded me of other learners with special needs, or suffering from dyslexia, who I had been tutoring before. Thus, after some private lessons with Anna I decided to talk with her mother about her daughter's immense difficulties concerning English language acquisition and voiced my suspicions on Anna suffering from some kind of dyslexia. As a result, an institution that specialised in testing children on dyslexia was contacted and two months later Anna took the corresponding screening tests that made clear that she definitely suffered from a form of dyslexia that primarily concerned spelling.⁵¹

5.3 The Teaching Project

5.3.1 Contents of the Teaching Project: Didactic units and lexis used

Content-wise, the project was focussed on two different didactic units, namely "Birthday" and "Island for Sale".

The first didactic unit "Birthday" involves the vocabulary related to "birthday" (e.g. *birthday cake, guests, to invite, surprise, presents*, etc.) introduced by means of the story "A surprise for Prince Sterling"⁵², which appears in unit fourteen of the school textbook *More! I* by Gerngross et al. (2009: 86f).

⁵¹ Cf. section 3.6 on dyslexia for a detailed discussion on difficulties dyslexic language learners suffer from

⁵² Cf. appendix no. 18 for the story "A surprise for Prince Sterling" (Gerngroß et al. 2009: 86f)

The second didactic unit "Island for Sale" is based on the graded reader of the same name written by Anne Collins and published by Pearson Education Ltd..⁵³ *Island for Sale* is especially designed for beginners, contains three hundred headwords and is richly illustrated in order to particularly appeal to young learners of the English language. The story is about the Scotsman

Duncan McTavish and his dog, Jock, [who] live in a castle on a Scottish island. One day, Duncan gets a letter from the electricity company. They want £5,000. But Duncan doesn't have the money. He can do only one thing: sell his island. Is [...] [the] famous rock star [Leaping Larry] going to buy it [for his girlfriend Roxanne] ? (Collins, A. 2007: spine)

The vocabulary (from both didactic units) used in the teaching project involves high frequency words considered to be acquired by learners of the English language attending first forms of Austrian 'Hauptschulen' or grammar schools and therefore has been suitable for the learner the case study was conducted with.

5.3.2 Structure of the lessons

Since the scope of my teaching project was to examine the effects vocabulary presentation and teaching techniques and strategies as well as recycling and depth of processing may have on retention, a broad range of different ways of introducing, recycling, eliciting and testing lexis was applied. Thus, although all the lessons strictly were focussed on some kind of vocabulary work, their actual structure varied, which means that while in some lessons new lexis was introduced to the learner, in others already known vocabulary was recycled. The most stable element appearing in all the individual lessons, however, is the extensive usage of various kinds of mnemonic devices or cues linked with presentation techniques and recycling activities in order to enhance retention and to facilitate accessibility, such as the keyword technique, drawings, gesture and mime, example scenarios and sentences, physical response, visualisations, etc., all of which are discussed in detail in the theoretical part of this thesis.

5.3.3 Procedure

The teaching project was carried out over a period of approximately four months and at the beginning I met the learner as often as twice or even thrice a week for at least two or three hours in a row. Towards the end of the project the time span between our meetings was extended to once a week or once in two weeks in order to check if our vocabulary work and the vocabulary teaching techniques and strategies applied had had any long-term effects and if the lexis had been committed to long-term memory. In section 3.6 of this thesis Russell's (1979) "revision

⁵³ Cf. appendix no. 19 for an excerpt from the graded reader *Island for sale* (Collins 2007: 2 – 5)

schedule", which is meant to "ensure that new material is permanently recorded" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 94) and which suggests a certain time schedule for revisions of new lexis, is presented. However, considering that this time plan for revision is designed for learners without special needs, it becomes obvious that in the case of learners struggling with difficulties concerning language acquisition the schedule had to be reconsidered. Regarding this particular teaching project carried out with a learner suffering from dyslexia, this means that firstly more reviews within a shorter time span were necessary and secondly that homework formed an integral part throughout the entire project.

5.3.3.1 Techniques and strategies applied

The vocabulary teaching strategies applied during the teaching project have already been discussed in detail in the theoretical part of this thesis and range from visualisations, language awareness raising activities and scenarios to drill exercises, gestures and pre-planned activities such as gap-fills or rankings.

Since the learner obviously had had serious problems with retaining new lexis when studying vocabulary from isolated word lists, the aim of the project was to discover ways of both enhancing retention and facilitating accessibility by means of various vocabulary presentation, teaching and learning techniques and strategies and to examine if the learner's retention could in fact be maximised by their application.

Besides the vocabulary presentation and teaching strategies, further emphasis was put on the importance of repetition (recycling) of new lexis in order to consolidate and commit it to long-term memory and on the question how many revisions were actually necessary for this to happen.

The amount of the learner's personal effort put into vocabulary work is another vital factor to be considered regarding retention. Thus, throughout the correction phases, words were attempted to be elicited from the learner by offering mnemonic devices or cues to prompt them. This procedure is largely based upon research on the workings of the human brain and on the assumption that the more often a certain lexical item is retrieved the easier is it to retrieve it subsequently, which has been discussed in detail in section 3.4.1 of this thesis.

In order to compare the impact these diverse vocabulary activities have on the learner's retention of the lexis with the effect of traditional word lists, the learner was also asked to study some words from lists.

In order to check how much of the newly acquired lexis the learner was able to retain from one lesson to the following, a broad range of diverse written 'tests' (which at the same time served as recycling activities) were used. Moreover, after each lesson the learner was given homework that involved vocabulary recycling exercises.

5.3.3.2 Documentation of the project: field notes and tables

The contents of each lesson were recorded by means of detailed field notes which contain the exact procedures and actions taken during lessons, sample dialogues between learner and teacher, the way new words were introduced to the learner, the learner's learning progress regarding the retention of each previously acquired word, typical and repeatedly made mistakes as well as the various vocabulary teaching and learning strategies applied with each newly introduced lexical item.

In order to document the learner's learning progress regarding each word that had been introduced and worked with during our private lessons, all the written vocabulary activities (tests, recycling exercises, etc.) the learner had done during our lessons or for homework were subsequently analysed. In order to render the results of the individual vocabulary exercises more obvious and to be able to compare them, tables containing the following criteria were created:

- the total number of words/word parts/phrases to be filled in/written down,
- the actual number of words/word parts/phrases the learner has filled in/written down,
- the number of words/word parts/phrases the learner has not filled in/written down,
- the number of words/word parts/phrases the learner has filled in/written down correctly,
- the number of words/word parts/phrases the learner has filled in/written down incorrectly,
- the number of words/word parts/phrases the learner has filled in/written down incorrectly regarding form,
- the number of words/word parts/phrases the learner has filled in/written down incorrectly regarding meaning.

This way, the learner's progress regarding each individual word was recorded.

Moreover, in some cases the correction of activities was documented as well in order to show which and how many words previously left out or supplied incorrectly by the learner could be elicited from her by using various mnemonic cues meant to prompt the lexical items in question.

Showing the development of the individual words (concerning the learner's retention) and the learner's learning progress regarding each lexical item in the course of this teaching project, these data are essential, since they make obvious the effects the various techniques of presentation and recycling had on the learner's retention.

5.3.5 Limitations and obstacles: External factors influencing the learning process

Generally speaking, the learner was eager to do all the tasks and activities required throughout the entire teaching project. However, since she really had to face serious difficulties regarding access to and retention of (new) vocabulary, there were setbacks that obviously had negative effects on her motivation as well as on her attitude towards the English language and that left her with a feeling of frustration. These negative feelings were mainly triggered off by her repeatedly not being able to recall a specific word that had already come up and dealt with many

times before. In such moments it was essential not to confirm her feelings of non-achievement and frustration but instead to be patient and to provide her with a sense of achievement. The learner's motivation and efforts always seemed to rise and fall in accordance with her achievements, which is only natural. Since the learner obviously recognised her shortcomings regarding language learning herself as well, it was of huge importance to point out her achievements and to praise her in order to avoid further failure-oriented attitudes towards second language learning.

5.4 Analysis and Reflection

This chapter attempts to show by means of actual examples taken from the teaching project which effects the implementation of the above-mentioned three principles may have on the learner's rate of retention. To put it differently, this means that since the main objective of this case study was to examine the role the presentation of new lexis, active learner involvement or the personal effort put into vocabulary work by learners themselves and finally the amount of (structured) regular recycling of new lexis play in vocabulary acquisition, the actual application of the theoretical expositions and assertions discussed in the theory part of this thesis are going to be illustrated here.

Describing the learner's learning process and progress regarding each individual lexical item would go beyond the scope of this thesis; thus, I have decided to focus this reflection on the three principles outlined above and to examine possible effects by taking a closer look at a number of selected words and phrases whose development shall be discussed in detail here.

5.4.1 Tracing Principle 1: Effect of presentation and mnemonic cues on retention

The aim of this section is to examine the impact presentation of new lexis may have on the learner's rate of retention. In chapter 4.1 of this thesis various techniques of vocabulary presentation have been described as well as discussed according to their possibly positive effects on the learner's ability to remember new words and in this context it has been emphasised that teachers might enhance and facilitate retention already during the presentation phase. This assumption is, among others, also supported by Haß et al. (2006: 115f), who put particular emphasis on the importance of learners' first encounter with new lexis.

5.4.1.1 Presentation in form of isolated word lists/translation

The very first technique of presentation discussed in section 4.1.3 is translation, which, however, does not require much effort on both the teacher's and the learner's part. The presentation of new vocabulary by means of translation only involves the L2 word and its L1

equivalent and therefore does not provide learners with any additional cues that could facilitate retention or access to a word.

In the teaching project, translation as a vocabulary presentation technique was used in order to compare its effects on retention with the effects of other techniques that involve more channels of perception, more effort and that include mnemonic cues meant to make it easier to access words that are stored in the mind. Thus, the learner was handed out two different lists of words (cf. appendix no.20 for "Isolated Word Lists") only containing the English words and their German translation, which she had to study at home and on which she was tested in the following lessons. [Here, only the testing of one word list is going to be presented in detail, since the results of the testing of the second word list are similar.]

The following table shows the results of these testings⁵⁴:

| Results:"Isolated words list 'Island for sale'" – rote learning – (individual written testing) | T1 | T2 | T3 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total number of words to be filled in | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Words filled in | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| Words not filled in | 6 | 3 | 4 |
| Words filled in correctly | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| Words filled in incorrectly (form & meaning) | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Words filled in incorrectly (form) | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Words filled in incorrectly (meaning) | 0 | 0 | 0 |

TABLE 1 Results from Testings 1 - 3 of "Isolated words list 'Island for sale'"

A close look at the figures in table 1 reveals a rather poor achievement by the learner, although she claimed to have studied the words carefully and to have written them down at least eight times, which she could prove by showing me the sheets on which she had jotted down the words when studying them at home. In the first testing, from the nine words on the list the learner merely remembered the spelling of two words correctly (*fangen* – *to catch*, *das Meer* – *the sea*) and the spelling of one word incorrectly (*hineinfallen* – *to fol (sic) into*), confusing spelling and pronunciation. However, it has to be stressed here that the learner had already been familiar with *to catch* and *sea* before, since these words had been introduced to her in her English lessons at school. She was not able to remember the other six words on the list (*plötzlich* – *suddenly*, *der See* – *the lake*, *sich bewegen* – *to move*, *schlagen* – *to hit*, *Lärm machen* – *to make noise*, *quer über* – *across*). Immediately after the test, the learner was provided with the correct words and had to correct her mistake as well as to fill in those words she had not been able to recall. Moreover, I offered a mnemonic cue for the word *to move* by relating it to the word *movie*

⁵⁴ T1 = 24 Aug, T2 = 24 Aug (90 min later), T3 = 25 Aug

signifying 'moving pictures'. At the end of the lesson, approximately one hundred minutes later, the learner was tested on the same words again and these results are represented by the figures corresponding to T2 in table 1. This time, the learner managed to provide four of the nine words correctly, namely *fangen* - *catch*, *das Meer* - *sea*, *schlagen* - *hit*, *hineinfallen* - *fall into*, and two further words (*plötzlich* - *suddenly* (sic), *sich bewegen* - *movie* (sic)) incorrectly. *Suddenly* (sic) obviously is a mixture of *sun* and *suddenly*, whereas the noun *movie* was the result of my previous explanation regarding the origins of this word. She did not recall *lake*, *to make noise* and *across*. Again, the results were discussed and corrected in class immediately afterwards.

The following day the learner was tested on the same nine words for the third time (cf. TP3 in table 1). In spite of filling in five of nine words, she recalled merely three words correctly, namely *catch*, *sea* and *fall into*, which are exactly the same three words she already managed to provide in the first test. Again, she mixed up the verb *move* with the noun *movie* and seemingly confused the words *hit* and *hill*, which resulted in her providing *hil* (sic) instead of *hit*.

The results of the above testings of words that were presented to the learner merely by means of translation and in a decontextualised way are important with regard to other testings that involve some kind of mnemonic devices meant to facilitate retention of as well as accessibility to new lexis. It may be concluded that translation, despite being a quick and economic presentation technique (as argued in section 4.1.3.1 of this thesis), might not belong to the most efficient ways of vocabulary presentation techniques as far as enhancement and facilitation of retention are concerned. However, as stated in 4.1.3.1, translation certainly is an appropriate means of presentation of, for example, (infrequent) words that learners merely have to understand or to know passively or that do not have to be transferred into long-term memory since they are only required for a short period of time, for instance, as long as it takes to read a certain text. In this or similar cases, there is no need to commit new lexis to long-term memory and therefore it is sufficient if the short-term (or working) memory holds such words for a short time-span (cf. section 3.2 on long-term and short-term memory).

5.4.1.2 Illustration of meaning by a combination of presentation techniques

In chapter 3, which is focussed on retention and accessibility of new lexis, and particularly in section 4.1.3, which is concerned with the various techniques of presentation, it has been argued that retention is enhanced and facilitated firstly by putting emphasis on the newly introduced vocabulary already during the presentation stage, and secondly by addressing several of the learners' channels of perception, which is, amongst others, as well claimed by

Gairns and Redman (1986: 92), French Allen (1983: 28), Haß et al. (2006: 115f) quoted in 4.1.3.2 in this thesis. Moreover, as discussed in the section on dyslexia (cf. section 3.7), multi-sensory approaches to language teaching as well as language awareness raising activities and emotions linked to words are the most important aspects regarding language teaching to dyslexic learners.

Thus, in this subchapter, a number of combinations of presentation techniques and their impact on the learner's retention are going to be presented. The lexis the following examples are focussed on involve high frequency words and were introduced within the context of the didactic unit "Island for sale" based on the graded reader of the same name. The words are: *to pull somebody into the boat, upstairs, downstairs, to arrive by helicopter, to arrive, to leave, to stay, to rock, to scream, bill, large, big and small.*

It is also important to point out here that the techniques applied during these vocabulary presentations served as mnemonic cues that later on could facilitate accessibility to and elicitation of a specific word.

Example 1: Showing, gestures, personalisation, scenario and drills

The very first example concerns the phrase *to pull somebody into the boat*", which the learner was introduced to within the context of pre-teaching some essential words required for reading the story *Island for sale*. Without saying anything, I stood up, went to the washing basin and then told the learner (pointing to the washing basin): "This is our boat. You, my dog and me, we are all sitting in this boat. Suddenly, you fall into the water and I have to pull and pull and pull and pull you into the boat!" Then I told her to imitate my gesture of pulling somebody into the boat and together we repeated the phrase *to pull into the boat* at least five times and simultaneously imitated the corresponding gesture of pulling somebody into the boat. Actually, this kind of presentation not only involved visual aids but also drills, an example scenario and personalisation. In this case, the crucial point probably might be that already by me standing up and going to the washing basin the learner must have recognised that what followed simply had to be important, since otherwise I would not have gone to the trouble of doing so.

Concerning the learner's retention rate and ability to remember *to pull into the boat*, respectively, it has to be stressed that throughout the whole teaching project she never had any problems recalling it correctly and this phrase always belonged to those she loved to write down and to utter.

Example 2: Synonyms and antonyms, personalisation, gestures, drills

The second example of presentation by means of the above mentioned techniques concerns the words *upstairs* and *downstairs*, which were introduced to the learner by drawing stairs and arrows indicating moving upstairs and downstairs. In addition, I signalled upward and downward movement with my fingers accompanied by saying aloud *going upstairs* and *going downstairs* at least five times with the learner imitating my words and gestures. Finally, the technique of personalisation was applied, which I would like to illustrate by means of the following actual teacher-learner exchange:

[The accompanying gestures as well as additional information are put in square brackets]

Teacher (T): Where is your room at home? Upstairs [+ finger movement] or downstairs
+ finger movement]?

Learner (L): Downstairs.

T: And where's your sister's room?

L: Upstairs.

T: Where's the bathroom?

L: The bathroom is upstairs.

T: The kitchen? Where is the kitchen? [incidental vocabulary teaching: learner is not familiar with the word "*kitchen*"]

T: The kitchen is the room where your mother cooks your meals. You cook in the kitchen.

L: Ah! It's downstairs.

T: Okay, the kitchen is downstairs. And where's the living room? [incidental vocabulary teaching: learner is not familiar with the word "*living room*"]

T: In the living room there's your TV set, you watch TV in the living room, eat popcorn

L: Ah, it's downstairs.

...

Throughout the entire teaching project the learner managed to provide *upstairs* and *downstairs* correctly. Whenever I wanted to elicit the words *upstairs* and *downstairs* from the learner, I fell back on the corresponding gestures and she immediately provided the words. Thus, once, when I merely wanted to take off my pullover and therefore put my hand in the air, her mouth produced *upstairs* and it seemed that she had not even deliberately uttered the word.

Example 3: Synonyms and antonyms, example sentences and personalisation:

Example 3 illustrates how I presented the phrase *arrive by helicopter* as well as the verbs *arrive*, *leave* and *stay* to the learner. First of all, I put this phrase on the prepared vocabulary sheet "Island for sale" (cf. appendix no. 2):

arrive by helicopter = _____, *arrive* ≠ *l_ _ _ e*, *leave* ≠ *s_ _ y*.

Recognising that the learner in fact was not familiar with the verbs *arrive*, *leave* and *stay*, I introduced them along with the phrase *to arrive by helicopter*, which can be observed by looking at the following teacher-learner interaction:

T: Do you know what *helicopter* means?

- L: Yes, Helikopter, Hubschrauber.
 T: Good. *Helicopter. Helicopter*. Let's say it! Five times. [Speaking and listening drill in order to get the learner used to the English stress pattern of the word]
 L: *Helicopter. Helicopter. Helicopter. Helicopter. Helicopter*.
 T: Fine. *Helicopter*. And do you know what arrive means?
 L: No.
 T: You and your mother arrived here by car. You came here with your car. You can go by bike, by helicopter, by car, by train ...
 L: by bus!
 T: Yes, very good! You always use *by* with *Transportmittel*.
 Da nimmst du immer *by*. And *arrive* is the opposite of *go away, leave*.
 L: [does not understand what I intend to say]
 T: Do you know the word *leave* (/li:v/).
 L: Leben? Live?
 T: No, listen: [carefully pronouncing] /li:v/ and /liv/, /liv/ is *leben*, and /li:v/ is *go away, verlassen*: /li:v/
 L: /li:v/ /li:v/
 T: Say the two words one after the other: sag die zwei Wörter abwechselnd: /li:v/ /liv/. *Verlassen*: /li:v/, *leben* /liv/.
 L: [says /li:v/ *verlassen*, /liv/ *leben* five times, pronouncing them carefully]
 T: and the opposite of *leave* is look here! [points to the vocabulary sheet "Island for sale indicating "leave ≠ s__ y"] Don't go away! *Stay* here! *Stay!* Stay with me! Don't leave! Stay here!
 L: Bleib hier?

Example 4: Keyword technique and reference to prior-knowledge

The following teacher-learner interaction illustrates how I tried to make the learner understand the meaning of the English verb *rock* by referring to *rock n'roll music*, with which she assumedly had already been familiar with, and by means of the keyword technique. *Rock*, too, was on the vocabulary sheet "Island for sale" as "schaukeln = r__ k" (cf. appendix no. 2):

- T: It is also some kind of music. Guitar music. There's pop music, Schlager music, and there is r_____ music ...
 L: *Rock! Rock* music!
 T: Good, and *to rock* is also *schaukeln*. Merk dir den Zusammenhang so: beim *Schaukeln* fliegt der blöde *Rock* immer rauf!

The technique according to which the German sentence "beim *Schaukeln* fliegt der blöde *Rock* immer rauf!" is designed is the keyword technique, as it contains three important elements, or keywords, namely 'schaukeln', which is the meaning of the verb *rock*, the German noun *Rock* and at the same time the English word signifying 'schaukeln', which is *rock*. The important thing here is that on hearing this simple – but obviously true – sentence, the learner simultaneously forms a mental picture in her mind, which most likely will be a girl wearing a skirt and rocking, and therefore combines the image with the words in question, which is intended to enhance her

retention of the word *rock*.⁵⁵

Example 5: Drawing, the keyword technique, showing and drills

Example 5 is a combination of at least four presentation techniques, namely the keyword technique, the drawing of a picture, showing and drill in order to introduce the learner to the verb *scream* and at the same time to facilitate and enhance her retention of the word in question. *Scream*, too, was introduced by means of the vocabulary sheet "Island for sale" (cf. appendix no.2), on which I had drawn a small picture of an angrily screaming woman and a bubble and next to the picture there was written *scream* and *she screams*:

- T: What is she doing? [then the teacher screams the sentences:] What is she doing? What does scream mean?
 L: Angry? Nein ...
 T: No, not angry. But she is angry, yes, she looks angry, but what does she do [teacher screams again:] She is screaming!
 L: Schreien?
 T: Yes, very good! She is screaming [teacher screams again]: I SCREAM! Come on, you scream, too!
 L: [laughs and giggles, at first screams very subdued and then loud and louder]
 I SCREAM

Subsequently, I applied the keyword technique, since *I scream* and the noun *ice cream* are homophones⁵⁶ and together provide a very good visual picture, for instance, of a boy screaming for ice cream at the top of his lungs, or even of a man selling ice cream at the beach who is screaming *ice cream* in order to draw attention to the product he wants to sell⁵⁷:

- T: Fällt dir was auf? *I scream* hört sich an wie *Ice cream*, also *Eiscreme*!
 Stell dir zum Beispiel einen Eisverkäufer am Strand, der immer *schreit*, who *screams*:
ICE CREAM! Let's *scream* abwechselnd *I SCREAM* and *ICE CREAM!*
 L: [shouts alternately *ice cream* und *I scream*]

Example 6: Scenario (example situation), personalisation, gesture and drill

In order to present and to clarify the meaning of the English noun *bill*, I fell back on a scenario familiar to the learner, personalised the scene and additionally applied gestures:

- T: Imagine: you and your dad, your mother and your sister go to a restaurant. You eat a ... do you like Schnitzel?
 L: Yes!
 T: ... okay, fine, you eat a Schnitzel, your father eats a Schweinsbraten, your mother eats a salad and your sister, your sister eats Wurstel. And then the waiter, der Kellner, comes and takes the plates and your father says: "The *bill*, please!" [uttered loudly and accompanied by the gesture of snapping my fingers]

⁵⁵ For a detailed discussion of the keyword technique cf. section 4.1.3.2 in this thesis

⁵⁶ For a detailed discussion of homophones cf. section 2.2.6 in this thesis

⁵⁷ For a detailed discussion of the keyword technique cf. section 4.1.3.2 in this thesis

- L: The *pill* (sic!), please!
 T: Attention! Pass auf! The *pill* is die *Pille*, die *Tablette*, und im Restaurant bringen sie dir keine *Pillen*, sondern *the bill*, die *Rechnung*, the *bill*!
 L: the *bill* the *bill* [pronounces the *b* very carefully and attentively]
 T: Okay, say it and snap your fingers like me!
 L: [snaps her fingers and says] the *bill*, please! [5 times]

The learner was told to repeat *bill* and *pill* a few times (drill) since firstly, generally speaking, Austrians are not used to differentiating between /b/ and /p/ sounds like speakers of the English language do, and secondly, it is not quite easy to pronounce a /b/ and a /p/ sound one immediately after the other.

Example 7: Synonyms and antonyms, example sentences

In order to refer to an instance of introducing vocabulary by means of antonymous and synonymous relationships, respectively, this example focuses on the adjectives *small*, *big*, and *large*, which have been introduced to the learner in the very first lesson of the didactic unit "Island for sale". In this respect, I would like to refer to 3.1. in the theory part of this thesis, which discusses the organisation of the mental lexicon and ways to facilitate mental storage of lexis and consequently the learner's access to the words in question by means of categorising certain lexical items rather than storing them as isolated entities; in addition, I also would like to call attention to 2.2.9, 4.1.3.4, 4.2.1 and 4.2.5, which deal with synonyms and antonyms and their usage in language teaching and which therefore are of relevance here as well.

When the learner had to write down words she already knew while listening to the narrator reading the first page of the story, she put down *smole* (sic) instead of *small*, which I corrected immediately afterwards. During the following pre-teaching of words that were essential for the reading of *Island for sale*, I gave the learner the "Vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'" (cf. appendix no.2) and asked her to fill in words she already was familiar with. On the sheet the adjectives *small*, *large* and *big* were introduced to the learner by means of their synonymous and antonymous relationships: "l _ g _ = big ≠ sm _ _". When I asked her to fill in the words she knew, she was not able to provide *large* on her own; however, since I was convinced that she actually was familiar with the word (e.g. from labels on clothes indicating size), I tried to elicit the word from her by applying the following example sentences:

T: Think of clothes, of pullovers, T-shirts. There are different sizes, there is *small*, medium and l_____ and x-l_____!

L: *Large! X-Large!*

T: Good! *Large* means the same as *big*!

The following records of the words *pull into the boat, upstairs, downstairs, leave, arrive, stay* and *arrive by helicopter, rock, scream, bill* and *large, big* and *small* serve to illustrate the learner's learning progress and rate of retention of each word introduced by means of the techniques indicated above. The total number of words the learner had to fill in on this vocabulary exercise sheet is thirty-two and since it would have gone beyond the scope of this thesis to relate the learner's learning process with each individual word, I have decided to discuss merely an illustrative selection of words (see above). The individual testings were carried out over a period of approximately four months and the testing dates are indicated by 'T1' to 'T7' below⁵⁸:

| Results: "Vocabulary Sheet 'Island for Sale'" – Individual written work | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T5 | T6 | T7 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total number of words/word parts/phrases to be filled in | 32 | 32 | 32 | 32 | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| Words/word parts/phrases filled in | 20 | 23 | 29,5 | 25 | 31 | 32 | 28 |
| Words/word parts/phrases not filled in | 12 | 9 | 2,5 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| Words/word parts/phrases filled in correctly | 20 | 21 | 27,5 | 24 | 31 | 32 | 26 |
| Words/word parts/phrases filled in incorrectly (form&meaning) | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Words/word parts/phrases filled in incorrectly (form) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Words/word parts/phrases filled in incorrectly (meaning) | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

TABLE 2 Results from Testings 1 - 7 of "Vocabulary Sheet 'Island for sale'"

For homework the learner had to fill in the missing words on the vocabulary sheet "Island for sale", which we had worked with during the pre-teaching phase (cf. T1 in table 2):

| Presentation of example as on sheet | Expected answers | Answers supplied by the learner (T1) |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| arrive by helicopter = _____ | mit dem Helikopter ankommen | --- |
| L_ _ _ e (verlassen) ≠ s_ _ _ y (bleiben) | leave , stay | --- , --- |
| arrive ≠ l_ _ _ e (verlassen) | leave | leave |
| U_ ≠ d_ _ n | up, down | up, down |
| Go upstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going upstairs] = _____ | hinaufgehen | hinaufgehen |
| Go downstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going downstairs] = _____ | hinuntergehen | hinuntergehen |
| to pull into the boat = ins B_ _ _ z_ _ _ _ _ | ins Boot ziehen | ins Boot ziehen |
| to pay the b_ _ _ = Re_ _ _ _ _ _ bez_ _ _ _ _ | bill, Rechnung bezahlen | bill., Rechnung bezahlen |
| A b_ _ _ = eine Re_ _ _ _ _ g | bill, Rechnung | bill, Rechnung |
| scream [+ drawing of an angrily screaming woman] = | schreien | schreien |

⁵⁸ T1 = hw 19 Aug to 22 Aug, T2 = 22 Aug, T3 = hw 22 Aug to 24 Aug, T4 = 24 Aug, T5 = hw 24 Aug to 25 Aug, T6 = hw 25 Aug to 26 Aug, T7 = 7 Nov

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------|-------------|
| _____ | | |
| schaukeln = r__k | rock | rock |
| L__g_ = big ≠ sm__ | large, small | --- , small |

TABLE 3 Results from Testing 1 of "Vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'"

By looking at table 3 it can be observed that the learner managed to primarily remember those words that were introduced by means of a combination of visual and verbal techniques and movement (*upstairs, downstairs, rock, to pull into the boat*, etc.), whereas she did not provide *leave, stay*, and *large* which were introduced by verbal means only.

This homework assignment was corrected together with the learner in class with the teacher repeating and stressing the mnemonic devices that had already been introduced the lesson before during the above described vocabulary presentation.

Towards the end of the lesson, the learner was tested on the words on the same vocabulary sheet "Island for sale" for the second time (cf. T2 in table 2) with the following results:

| Presentation of examples as on sheet | Expected answers | Answers supplied by the learner (T2) |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Arrive by helicopter = _____ | mit dem Helikopter ankommen | --- |
| L__e (verlassen) ≠ s__y (bleiben) | leave , stay | leave , --- |
| Arrive ≠ l__e (verlassen) | leave | leave |
| U_ ≠ d__n | up, down | up, down |
| go upstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going upstairs] = _____ | hinaufgehen | hinaufgehen |
| go downstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going downstairs] = _____ | hinuntergehen | hinuntergehen |
| to pull into the boat = ins B__ z_____ | ins Boot ziehen | ins Boot ziehen |
| to pay the b__ = Re_____ bez_____ | bill, Rechnung bezahlen | bill., Rechnung bezahlen |
| A b__ = eine Re_____g | bill, Rechnung | bill, Rechnung |
| scream [+ drawing of an angrily screaming woman] = _____ | schreien | schreien |
| schaukeln = r__k | rock | rock |
| L__g_ = big ≠ sm__ | large, small | --- , smole (sic) |

TABLE 4 Results from Testing 2 of "Vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'"

This time (cf. table 4), the learner filled in one word more than in the previous testing (*leave*) (cf. table 3), but spelt incorrectly a word she previously had spelt correctly, namely *smole* (sic) instead of *small*.

After having corrected the second test, the learner was handed out another blank copy of the vocabulary sheet and was asked to fill in again until the following lesson (cf. T3 in table 2):

| Presentation of example as on sheet | Expected answers | Answers supplied by the learner (T3) |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| arrive by helicopter = _____ | mit dem Helikopter ankommen | ----- ankommen |
| L_ _ _ e (verlassen) ≠ s_ _ y (bleiben) | leave , stay | leave, --- |
| arrive ≠ l_ _ _ e (verlassen) | leave | leave |
| U_ ≠ d_ _ n | up, down | up, down |
| go upstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going upstairs] = _____ | hinaufgehen | hinaufgehen |
| go downstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going downstairs] = _____ | hinuntergehen | hinuntergehen |
| to pull into the boat = ins B_ _ _ z_ _ _ _ _ | ins Boot ziehen | ins Boot ziehen |
| to pay the b_ _ _ = Re_ _ _ _ _ _ bez_ _ _ _ _ | bill, Rechnung bezahlen | bill., Rechnung bezahlen |
| A b_ _ _ = eine Re_ _ _ _ _ g | bill, Rechnung | bill, Rechnung |
| scream [+ drawing of an angrily screaming woman] = _____ | schreien | schreien |
| schaukeln = r_ _ k | rock | rock |
| l_ _ g_ = big ≠ sm_ _ _ | large, small | largg (sic), smole (sic) |

TABLE 5 Results from Testing 3 of "Vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'"

In the third testing (cf. table 5 above), the learner still did not manage to recall *stay* for 'bleiben', but obviously vaguely remembered *large* and *small*, since she wrote them down with an incorrect spelling (cf. table 5).

At the end of the following lesson the learner had to fill in the words and phrases on the vocabulary sheet for the fourth time (cf. T4 in table 2):

| Presentation of examples as on sheet | Expected answers | Answers supplied by the learner (T4) |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| arrive by helicopter = _____ | mit dem Helikopter ankommen | --- |
| L_ _ _ e (verlassen) ≠ s_ _ y (bleiben) | leave , stay | leave , --- |
| arrive ≠ l_ _ _ e (verlassen) | leave | leave |
| U_ ≠ d_ _ n | up, down | up, down |
| go upstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going upstairs] = _____ | hinaufgehen | hinaufgehen |
| go downstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going downstairs] = _____ | hinuntergehen | hinuntergehen |
| to pull into the boat = ins B_ _ _ z_ _ _ _ _ | ins Boot ziehen | ins Boot ziehen |
| to pay the b_ _ _ = Re_ _ _ _ _ _ bez_ _ _ _ _ | bill, Rechnung bezahlen | bill., Rechnung bezahlen |
| A b_ _ _ = eine Re_ _ _ _ _ g | bill, Rechnung | bill, Rechnung |
| scream [+ drawing of an angrily screaming woman] = _____ | schreien | schreien |
| schaukeln = r_ _ k | rock | rock |

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|
| L__g_ = big ≠ sm__ | large, small | large, small |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|

TABLE 6 Results from Testing 4 of "Vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'"

In the fourth testing of the vocabulary sheet, the learner finally was able to recall the correct spelling of both *large* and *small* and the only words she did not fill in are *arrive by helicopter* and *stay*.

Again, the correction of the vocabulary sheet took place in class together with the learner by means of the teacher providing mnemonic cues in order to elicit the missing words from the learner. Until the following lesson on the next day the learner had to complete the vocabulary sheet for the fifth time, and this time she managed to recall correctly all words except for *stay* (cf. T5 in table 2):

| Presentation of examples as on sheet | Expected answers | Answers supplied by the learner (T5) |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| arrive by helicopter = _____ | mit dem Helikopter ankommen | mit dem Helikopter ankommen |
| L__e (verlassen) ≠ s__y (bleiben) | leave , stay | leave , --- |
| arrive ≠ l__e (verlassen) | leave | leave |
| U_ ≠ d__n | up, down | up, down |
| go upstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going upstairs] = _____ | hinaufgehen | hinaufgehen |
| go downstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going downstairs] = _____ | hinuntergehen | hinuntergehen |
| to pull into the boat = ins B__ z_____ | ins Boot ziehen | ins Boot ziehen |
| to pay the b__ = Re_____ bez_____ | bill, Rechnung bezahlen | bill., Rechnung bezahlen |
| A b__ = eine Re_____g | bill, Rechnung | bill, Rechnung |
| scream [+ drawing of an angrily screaming woman] = _____ | schreien | schreien |
| schaukeln = r__k | rock | rock |
| L__g_ = big ≠ sm__ | large, small | large, small |

TABLE 7 Results from Testing 5 of "Vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'"

She had been filling in the missing words on the vocabulary sheet for a whole week – and it still (or more and more) meant great fun to her. Furthermore, she was highly motivated to fill it in again for homework until the following day (cf. T6 in table 2). This time she remembered all the words correctly regarding spelling as well as meaning, even *stay*:

| Presentation of examples as on sheet | Expected answers | Answers supplied by the learner (T6) |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| arrive by helicopter = _____ | mit dem Helikopter ankommen | mit dem Helikopter ankommen |
| L__e (verlassen) ≠ s__y (bleiben) | leave , stay | leave , stay |
| arrive ≠ l__e (verlassen) | leave | leave |

| | | |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| U_ ≠ d_ _ n | up, down | up, down |
| go upstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going upstairs] = _____ | hinaufgehen | hinaufgehen |
| go downstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going downstairs] = _____ | hinuntergehen | hinuntergehen |
| to pull into the boat = ins B_ _ _ z_ _ _ _ _ | ins Boot ziehen | ins Boot ziehen |
| to pay the b_ _ _ = Re_ _ _ _ _ _ bez_ _ _ _ _ | bill, Rechnung bezahlen | bill., Rechnung bezahlen |
| A b_ _ _ = eine Re_ _ _ _ _ g | bill, Rechnung | bill, Rechnung |
| scream [+ drawing of an angrily screaming woman] = _____ | schreien | schreien |
| Schaukeln = r_ _ k | rock | rock |
| L_ _ _ g_ _ = big ≠ sm_ _ _ | large, small | large, small |

TABLE 8 Results from Testing 6 of "Vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'"

The figures corresponding to T7 in table 2 show the learner's rate of retention regarding the words on the vocabulary sheet "Island for sale" approximately two and a half months after the previous testing:

| Presentation of examples as on sheet | Expected answers | Answers supplied by the learner (T7) |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| arrive by helicopter = _____ | mit dem Helikopter ankommen | ----- |
| L_ _ _ e (verlassen) ≠ s_ _ y (bleiben) | leave , stay | leave , saly (sic) |
| arrive ≠ l_ _ _ e (verlassen) | leave | leave |
| U_ ≠ d_ _ n | up, down | up, down |
| go upstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going upstairs] = _____ | hinaufgehen | hinaufgehen |
| go downstairs [+ drawing of stairs and arrows signalling going downstairs] = _____ | hinuntergehen | hinuntergehen |
| to pull into the boat = ins B_ _ _ z_ _ _ _ _ | ins Boot ziehen | ins Boot ziehen |
| to pay the b_ _ _ = Re_ _ _ _ _ _ bez_ _ _ _ _ | bill, Rechnung bezahlen | bill., Rechnung bezahlen |
| A b_ _ _ = eine Re_ _ _ _ _ g | bill, Rechnung | bill, Rechnung |
| scream [+ drawing of an angrily screaming woman] = _____ | schreien | schreien |
| Schaukeln = r_ _ k | rock | rock |
| L_ _ _ g_ _ = big ≠ sm_ _ _ | large, small | large, small |

TABLE 9 Results from Testing 7 of "Vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'"

Comparing the figures under T7 in table 2 with those from the previous testings under T5 and T6 in the same table, a slight deterioration becomes obvious, since in the previous two testings the learner had managed to provide correctly all the words and all but one word, respectively, whereas in the seventh testing she left out 'mit dem Helikopter ankommen' and spelt incorrectly

stay, namely *saly* (sic). However, considering that the interval between the testings had been quite long, it may be claimed that the amount of words the learner could still provide, is rather large. It therefore may be supposed that the learner's achievements might as well be attributed to the effort and time invested into the presentation of the lexis on the vocabulary sheet "Island for sale".

In order to check if the learner was also able to access and recall these (and other) words when confronted with a different testing source, she was handed out the so-called "Words in isolation test: Didactic unit 'Island for sale'" (cf. appendix no.21) and the "Vocabulary Retention Test: Didactic unit 'Island for sale'" (cf. appendix no.22) and asked her to try to recall as many words as possible without setting a time limit.

As already indicated by the title of the test, individual words were tested in isolation and the learner had to provide the English words for the L1 words. It has to be mentioned that although the test contained fifty L1 words that had to be translated into English, I will merely refer to those words that have been discussed above. Unfortunately, neither *rock* nor *arrive by helicopter* appeared on the test. The results of the "Words in isolation test" (see appendix no.21) are illustrated by the figures in table 10 below⁵⁹:

| Results: "Final Testing Phase – Part Two: "Words in isolation test: 'Island for Sale'" – Individual silent work | T1 |
|--|-----------|
| Total number of words to be filled in | 50 |
| Words filled in | 30 |
| Words not filled in | 20 |
| Words filled in correctly | 26 |
| Words filled in incorrectly (meaning & form) | 4 |
| Words filled in incorrectly (form) | 2 |
| Words filled in incorrectly (meaning) | 2 |

TABLE 10 Results from Testing 1 of "Words in isolation test: Didactic Unit 'Island for sale'"

| Presentation of examples as on sheet | Expected answers | Answers supplied by the learner (T1) |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| ankommen = _____ | arrive | --- |
| verlassen = _____ | leave | --- |
| bleiben = _____ | stay | --- |
| hinauf = _____ | upstairs | upstairs |
| Hinunter = _____ | downstairs | downstairs |
| Rechnung = _____ | bill | bill |
| ins Boot ziehen = _____ | to pull into the boat | to pull into the boat |

⁵⁹ T1 = 5 Nov

| | | |
|------------------|--------|-------|
| klein = _____ | small | small |
| groß = _____ | large | small |
| schreien = _____ | scream | shout |

TABLE 11 Results from Testing 1 of "Words in isolation test: Didactic Unit 'Island for sale'"

Regarding the words the learner did not provide (cf. table 11), it has to be stressed that she always had had problems with recalling or accessing (correctly) the verb *stay*, whereas she previously often had managed to recall *leave* and *arrive*, even if mostly as synonymous pair. The fact that she could not provide these two verbs in this testing may be attributed to the fact that not even the slightest cues were offered to support the learner's accessibility to the words. In previous tests, *leave*, *arrive* and *stay* always had been presented in some kind of (synonymous or antonymous) relationship, which facilitated both the access to and the recall of these words. However, she managed to provide *small* and *large*, which were introduced by means of antonymy and an example situation (scenario), *bill*, which was presented to her by a combination of various techniques (e.g. example situation, rhyming with *hill*, *electricity bill*, gesture for *the bill*, *please* in a restaurant, personalisation, etc.), *upstairs* and *downstairs*, which were introduced by means of gestures, drawing, personalisation, example situations, drills, and finally *to pull into the boat*, which as well was presented by means of a personalised example situation (scenario), TPR with speaking drills and gestures. Regarding the verb 'schreien', the learner supplied the English verb *shout*, which is correct, even though the intended answer would have been *scream*.

The second test, namely the "Vocabulary retention test" (see appendix no.22), I have referred to above, is a gap-fill exercise containing twenty-eight individual sentences and fifty-nine gaps, which had to be completed by the learner by means of translating the L1 words indicated in front of each sentence. The results are indicated in table 12 below⁶⁰:

| Results: "Final Testing Phase – Part Three: "Vocabulary Retention Test: 'Island for Sale'" – gap-fill exercise - individual silent work | T1 |
|--|-----------|
| Total number of words/compound nouns/verb phrases to be filled in | 59 |
| Different words to be filled in | 47 |
| Words filled in | 44 |
| Words not filled in | 15 |
| Words filled in correctly | 36 |
| Words filled in incorrectly (form & meaning) | 8 |
| Words filled in incorrectly (form) | 4 |

⁶⁰ T1 = 7 Nov

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Words filled in incorrectly (meaning) | 4 |
|---------------------------------------|---|

TABLE 12 Results from Testing 1 of "Vocabulary Retention Test: 'Island for sale'"

Table 13 below illustrates the learner's achievements regarding the individual words tested in the "Vocabulary retention test: 'Island for sale'" (see appendix no.22):

| Presentation of examples as on sheet | Expected answers | Answers supplied by the learner (T1) |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Mit dem Helikopter ankommen: Larry and his girlfriend _____ . | arrive by helicopter | arrive by helicopter |
| Bleiben, verlassen: Roxanne doesn't want to _____ on the island. She wants to _____ . | stay, leave | --- , --- |
| Hinauf, hinunter: Roxanne, Larry and Duncan go _____ and _____ . | upstairs, downstairs | upstairs, downstairs |
| [...] ins Boot ziehen: [...] and Duncan _____ the dog _____ the _____ . | pulled [...] into the boat | pullt (sic) into the boot (sic) |
| Rechnung bezahlen: Duncan cannot _____ the ____ . | pay [...] bill | --- |
| Schreien: Roxanne _____ because there is a [...]. | screams | screams |
| [...] groß [...]: Larry says: "[...] We can [build] a _____ [new] house here." | big | big |
| Klein: Bobo is very _____ . | small | small |

TABLE 13 Results from Testing 1 of "Vocabulary retention test 'Island for sale'"

What is interesting here (cf. table 13) is the fact that here, too, the learner was not able to provide *stay* and *leave*, although here the verbs were presented within a context. Moreover, it is noteworthy that she spelled both *pull* and *boat* incorrectly (*pullt* (sic), *boot* (sic)), even though she had recalled them correctly only a few minutes earlier. This time, she managed to provide *scream* (instead of *shout* as in the above test), which, too, had been introduced to her on the "Vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'" by means of the drawing of a screaming woman and the keyword technique ("I *scream*: 'Ice-cream!'").

By looking at the above presented results of the learner's learning progress with the ten lexical items in question, it may be concluded that the most important aspect of any vocabulary presentation is its uniqueness: the more 'special' a word's introduction is, the more easily is it remembered by the learner. The second element vital to any efficient vocabulary presentation is to address as many channels of perception as possible in order to facilitate accessibility and retention. This becomes obvious by looking at how *stay*, *leave*, *arrive*, *arrive by helicopter* were introduced to the learner and by comparing this presentation with the ones of the other words. Although the learner obviously had already been familiar with the above words, these words were the ones she had the biggest problems with regarding retention and spelling, which probably may

be attributed to the fact that they merely were introduced by means of verbal illustrations of meaning without any sort of further mnemonic cues or visual image to accompany them, while words or phrases, such as *to pull into the boat, small, large, big, etc.*, were presented by means of a combination of verbal and visual presentation techniques.

Finally, it is noteworthy that the learner sometimes supplied words correctly in one testing but not in the following testing (e.g. *small – smole*), which means that, generally speaking, there is no stability in her mastering of words.

5.4.2 Tracing Principle 2: Effect of personal effort put into a word by the learner (depth of processing) on retention

The second principle the teaching project is based on is concerned with examining possible links between depth of processing, which in this context simply refers to the personal effort put into a word by the learner, and vocabulary retention. In section 3.4.2 I have already quoted Schmitt's (2000: 121) so-called "depth of processing hypothesis", which holds that maximum manipulation of words eventually leads to maximum retention. In this respect, depth of processing, or personal effort, can be considered an important component inherent in Principle 1 as well as in Principle 3. Furthermore, the hypothesis implies that, generally speaking, learners should not be provided with ready-made vocabulary lists by the teacher, since if no mental effort is required from the learners in order to, for instance, infer the meaning of an unknown word, the retention rate will be rather low. An experiment by Wilson and Bransford (cf. Bransford 1979), referred to in 3.1.3.4, illustrates that the rate of retention is higher with a group that had to do a ranking activity (ranking items according to their importance for survival on an island) than two other groups that were supposed to recall words from word lists or rank words according to their degree of pleasantness, respectively. In this respect, I would like to briefly refer to the two basic conclusions drawn by Gairns and Redman (cf. section 3.4.2 in the theory part of this thesis), which hold that the mere intention and determination to learn new lexis is not enough for remembering it and that deep processing as well as categorising individual words according to a certain theme maximise and facilitate retention (cf. Gairns & Redman 1986: 91).

5.4.2.1 Tracing principle 2 by means of individual words

The following examples taken from various vocabulary activities used in the teaching project are meant to illustrate what is actually intended by the terms *depth of processing, personal effort* and *learner involvement* and how I tried to ensure that the learner had to put mental effort into the vocabulary work. This section is concerned with illustrating the learning process on the basis of individual words, namely *father* and *electricity (bill/company)*, into which she had to put conscious mental effort in order to recall them correctly, and – as contrast – by means of one

more word, namely *pay*, into which no special personal effort was put. Actually, these three words were not initially selected for serving the purpose of documenting the impact of depth of processing on retention but were chosen only later on in the course of the teaching process.

Example 1: father

The first example that serves to illustrate the importance of mentally engaging learners in order to enhance a correct retention of words concerns the word *father*, which the learner spelled correctly during our first lesson when she had to complete a gap-fill activity (cf. appendix no.4 for "Gap-fill: 'A surprise for Prince Sterling'"): _ _ _ _ _ (Vater) [*father*]

However, in the following lesson, in the same gap-fill exercise as the one mentioned above, she suddenly mixed up the letters *t* and *h* in *father*, producing *fahter* (sic); thus, during the subsequent correction I made her aware of her mistake and simultaneously told her that I probably knew the reason for her mistake and this way I tried to draw the learner's attention to the highly frequent and important word *father* – as illustrated by the following teacher-learner interaction:

T: Ich weiß, warum du *ht* schreibst anstatt *th*. Weißt du es auch?

L: [smiles] Nein.

T: Willst du es wissen?

L: Ja!

T: Im Deutschen verwenden wir das sogenannte stumme *h* um Selbstlaute, also a, e, i, o, u in Wörtern zu verlängern, wie zum Beispiel in *Fahne* oder *Bahn*, und da man beim englischen Wort *father* das *a*, das /fa:/, lang sagt, setzt du unbewusst ein stummes *h* ein. Man sagt aber *father*, wie bei *the*, *there*, und wenn du das *h* und das *t* vertauschst, dann würde man /fa:ta/ sagen, wie im Deutschen. Wir brauchen aber *th*, das ist ganz wichtig. Okay? Merkst du dir das?

The learner was listening intently to my rather lengthy explanation and, as can be seen from the subsequent records of the learner's spelling of *father*, this language awareness raising activity had been effective and successful, since from this point onwards she not even once made this mistake again and – on asking her why she thought she had finally remembered the correct spelling of *father* – she gave my explanation as the reason for her successful retention of the word.

Example 2: electricity, electricity company, electricity bill

The noun *electricity* together with the compound nouns *electricity company* and *electricity bill*, respectively, were introduced to the learner at the beginning of the story *Island for sale*. She came across the form *electricity company* while listening to the narrator's voice on CD and simultaneously reading along. Considering that the while-listening/-reading task had been to underline unfamiliar words, she underlined *electricity company*; during the subsequent activity, which involved guessing unknown words from the context (cf. section 4.1.3.5), the meaning of the compound noun had to be clarified, since she neither had been familiar with *company* nor

with *electricity*. When the learner was asked to read the part of the story she had previously merely listened to (with while-reading tasks which combine different reading strategies for different purposes, namely scanning the text for words she had written down during the previous listening phase and skimming the text for the gist) out aloud, she naturally had problems with the pronunciation as well as the stress pattern of the lexical unit. Thus, I immediately corrected her pronunciation by stressing the appropriate syllables in the words *COMpany* and *elecTRicity*, which she imitated. When reading the text for the second time, I told her to stop after each paragraph and asked reading comprehension questions to check if she understood the content of the story and to make her make use of the new lexis introduced in the story:

T: What does Duncan get one Monday morning? Eines Montag Morgens ... Look at the picture!

L: Duncan gets a letter.

T: From whom does he get a letter?

L: From the ele ... eles...

T: From the elecTRicity COMpany [pronounces carefully], elecTRicity COMpany.
Man betont *TRI* und *COM* und man schreibt zwar *company*, aber man sagt *KAMpany*.

L: [repeats four times] *elecTRicity COMpany*

T: Who brings the letter?

L: The postman?

T: Yes, good. What is written in the letter? What does the letter say?

L: Elec... Elec.... *ElecTRicity* from October to March: fünfthousand (sic) pounds

T: fivethousand pounds, FIVEthousand pounds.

L: fünfthousand pounds, fivethousand pounds, fivethousand pounds [...]

This teacher-learner exchange clearly shows that drills were used and, once again, the learner's attention was drawn to the particularities of these two words in question by pointing out to her the correct stress pattern as well as pronunciation. It was clearly noticeable that the learner was eager to stress and pronounce the words correctly and therefore concentrated on both spelling and pronunciation.

The following lesson, the learner was asked to do a gap-fill exercise (cf. appendix no.3 for "Worksheet 6") based on the first part of the story *Island for sale*. The lines where she should have filled in *electricity company* and *electricity* run as follows:

13. He opens the l_____. It's fr__ the ele_____ co_____.

14. Ele_____ fr__ Oct_____ to Ma____: 5.000 ,
("Worksheet 6")

Considering the fact that she did the exercise for the first time, it was not surprising that she could recall neither *electricity* nor *company* and therefore left the gaps blank. However, when she did the same gap-fill again in the following lesson only two days later, she did manage to recall *electricity* but spelt it incorrectly, namely *electrisiti* (sic).

During the subsequent correction I tried to elicit from the learner the missing words and the correct spelling of words she had spelt incorrectly, respectively, and in the case of *electricity* I fell back on another drill asking her to write down *electricity* three times and at the same time to say it aloud. Moreover, she was provided with a mnemonic aid making her aware that the last part of the word was spelled like *city*, which was another word for *town*. For homework until the next lesson (only one day later), she had to do the gap-fill again – and, again, wrote *electrisiti* (sic), even though she actually managed to fill in correctly sixty-five words or word parts (of a total of seventy-two), among which were *company* and *electric lights*. Once again, the above mentioned cue was pointed out to her:

T: Wie die *Stadt*, hab ich gestern gesagt, schreibt man das Ende von *electricity*.

L: Mit *c* und *y* am Schluß?

Two days later, the learner had to do the so-called "Vocabulary Progress Test" (cf. appendix no.23), which contains lexis introduced in the course of the previous lessons and which consists of three parts (1. *Find the opposite*, 2. *Find a synonym*, 3. *Find the English word*). In part three the learner was required to provide the English word for the L1 word 'Stromrechnung', but she actually could not recall *electricity bill* and therefore left it out. When I subsequently tried to prompt *bill* by means of a certain hand movement typical of restaurant guests gesturing to the waiter that they wanted the bill introduced earlier in the teaching project, she was able to provide it immediately. In this context, it is noteworthy that the noun *bill* previously had been introduced by means of a scenario combined with the personalisation technique. It is true that at this stage she still had had problems with the spelling of *electricity*, but since I had told her that the second part of the word was spelt like the word *city*, she self-corrected her own incorrect spelling (*electrisiti* (sic)). At the end of that lesson the learner was asked to repeat the "Vocabulary Progress Test" (cf. appendix no.23) and then managed to recall *electricity bill* correctly for the first time and it was clearly visible how intensely she concentrated on the word when writing it down, using all the available mnemonic aids she remembered.

In the course of the teaching project the learner had to repeatedly provide *electricity*, *electricity bill* and *electricity company* in a large number of different activities (cf. appendix no. 10 for the matching activity on "Worksheet 11", cf. appendix no.3 for the gap-fill exercise on "Worksheets 6, 7 and 8", cf. appendix no.23 for the "Vocabulary Progress Test", cf. appendix no. 8 for the "Vocabulary Progress Test 2" on "Worksheet 16", cf. appendix no.21 for the "Words in isolation test" on "Final Testing Phase Part two" and cf. appendix no. 22 for the "Vocabulary Retention Test" on "Final Testing Phase Part three"), in which she always managed to recall them correctly – which, it must be added, she was really proud of.

Admittedly, the learner's progress and success in this case cannot exclusively be attributed to the amount of personal effort she put into the word(s), since recycling certainly played a

significant role as well. However, it may be assumed that her conscious mental attempt to come to terms with *electricity (bill/company)* in fact contributed to her later constant mastery of these words.

Example 3: to pay

The learning process concerning the verb *to pay* stands in stark contrast with the ones presented above, since it perfectly illustrates the possible consequences of firstly, not drawing any attention to a new word, and secondly, of not ensuring that deep processing on the learner's part takes place.

Even though *pay* had been introduced to the learner already in the first lesson of the teaching project by means of the prepared "Vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'" (cf. appendix no.2) used for pre-teaching important words for the subsequent reading of the story, the learner had not recognised the word until much later on in the teaching project. On the "Vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'" (cf. appendix no.2) she merely had to deal with the word *bill*, since she did not have to actively produce *pay* and therefore simply did not notice it:

to pay the b_ _ _ = Re_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ bez_ _ _ _ _
a b_ _ _ = eine Re_ _ _ _ _ g

Four lessons and eight days later, when she did the "Vocabulary Progress Test" (cf. appendix no.23), she was confronted with *pay* for the first time, since she had to provide the English word for 'bezahlen' but instead produced *buy*, supposedly due to their both being related to money. During the correction of the vocabulary test it was obvious that the word *pay* was completely new to her even though it had appeared and been worked with in all our previous lessons. As already mentioned above, the learner never had to actively produce it, so it obviously went unnoticed. During the correction she did not know how to write it, at first produced again *buy*, then even *beg* and only after having it spelt out to her three times, she managed to put it down correctly. Afterwards she was looking at the written word *pay* in disbelief and perplexedly and it could be noticed that for her it was completely unfamiliar. Thus, when I asked her whether she remembered the word, she denied. Approximately ninety minutes later the vocabulary test was repeated and, again, she was not able to provide *pay* for 'bezahlen'. Five days later, when doing the same vocabulary test for the third time, instead of *pay* she put down *sell*, which can be attributed to the meaning-relatedness of these words. Two lessons later we played a game with word cards (cf. appendix no.17 for "Worksheet 18" and cf. appendix no.16 for "Worksheet 24") during which she was continuously mixing up the pronunciation of *buy* and *pay* and *paid* and only after having pronounced it incorrectly approximately six times and having been corrected each time, did she manage to say *pay* correctly. In fact, the learner did not reach a certain familiarity with *pay* in the course of the whole teaching project and it might be assumed that the

lack of attention and of personal effort at the beginning of the teaching project contributed its share to this lack of achievement.

The reason for presenting the learning process regarding the verb *pay* has been to show that *passive* recycling does by no means guarantee retention and obviously does not seem to be sufficient for remembering new lexis. In this respect, I would like to once again refer to the "depth of processing hypothesis" (cf. Schmitt 2000: 121; section 3.4.2 in the theory part of this thesis), which stresses the huge importance of putting personal (mental) effort into vocabulary in order to enhance retention and to commit new words to the long-term memory (cf. 3.2, 3.3 and 3.6 in the theory part of this thesis). A teacher, therefore, should spend considerable time on contemplating how to present, how to work with new lexis and how to actively involve learners into vocabulary work. Naturally, in the course of English lessons, there will come up words (e.g. infrequent words, technical jargon words, etc.) that do not have to be mastered actively but only known passively by learners⁶¹ – thus, the teacher should decide consciously which words are to be transferred into long-term memory and which words merely have to be understood for the duration of a certain activity (e.g. reading of an article) but can be forgotten immediately afterwards.

The verb *pay* definitely is a high-frequency word and should certainly be committed to long-term memory⁶² and it has been a mistake on my part that I did not draw the learner's attention to the verb at the beginning of the teaching project. However, this experience in fact has been useful and quite important for my further teaching career.

Generally speaking, in the above examples language awareness raising activities and the learner's conscious effort put into the words obviously contributed a lot to her retention of the words in question. Actually, the first two examples stand for a number of similar cases and results with other words in the teaching project. What becomes obvious by comparing the progress the learner achieved with both *electricity bill* and *father* with her failure to recall or provide *pay*, which had been completely ignored and disregarded during the first part of the teaching project, is that the most important factor is to put focus on lexis that is to be acquired and to highlight and make words visible to the learner and to 'force' learners to consciously work with vocabulary.

⁶¹ For a detailed discussion of receptive vs. productive lexis cf. section 4.1.1 in this thesis

⁶² For a detailed discussion of long-term and short-term memory cf. 3.2 in this thesis

5.4.3 Tracing Principle 3: Effect of recycling and of retrieval cues on retention

This section is concerned with illustrating the importance of recycling of newly acquired lexis by means of actual examples taken from the teaching project.

In the theory part of this thesis, I have already discussed the necessity of recycling in 3.3 and 3.6, which concern the theories of forgetting and their implications on vocabulary teaching and learning, in 3.2, which deals with committing new lexis to long-term and short-term memory (cf. Zull 2002: 180ff; Brand & Markowitsch 2009: 70ff; Schmitt 2000: 129; Multhaup 1995: 136), in 3.4.1, which discusses the enhancement of retention in general and the importance of recycling in particular, as well as in 4.2, which finally tackles the actual recycling/testing activities of previously introduced lexis and the usage of mnemonic devices. As already mentioned in 5.4.1, mnemonic devices (or, retrieval cues) introduced during the presentation of new vocabulary may as well be applied during the recycling phase of the same lexis, since they not only are considered to enhance and facilitate retention, but also to facilitate access to words already stored in the mind (cf. Brand & Markowitsch 2009: 73ff in section 3.2). Retrieval cues are of particular importance if one considers "cue-dependent forgetting" (cf. Gairns & Redman 1986: 89, cf. 3.3), which holds that "recall [...] [is] considerably strengthened by appropriate retrieval cues" and which appears to be backed up by actual examples from my own teaching project as well (Gairns & Redman 1986: 89). Finally but yet importantly it has to be stressed that regular recycling should not be considered a luxury but a necessity, since without it newly acquired lexis most likely would not be retained (cf. 'decay theory' discussed in 3.3).

Regarding the recycling of lexis carried out in the project, it has to be pointed out that the "revision schedule" suggested by Russell and referred to by both Gairns and Redman (1986: 94) and Schmitt (2000: 130) (cf. section 3.6), would not have been sufficient here, since this particular learner actually required much more recycling activities within a much shorter time-span. In this respect., homework (cf. section 3.6) played an extremely crucial role, as it provided the learner with additional practice. However, lack of time on the learner's part sometimes lengthened the intervals of time between our individual lessons, which had a negative impact on the learner's retention, since she would have needed shorter time-spans in-between the individual recyclings and testings (see below).

5.4.3.1 Tracing Principle 3 by means of data collected from "Worksheet 16: 7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2" (cf. appendix no.8)

In order to illustrate the importance of recycling by means of this teaching project, the results of one and the same vocabulary test that the learner took repeatedly over a period of approximately three months are presented here. The so-called "Vocabulary Progress Test 2" (cf. appendix no.8) contains words from both didactic units "Island for sale" and "Birthday" treated in

the project and involves finding an antonym, finding a synonym and translating from L1 into L2. Each test can at the same time be considered a further recycling exercise on the previously acquired vocabulary from the graded reader *Island for sale* (Colins 2007) and from the story "A surprise for Prince Sterling" taken from the textbook *More!1* by Gerngross et al. (2009: 86f). Since this subchapter is concerned with demonstrating that without regular recycling retention will not take place, the number of words provided by the learner is more important than the actual words that were tested. For further reference, the "Vocabulary Progress Test 2" is put in the appendix (cf. appendix no.8).

Each time, the learner first had to do the test on her own without any time limit.

By looking at the results of the individual testing or recycling exercises – represented in figures - in the tables 14 to 17 below, the learner's overall learning progress and process concerning the vocabulary on "Vocabulary Progress Test 2" (see appendix no.8) in the course of the whole teaching project can be measured and simultaneously the role recycling plays in this respect can be examined (cf. T1, T2, T3, T4, T5 in tables 14 – 17)⁶³:

| Results: "Worksheet 16: 7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2: a. Opposite!" | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T5 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total number of words/phrases to be filled in | 21 | 21 | 21 | 21 | 21 |
| Words/phrases filled in | 10 | 12 | 11 | 13 | 15 |
| Words/phrases not filled in | 11 | 9 | 10 | 8 | 6 |
| Words/phrases filled in correctly | 10 | 9 | 9 | 11 | 14 |
| Words/phrases filled in incorrectly | 0 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 |

TABLE 14 Results from Testings 1 - 5 OF "Worksheet 16: 7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2, a. Find the opposite"

| Results: "Worksheet 16: 7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2: b. Synonym" | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T5 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total number of words/phrases to be filled in | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Words/phrases filled in | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Words/phrases not filled in | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 4 |
| Words/phrases filled in correctly | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Words/phrases filled in incorrectly | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 |

TABLE 15 Results from Testings 1 - 5 OF "Worksheet 16: 7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2, b. Find a synonym"

⁶³ T1 = 14 Sept, T2 = 26 Sept, T3 = 10 Oct, T4 = 31 Oct, T5 = 5 Nov

| Results: "Worksheet 16: 7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2: c. English word" | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T5 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total number of words/phrases to be filled in | 22 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 22 |
| Words/phrases filled in | 7 | 12 | 10 | 7 | 19 |
| Words/phrases not filled in | 15 | 10 | 12 | 15 | 3 |
| Words/phrases filled in correctly | 6 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 18 |
| Words/phrases filled in incorrectly | 1 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 1 |

TABLE 16 Results from Testings 1 - 5 OF "Worksheet 16: 7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2, c. Find the English word"

| Results: "Worksheet 16: 7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2: a. Opposite, b. Synonym, c. English word" - Individual silent work" | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T5 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total number of words/phrases to be filled in | 51 | 51 | 51 | 51 | 51 |
| Words/phrases filled in | 18 | 25 | 23 | 22 | 38 |
| Words/phrases not filled in | 33 | 26 | 28 | 29 | 13 |
| Words/phrases filled in correctly | 17 | 16 | 16 | 18 | 34 |
| Words/phrases filled in incorrectly | 1 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 4 |

TABLE 17 Results from Testings 1 - 5 OF "Worksheet 16: 7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2, a. Opposite, b. Synonym, c. English word"

By comparing the figures from the first testing (cf. T1 in tables 14 – 17) with the ones from the second testing (cf. T2 in tables 14 – 17), it can be observed that the learner actually managed to fill in seven words more than in the first testing, but, interestingly enough, the number of incorrectly filled in words rose by eight, which means that despite providing more words she also made more mistakes than in the first testing. Regarding the time span between the two tests, it certainly may be argued that it was too long (twelve days), since at first recycling of new vocabulary should take place within shorter intervals.

The results of the third testing, which took place exactly two weeks after the second testing, are shown under T3 in tables 14 to 17. Contrasting these figures with the ones obtained in the second testing (cf. T2 in tables 14 – 17), it can be noted that even though the learner filled in two words less than in the previous testing, the amount of correctly provided words is identical with the one in the second testing.

The results of the fourth testing, which was carried out three weeks later, are indicated by the figures under T4 in tables 14 to 17. Contrasting the results obtained in the fourth testing (cf. T4 in tables 14 – 17) with the ones from the previous testing (cf. T3 in tables 14 - 17), a slight upward trend can be recognised, since - despite filling in one word less than in the third testing - she managed to put down two correct words more than the previous time.

An enormous progress can be noted by confronting the above figures obtained in the fourth testing (cf. T4 in tables 14 – 17) with the ones from the fifth testing (cf. T5 in tables 14 – 17), which took place only five days after the previous one. In the fifth testing the learner not only managed to fill in sixteen words more than in the fourth testing, but she also was able to provide correctly the same number of words, namely sixteen, and only filled in incorrectly four words. However, the question, if this huge progress is linked with the amount of recycling that already took place or rather with the fact that between the fourth and the fifth testing there were merely five days in-between, remains. It may be assumed that the positive results of the fifth testing (cf. T5 in tables 14 – 17) probably may be attributed to both.

After she had finished the tests (cf. T1, T2, T3, T4, T5 in tables 14 - 17), I copied her test and we subsequently went through it together in order to correct her mistakes; simultaneously, I always tried to elicit those words from the learner she previously had not managed to recall on her own by providing either new or already well-known retrieval cues or mnemonic devices. The role of retrieval cues or mnemonic devices becomes obvious when taking a closer look at the following table⁶⁴:

| Results: "Worksheet 16: 7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2: a. Opposite, b. Synonym, c. English word" - teacher-learner exchange: teacher tries to elicit missing/incorrect words from the learner by providing cues | T1 | T3 | T4 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total number of words/phrases not filled in or filled incorrectly by learner at her previous individual attempt of the test | 33 | 35 | 33 |
| Words/phrases successfully elicited from learner by teacher providing cues | 29 | 29 | 32 |
| Words/phrases that could not be elicited from learner by teacher providing cues | 4 | 6 | 1 |

TABLE 18 Results from Correction of Testings 1, 3, 4 of "Worksheet 16: 7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2, a. Opposite, b. Synonym, c. English word"

By comparing the figures for T1 in tables 14, 15, 16 and 17 above with the ones in table 18, the impact of the usage of retrieval cues as well as the validity of the theory of "cue-dependent forgetting" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 89) discussed in section 3.3 can hardly be denied. These elicitations, on the one hand, serve to make the learner aware of various strategies and techniques how to remember and to access vocabulary (cf. 4.1.3 and 4.2), and, on the other hand, to motivate her by showing to her that she actually had retained many more words than she could recall during the testing activity and additionally to point out to her that she could access these words by means of retrieval cues (cf. 3.3 for the theory of "cue-dependent forgetting"). Therefore, I did not simply provide the missing or correct words but actively involved her into the word-finding process in order to facilitate and aid the further retention of the lexis. Before we started, I

⁶⁴ T1 = correction of testing 1 on 14 Sept, T3 = correction of testing 3 on 10 Oct, T4 = correction of testing 4 on 31 Oct

had told her that I was convinced that she knew much more words than she had written down and I wanted to prove it to her, too – which I did.

Comparing the amount of words (29) that could be successfully elicited from the learner by the teacher during the subsequent correction of the third testing, it can be seen that it equals the one from the correction of the first testing, which can be observed by comparing the figures corresponding to T1 and T3 in table 18. Once again, it has to be stressed that the number of words that could be successfully elicited from the learner by the teacher providing cues is enormous (29), which offers strong evidence that the words the learner could not access or recall on her own but that could be elicited by means of appropriate cues were not forgotten but merely 'misaid'. This, however, would suggest that the nature of the learner's problems regarding recalling vocabulary is more closely linked with retrieval than with retention.

T4 in table 18, which shows the results of the correction of the fourth testing, or, in other words, the elicitation of words the learner had not been able to recall on her own, once again makes obvious the impact of mnemonic cues: from the thirty-three words that had to be elicited from the learner thirty-two could be successfully elicited.

To illustrate the above claims, I would like to present one illustrative teacher – learner interaction carried out according to the principle of attempting to elicit the appropriate word from the learner:

Example 1: "stay ≠ _____" [the intended word is *leave*]

T: Okay. Listen. Close your eyes and listen to me! Concentrate!

L: [closes eyes and listens intently]

T: Okay. Stell dir den "Vocabulary Sheet" vor: *stay* is the last word – das letzte Wort – ...

L: 'Bleiben'!

T: Very good. Und siehst du vor dir auch das Gegenteil von ...

L: [correct pronunciation] *Leave*!

T: Very, very, very good! Yes! Write it down, please!

L: [spells it correctly]

T: How did you spell it? [checks learner's spelling of *leave*] Correct!

Und richtig geschrieben hast du auch! Sehr gut, Anna! Very, very good!

I briefly would like to comment on the above example, since it perfectly illustrates and appears to support one of the main principles emphasised in this thesis, namely that it is essential for language teachers to provide the learners with a huge variety of strategies and techniques they can choose from to enhance and facilitate retention, or to put it differently, to give them tools and to show to them how to use these tools efficiently and successfully. After having become used to and familiar with the various strategies, after a certain period of 'apprenticeship', so to speak, the next step for learners is to actively and independently work with these tools and to apply them

effectively to foreign language learning; in fact, this should take place at the learner's individual pace and as a gradual process.

What is noteworthy here – and now we are returning to the starting point of this dissipation – that this learner obviously has already used mnemonic devices she has become familiar with during our vocabulary lessons:

Example 4: "up ≠ _____ " [the intended word is *down*]

T: You know that. I know that you know it. Look at me: [moves fingers imitating going upstairs and then downstairs, which is an already fixed gesture]

L: Ah, *upstairs* and *downstairs*. *Up* and *down*!

Example 5: "*large* = _____ " [the intended word is *big*]

T: This is easy. I know that you know another word for *large*. Close your eyes and listen carefully! Denk an den "Vocabulary sheet": can you see the word *large* on it? Und was steht da neben *large* ... ?

L: [with her eyes closed she suddenly says] *large* *small* *big*! *Big*!

T: Very good! *Big*!

The latter example perfectly illustrates the workings of the learner's brain, since the process that takes place when a certain word is retrieved as well as the various detours that are taken in order to arrive at the appropriate word, are displayed and could literally be observed. The learner visualised the "Vocabulary sheet 'Island for sale'" (cf. appendix no.2) in order to recall another word for *large*, which together with its antonym *small*, was on the sheet. Thus, she was both able to provide its synonym and its antonym, which probably is an important point here, since it obviously supports the claim that it is vital not to present words as isolated entities, but within a certain context that is meant to facilitate retention of as well as accessibility to a single word (cf. 3.1 on the mental lexicon; cf. 2.2.9 on synonyms and antonyms). Moreover, the learner did not only remember one single word but three words that were stored together in the mind and that therefore either could be retrieved individually or altogether. Actually, the number of similar examples occurring in the teaching project is endless, however, their presentation here would be redundant, since they all follow more or less the same principles and rules.

Whenever it appeared to be useful – I generally put focus on language form by pointing out to the learner similarities between L1 and L2, since it may be supposed that language awareness activities (cf. 4.2.8 on language awareness raising activities) might help the learner to form connections between word forms and meanings, which hopefully contribute in a positive way to retention and accessibility of L2 words. Examples of raising the learner's awareness to inter-language similarities are recorded below:

[the underlined word parts are those to which the attention is drawn:]

Example 8: 'warten' = to wait, 'Platz' = place, 'bauen' = build

5.4.3.2 Tracing Principle 3 by means of data collected from Didactic Unit

"Birthday": "Gap-fill: Fill in the missing words or find the English word!"

(cf. appendix no.4)

The following tables illustrate the results obtained from a 'gap-fill' exercise consisting of two pages, which is based on the story "A surprise for Prince Sterling" (Gerngross et al. 2009: 86f) and therefore contains the lexis introduced within the context of the didactic unit "Birthday" (see appendix no.4 for the "gap-fill exercise"). As in the previous section, the focus here is not put on the individual words to be filled in but on the number of words that were recalled/not recalled and supplied correctly/incorrectly by the learner from one testing to the next, since the aim of tracing principle 3 is to measure the impact recycling has on retention. However, in the following discussion of the results, the learner's learning/retention progress is commented on and illustrated by means of actual examples.

The learner either had to provide the English words for the L1 words in brackets or to guess the appropriate words that fitted in the gaps; the guesswork was facilitated by the presence of cues for each word: the number of the lines indicated the number of letters a word consisted of and for each word there was provided at least the initial letter, in most cases, however, more than one letter and sometimes even half words were indicated⁶⁵.

[T1: 1st testing of sheet 1 on 24 Aug, T2: 2nd testing of sheet 1, 1st testing of sheet 2 on 25 Aug, T3: 3rd testing of sheet 1, 2nd testing of sheet 2 on 29 Aug, T4: 4th testing of sheet 1, 3rd testing of sheet 2 on 31 Aug, T6: 6th testing of sheet 1, 5th testing of sheet 2 on 31 Oct, T7: 7th testing of sheet 1, 6th testing of sheet 2 on 7 Nov.]

| Results: "3. Post-reading: Gap-fill 'A surprise For Prince Sterling'" – individual silent work | T1⁶⁶ | T2 | T3 | T4 | T6 | T7 |
|---|------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total number of words/word parts to be filled in | 113 | 209 (113/96) | 209 | 209 | 209 | 209 |
| Words/word parts filled in | 39 | 147 (82/65) | 189 | 194 | 196 | 198 |
| Words/word parts not filled in | 74 | 62 (31/31) | 20 | 15 | 13 | 11 |
| Words/word parts filled in correctly | 33 | 130 | 177 | 179 | 174 | 183 |

⁶⁵ T1 = testing 1 of sheet 1, 24 Aug, T2 = testing 2 of sheet 1, testing 1 of sheet 2, 25 Aug, T3 = testing 3 of sheet 1, testing 3 of sheet 2, 29 Aug, T4 = testing 4 of sheet 1, testing 3 of sheet 2, 31 Aug, T6 = testing 6 of sheet 1, testing 5 of sheet 2, 31 Oct, T7 = testing 7 of sheet 1, testing 6 of sheet 2, 27 Nov.

⁶⁶ In the first testing (cf. T1 in table 19), the learner merely had to do the first page of the exercise and therefore less words (113) had to be filled in. Under T2 the number of words the learner had to fill in on both pages 1 and 2 are indicated separately: The numbers below (.../...) indicate the amount of words filled in on sheet 1/sheet 2).

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|--------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | (75/55) | | | | |
| Words/word parts filled in incorrectly (form & meaning) | 6 | 17 (7/10) | 12 | 15 | 22 | 15 |
| Words/word parts filled in incorrectly (form) | 4 | 15 (7/8) | 10 | 13 | 14 | 10 |
| Words/word parts filled in incorrectly (meaning) | 2 | 2 (0/2) | 2 | 2 | 7 | 5 |

TABLE 19 Results from Testings 1 – 7 of Sheet 1 and from Testings 1 – 6 of Sheet 2 of "3. Post-reading: Gap fill (cloze): Fill in the missing words or find the English word!"

In the first testing of sheet 1 (cf. T1 in table 19), from the 113 words she had to fill in, she only managed to provide 39 and of these merely 33 correctly. Comparing these figures under T1 in table 19 with the ones of the second testing of sheet 1 (cf. T2), which took place already the following day, illustrated in the same table under T2, an enormous progress is recognisable, since this time the learner provided 43 words more than in the first testing (cf. T2 in table 19). In addition to this, she managed to put down correctly 42 words more than in her first attempt. Now the learner also had to fill in the missing words on the second page of the gap-fill exercise. Considering the fact that the words to be filled in on both pages partly overlap, it is not surprising that already her first attempt at the second page of the gap-fill (cf. T2 in table 19) was more successful than her first attempt at page one of the gap-fill the previous day.

The third testing of sheet 1 and the second testing of sheet 2, respectively, was a great success for the learner, since she actually managed to recall 189 words and moreover made only few form and meaning mistakes (12) (cf. T3 in table 19). Regarding the words she left out (20) it can be said that these mostly were words she had been struggling with repeatedly; in some cases, however, these words were ones she previously had recalled without the slightest problems, such as *sit*. Here, too, it has to be emphasised that among the omitted words there even was the verb *have*, which is one of the most frequent and most important words of the English language, the words *hear*, *listen* and *watch*, which also are frequent verbs, *bring*, whose form and meaning similarity with the L1 word *bringen* is obvious, the verb *take*, which she had not managed to remember at all, or *with*, which often had been mixed up with the colour adjective *white* before.

With regard to the words whose form she had provided incorrectly, it must be mentioned that within an apparent consistency a certain inconsistency concerning some words can be recognised: for example, she usually had known the noun *servant* since my introduction of the keyword technique (cf. example 14: "Die Diener servieren Ameisen."), but sometimes it simply was not possible for her to access the word. Another example that illustrates the above mentioned inconsistency concerning her ability to access and to recall certain words, concerns

the verb *whisper*, which, by the way, belonged to her 'favourite' words: besides her correct spelling of *whisper* quite a few versions of one and the same word could be encountered, namely *wispehr* (sic) and *wisperie* (sic); the same is true for *surprise*, which sometimes was spelt *surprice* (sic) or *surprese* (sic), for *prince*, whose last letter *-e* she omitted regularly, for the noun *game*, which often got the letter *-n* at the end of the word, and finally for *guests*, whose *u* and *e* were frequently exchanged. It has to be emphasised that the learner regularly mixed up various letters in a word: so, for example, she mixed up the *t* and the *h* in the word *father* until I told her why I thought she made that mistake and elaborated on why it was wrong to spell it *ht* (- because of German pronunciation and spelling rules according to which a silent *h* serves to prolong the pronunciation of the vowel in front of the *h*, as in *Ehre*, pronounced /e:re/ or in *Ahnen*, pronounced /a:nen/).

However, there were also words she never managed to recall - some of these were: *also* for 'auch', *with* for 'mit', *listen to* for 'zuhören', *near* for 'nahe', *have* for 'haben', *are* for 'bist/sind/seid/sind', *take* for 'nehmen', *want* for 'wollen', *like* for 'mögen' etc. It can be supposed that her lack of ability to access or to recall these words is connected with the emphasis that is put on these words during the various tasks and the corresponding vocabulary work. In order to illustrate this assumption, I would like to refer to the word *because*: the learner never had been able to recall its word form, which may firstly be attributed to me having put less stress on that word than I put on content words, and secondly to my inability to find a mnemonic aid for it. Conjunctions, such as *because* or *with*, and more or less easy words whose form is very similar to the German one, such as *bring*, stand in stark contrast to content words like *servants*, *fireplace*, *invite*, *presents*, *birthday*, on which I have put much more emphasis during the presentation as well as during the practice phase.

The above analysis of the learner's shortcomings might support both Principle 1 (cf. 5.1), which is based on the assumption that retention and accessibility of words are connected with the way they are introduced, and Principle 2 (cf. 5.1), which holds that the effort put into words in order to find their meaning, in order to practise, to elicit and to recycle them is decisive for the rate of retention, since words that get much attention during the presentation phase as well as during the recycling phase and that are repeated again and again, are much more likely to be committed to long-term memory and much more easily recalled, accessed and remembered correctly.

The assumptions contained in Principle 1 (cf. 5.1) as well as those of the so-called "decay theory" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 89) discussed in sections 3.3 and 3.6 in the theory part of this thesis, might be supported by another observation, which I consider quite interesting as well: words, such as *circle*, that initially are paid attention to and repeated over a certain period of time but not used or practised actively and deliberately, and which then are encountered or

repeated for a short amount of time afterwards, are likely to be either spelt incorrectly although they have been spelt correctly before, or to simply be forgotten or to be no longer accessed as easily as before – or, to put it with Gairns and Redman's (1986: 89) words – they "gradually fade in the memory and ultimately disappear."

Comparing the results of the fourth testing of sheet 1 and the third testing of sheet 2 (cf. T4 in table 19) with those of the previous testing (cf. T3 in table 19), it can be said that a general improvement is noticeable, since this time the learner was able to provide more words (194) than last time (189); interestingly, the number of words filled in incorrectly nevertheless corresponds to the previous one (15). With regard to the incorrectly filled in words it must be emphasised that although the number of mistakes is identical, the various errors do not concern the same words in the two gap-fills.

In order to illustrate her spelling difficulties, I now would like to present a few illustrative examples. The learner did not only have problems with the spelling of some specific words, but her difficulties with words varied, which means that one and the same word often was spelt both correctly and incorrectly in one and the same exercise:

Example 18:

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| line 3: <i>fireplase</i> (sic) | - | line 26: <i>fireplace</i> |
| line 9: <i>cakses</i> (sic) | - | line 24: <i>cakes</i> |
| line 30: <i>wisperie</i> (sic) | - | line 14: <i>whispers</i> |

Additionally, it also happened that the learner created two or more incorrect versions of one word:

Example 19:

line 9: *beauteful* (sic) - **line 24:** *beutifuls* (sic) - **line 32:** *beautiful*

Furthermore, the learner sometimes mixed up the meanings of certain words, which represented another characteristic feature of her difficulties; so, for instance, she kept mixing up the meanings of the words *invite* and *presents* in spite of her generally knowing the meaning of *presents* and *surprise*:

Example 20:

line 21: " ' We've got a presents (sic) (Überraschung) for (für) you [...]' "
title: "A surprise for Prince Sterling"

Finally, I would like to comment on the overall results as illustrated under T1 to T7 in table 19. By comparing the figures obtained in the second testing of sheet one and the first testing of sheet two of the gap-fill exercise as illustrated under T2 in table 19, with the ones from the third testing of sheet one and the second testing of sheet two (cf. T3 in table 19), an enormous upward trend can be observed, since in the latter the learner filled in 42 words more than in the

previous one (namely 189 words), and moreover managed to provide correctly one 177 words, which were 47 words more than in the former testing. Considering the fact that the second testing of sheet one and the first testing of sheet two (cf. T2 in table 19) took place only one day after the first testing of sheet one (cf. T1 in table 19), and that the third testing of sheet one and the second testing of sheet two (cf. T3 in table 19), respectively, took place merely four days after the second testing of sheet one and the first testing of sheet two, it may be assumed that the learner's retention progress may be attributed to the tight revision schedule, which resembled the one proposed by Russell (1997, qtd. in Gairns & Redman 1986: 94) referred to in section 3.6 in the theory part of this thesis, which attempts to "ensure that new material is permanently recorded":

- 1 A five-minute review five to ten minutes after the end of a study period
- 2 A quick review twenty-four hours later
- 3 A further review one week later
- 4 Final reviews one month later and then six months later

In this context, I would like to once again refer to Schmitt (2000: 130), who as well stresses the huge importance of "expanded rehearsal" in order to minimise forgetting and attrition, and whose illustrations of the "typical pattern of forgetting" and the "pattern of forgetting with expanded rehearsal" make obvious the importance of structured recycling within any learning process so that retention of newly introduced vocabulary may take place.

The learner's positive retention progress continued, as can be seen by looking at the figures under T4 in table 19, which illustrate the results from the fourth testing of sheet one and the third testing of sheet two of the gap-fill exercise, which took place two days after the previous testing. This time, the learner managed to fill in five words more (194 words) and to put down correctly two words more (179) than in the testing two days earlier.

By comparing the results indicated under T4 (cf. table 19) with the ones obtained two entire months later illustrated under T6, it can be observed that – despite the huge amount of time in-between these two testings – the learner's achievement did not deteriorate drastically. Even though she put down two words more than in the previous testing, she also provided incorrectly five words more. Considering the amount of time between these two testings, it has to be emphasised that the learner here managed to maintain a certain stability. This, once again, may support the principle of "expanded rehearsal" proposed by Schmitt (2000: 130) as well as Principle 3 (cf. 5.1), which holds that recycling is essential for retention and that without recycling retention will not take place. In this case, it may be supposed that the learner's achievements could be attributed to the fact that recycling took place in frequent and short intervals.

The results from the last testing, which was carried out only one week after the previous one, are presented under T7 in table 19. Here, the learner filled in 198 words (cf. T7 in table 19),

which are two words more than in the previous testing (cf. T6 in table 19), and furthermore managed to put down correctly 183 words (cf. T7 in table 19), which are nine words more (cf. T6 in table 19).

Comparing the learner's achievements in the testings of "Worksheet 16: 7.F Vocabulary Progress Test 2" (cf. tables 14 - 17) with the ones of the "Gap-fill exercise" (cf. table 19) it may be stressed that the latter show a gradual upward trend, whereas the former also contain setbacks. It might be assumed that these results probably are connected with the time-span between the various testings, since while the intervals between the testings of the gap-fill exercise were much shorter than the ones between the individual testings of the "Vocabulary Progress Test 2", they were not conducted more frequently.

5.5 Discussion of Results: Retention of lexis as reflected in testings/recycling

This subsection is primarily concerned with summarising and discussing the results obtained from the teaching project in the light of the three principles the whole project is founded on.

The very first principle holds that teachers can contribute to learners' retention of new lexis already during its presentation by means of making use of a combination of different presentation techniques and mnemonic cues meant to facilitate learners' subsequent access to and retrieval of the words in question. To sum up the results gained from tracing principle 1, it can be said that by using a combination of several presentation techniques that, firstly, address as many sensory channels as possible (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic), and that, secondly, render each word 'special', or, in other words, that in one way or another underline the 'uniqueness' of each word and consciously draw attention to words, is it possible to enhance learners' access and retention of words. The presentation techniques applied when introducing new vocabulary to learners may serve as mnemonic aids, or retrieval cues later on during the recycling phase when learners have to recall or retrieve this lexis (independently). Moreover, particularly combinations of strategies that involved visual images and gesture or mime, as it was, for example, the case with *upstairs* and *downstairs*, *small*, *big* and *large*, or presentations that contained personalisation or evoked emotional associations, as with *to pull into the boat*, were useful, since they contributed a great deal to the learner's rate of retention and facilitated accessibility. Furthermore, as can be observed in the teaching project, the fact that learners supply a certain word correctly once does neither imply that they 'know' or 'master' this word nor automatically guarantee that they will provide the word correctly the next time (cf. the learner's alternating spelling of *whisper* or *small*).

Therefore, no matter how impressive a vocabulary presentation is, it hardly will be sufficient to ensure that learners without special needs retain the words in question, and least of all will learners with special needs be able to remember newly introduced words without further recycling activities.

Moreover, following Nation's (2001: 23) claim that words differ with regard to their "learning burden" (cf. section 2 in this thesis, or cf. Nation 2001:23), different degrees of attention have to be drawn to different words, which means that some words need more attention than others, which is best illustrated by the verb *stay*, which was introduced by verbal means only and which was provided by the learner for the very first time in the seventh testing.

Finally, I would like to refer to presentation by means of isolated word lists, which do not offer any cues meant to facilitate retention or access. The consideration of the results obtained from testing the learner on isolated words she had to learn at home let us arrive at the conclusion that mere rote-learning of decontextualised, isolated words is the least efficient technique – particularly with dyslexics language learners who need to fall back on mnemonic (multi-sensory) cues when trying to recall words.

The second principle on which the teaching project is based stresses the importance of depth of processing and claims that putting personal effort into words is essential in order to enhance retention of vocabulary. Principle 2 was illustrated by documenting the learner's learning process/progress with regard to three individual words, namely *father*, *electricity* (*bill/company*) and *to pay*.

The first two words were focussed on by means of language awareness raising activities that involved analyses of spelling and pronunciation errors and corresponding explanations, so that the learner's attention was drawn to both the aforementioned aspects, which involved depth of processing on the learner's part. In the case of *father*, which the learner had spelt *fahter* (sic), a detailed error analysis was enough to ensure the learner's subsequent correct spelling of the word.

The learner's (non-existing) learning process with the verb *to pay* was presented in order to show what may happen to words that do not get any form of attention – they pass unnoticed. If learners do not consciously work with words, or, do not invest personal effort into them, they either will be forgotten soon or, most likely, will not even be recognised.

Principle 2, which is based on the assumption that retention of vocabulary will not take place without regular recycling activities, was traced by illustrating the learner's learning progress regarding a large number of words that were recycled/tested by means of different testing/recycling formats over a certain time interval.

Generally speaking, the results obtained from the various testing/recycling activities emphasised the necessity of tight revision schedules and intensive recycling according to the

principle of "expanded rehearsal" (cf. Schmitt) to reduce forgetting and attrition. If recycling occurs in frequent and short intervals, the chances that new vocabulary is retained are high. In the case of the learner on who the teaching project was based, gradual improvement – with occasional set-backs - could be observed and it has to be stressed that the shorter the time-span in-between the various testings were, the better and the more stable were her achievements. When the time intervals – particularly between the very first testings – were longer, she had to experience set-backs.

Regarding the impact of the theories of forgetting (cf. section 3.3, or, cf. Gairns & Redman 1986:89) on the results obtained from the teaching project it may be said that both the so-called cue-dependent forgetting and the decay theory have played an important role. The "decay theory" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 89), which corresponds to my principle 3 and which holds that recycling is necessary in order to minimise attrition, is – as is principle 3 – supported by the findings presented in the teaching project. The theory of "cue-dependent forgetting" (Gairns & Redman 1986: 89), on the other hand, holds that some words "persist in the memory" but cannot be retrieved nevertheless, which indicates that these words are not forgotten but simply are "misaid". In the course of the teaching project a large number of examples supporting the theory of cue-dependent forgetting could be recorded, since when the tests the learner previously had to do on her own were subsequently corrected together: although she was not able to recall an enormous amount of the intended words independently, she often managed to retrieve them on my providing her with the appropriate cues (only a few instances after the individual testing). These findings led to the question how the learner could be made to internalise the cues so that she no longer needed the teacher to provide them. Actually, this problem could not be solved within the time available for the teaching project. However, it is to be assumed that the learner - after having been able to observe the teacher's conscious usage of mnemonic aids over a longer period of time – probably will be able to use these cues without any further help and moreover will learn how to use these resources and similar coping strategies independently. Most likely, just more time would have been necessary for the learner to take the second and third step, since she was already able to take step one:

Step 1: reacting on cues provided by the teacher

Step 2: internalising cues and using cues independently

Step 3: developing own cues

Finally, let me sum up the most important findings with regard to the three principles with a few final words. By making use of a combination of different vocabulary presentation techniques that address as many sensory channels as possible and that pay attention to particularities and uniqueness of words definitely facilitate retrieval and retention, since these

techniques serve as mnemonic cues learners can fall back on. Moreover, teachers should ensure that learners put personal effort into words, since depth of processing, too, enhances remembering and recalling words (correctly). Language awareness raising activities, which involve splitting up words and focussing on their correct spelling and pronunciation, have proven especially helpful. Providing learners with prepared vocabulary lists should not be the first choice if words should be committed to long-term memory. Furthermore, recycling can be said to be one of the most – if not *the* – most important pillar of vocabulary learning and teaching, since without regular and intensive practice of previously acquired words retention is very unlikely and only after a certain amount of scheduled recycling is done stability in achievements can be observed. Considering the large number of words second (or, foreign) language learners have to study, mnemonic cues are extremely important, since they support learners in the process of storing words in the mind and later on of retrieving words from memory.

6. Implications of the results of my teaching project on teaching, learning and testing of vocabulary in ELT

The final chapter is concerned with the discussion of the implications of the results of the teaching project on teaching, learning and testing of vocabulary in ELT in general and with dyslexic learners in particular, as well as with questions that came up in the course of the teaching project and which would represent interesting starting points of further research into the field of teaching English to dyslexic learners.

Firstly, it has to be stressed that a combination of different vocabulary presentation, teaching and learning strategies and techniques that address as many different perception channels as possible as well as the usage of mnemonic cues and categorisations of individual words certainly make it easier for all learners (with and without learning impairments) to access, retrieve and retain vocabulary. Pre-teaching of important words may contribute a lot to learners' retention of words, since by drawing attention to the words to be learned learners will recognise their importance.

Secondly, the involvement of learners into vocabulary work and a way of language teaching that 'forces' them to put personal effort into the lexis to be acquired (depth of processing) rather than being mere recipients of input the teacher provides them with, is a further essential factor that increases the likelihood and the rate of retention. Thus, ready-made vocabulary lists or mere translations from L2 into L1 should not be the teacher's first choice if learners are meant to

acquire vocabulary (e.g. high frequency words) for active usage and to transfer it to long-term memory.

Thirdly, presentation of vocabulary must be followed by recycling of the words in question, since the mere introduction of words does by no mean guarantee that they are remembered and mastered by learners. Thus, a clearly structured revision schedule with a number of different vocabulary recycling activities is of huge importance in order to commit new lexis to long-term memory and to minimise the rate of forgetting.

In order to support the learners' retention process, already at the presentation stage teachers should fall back on mnemonic cues and devices that may also serve as elicitation cues later on when the learners want to retrieve the lexis or when the teacher tries to elicit the newly acquired vocabulary from the learners. Moreover, the more often a certain word is accessed and recalled, the faster the retrieval will become.

So far, the discussion has been focussed on vocabulary that has to be known and used actively and that therefore must be transferred to long-term memory. However, there are also words that merely have to enter the learners' short-term (or, working) memory, since they are only required to be known for a limited period of time (e.g. as long as it takes to read a text in class). Naturally, with these words, teachers may use more time-saving vocabulary presentations, such as prepared vocabulary lists or translations. Generally speaking, it is vital for a language teacher to think about what to do with which words and why and on the basis of these deliberations to decide how to handle words in the ELT classroom, since otherwise he or she runs the risk of learners not even recognising essential words.

The above discussed aspects of vocabulary teaching and learning are applicable to both learners with and without learning impairments, since also the latter's rate of retention is enhanced by the usage of mnemonic cues, different types of presentation and recycling that, for instance, involve multi-sensory approaches to vocabulary, learner involvement and depth of processing, etc. Regarding dyslexic learners, however, these strategies definitely are a necessity, since without intensive and regular practice or the usage of multi-sensory teaching and learning strategies they will not overcome their difficulties. As already argued in the above discussion of the results of the teaching project focussed on vocabulary work with a dyslexic learner, recalling the correct spelling and pronunciation of lexis, identifying the appropriate spelling for a certain sound and the other way round, as well as remembering the meaning(s) of words pose extreme difficulties for these learners and inhibit their language acquisition to a large degree. Thus, without the application of a wide range of (multi-sensory) vocabulary teaching and learning techniques and constant recycling activities and retrievals of the lexis in question, vocabulary retention would not be possible for dyslexics.

In the course of the teaching project it became obvious that the usage of a large number of different mnemonic cues (e.g. visual, auditory, etc.) and of a wide range of vocabulary teaching strategies (e.g. language awareness raising activities, gestures, mime, etc.) supported the learner's retention and ability to retrieve words. This became extremely evident within the context of the corrections of the learner's testing and recycling activities: sometimes she managed to recall independently only a few words and subsequently, when I tried to elicit the words she had not managed to provide on her own by means of applying the various mnemonic aids introduced repeatedly before, she was able to supply (nearly) all the intended words. After having repeatedly observed this phenomenon, I arrived at the assumption that the learner's problem did not primarily regard retrieving vocabulary by means of retrieval cues but rather concerned the inability to recall and therefore to independently make use of the cues connected with words that had been previously introduced. To put it differently, while she managed to retrieve words when provided with the appropriate mnemonic cues from an outside source (e.g. the teacher), she herself was not able to access the cues in question independently and therefore – when doing recycling activities on her own – she was unable to retrieve the words from her memory. On this discovery, I tried to find ways of enabling the learner to retrieve the mnemonic cues associated with words on her own (e.g. by repeating already formed associations and mnemonic cues again and again), but, generally speaking, the learner managed to access mnemonic cues – and therefore to retrieve vocabulary – directly only with a small number of words, and on the whole was not able to recall cues independently without requiring external sources (in this case, the teacher) in order to arrive at the intended words. Considering the above findings, it may be assumed that the learner did not achieve to internalise the different mnemonic cues accompanying words but always required some kind of social interaction to recall them and to use them efficiently. Thus, the question how the learner's internalisation of the mnemonic devices so that she is able to retrieve vocabulary independently without needing any external support, remains and in itself represents an interesting topic of further research.

Finally, it has to be emphasised that within a 'normal' classroom setting at school the larger part of the dyslexics' needs can hardly be met considering that the amount of time dedicated to vocabulary work is limited and that recycling therefore cannot take place to the extent to which it was carried out in the teaching project. This leads to the conclusion that dyslexic language learners have to invest much more time and effort into language learning in general and vocabulary work in particular and moreover have to learn how to apply and take advantage of learning techniques and coping strategies meant to facilitate retrieval and retention, which may never happen if their learning impairment is not discovered or if they are not supported by professionals trained for these purposes.

7. Appendix

Appendix No. 1

7 STEPS FOR "GUESSING UNKNOWN WORDS FROM THE CONTEXT":

1st: Decide whether the word is a noun, a verb, an adjective, an adverb etc.

The word's position in the sentence may be a guide, as might its ending or beginning (e.g. an –ed or –ing ending might indicate that it is a verb etc.)

2nd: Look for further clues (Hinweise) in the word's immediate collocates –

if it is a noun, does it have an article (whether it is countable or not)?

If it is a verb, does it have an object?

3rd: Look at the wider context, including the surrounding clauses and sentences – especially if there are sign-posting words, such as "but", "however", "and", "so" etc., which might give a clue as to how the new word is connected to its context.

e.g. "We got home, tired but *elated*. → the presence of "but" suggests that "elated" is not similar in meaning to "tired".

Compare: "We got home, tired and *downhearted*."

4th: Look at the form of the word for any clues as to meaning.

e.g. "downhearted" is made up of "down" + "heart" + the suffix "-ed".

5th: Make a guess as to the meaning of the word, on the basis of the above strategies!

6th: Read on and see if the guess is confirmed; if not – and if the word seems *critical to your understanding of the text (!!!)* – go back and repeat the above steps.

If the word does *not* seem *critical* and essential, carry on reading! Maybe the meaning will become clearer later on.



7th: When all else fails, consult a dictionary!

ad 5th: Languages do not exist in isolation from each other. When guessing the meaning of an unknown word make use of any other languages you speak (your mother tongue, Italian, French, Spanish ...) or you learn (Latin). More often than not they may give you clues as to the meaning of the English word!

From: Thornbury, Scott. *How to teach vocabulary*. Pearson Education Limited: 2002.

Appendix No. 2 "Vocabulary Sheet 'Island for sale'"

l_ _ _ e + s_ _ y | ISLAND FOR SALE |
 (verlassen) (bleiben)

aufregend = e_ c_ _ ing  how did you get here?
 = _ _ _ _ _
 i_ _ _ _ da  c_ _ _ _ e = Schloss
 I can do only one thing! =

to buy ≠ to sell

schakeln = r_ _ k

arrive by helicopter =
 arrive ≠ l_ _ _ _ e

ne_ _ _ _ _ r = Nachbar
 what's your n_ _ _ _ _ r's name?

visitor = B_ _ _ _
 teach painting = _ _ _ _ _

l_ _ g_ _ = big ≠ sm_ _ _ _

c_ _ _ _ r = Ecke

to pull into the boat
 = ins B_ _ _ z_ _ _ _

to pay the b_ _ _ _ = Re_ _ _ _ _ bez_ _ _ _ _


a b_ _ _ _ = eine Re_ _ _ _ _ g

in e_ _ h room = in every room

road = St_ _ _ _ e = st_ _ _ t h_ _ _ _ y = Liebling
 Honig

Tier = a_ _ _ _ l

hills = Hü_ _ _ _

scream = 
 she screams

go = upstairs

u_ _ ≠ d_ _ _ a



go downstairs

Appendix No. 3

DIDACTIC UNIT "ISLAND FOR SALE"

WORKSHEET 6

Name:

Date:

6. POST-READING ACTIVITIES:

6. A. POST-READING TASK: Gap-fill (cloze)

Fill in the missing words!

1. There are many is_ _ _ _ _ in the sea near Scotland.
2. The n_ _ _ of the is_ _ _ _ is La_ _ _ .
3. La_ _ isn't big, but it's very bea_ _ _ _ _ .
4. La_ _ is bea_ _ _ _ _ and very qu_ _ _ .
5. There are no h_ _ _ _ _ or ro_ _ _ _ or cars on La_ _ _ .
6. But there's a c_ _ _ _ _ . The c_ _ _ _ _ is very o_ _ _ .
7. In the c_ _ _ _ _ there li_ _ _ _ a young Scots_ _ _ . His n_ _ _ _ is Duncan Mc Tavish.
8. The Sc_ _ _ _ _ has a d_ _ _ . The d_ _ _ 's n_ _ _ _ is Jock.
9. Duncan is very ha_ _ _ _ on his i_ _ _ _ _ . He likes going for w_ _ _ _ _ and sw_ _ _ _ _ and fi_ _ _ _ _ in his lit_ _ _ _ bo_ _ _ .
10. In the c_ _ _ _ _ there are many b_ _ _ ro_ _ _ _ and there are many old th_ _ _ _ : pictures and heavy ta_ _ _ _ , cha_ _ _ _ and be_ _ _ .
11. In wi_ _ _ _ the c_ _ _ _ _ is very c_ _ _ _ and d_ _ _ _ . So Duncan p_ _ _ _ on a lot of ele_ _ _ _ _ lig_ _ _ _ in all the rooms.
12. One Mo_ _ _ _ morn_ _ _ _ in A_ _ _ _ , Duncan gets a le_ _ _ _ _ .
13. He opens the l_ _ _ _ _ . It's fr_ _ _ the ele_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ co_ _ _ _ _ .
14. Ele_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ fr_ _ _ Oct_ _ _ _ _ to Ma_ _ _ _ : 5.000 ,-
15. Duncan sa_ _ _ _ : " Oh, I can do o_ _ _ _ _ one th_ _ _ _ : s_ _ _ _ _ my is_ _ _ _ _ and my ca_ _ _ _ _ !"
16. So Duncan tel_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ a man in London. The m_ _ _ _ 's na_ _ _ _ is Mr. Mon_ _ _ _ _ . He s_ _ _ _ _ houses and ca_ _ _ _ _ .
- !7. "I wa_ _ _ to se_ _ _ my c_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ !" Duncan sa_ _ _ .

Name:

Date:

18. Two d_ _ _ later Mr. Mo_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ tel_ _ _ _ _ _ Duncan.
19. "L_ _ _ _ _ Larry, the fa_ _ _ _ American roc_ _ _ _ _ , wants to
b_ _ _ your c_ _ _ _ _ for his gi_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ !"
He wants to s_ _ _ the is_ _ _ _ _ tomorrow aft_ _ _ _ _
20. L_ _ _ ping Larry and his gi_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ar_ _ _ _ _
by he _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .! The h_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ar_ _ _ _ _ .
21. A t_ _ _ _ man with lo_ _ _ dark ha_ _ _ and a girl with l_ _ _ _
ye_ _ _ _ ha_ _ _ get down from it.
22. There is a small an_ _ _ _ _ with them. The an_ _ _ _ _ has l_ _ _ _
wh_ _ _ _ ha_ _ _ . It's a d_ _ _ .
23. The man is L_ _ _ ping Larry and the gi_ _ _ is his gi_ _ _ _ _ _ _
Roxanne.
24. "This is my d_ _ _ , Bobo." Roxanne sa_ _ _ .
25. L_ _ _ ping Larry l_ _ _ _ _ at the ca_ _ _ _ _ and says to Roxanne:
"L_ _ _ _ at that old ca_ _ _ _ _ , Roxanne! Don't you l_ _ _ _ it, ho_ _ _ _ ?"
26. Roxanne doesn't smi_ _ _ .
27. Larry and Roxanne go in_ _ _ the old ca_ _ _ _ _ . It's very da_ _ _ .
L_ _ _ ping Larry can't s_ _ _ and he falls d_ _ _ _ .
28. "Where are the li_ _ _ _ _ ?", he asks.
29. "I'm so_ _ _ _ . There isn't any li_ _ _ _ . The ele_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ com_ _ _ _ _
stopped my ele_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ this morning." Duncan sa_ _ _ .
30. "I want some h_ _ _ fo_ _ _ !" Roxanne says.
31. "I'm so_ _ _ _ , but I can't make h_ _ _ fo_ _ _ . I haven't got any
ele_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ . But there is some co_ _ _ fo_ _ _ ." Duncan says.
32. "Co_ _ _ fo_ _ _ ? No, tha_ _ _ you! I'm going to b_ _ _ . But first I want a
h_ _ _ bath. And Bobo wants a b_ _ _ _ , too." Roxanne sa_ _ _ .
33. "But there isn't any h_ _ _ wa_ _ _ _ ! I'm very so_ _ _ _ !" Duncan sa_ _ _ .

Name:

Date:

34. "No li_ _ _ _ ! No h_ _ _ f_ _ _ ! No h_ _ _ w_ _ _ _ ! I don't like this place!" Roxanne sa_ _ .
35. "Roxanne! Ho_ _ _ !" Duncan sa_ _ .
36. But Roxanne says: "Don't ca_ _ me h_ _ _ _ !" !"
37. Roxanne and Bobo go to b_ _ .
38. Larry and Duncan e_ _ co_ _ fo_ _ and talk. Jock wa_ _ _ _ _ them.
39. Suddenly Roxanne sc_ _ _ _ _ . Duncan. Larry and Jock run to her r_ _ _ . Roxanne is in b_ _ with her d_ _ Bobo.
40. "Ho_ _ _ , what's wr_ _ _ ?" Larry says.
41. "There was a no_ _ _ in the ro_ _ . What was it?" Roxanne scr_ _ _ _ .
42. Suddenly Duncan starts to sm_ _ _ .
42. "Why are you sm_ _ _ _ _ ?" Roxanne says. She is very a_ _ _ _ .
43. "Lo_ _ at Jock!" Duncan sa_ _ .
44. Jock is un_ _ _ the b_ _ . He has a mou_ _ in his mou_ _ .
55. "A m_ _ _ _ !" Roxanne sc_ _ _ _ _ .
56. In the mo_ _ _ _ _ , Duncan and L_ _ ping Larry are wai_ _ _ _ .
57. Roxanne a_ _ Bobo are la_ _ . They g_ _ u_ at ele_ _ o'cl_ _ _ .
58. "G_ _ _ mor_ _ _ _ !" Duncan s_ _ _ .
59. But Roxanne doesn't an_ _ _ _ . She s_ _ _ to Larry, "Larry, I don't li_ _ _ this pla_ _ . I want to go ho_ _ ."
60. "But ho_ _ _ , "Larry s_ _ _ .
61. "Don't ca_ _ me h_ _ _ _ ! This ca_ _ _ _ is o_ _ , da_ _ and very co_ _ ! There's no ele_ _ _ _ _ , no f_ _ _ and no h_ _ wa_ _ _ ! And I don't li_ _ it! Do you under_ _ _ _ _?" Roxanne says.
62. "Lis_ _ _ , ho_ _ _ ! We can bui_ _ a big new ho_ _ _ here. Our fri_ _ _ _ from California can co_ _ here and st_ _ !" Larry says.
63. Duncan l_ _ _ _ at Jock. Jock l_ _ _ _ at Duncan.
64. "Bu_ _ _ a b_ _ new ho_ _ _ !" they think. "Oh, no!"

Appendix No. 4

3.) POST-READING: GAP-FILL (CLOZE) – DIDACTIC UNIT "BIRTHDAY"

Fill in the missing words or find the English word!

" A SUR_____ FOR P_____ STERLING"

It's Thu_____ Sep_____ 17th. Pr_____ Sterling and his _____ (Vater),
K_____ Nicholas are in the c_____. They are in the _____ (groß) ro____ with the
golden fi__ p_____ and the _____ (groß) _____ (Tisch).

"Sa_____ is my bi____ d____!" the Prince _____ (schreit).

"I kn____, I kn____," the King _____ (sagt). "Sa_____ is your b_____ and
____ (am) Su_____ you can ha____ a pa_____!"

"But I'm a Pr_____! And I'm v_____ (sehr) sp_____ (besonders)!" sh_____

Prince Sterling. "So I _____ (mag) a v_____ sp_____ party. I want tw_____
beaut_____ marzipan ca_____. And I w_____ tw_____ gu_____!" P_____
Sterling sh_____ again.

King Nicholas _____ (hört zu). Then he c_____ (ruft) his ser_____.

"____ (Am) S_____, it's P_____ Sterling's b_____" he _____ (sagt).

"Le_ ' have a v_____ sp_____ party ____ (am) S_____! We _____
(brauchen) _____ (12) fant_____ (Geschenke)

____ (und) we wa____ to _____ (einladen) _____ (12) gu_____ from
the vil_____!"

The ser_____ go into the vi_____ and _____ (kaufen) _____

(wunderschöne) pr_____ for the Prince. They also in_____ (12)

_____ (Gäste) fr____ the vi_____ for the party ____ (am) S_____.

It's _____ (Sonntag). The K_____, the P_____, the s_____ and the
_____ (12) _____ (Kinder) are all in the _____ (groß) _____ (Raum)
_____ (mit) the golden fi_____ and the _____ (groß) _____ (Tisch).

____ (Auf) the t_____, there are the _____ (12) _____ (Geschenke)
and the b_____ (wunderschön) _____ (Kuchen).

The P_____ is _____ (nicht) very h_____ (froh). He s_____ (sitzt) ____ (in) a
ch_____ (Sessel) n_____ (nahe) the golden f_____ and he w_____

(beobachtet) the _____ (Kinder). They are h_____ ng f____ (haben Spass).

They are _____ ing to mu____. They a____ d_____ g (tanzen) and

p_____ (spielen) ga_____ (Spiele). They a____ d_____ (trinken)

_____ j_ i_ (Orangensaft) and _____ (essen) oranges, ba_____ and a_____ (Äpfel).

"It's time for the pr _____!" the Prince sh_____ (ruft).
The ser_____ st_____ u_ (stehen auf) and br_____ (bringen) the
_____ (12) p_____. The Prince op_____ them.

"Wow! What won_____ (wundervolle) p_____!" the _____
(Kinder) s_____ (sagen).

"They are bo_____ (langweilig)!" P_____ Sterling sh_____ (ruft). "I'm
sp_____ (besonders)! I do_' wa_____ these si_____ pre_____!"

The K_____ is very s_____ about what the Prince _____ (sagt).
And he is a_____ (auch) a bit a_____ (wütend). He _____ u_ (steht auf)
and g_____ (geht) over to the _____ (groß) _____ (Tisch) with the
_____ (12) c_____. Then he c_____ (ruft) the ch_____ to come over to
him. The King wh_____ (flüstert) som_ t_____ in the ch_____ 's
_____ (Ohren).

"_____ (warum) are you w_____?" the Prince sh_____.
"We're ta_____ (sprechen) ab_____ (über) somet_____ sp_____ for a
sp_____ Prince!" the King _____ (sagt).

"I w_____ (will) to h_____ (hören) it too!" the Prince sh_____.
"Ju_____ (Nur) a mo_____!" one of the _____ (Kinder) _____ (sagt).
"We've got a _____ (Überraschung) f_____ (für) you, Prince Sterling!"
"Oh, a s_____ p_____! I h_____ (hoffe) it's a sp_____ su_____. I'm a
sp_____ Prince!" the Prince says.

"Yes, it's v_____ (sehr) sp_____!" the _____ (Kind) s_____ (sagt). "Just
_____ (schließe) your e_____ (Augen), please!"
The Prince _____ (lächelt) and _____ (schließt) his _____ (Augen).

The _____ (12) _____ (Kinder) t_____ (nehmen) the
_____ (12) c_____ (Kuchen) and go over to the _____ (Sessel) where the
Prince is s_____ (sitzt). They st_____ (stehen) in a c_____ (Kreis) around
the Prince. Then one of them w_____ (flüstert), "_____ (1), _____ (2),
_____ (3)!" "H_____ bi_____, Prince!" they sh_____.
Then they th_____ (werfen) the b_____ (wunderschön) c_____ (Kuchen)
in the Prince's _____ (Gesicht).

Appendix No. 5

DIDACTIC UNIT "ISLAND FOR SALE"

WORKSHEET 12

Name:

Date:

7. B Fill in the correct words! Setze die richtigen Wörter ein!

- ☉ cold ☉ wants ☉ electricity ☉ tall ☉ girlfriend ☉ company ☉ honey ☉
☉ screams ☉ want (2x) ☉ wait ☉ like ☉ looks ☉ build ☉ noise ☉
☉ bed ☉ mouse ☉ dark (2x) ☉ see ☉ small ☉ lights ☉ understand ☉
☉ white ☉ water ☉ late ☉ old ☉ mouth ☉ call ☉ place ☉

- a. Leaping Larry wants to _____ Duncan's island.
- b. The American rock star and his _____ arrive on the island.
- c. Duncan and Jock _____ a long time, because Larry and Roxanne are very late.
- d. Leaping Larry is _____ and has long _____ hair.
- e. Roxanne has a _____ dog. The animal has long _____ hair.
- f. Larry _____ at the castle.
- g. Roxanne doesn't _____ the castle. It's old and very _____.
- h. "The _____ stopped my electricity this morning!" Duncan says.
- i. "I _____ some hot food!" Roxanne says.
- j. "Bobo _____ a bath, too!" Roxanne shouts.
- k. "No _____ ! No hot food! No _____ ! I don't like this _____ !" Roxanne says.
- l. Suddenly Roxanne _____. Duncan, Larry and Jock run to her room. Roxanne is in _____ with Bobo.
- m. "There was a _____ in the room," Roxanne says. "What was it?"
- n. Jock is under the bed. He has a _____ in his _____ .
- o. In the morning, Duncan and Leaping Larry are waiting. Roxanne and Bobo are _____. They get up at eleven o'clock.
- p. Roxanne says to Larry: "I _____ to go home!"
- q. "But, _____ " Larry says.
- r. "Don't _____ me 'honey' !" Roxanne says. "This castle is _____, dark and very _____. There is no _____, no food and no hot water. And I don't like it! Do you _____ ?"
- s. "We can _____ a big new house here!" Larry says.

Appendix No. 6

DIDACTIC UNIT "ISLAND FOR SALE"

WORKSHEET 26

Name:

Date:

7. M FILL IN THE MISSING VERBS IN THE PAST TENSE !!!

a. Put the verbs in brackets in the past tense and fill them in!

Yesterday Duncan _____ swimming in the sea. (go)

Duncan _____ cold food for Larry and him. (make)

Roxanne and Bobo _____ to bed. (go)

Roxanne and Bobo _____ up at eleven o'clock. (get)

The Scotsman _____ the letter from the electricity company. (read)

Duncan _____ on a lot of electric lights. (put)

The men _____ cold food and talked. (eat)

"Roxanne is silly!" Jock _____ . (think)

Two men, one girl and two dogs _____ in the boat.

They did not stand up. (sit)

Duncan _____ the bill. (pay)

Roxanne _____ about 20 years old. (is)

"I _____ sad. I did not want to sell my castle!"

Duncan said. (am)

Duncan _____: "I'm sorry, the electricity company stopped my electricity this morning. There is no light." (says)

Jock, the dog, _____ the mouse. (catch)

Larry _____ a helicopter. He is very rich. (have)

When Roxanne _____ the castle, she said:
"I don't like this castle. It is old, cold and dark." (see)

Larry and Roxanne _____ into the castle. (go)

There was no light. Larry could not see. Suddenly
he _____ down. (fall)

Roxanne _____ in bed with her dog Bobo. (sleep)

Duncan and Larry _____ a lot of orange juice. (drink)

Larry and Roxanne _____ to the island to buy the castle.
They arrived by helicopter. (come)

Roxanne _____ the island again, because she did not
like the island and the castle. (leave)

Name:

Date:

7. M FILL IN THE MISSING VERBS IN THE PAST TENSE !!!**b. Translate the German words in brackets in English !****Use the past tense and fill them in!**

Yesterday Duncan _____ swimming in the sea. (ging)

Duncan _____ cold food for Larry and him. (machte)

Roxanne and Bobo _____ to bed. (gingen)

Roxanne and Bobo _____ up at eleven o'clock. (standen)

The Scotsman _____ the letter from the electricity company. (las)

Duncan _____ on a lot of electric lights. (drehte)

The men _____ cold food and talked. (aßen)

"Roxanne is silly!" Jock _____. (dachte)

Two men, one girl and two dogs _____ in the boat.

They did not stand up. (saßen)

Duncan _____ the bill. (bezahlte)

Roxanne _____ about 20 years old. (war)

"I _____ sad. I did not want to sell my castle!"

Duncan said. (war)

Duncan _____: "I'm sorry, the electricity company stopped my electricity this morning. There is no light." (sagte)

Jock, the dog, _____ the mouse. (fing)

Larry _____ a helicopter. He is very rich. (hatte)

When Roxanne _____ the castle, she said:
"I don't like this castle. It is old, cold and dark." (sah)

Larry and Roxanne _____ into the castle. (gingen)

There was no light. Larry could not see. Suddenly
he _____ down. (fiel)

Roxanne _____ in bed with her dog Bobo. (schief)

Duncan and Larry _____ a lot of orange juice. (tranken)

Larry and Roxanne _____ to the island to buy the castle.
They arrived by helicopter.(kamen)

Roxanne _____ the island again, because she did not like
the island and the castle. (verließ)

Name:

Date:

7. M FILL IN THE MISSING VERBS IN THE PAST TENSE !!!**c. Find the correct words in the past tense!**

Yesterday Duncan _____ swimming in the sea.

Duncan _____ cold food for Larry and him.

Roxanne and Bobo _____ to bed.

Roxanne and Bobo _____ up at eleven o'clock.

The Scotsman _____ the letter from the electricity company.

Duncan _____ on a lot of electric lights.

The men _____ cold food and talked.

"Roxanne is silly!" Jock _____ .

Two men, one girl and two dogs _____ in the boat.

They did not stand up.

Duncan _____ the bill.

Roxanne _____ about 20 years old.

"I _____ sad. I did not want to sell my castle!"

Duncan said.

Duncan _____: "I'm sorry, the electricity company stopped my electricity this morning. There is no light."

Jock, the dog, _____ the mouse.

Larry _____ a helicopter. He is very rich.

When Roxanne _____ the castle, she said:
"I don't like this castle. It is old, cold and dark."

Larry and Roxanne _____ into the castle.

There was no light. Larry could not see. Suddenly he _____ down.

Roxanne _____ in bed with her dog Bobo.

Duncan and Larry _____ a lot of orange juice.

Larry and Roxanne _____ to the island to buy the castle.
They arrived by helicopter.

Roxanne _____ the island again, because she did not like the island and the castle.

Appendix No. 7

DIDACTIC UNIT "ISLAND FOR SALE"

WORKSHEET 17

Name:

Date:

7. G TRANSLATION - Übersetzung

Translate the German sentences into English!

Übersetze die deutschen Sätze ins Englische!

- a. Der hüpfende Larry schaut das Schloss an.
- b. Es gibt kein Licht, kein heißes Essen und kein heißes Wasser im Schloss.
- c. Ich mag diesen Ort nicht! Ich will nach Hause fahren!
- d. Larry und der Schotte Duncan essen kaltes Essen und reden.
- e. Der Hund beobachtet die Männer.
- f. Da war ein Lärm im Zimmer! Eine Maus ist unter dem Bett!
- g. Jock fängt die Maus. Er hat eine Maus in seinem Mund!
- h. Das Mädchen schreit wieder.
- i. Am Morgen warten die Männer. Das Mädchen und der weiße Hund stehen um 11 Uhr auf.
- j. Das Schloss ist alt, dunkel und sehr kalt. Es gibt keinen Strom, kein Essen und kein heißes Essen. Ich mag es nicht. Verstehst du?
- k. Hör zu, Liebling. Wir bauen ein großes neues Haus. Unsere Freunde können kommen und hier bleiben.

Appendix No. 8

7. F VOCABULARY PROGRESS TEST 2 WORKSHEET 16

a. Find the opposite ! Finde das Gegenteil!

light ≠ _____ old ≠ _____ shout ≠ _____
cold ≠ _____ day ≠ _____ hear ≠ _____
hate (hassen) ≠ _____ cry (weinen) ≠ _____
under the bed ≠ _____ up ≠ _____ big ≠ _____
happy ≠ _____ Good morning! ≠ _____ !
sell ≠ _____ short ≠ _____ expensive ≠ _____
stay ≠ _____ boy ≠ _____ country ≠ _____
tall ≠ _____

b. Find a synonym! Finde ein Wort mit gleicher Bedeutung!

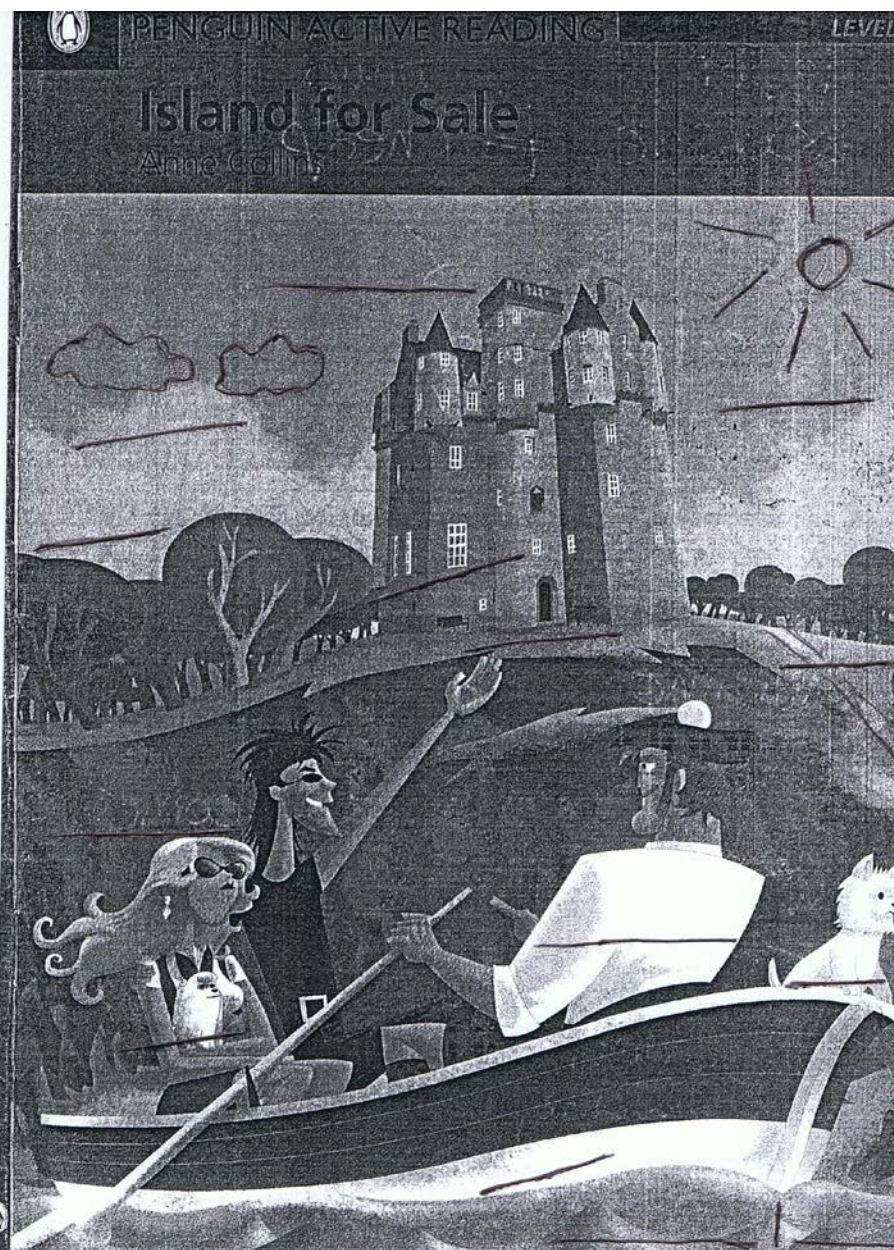
street = _____ large = _____ city = _____
to telephone = to _____ little = _____
to leap = to _____ to love = to _____
to shout = to _____

c. Find the English word! Finde das englische Wort!

etwas anschauen = to _____
beobachten = to _____
mit dem Auto ankommen = to _____
Mund = _____ Ort, Platz = _____
warten = to _____ spät = _____ später = _____
hüpfen = to _____ verstehen = to _____
bauen = to _____ ein neues Haus = _____
Bad = _____ ich weiß, ich weiß = _____,
weiße Haare = _____ gelbe Haare = _____
reden = to _____ Stromfirma = _____

Appendix No. 9

LABEL THE
OBJECTS!
Benenne die
Dinge!



From: Collins, Anne. 2007. *Island for sale*. Ed. Hopkins, Andy and Jocelyn Potter. England:
Pearson Education.

Appendix No. 10

DIDACTIC UNIT "ISLAND FOR SALE"

WORKSHEET 11

Name:

Date:

VOCABULARY ACTIVITIES

("Island for sale", focus on p. 4 – 7)

7. POST-READING ACTIVITIES:

7. A Match the words on the left with their meanings on the right!

Verbinde die Wörter auf der linken Seite mit ihren Bedeutungen auf der rechten Seite!

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. buy | a. Bad |
| 2. company | b. bauen |
| 3. honey | c. hüpfen |
| 4. electricity | d. Maus |
| 5. bill | e. Liebling; Honig |
| 6. pay | f. bleiben |
| 7. place | g. warten |
| 8. mouth | h. Firma |
| 9. mouse | i. Rechnung |
| 10. leap | j. verkaufen |
| 11. bath | k. kaufen |
| 12. stay | l. schreien |
| 13. scream | m. Mund |
| 14. wait | n. bezahlen |
| 15. build | o. Strom |
| 16. sell | p. Ort, Platz |

2.1 Were you right?

Look at your answers to Activities 1.1 and 1.2 on page ii. Are your answers right? Then answer these questions. Write the people's names.



- 1 Who is a rock star? Larry
- 2 Who is from California?
- 3 Who has a small dog?
- 4 Who wants to buy an island?
- 5 Who has money problems?
- 6 Who likes beautiful women?
- 7 Who likes big hats?
- 8 Who has a small boat?
- 9 Who has a helicopter?

2.2 What more did you learn?

Finish the sentences with words on the right.

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Leaping Larry | wants £5000. |
| 2 Mr Moneybags | in Roxanne's room. |
| 3 Duncan likes living | no hot water or electricity. |
| 4 Jock finds a mouse | has a lot of money. |
| 5 The castle has | have long hair. |
| 6 Larry, Roxanne and Bobo | on the island. |
| 7 Bobo and Roxanne | sells houses and castles. |
| 8 The electricity company | get out of the helicopter. |

2.3 Language in use

Look at the sentence on the right. Then put these words in the sentences.

at to from by
with for on in

- 1 There is only one building Lana.
- 2 Duncan likes going for walks Jock.
- 3 Duncan gets a letter the electricity company.
- 4 Mr Moneybags works London.
- 5 Larry wants to buy the island Roxanne.
- 6 Larry and Roxanne arrive helicopter.
- 7 Roxanne and Bobo go bed.
- 8 Roxanne and Bobo get up eleven o'clock.

Duncan and Jock live on the island of Lana.

2.4 What's next?

Who is thinking? Write the letters, A–D.



- 1 'I don't like this island. I want to go back to California.'
- 2 'I haven't got any money for the electricity company. I don't want to sell my island.'
- 3 'I like this island. I want to bring film companies here.'
- 4 'I want to catch rabbits. I love swimming in the sea!'

Appendix No. 12

DIDACTIC UNIT "ISLAND FOR SALE"

WORKSHEET 4

Name:

Date:

4. READING OUT ALOUD:

Now read the text out aloud!

5. Now read the text again!

5.a. WHILE – READING TASK:

WORD FORM and WORD MEANING:

Pronunciation and Spelling - Any problems?

Remembering the meanings of the words?

Pronunciation = A_____ How do you pronounce "girl"?

Spelling = R_____ How do you spell "helicopter"? H-E-L-

Meaning = B_____ What is the meaning of the word "dog"?

WRITE DOWN 6 WORDS THAT ARE EASY FOR YOU:

EASY SPELLING

EASY PRONUNCIATION

EASY MEANING

DIDACTIC UNIT "ISLAND FOR SALE"

WORKSHEET 5

Name:

Date:

WRITE DOWN 6 WORDS THAT ARE DIFFICULT FOR YOU:

DIFFICULT SPELLING

DIFFICULT PRONUNCIATION

DIFFICULT MEANING

Name:

Date:

6.E. Choose (Wähle) 10 NEW words you have learned today.

Write them on WORD CARDS and study them until our next lesson!

For each new word write down one sentence!

Example: "hot"

→ "I want hot food and a hot bath!"

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Appendix No. 13

DIDACTIC UNIT "BIRTHDAY"

REPETITION OF UNIT 14

DATE:

NAME:

TIME:

1. Reading: Read the story "A sur_ _ _ _ _ for Prince Sterling"

2. Post-reading: Answer the following questions:

Reading comprehension questions:

- a) When is the Prince's birthday?
- b) Who is in the big room?
- c) What is there in the big room?
- d) What does the Prince want?
- e) What does the King tell the servants?
- f) Who does the Prince want to invite to the party?
- g) Which presents does he want?
- h) What is on the table on Sunday?
- i) Is the Prince happy on Sunday?
- j) What are the children doing? What are they drinking and eating?
- k) Does the Prince like his presents? What does he say when he opens them?
- l) Do the other children like the presents? What do they say?
- m) Is the King happy about what the Prince says?
- n) What does the King do then?
- o) Which surprise do the children have for the Prince?
- p) Why does the Prince close his eyes?
- q) What do the children do then?

Name:

Date:

7. E READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Answer the following questions! Form whole sentences!

Beantworte folgende Fragen! Bilde ganze Sätze!

- a. Where is Lana?
→ Lana is
- b. Is it loud on Lana? Why? Why not?
→
- c. What does Duncan McTavish like?
→ He
- d. Why does Duncan put on a lot of electric lights in all the rooms?
→ Because ...
- e. From whom (von wem) and when does Duncan get a letter?
→ He gets
- f. What does Mr. Moneybags sell? Where does Mr. Moneybags live?
→ Mr. Moneybags
- g. Who is Leaping Larry? Why does he come to Lana?
→ He ...
- h. Why does Leaping Larry fall down in the castle?
→ Because
- i. Why is there no hot food and no hot water in the castle?
→ Because
- j. Who screams suddenly and why?
→
- k. Why is Roxanne angry?
→ She is angry because
- l. What is there in Roxanne's room? Where is the mouse?
→ There is ...

Appendix No. 15

DIDACTIC UNIT "ISLAND FOR SALE"

WORKSHEET 13

Name:

Date:

7. C DESCRIBE THE PEOPLE AND ANIMALS IN THE STORY!

Beschreibe die Personen und Tiere in der Geschichte!

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM?

Read the story again and collect all the things you know about each person and each animal!

Lies die Geschichte noch einmal und sammle alle Dinge, die du über jede Person und jedes Tier weißt!

Appendix No. 16

DIDACTIC UNIT "ISLAND FOR SALE"

WORKSHEET 24

Name:

Date:

7. L STUDY THE IRREGULAR PAST TENSE VERBS WITH CARDS!

a. PLAY A GAME I

Take the BLUE CARDS and put them face down on the table in front of you.

Mix them. Then try to find the PAIRS!

What is a PAIR?

→ ONE PAIR = one card with the VERB in the PRESENT TENSE and
one card with the VERB in the PAST TENSE.

for example: leave – left , take – took ...

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Each time you LOOK FOR a VERB, say it aloud!

Each time you FIND a PAIR, look at it and say the VERBS aloud!

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Nimm die BLUE CARDS und lege sie mit der Vorderseite nach unten vor dir auf den Tisch. Vermische sie. Dann versuche die PAARE zu finden!

Was ist ein PAAR?

→ EIN PAAR = eine Karte mit dem VERB (ZEITWORT) in der Gegenwart und
eine Karte mit dem VERB (ZEITWORT) in der Vergangenheit.

for example: leave – left, take – took ...

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Jedes Mal, wenn du nach einem VERB (ZEITWORT) SUCHST, sage es laut!

Jedes Mal, wenn du ein PAAR FINDEST, schau es an und sage die VERBEN laut!

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Name:

Date:

7. L STUDY THE IRREGULAR PAST TENSE VERBS WITH CARDS!

b. PLAY A GAME II

Take the BLUE CARDS. Put them face up on the table in front of you. Now you need only the VERBS in the PAST TENSE ! Put the verbs in the present tense aside! You don't need them now!

Take the SENTENCES with the GAPS and put them on the table, too.

Try to FIND the RIGHT PAST TENSE VERB for each sentence!

Which verbs are missing in the sentences?

For example: "Duncan _____ : "I'm sorry. There is no light."

The verb is: "said"

"Duncan said: "I'm sorry. There is no light."



Read aloud each sentence you find! Lies jeden Satz, den du findest, laut vor!

When you are ready, read aloud all the sentences! Lies alle Sätze laut vor!



Nimm die BLUE CARDS. Lege sie mit der Vorderseite nach oben vor dich auf den Tisch.

Jetzt brauchst du nur die VERBEN (ZEITWÖRTER) in der PAST TENSE (Vergangenheit) ! Lege die Verben in der Present tense (Gegenwart) zur Seite! Du brauchst sie jetzt nicht!

Nimm die SÄTZE mit den LÜCKEN und lege sie auch auf den Tisch.

Versuche die RICHTIGEN PAST TENSE VERBEN (Vergangenheitszeitwörter) für jeden Satz zu finden! Welche Verben (Zeitwörter) fehlen in den Sätzen?

Name:

Date:

7. L STUDY THE IRREGULAR PAST TENSE VERBS WITH CARDS!

c. PLAY A GAME III

Take the WHITE CARDS and put them face down on the table in front of you!

Mix the cards!

Try to find the PAIRS!

What is A PAIR? → A PAIR = the ENGLISH VERB and PRONOUN (I, you...) and
the GERMAN VERB and PRONOUN (Ich, du ...)



Each time you find a PAIR, SAY the English and the German verbs and pronouns aloud!

When you are ready, say all the PAIRS aloud again!



Nimm die WHITE CARDS und lege sie mit der Vorderseite nach unten vor dich auf den Tisch!

Vermische die Karten!

Versuche die PAARE zu finden!

Was ist EIN PAAR? → EIN PAAR = das ENGLISCHE VERB und FÜRWORD (I, you...) und
das DEUTSCHE VERB und FÜRWORD (Ich, du ...)



Jedes Mal wenn du ein PAAR findest, SAGE die englischen und deutschen Verben und

Fürwörter laut!

Wenn du fertig bist, sage noch mal alle PAARE laut!



go

went

pay

paid

leave

left

say

said

do

did

run

ran

put

put

think

thought

read

read

write

wrote

come

came

make

made

understand

understood

sit

sat

see

saw

swim

swam

I went ich ging you had du hattest

she bought sie kaufte we said wir sagten

they made sie machten it caught es fing

you understand you understood

we took wir nahmen he did er tat

they did sie taten you read ihr last

she sold sie verkaufte you ran du ranntest

we sold wir verkauften he sat er saß

Yesterday Duncan _____ swimming in the sea.

Duncan _____ cold food for Larry and him.

Roxanne and Bobo _____ to bed.

Roxanne and Bobo _____ up at eleven o'clock.

**The Scotsman _____ the letter from the
electricity company.**

Duncan _____ on a lot of electric lights.

The men _____ cold food and talked.

"Roxanne is silly!" Jock _____ .

Name:

Date:

7. H THE PAST TENSE: The island was for sale!

Put the verbs in brackets into *past tense simple*!

Setze die Verben (Zeitwörter) in Klammer in die *einfache Vergangenheitsform*!

PAST TENSE SIMPLE:

→ **REGELMÄSSIGE BILDUNG**: Verb + -ed

eg want+ed → wanted listen+ed → listened like+ed → liked

eg Duncan wanted to sell the island. Duncan wollte die Insel verkaufen.

Larry listened to his girlfriend. Larry hörte seiner Freundin zu.

Larry liked the island and the castle. Larry mochte die Insel und das Schloss.

→ **UNREGELMÄSSIGE VERBEN (IRREGULAR VERBS)**:

to be (sein)

Present tense simple → **Past tense simple** Gegenwart → Vergangenheit

I am → I was

You are → You were

He/she/it is → He/she/it was

We are → We were

You are → You were

They are → They were

More irregular verbs:

go → went do → did put → put swim → swam

have → had read → read write → wrote sleep → slept

buy → bought sell → sold leave → left get → got

says → said pay → paid come → came fall → fell

make → made run → ran eat → ate drink → drank

understand → understood build → built think → thought

catch → caught sit → sat see → saw swim → swam

take → took

Name:

Date:

7.1 THE PAST TENSE: TIME FOR PRACTICE!

- a. Take the story "Island for sale" and look for verbs that have a regular past tense form! Write them down here!

Nimm die Geschichte "Island for sale" und suche die Verben (Zeitwörter), die eine regelmäßige Vergangenheitsform haben! Schreibe sie hier her!

For example:

live → lived like → liked

- b. Now look for verbs that have an irregular past tense form!

Write them down here!

Nun suche Verben, die eine unregelmäßige Vergangenheitsform haben!
Schreibe sie hier her!

For example:

are → were is → was have →

Name:

Date:

7.1 THE PAST TENSE: TIME FOR PRACTICE !

c. Production task:

Now re-write page 1 of the story in the past tense!

Schreibe nun die Seite 1 der Geschichte in der Vergangenheit!

"There *were* many islands in the sea near Scotland. This story *was* about one of these islands. The name of the island

Name:

Date:

7.1 THE PAST TENSE: TIME FOR PRACTICE

d. For homework: re-write page 2 and page 3 of the story in the past tense!

Als Hausübung schreibe Seite 2 und Seite 3 der Geschichte in der Vergangenheit!

"One Monday morning in April, Duncan a letter. "What's this?" he

He the letter. It *was* from the electricity company. Duncan

Name:

Date:

7. J Translate the following sentences into English! Use the past tense!

Übersetze folgende Sätze ins Englische! Verwende die Vergangenheit!

- a. Lana war sehr schön und sehr ruhig.
- b. Duncan und Jock machten gerne lange Spaziergänge.
- c. Der amerikanische Rockstar sah das Schloss an.
- d. Jock hatte eine Maus in seinem Mund.
- e. Die Maus war unter dem Bett. Roxanne und Bobo waren auf dem Bett.
- f. Dann kam der Helikopter an.
- g. Duncan verkaufte seine Insel und sein Schloss.
- h. Roxanne und der hüpfende Larry gingen in das Schloss.
- i. Plötzlich fiel Larry hinunter.
- j. Roxanne und Bobo gingen ins Bett.
- k. Plötzlich schrie das Mädchen. Da war ein Geräusch/Lärm im Zimmer.
- l. Duncan lächelte und Roxanne war sehr wütend.
- m. Duncan schaut Jock an und Jock schaute Duncan an.
- n. Die Frau wollte nach Kalifornien fahren.

Name:

Date:

7. K THE IRREGULAR VERBS – Die unregelmäßigen Verben

Find the past tense forms of the following verbs and use them in a sentence!

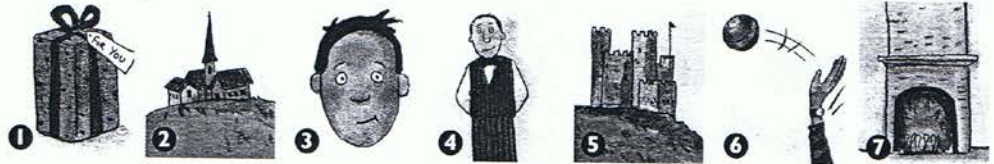
Finde die Vergangenheitsformen der unregelmäßigen Verben und verwende sie in einem Satz!

| <u>Present tense</u> | | <u>Past tense</u> | | <u>Sentences</u> |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| I <i>am</i> | → | I <i>was</i> | I <i>am</i> on the island. | → I <i>was</i> on the island. |
| You <i>are</i> | → | You | You <i>are</i> clever. | → You clever. |
| He | → | He | He silly. | → He silly. |
| She | → | She | She on the bed. | → She <i>was</i> on the bed. |
| It | → | It | It <i>is</i> under the bed. | → It under the bed. |
| We | → | We <i>were</i> | We <i>are</i> happy. | → We happy. |
| You | → | You | You sad. | → You sad. |
| They <i>are</i> | → | They | They hungry. | → They hungry. |
| | | | | |
| I <i>go</i> | → | I | I <i>go</i> to school. | → |
| She has | → | | | → |
| They write | → | | | → |
| You come | → | | | → |
| We run | → | | | → |
| Duncan reads | → | | | → |
| Roxanne sleeps | → | | | → |
| Larry buys | → | | | → |
| Duncan sells | → | | | → |
| Jock catches | → | | | → |
| Roxanne falls | → | | | → |
| They sit | → | | | → |

Vocabulary

Match the pictures with the correct words.

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---|-----------|---|---------|---|-------|
| 5 | castle | 7 | fireplace | 4 | servant | 6 | throw |
| 2 | village | 1 | present | 3 | face | | |



Story time

51
CD 2
MP3
★

12 Read the story. Then listen to it.

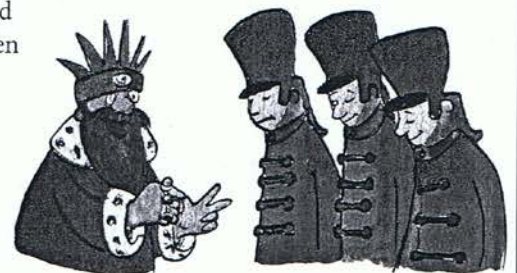
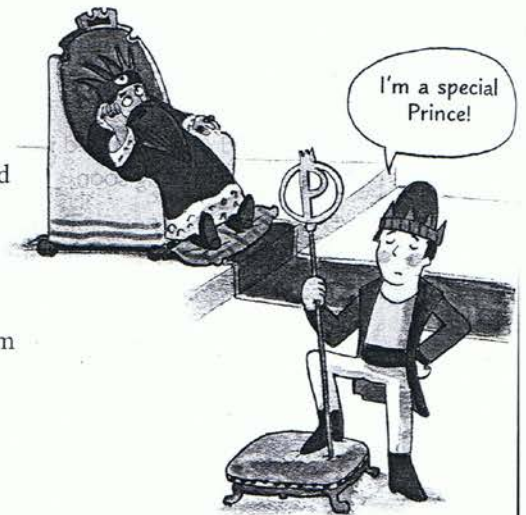
A surprise for Prince Sterling

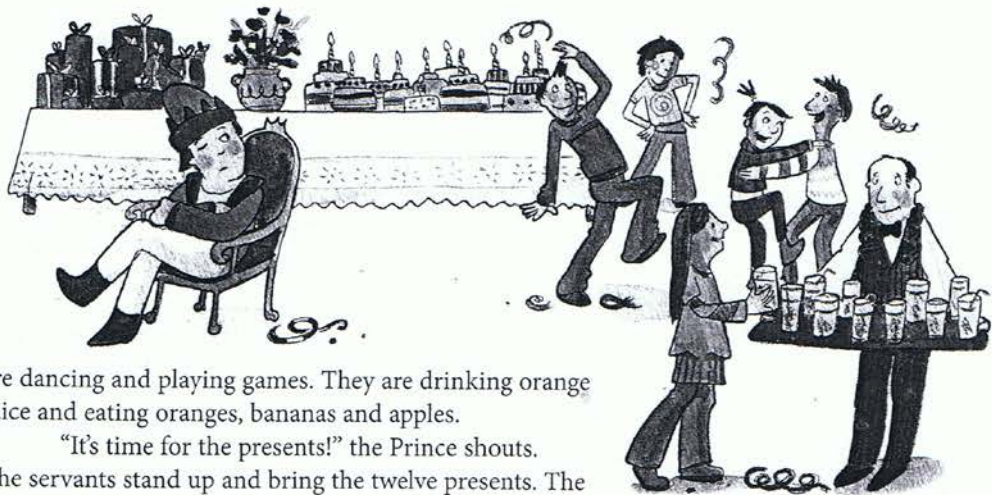
It's Thursday September 17th. Prince Sterling and his father, King Nicholas, are in the castle. They are in the big room with the golden fireplace and the big table. "Saturday's my birthday!" the Prince shouts. "I know, I know," the King says. "Saturday's your birthday and on Sunday you can have a party!" "But I'm a Prince! And I'm very special!" shouts Prince Sterling. "So I want a very special party. I want twelve beautiful marzipan cakes. And I want twelve fantastic presents. And I want twelve guests!" Prince Sterling shouts again.

King Nicholas listens. Then he calls his servants. "On Saturday, it's Prince Sterling's birthday," he says. "Let's have a very special party on Sunday! We need twelve fantastic presents and we want to invite twelve guests from the village!" The servants go into the village and buy beautiful presents for the Prince. They also invite twelve children from the village for the party on Sunday.

It's Sunday. The King, the Prince, the servants and the twelve children are all in the big room with the golden fireplace and the big table. On the table, there are the twelve presents and twelve beautiful cakes.

The Prince is not very happy. He sits in a chair near the golden fireplace and he watches the children. They are having fun. They are listening to music. They





are dancing and playing games. They are drinking orange juice and eating oranges, bananas and apples.

"It's time for the presents!" the Prince shouts.

The servants stand up and bring the twelve presents. The Prince opens them. "Wow! What wonderful presents!" the children say. "They're boring!" Prince Sterling shouts. "I'm special. I don't want these silly presents!"

The King is very sad about what the Prince says. And he is also a bit angry. He stands up and goes over to the big table with the twelve cakes. Then he calls the children to come over to him. The King whispers something in the children's ears.

"Why are you whispering?" the Prince shouts. "We're talking about something special for a special Prince!" the King says.

"I want to hear it too!" the Prince shouts. "Just a moment!" one of the children says. "We've got a surprise for you, Prince Sterling!" "Oh, a surprise! I hope it's a special surprise. I'm a special Prince!" the Prince says. "Yes, it's very special, Prince Sterling!" the child says. "Just close your eyes, please!" The Prince smiles and closes his eyes.

The twelve children take the twelve beautiful cakes and go over to the chair where the Prince is sitting. They stand in a circle around the Prince. Then one of them whispers, "One, two, three!" "Happy birthday, Prince!" they shout. Then they throw the beautiful cakes in the Prince's face.



13 Circle the correct answers.

- 1 Prince Sterling's birthday is on *Saturday* / *Sunday*.
- 2 The King's servants buy *10* / *12* presents for the Prince.
- 3 The King's servants invite *children* / *princes* to the party.
- 4 The Prince *enjoys* / *doesn't enjoy* the party.
- 5 The Prince *likes* / *doesn't like* the presents.
- 6 The King is *angry* / *happy*.
- 7 The children *push* / *throw* the cakes in the Prince's face.



One Monday morning in April, Duncan gets a letter.
'What's this?' he asks.

He opens the letter. It's from the electricity **company**. Duncan reads,

Electricity from October to March: £5,000.

'Oh,' Duncan says. 'I haven't got £5,000. What can I do?' He's very unhappy. 'I can do only one thing: **sell** my island and my castle.'

Duncan telephones a man in London. The man's name is Mr Moneybags. Mr Moneybags sells houses and castles.

'I want to sell my island and my castle,' Duncan says.

'OK,' Mr Moneybags says.



company /'kʌmpəni/ (n) I have a small taxi **company** with ten drivers.
sell /sel/ (v) I sell my photographs to newspapers.

Two days later, he telephones Duncan.

'**Leaping** Larry wants to buy your island,' he says.

'Leaping . . . who?' Duncan asks.

'Leaping Larry. You know – the famous American **rock star**.'

He wants to buy your island for his girlfriend.'

'A rock star,' Duncan says. 'Oh.'

'He wants to see the island tomorrow afternoon,' Mr Moneybags says. 'Is that OK?'

'Er . . . yes,' Duncan says. 'Yes, of course.'

Leaping Larry and his girlfriend are coming to the island by

helicopter. They're very late. Duncan and Jock wait a long time.

Then the helicopter arrives. A tall man with long dark hair gets down from it. He's about forty-five years old. There's a girl with him.

She's about twenty and has long yellow hair. There's a small animal with her. The animal has long white hair.

'Hi,' the man says. 'I'm Leaping Larry. And this is my girlfriend, Roxanne.'



leap /li:p/ (v) Can you **leap** across that river?

rock star /'rɒk stɑ:/ (n) **Rock-stars** can make a lot of money from their music.

helicopter /'helɪkɒptə/ (n) The police **helicopter** is looking for a small child.



'Hi,' Roxanne says. 'This is my dog, Bobo.'

Larry looks at the castle.

'Look at that old castle, Roxanne,' he says. 'Don't you love it, honey?'

Roxanne doesn't smile. It's only an old castle.

Leaping Larry and Roxanne go into the castle. It's very dark.

Leaping Larry can't see. He falls down.

'Where are the lights?' he asks.

'I'm sorry,' Duncan says. 'There isn't any light. The company stopped my electricity this morning.'

'I want some hot food,' Roxanne says.

honey /'hʌni/ (n) I have fruit and honey every morning.

4

'I'm sorry,' Duncan says, 'but I can't make hot food. I haven't got any electricity. But there is some cold food.'

'Cold food!' Roxanne says. 'No, thank you! I'm going to bed. But first I want a hot **bath**. And Bobo wants a bath, too.'

'I'm very sorry,' Duncan says. 'But there's no hot water.'

'No lights! No food! No hot water!'

Roxanne says. 'I don't like this place!'

'Now, honey . . . ' Leaping Larry says.

'Don't call me "honey"!' Roxanne says.

'Let's go, Bobo!'

bath /bɑ:θ/ (n) Let's have a bath and then go to bed.
call /kɔ:l/ (v) I don't call that colour green – it's blue!

5



Appendix No. 20

ISOLATED WORD LIST: "Island for sale"

Learn the following words by heart!

| | |
|---------------|--------------|
| to catch | fangen |
| suddenly | plötzlich |
| the sea | das Meer |
| the lake | der See |
| to move | sich bewegen |
| to hit | schlagen |
| to make noise | Lärm machen |
| to fall into | hineinfallen |
| across | quer über |

ISOLATED WORD LIST

Learn the following words by heart!

pottery

Töpferei

taxation

Besteuerung

bridge

Brücke

shallow

seicht

to rub down

schmirgeln

loan

Darlehen

dumbbell

Hantel

grainy

körnig

Appendix No. 21

FINAL TESTING PHASE PART TWO
WORDS IN ISOLATION TEST
DIDACTIC UNIT "ISLAND FOR SALE"

NAME:

DATE:

1. rufen =
2. anrufen =
3. kaufen =
4. verlassen =
5. verkaufen =
6. hüpfen =
7. bleiben =
8. aufregend =
9. schreien =
10. dunkel =
11. kalt =
12. heiß =
13. Liebling =
14. bauen =
15. klein =
16. hinauf, hinunter =
17. Ecke =
18. Hügel =
19. Rechnung =
20. reden =
21. ziehen =
22. niederfallen =
23. groß =
24. neu =
25. weiß =
26. ins Wasser fallen =
27. Lärm, Geräusch =
28. anschauen =
29. mögen =
30. ankommen =
31. Brief =

32. billig =
33. unter =
34. auf =
35. quer über =
36. Maus =
37. teuer =
38. Stromfirma =
39. Rechnung =
40. warten =
41. Insel =
42. Schloß =
43. Nachbar =
44. ins Boot ziehen =
45. Straße =
46. verstehen =
47. etwas =
48. See =
49. Meer =
50. Baum =

Appendix No. 22

FINAL TESTING PHASE PART THREE
VOCABULARY RETENTION TEST
DIDACTIC UNIT: "ISLAND FOR SALE" :

NAME:

DATE:

1. Brief, Stromfirma: Duncan gets a _____ from the _____
_____.
2. verkaufen, Insel, Schloß: Duncan hasn't got the money. He can do only one thing:
_____ his _____ and his _____.
3. billig, teuer: The island is not _____. It is very _____.
4. Rechnung bezahlen: Duncan cannot _____ the _____.
5. Maus, Mund: Jock has a _____ in his _____!
6. unter, auf: The _____ (Maus) is _____ the bed and Roxanne
and Bobo are _____ the bed.
7. warten: In the morning Duncan and Larry _____ a long time.
8. hüpfen, (quer) über: Larry _____ the river.
9. mit dem Hubschrauber ankommen: Larry and his girlfriend _____
_____.
- 10: kalt, dunkel, heißes Essen, verstehen: Roxanne says: "I don't like this _____
(Schloss)! It is _____ and _____ and there
is no _____ ! Do you
_____?"
10. Lärm: There is a _____ in Roxanne's room. Duncan and Larry run into
Roxanne's room. Bobo and Roxanne are _____ (auf) the bed.
11. schreien: Roxanne _____ because there is a _____ (Maus)
in her room.
12. Liebling, bauen, groß, neu: Larry says: "Listen, _____. We can _____
a _____ house here on the island!"
13. klein: Bobo is very _____.
14. mögen: Roxanne says: "I don't _____ this castle! I want to go home!"
15. anschauen: Roxanne and Larry _____ the castle.
16. hinauf, hinunter: Roxanne, Larry and Duncan go _____ and
_____.
17. Nachbar, rufen: Your _____'s name is Karl. _____ Karl!
17. Ecke: Stand up and go to the _____ !
18. weiß: Bobo has long _____ hair.

19. mit: Duncan likes going for walks _____ his dog Jock.
20. ins Wasser fallen, ins Boot ziehen: Suddenly Bobo _____ the _____
and Duncan _____ the dog _____
the _____.
21. reden: Duncan and Larry _____ about the castle and the island.
22. niederfallen: Larry, Roxanne and Duncan go into the _____ (Schloß).
Suddenly Larry _____ because there is no
light.
23. aufregend: It is very _____ on the island.
24. zu verkaufen: The island is _____.
25. Hügel: There are many _____ on the island.
26. bleiben, verlassen: Roxanne does not want to _____ on the island. She wants
to _____.
27. anrufen, verkaufen: Duncan _____ Mr. Moneybags. Mr. Moneybags
_____ houses and castles.
28. rufen, kaufen: The next day Mr. Moneybags _____ Duncan. He says:
"Leaping Larry, the rockstar, wants to _____ your island!"

Appendix No. 23

VOCABULARY PROGRESS TEST

1. Find the opposite!

buy ≠ _____ cheap ≠ _____

upstairs ≠ _____ village ≠ _____

leave ≠ _____ arrive ≠ _____

clever ≠ _____ whisper ≠ _____

interesting ≠ _____ big ≠ _____

2. Find a synonym!

stupid = _____ very pretty = _____

big = _____

3. Find the English word!

Sessel = _____ Ohren = _____

werfen = _____ bleiben = _____

rufen = _____ anrufen = _____

Stromrechnung = _____

bezahlen = _____ Schloß = _____

Vater = _____ Brief = _____

dunkel = _____ mögen = _____

wollen = _____ traurig = _____

böse, wütend = _____ sitzen = _____

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Abstract

This thesis consists of a theoretical part and an empirical part that includes a case study carried out with a dyslexic learner over a period of approximately four months of intensive study.

The theoretical part focuses on vocabulary teaching and learning in general, and on various techniques and strategies of vocabulary presentation, recycling and testing aimed at facilitating and enhancing the learner's accessibility to and retention of lexis. Moreover, besides discussing a wide range of techniques of retention enhancement teachers may apply at the various stages of vocabulary work, the theory part also includes the underlying theories and basic principles which these techniques and strategies are founded on and the reasons why they should form an integral part of vocabulary teaching and learning. Furthermore, the theoretical part also discusses the usage of a large number of vocabulary recycling and testing activities and therefore contains materials used in the teaching project.

The first part of the empirical part is concerned with the three main principles of effective vocabulary teaching and learning (proposed by the author of this thesis) according to which the teaching project was carried out and provides a brief description of the learner's difficulties regarding second language acquisition and of the didactic units and the lexis dealt with in the teaching project.

The second part includes examples taken from the actual teaching in order to illustrate the impact on the learner's retention of lexis the application of the three main principles might have had. Regarding the examples and tests taken from the teaching project in order to illustrate the actual usage of the techniques and their effects, it has to be mentioned that the author has made use of detailed field notes and designed a variety of tests in order to record the learner's learning process and progress, respectively.

Finally, the data and findings will be discussed and reflected on, and possible implications on language teaching and learning will be highlighted.

Abstract

Diese Diplomarbeit besteht aus einem theoretischen und einem empirischen Teil, welcher eine Fallstudie beinhaltet, die mit einer legasthenischen Lernenden über einen Zeitraum von ungefähr vier Monaten intensiven Lernens durchgeführt wurde.

Der theoretische Teil fokussiert das Lehren und Lernen von (englischem)Vokabular im allgemeinen und konzentriert sich auf verschiedene Techniken und Strategien der Präsentation, des Wiederholens und des Testens von Wortschatz. Diese Techniken und Strategien haben zum Ziel, den Lernenden den Zugang zu und das Erinnern von Vokabular zu erleichtern und die Merkfähigkeit zu fördern bzw. zu maximieren. Des weiteren werden im theoretischen Teil, zusätzlich zur Diskussion eines weiten Spektrums von erinnerungsfördernden Techniken, die LehrerInnen in den unterschiedlichen Phasen der Wortschatzarbeit anwenden können, die zugrundeliegenden Theorien und Prinzipien, auf welchen diese Techniken und Strategien gegründet sind sowie die Gründe, warum diese einen essentiellen Part im Lehren und Lernen von Wortschatz darstellen sollten, dargelegt. Darüber hinaus beschäftigt sich der theoretische Teil dieser Arbeit mit der Verwendung einer Vielzahl von Wortschatzwiederholungs- und Wortschatzüberprüfungsaktivitäten und enthält Unterrichtsmaterialien, die im Lehrprojekt verwendet wurden.

Der erste Teil des empirischen Teils beschäftigt sich mit drei vom Autor dieser Arbeit aufgestellten Hauptprinzipien effektiver Wortschatzarbeit, gemäß welcher das Lehrprojekt ausgeführt wurde, und liefert außerdem eine kurze Beschreibung der Schwierigkeiten bezüglich des Fremdsprachenerwerbs der Lernenden sowie eine kurze Präsentation der didaktischen Einheiten und des Wortschatzes, mit dem im Unterrichtsprojekt gearbeitet wurde.

Der zweite Teil enthält Auszüge und Beispiele des tatsächlichen Unterrichtsprojekts, um die möglichen Auswirkungen der Anwendung der oben genannten Hauptprinzipien auf die Merkfähigkeit der Lernenden zu illustrieren. Bezüglich der dem Unterrichtsprojekt entnommenen Beispiele und Überprüfungen (oder Tests), die dazu dienen die praktische Anwendung der Techniken und deren Auswirkungen darzustellen, muss erwähnt werden, dass der Autor während des Unterrichtsprojektes detaillierte Aufzeichnungen gemacht hat und eine Vielzahl von Tests erstellt hat, um den Lernprozess bzw. den Lernfortschritt der Lernenden zu dokumentieren.

Schließlich werden die im Lehrprojekt erhaltenen Daten und Ergebnisse besprochen und reflektiert und mögliche Auswirkungen auf das Lehren und Lernen von Fremdsprachen werden herausgearbeitet.

Lebenslauf - Curriculum Vitae

Name/Name: Silke Berger

Geburtsdatum/Date of birth: 02. 03. 1979

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Schullaufbahn/School career:

1985 – 1989 Volksschule in Schwanenstadt (Oberösterreich)

1989 – 1997 Gymnasium in Vöcklabruck (Oberösterreich)

Akademische Laufbahn/Academic career:

Studium „Unterrichtsfach Englisch und Italienisch“ an der
der Universität Wien (Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik,
Institut für Romanistik)

Diplomarbeit über „Teaching Vocabulary to Learners with special
needs“

1997 – 2012: Nachhilfelehrerin für Englisch und Italienisch

2007: Lehrerin am Montessori Gymnasium in Wien

2009 – 2012: Nachhilfelehrerin in einem Nachhilfeinstitut
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2012: Abschluss des Studiums „Unterrichtsfach Englisch und
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