Learning vocabulary in another language. Paul Nation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Pp xiv + 477.

Paul Nation has published over twenty articles and books on issues related to learning and teaching vocabulary. This new book, published in the *Cambridge Applied Linguistics* series, builds on his earlier book on the same subject (Nation 1992). As he says in his introduction, "although it is largely written from the viewpoint of a teacher of English, it could be used by teachers of other languages" (p. 4), and he makes the point that he generally conflates foreign and second language teaching and learning. It will be particularly useful for those who are following graduate programmes in second language teaching or applied linguistics - and, of course, their lecturers. It is also highly relevant to the classroom teacher because the book provides extremely useful, and clearly written, practical guidance.

The eleven chapters of the book cover: the goals of vocabulary teaching, what it means to know a word, teaching and explaining vocabulary, vocabulary and listening and reading, vocabulary and reading and writing, specialised uses of vocabulary, vocabulary learning strategies, word study strategies, chunking and collocation, testing vocabulary knowledge and use, and designing the vocabulary component of a language course. There are also several appendices, comprising the headwords of the *Academic Word List* (Coxhead 1998), four examples of different vocabulary tests, and a list of 320 function words. There is a very comprehensive list of references and two indices; one of subjects covered in the text and the other of authors cited.

From an overview of the titles of the chapters, one can readily see how comprehensive has been the author's scope. Within the chapters, he has also presented a detailed discussion of theoretical issues, research studies, and pedagogical implications of each topic. It would be impossible to discuss the full range of issues dealt with in such a long book within the limits of this review; so the contents of one chapter will be examined in detail.

Chapter 3, 'Teaching and explaining vocabulary' (pp. 60-112), begins with looking at the psychological conditions required for effective vocabulary learning, and it does so by asking and answering four questions: what is the learning goal of the activity?

what psychological conditions does the activity use? what are the observable signs that learning might occur? and, what are the design features of the activity, which set up the conditions for learning? In this section, Nation reviews much recent research which has investigated such questions. The next part of the chapter, 'Vocabulary in the classroom', explores a number of practical implications; firstly, on the basis that a word needs to be repeated in order to be learnt, he discusses the spacing, types and number of repetitions needed for effective acquisition. He next turns his attention to 'Communicating meaning'; here he reviews the skills needed of writer and reader in communicating and comprehending meaning, and goes on to discuss common classroom issues such as using realia and pictures, translating into the learner's first language, how teachers can help learners to comprehend and learn from definitions, and how much time should be spent on each unknown word and how the words could be dealt with. The next thing he considers is 'Rich instruction', by which he means "giving elaborate attention to a word, going beyond the immediate demands of a particular context of occurrence" (p. 95). He rehearses several arguments against this practice, but also shows how relevant it can be to second language learners if done appropriately. On page 99, he provides a table of a range of thirty or so activities for vocabulary learning, according to whether the goal is intended to focus on form, meaning or use; he spends the next ten pages discussing each of these options on the understanding that rich instruction would involve using several of these activities for the same word. Finally, and not surprisingly given his interest in the subject, he considers the way that CAVL (computer assisted vocabulary learning) might assist the teacher to provide rich vocabulary instruction; for example by using software programmes that encourage the retrieval of vocabulary with varying degrees of textual content, and by the various applications of concordances. He concludes the chapter with a brief review of research into CAVL.

The above presentation reveals how thoroughly Nation deals with a wide range of issues relating to teaching and explaining vocabulary; the other chapters in the book are of like flavour as regards the coverage of theoretical foundations, research findings and practical implications.

Is a book of this length necessary? Certainly it is for academic purposes, as a clear and comprehensive overview of recent research and contemporary thinking about the wide range of issues related to vocabulary teaching is of vital concern to applied linguists. This is especially relevant these days when the structural focus of syllabus design is being challenged by those who favour a lexical approach. The references supplied by Nation will prove extremely valuable to follow up particular points. The classroom teacher, usually busy in lesson planning and preparation - and, of course, teaching - may find the length of the book daunting. However, the clear layout of the chapters, and the author's evident classroom expertise, will enable even the reflective practitioner to pluck useful plums from this lexical pudding.

References

Coxhead, A. 1998. *An academic word list.* Occasional Publication Number 18. LALS,Victoria University of Wellington.

Nation, I.S.P. 1992. *Teaching and learning vocabulary.* Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

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