VOCABULARY

Motivation

The trade union language learner's previous language learning experience is unlikely to have brought him or her into contact with the vocabulary for describing trade union structures, organisation or practices. Exploring the rich vocabulary of industrial relations in the target language will prove an exciting challenge to both learner and tutor, and the relevance of this new vocabulary will serve to motivate the learner.

The trade union context provides many opportunities for meaningful vocabulary extension. The particular contexts chosen will depend on the needs and level of the learning group.

At basic survival level and lower intermediate level, the vocabulary will necessarily be of a more general nature, to cover personal life and circumstances, living conditions, occupational activities and interests, leisure activities and social life, education and training and current affairs. The contexts in which this vocabulary is presented will be of relevance to the trade union language learner.

At the upper intermediate and advanced levels, the vocabulary will become increasingly specialised and may relate to the following themes: trade union organisation and structures, equal opportunities, globalisation, health and safety, the European Union, education and training, new technology, changing management practices, collective bargaining, European Works Councils, etc., according to the needs and interests of the group.
Selection of vocabulary

The main objectives in teaching vocabulary are to enrich the learners' vocabulary and to allow them to select the correct word for the situation they are in. In choosing which words to teach, the tutor will consider the traditional criteria, which are frequency of usage, extent of meaning and appropriateness of register.

However, the tutor will also take into consideration the topic area being dealt with, the function selected, the context in which the words are used and the usefulness of the words for the trade union language learner.

Learning new vocabulary

Language learners appear to learn new words in a variety of ways. The word is more likely to be understood if it is presented in a meaningful context, as learners appear not to learn words in isolation. It is important that new words be presented within the phrases they usually occur (collocation), and that learners are aware of associated meanings (connotations). In addition, the learner is more likely to use the word correctly in new contexts if s/he is given the opportunity to use the word actively in some consolidation activity. For example, the learners could work in pairs to write new sentences using the word, or could be asked to fill in a grid with related words, etc.

Words trigger reactions in people. Learners have a relationship with words. They have words which they like, hate, or frequently make mistakes with. The tutor can capitalise on this when teaching vocabulary.

The tutor can create an interaction between the learner and the vocabulary, which requires real involvement on the part of the learner. For example, a group of trade union language learners could compile a glossary for their particular industry or sector which could be regularly updated as new words are discovered. Such an activity involves the learners themselves as a valuable resource in the learning process, and because it builds on their own experience, it is more likely to be effective.

Strategies for teaching and learning vocabulary

Different kinds of vocabulary expansion activities can usefully be identified:

- pre-text activities including prediction
- vocabulary expansion based on reading
- word imagery, including illustration of meaning
Language training for European trade unionists – a guide

- categorisation of words according to theme, or association of ideas, or according to causative or temporal chains, etc.
- activities which build on personal responses to vocabulary, such as wordlists or mindmaps
- Songs, poems, games
- use of dictionaries and other reference books.

The tutor can help learners to learn new vocabulary by increasing learner independence and by encouraging the learners to share their own strategies with one another. Use of a good dictionary ought to be taught early in a course as well as ways of deducing meaning without looking the word or expression up a dictionary.

Traditional approaches include translating words into the mother-tongue, paraphrasing, using word associations, synonyms, antonyms and homonyms. A communicative approach to learning languages has resulted in the use of techniques such as problem solving, predicting, guessing, trial and error, hypothesising and vocabulary games.

Vocabulary learning activities such as those above need not be an isolated part of any session but can be incorporated into different stages of the development of language skills. A variety of techniques should be employed, to encourage learners to develop their own strategies for learning and recording vocabulary. Learners can often pick up valuable tips from each other, rather than from the tutor, so time could be allocated to groups to enable them to discuss these strategies among themselves.

Some tips for teaching vocabulary

- Expose learners to large amount of authentic written and spoken discourse
- Help build confidence by presented new words in usual collations – ‘chunking’ and focussing on frequently used and useful lexical items
- Encourage learners to record and re-cycle
- Don’t explain, explore
- Don’t correct, collect
- Build and use corpora (authentic written and spoken text with occurrences of useful terms).
Example activities

VOCABULARY

Level 1

Countries and cities

Look at the map below and match the cities (capitals) with the countries (e.g. Paris = France)
Countries and People

Nationality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of country/area</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britain (UK)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Irish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Scottish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Belgian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multi words

**Multi-** is of Latin origin and means *many*. We can combine **multi-** with other words.

For example:

- **Multi-national**: A multinational company is one that operates in many countries.
- **Multi-millionaire**: A multimillionaire owns many millions.
- **Multiply** means to increase
- **Multitude** means a large number

Other combinations include: **multimedia; multiracial; multicultural; multi**-coloured.

- What do you think these combinations mean?
- Can you add any other **multi**-words (look at your dictionary)?

### 2 Fill in the gaps in the following sentences with an appropriate word from the table above.

**Example:**

With many second and third generation citizens from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the West Indies, is the UK now... **multiracial**?

1. My uncle won £5m in the National Lottery, so now he’s a...........................

2. A company which operates in different countries is called a ................................

3. At a recent conference, the health and safety rep gave an excellent ..................... presentation.
4. The company’s ..........................................sales brochure was very attractive.

5. The secretary usually receives a ................. of requests for help and advice.

6. There was music and dancing from many ethnic groups. It was a happy ............. evening

7. You need to ................. the number by three to understand the size of the problem.

8. Do you think your country is ..................... ?

3  Provisions of a European Works Council Agreement

A European Works Council Agreement usually includes reference to the provisions given in the table below.

Match the provisions in the list below with their definitions

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Frequency</th>
<th>(b) (of meetings): how often the EWC will meet.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Frequency</th>
<th>(a) (of the Agreement): how long the Agreement will last (for example, 4 years).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Location</td>
<td>(b) (of meetings): how often the EWC will meet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Duration</td>
<td>(c) The list of the issues to be discussed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Facilities</td>
<td>(d) The powers of the EWC: what the EWC can discuss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Competence</td>
<td>(e) (of information): things that have to remain secret.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Language training for European trade unionists – a guide

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Agenda</strong></td>
<td>(f) Preparatory meeting of delegates before the meeting of the full European Works Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Confidentiality</strong></td>
<td>(g) Where the meetings will be held.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8. Pre-meeting</strong></td>
<td>(h) For the meetings, for example, interpreters, training, secretarial help.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Now comment on the above terms with reference to the EWC Agreement of your company (or suggest what you would negotiate in a new Agreement).*
MAKING TELEPHONE CALLS

**Level 3**

Union representatives may often need to make telephone calls in which English is the common language.

- **With a partner write down all the words and phrases you associate with telephone calls. Compare your list with those of other pairs.**

- **Describe how to make a call from a public telephone in your country. Here are some words and phrases to help you.**
  - Coin-operated
  - telephone card
  - credit card
  - slot
  - receiver
  - pickup/lift up
  - dial
  - local/national/international

- **Discuss what you find difficult about making telephone calls**

- **Complete the sentences below with an appropriate word or phrase from the following list.**
  - speaking
  - holding
  - receiver
  - bad line
  - other line
  - wrong number
  - extension number
  - unobtainable
  - put me through
  - ring back
  - engaged
Example: Do you know her extension number?

1. I’d like to speak to Roger Orr, could you ____________________ please?
2. I’m sorry the line’s ________________________, can you hold?
3. You’re through now. Extension 7562, Johnson ________________________.
4. I’m sorry I must have dialled the ________________________.
5. Mary Porter’s on the ________________________, can I take a message?
6. No one’s answering at the moment, could you ____________________ later?
7. This is a ________________________ I can’t hear you very well.
8. The number is ________________________. Are you sure you have the right number?
9. Please put the ________________________ down and wait until I call you.
10. Her line is busy at the moment would you mind ____________________?
STUDY BOX

Making Contact
- I’d like to speak to Mr Watson, please.
- Could I speak to Jane, please?
- Tommy Cole, please.
- Extension 3782 please.
- Is that Butterworths Breweries?
- Could you put me through to the manager please?

Leaving a Message
- Could you tell her I phoned?
- Could I leave a message?
- Could you ask him to ring me back on 223 5468?
- Could you say I’ll call back later?

Getting the Wrong Number
- I’m sorry I’ve got the wrong number.
- My mistake, I must have dialled the wrong number.
- Sorry wrong number. I’ll ring off.
- Sorry to trouble you, that’s not the number I wanted.

Ending the Call
- That’s fine. Thank you very much.
- Right, that’s very helpful.
- OK now. Thank you very much.
- Right. Thank you. Goodbye.
Take turns to read out the following dates and numbers while one partner writes them down. Then read back your answers to each other.

A 1. 7 August 1996  
   2. 57.4m  
   3. 84.3%  
   4. 2,231,003  
   5. 1985-90

B 1. 29 March 2005  
   2. 125,340  
   3. 2/3  
   4. 1970-5  
   5. 1,493,251

Methodological Principles – vocabulary
Study the following sentences.

- In 1993 the TUC had a membership of just under 7.6m workers.
- One quarter of all employees now work part-time.
- Service industries now account for three out of every four jobs.
- 53% of the workforce have no problems with health and safety.
- The official rate of fatal injuries is much lower than the actual rate.
- The incidence rate has gone up in the construction sector.
- Over 350 were injured when the building collapsed.
- 38% of workers claimed they were suffering from stress.
- The number of accidents has fallen in the last ten years.

Select a word or phrase from the following list which has the same meaning as those in bold.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>more than</th>
<th>just over 50%</th>
<th>significantly below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nearly</td>
<td>one out of every four</td>
<td>risen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75%</td>
<td>more than a third</td>
<td>dropped</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collocation

**Level 4**

Meaningful language is made up of combinations of words, and certain words combine more acceptably than others. For example:

- Railtrack has established a reputation for **driving a hard bargain**.
- Railtrack has negotiated **tough terms** in its access contracts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>challenge</th>
<th>dispute</th>
<th>problem</th>
<th>job</th>
<th>task</th>
<th>test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>slight</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>light</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heavy</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>serious</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>great</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓*</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hard</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>harsh</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

✓ = acceptable combinations
✗ = unacceptable combinations
? = doubtful or unusual combinations

*Note: In this collocation, great means wonderful.*
Fill in the grid by indicating acceptable combinations with a tick (√), unacceptable combinations with a cross (×), and doubtful or unusual combinations with a question mark (?).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a strike</th>
<th>a dispute</th>
<th>a stoppage</th>
<th>a settlement</th>
<th>an agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>have</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>make</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>do</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>break</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>negotiate</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reach</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Write sentences containing the acceptable collocations.