

How can we teach vocabulary and grammar more communicatively?

Teaching English with the British Council: Series 3, episode 2 overview

In episode 2, we're discussing how we can teach vocabulary and grammar more communicatively. We talk to [Jo Cummins](#), ELT trainer and writer. Together, we look at strategies for learning language and the importance of student confidence within the safe rehearsal space of the classroom. Then we discuss task-based and project-based learning to teach communicative vocabulary and grammar to students. We are later joined by [Dr Luis Carabantes](#), Lecturer in Academic and Professional Communication at Queen Mary University of London. We look at how we can teach vocabulary and grammar more communicatively and the challenges that teachers face in doing so.

Show notes and transcripts in English and Arabic are also available to download.

Detailed notes

Introduction	
Welcome to episode 2!	If you missed episode 1 – How can we achieve gender equity in the classroom? – you can listen here .
CLT	Throughout this episode, whenever you hear 'CLT', it stands for 'communicative language teaching'. A useful list of links about this topic can be found here .
Interview 1	
Jo Cummins	ELT trainer and writer. Discover more about Jo here .
Oxymoron	Two words or phrases used together that have, or seem to have, opposite meanings.
Passive vocabulary and passive grammar	A learner's passive vocabulary is the words that they understand but don't use yet.
Safe space	A place or situation in which you are protected from harm or danger.
Information-gap activities	Also known as 'information exchange'. Communicative activities for two or more learners. They involve learners having different bits of information that they have to convey orally to each other.
Jigsaw readings	This is an approach to reading that involves the students in speaking and summarising skills. It is very useful when working with short, authentic texts such as newspaper articles.

Project-/task-based focus	For more information on this type of teaching, please refer to this British Council article .
Analytical curriculum	A type of approach to learning that focuses on grammatical form; also known as a structural approach.
Cloze test	A testing method. More information is available here .
Collocation	A word or phrase that is often used with another word or phrase in a way that sounds correct to people who have spoken the language all their lives, but might not be expected from the meaning.
L1	L1 is a speaker's first language.
Binary correlation	A one-to-one relationship.
Role play	A method of teaching/learning by acting out or performing the part of a person or character.
Curators	The people in charge of the collections at a museum.
Interview 2	
Dr Luis Carabantes	Lecturer in Academic and Professional Communication at Queen Mary University of London. You can discover more about him, and his work, here .
Paradigm	A typical example or model of something; in this case, the typical teaching of language within a vocab and grammar setting.
Thompson, 1996	Thompson's paper: Some misconceptions about communicative language teaching Available to read here
Osmosis	The process in plants and animals by which a liquid moves gradually from one part of the body or the plant to another through a membrane; in this instance, used as a metaphor for the learning process.
Linguistic competence	The unconscious knowledge of grammar that allows a speaker to use and understand a language.
Lexicogrammaticality	When discussing vocabulary and grammar within parts of sentences and phrases. Further reading on Lexicogrammar here
A dangling carrot	'Dangling a carrot in front of someone' is an idiom that means to offer a reward or incentive to someone in order to motivate them to do something. It comes from

	the image of dangling a carrot in front of a donkey to make it move forward.
Bring popcorn	A traditional snack to eat while watching films at the cinema.
English for specific purposes/English for academic purposes/English for no obvious reason	Courses designed for the teaching of English for various reasons; learning language with a particular goal in mind, for education, for a job, or, as discussed in this episode, for no obvious reason. A previous episode of this podcast focused on this issue.
Foreground	To give the most importance to a particular subject; in this case, grammar and vocabulary.
Idiom	A group of words in a fixed order that has a particular meaning that is different from the meanings of each word on its own.
Jug and mug	The jug and mug theory of teaching and learning. The instructor, or teacher, is the jug that pours knowledge from above into the passively receiving mug, or student.
Paulo Freire, Brazilian educator and philosopher	Have a listen to Teachings on ELT here!
Olive harvesting	In Palestine, the ancient tradition of gathering in the olive harvest between October and November. Read more about this in an ELT context here .