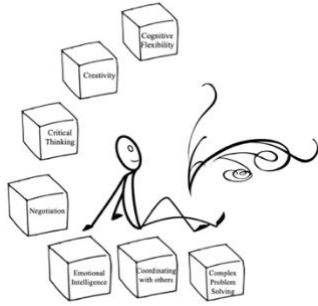


Scaffolding Synonyms and Antonyms through Translanguaging (Primary)



theory behind scaffold...

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You're a language teacher and this is one of those times that you are going to forget all that talk about learning language through content. NO! You are going to give your students a list of synonyms and antonyms to learn and that's THAT!!

Well, alright. But at least let's make it dynamic, and at least let's add critical thinking, and at least let's plan it a little differently so that we can categorise it as the effective language learning technique: *translanguaging*.

Translanguaging is the thoughtful use of more than one language for learning in one lesson'. More specifically, *translanguaging* involves speaking, listening, reading and/or writing about a topic on one language, and then speaking or writing about it in another. In *translanguaging*, both languages are used in an integrated and coherent way to organise and mediate learning.

An important factor in *translanguaging* is knowing the different registers - when to use different tones, words, phrases. It's important to know which terms are appropriate for specific circumstances. Especially in those languages (such as English) in which there is no formal or informal pronouns, register and tone transmit crucial information. To give our students an even wider prospects in their scholastic and professional lives, being comfortable with - or at least recognising - register is of the highest importance.

All this can be included in what might at first seem like a simple language lesson to learn synonyms and antonyms - building a firm lexical foundation.

This scaffold will help not only introduce and refine academic language, but also - for those students learning in plurilingual environments - will also support and honour code switching.

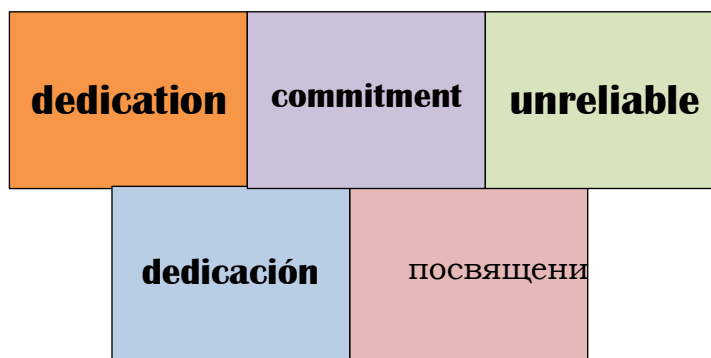
* [Mehisto](#), 2007

step by step...

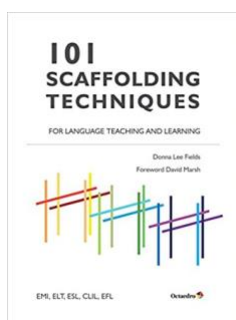
1. Make a list of 15-20 terms you'd like your students to learn from the next lesson, unit, project, video, podcast, etc. you'll be interacting with.
2. In a column next to that list, write a synonym for each word or phrase – either one word or a phrasal verb.
3. In a third column, write the antonym for each word or term.
4. Decide on one or two languages that your students are learning and add one, two or three columns to the left, adding the terms in this/these languages. (See example below.)

| Term/Phrase | Synonym | Antonym | Spanish | Russian |
|-------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| effort | striving | passivity | esfuerzo | усилия |
| dedication | commitment | unreliable | dedicación | посвящение |
| optimistic | positive | negative | optimista | оптимистичный |

5. Print each column on small separate pieces of paper.
6. Print out a complete set for each group or pair of students and mix each set up well. (Example below of one word printed out on different coloured pieces of paper.)



7. Without explaining anything to the students except that they are to work together to study the words on the cards, give each group or pair of students a set of the coloured cards.
8. Students work together to examine the set of words and put them into categories that they invent and can justify. Remind them many times that there is no one correct way to categorise them as long as they can verbally and clearly defend what they've concluded.
9. Groups share the way they've categorised the words.
10. You show them how you did it, stressing that it is neither correct nor incorrect, it's just one more way to order the words you've presented.
11. *Formative Assessment:* Visualise one word from any column and groups take turns filling in the missing words from the other columns – from either the way you've ordered them and/or the way they have.
12. *Reflection:* Students write 75-100 words on how they felt about learning the academic terms through categorisations of their own invention.



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