



# UNIT

## 3

# LANGUAGE ITEMS AND TEACHING POINTS

### **Introduction**

This unit introduces some basis concepts of language teaching like language items, teaching points, vocabulary, etc. As English teachers you are expected to know and use these terms in your professional work.

## LESSON

## 1

## Language Items and Teaching Points

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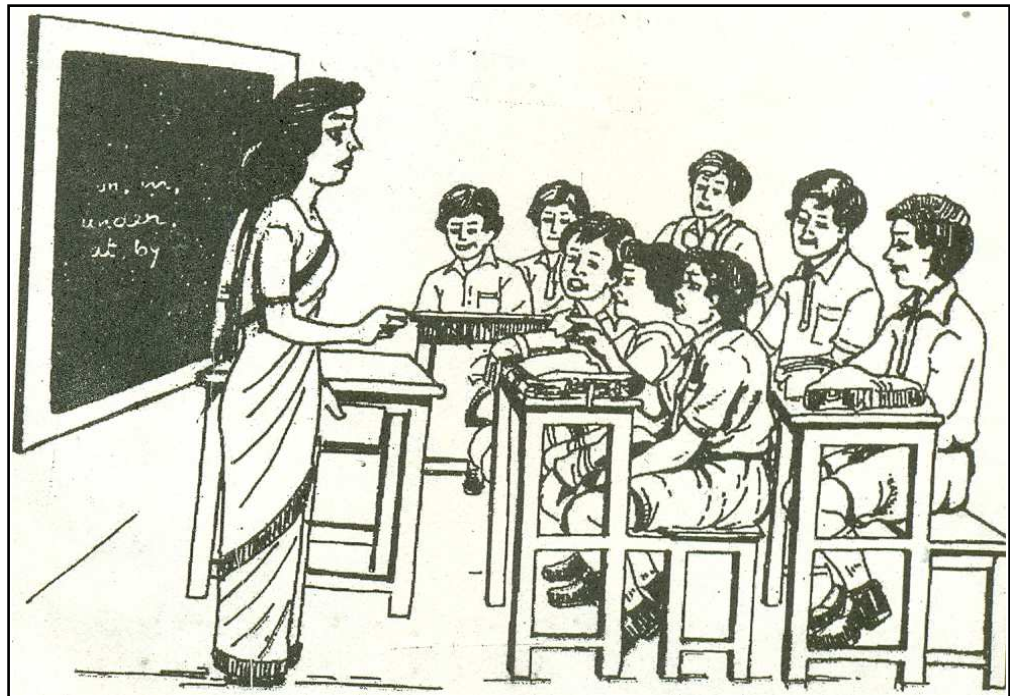
### Objective

After reading this lesson you will be able to–

- describe the meaning of language items and teaching points
- identify teaching points in a lesson.

### 1.1 Language Items

In a language there exist many language items. We teach language with the help of these items. Thus there are vocabulary items, structure items, pronunciation items, intonation items, test items and so on. They are used for different purposes of language teaching involving the four basic skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. The selection of language items depends on the needs of the course, and the level of the learners. They should be suitable for the learner. Not all language items are suitable for a particular level. Learning of a language would be difficult if language items are not chosen carefully. Language items should not be a burden on the ability and understanding of the learner.



Picture 1: A language class.

## Task 1

Go through any English book, **English For Today** for classes I-V. Study about 2/3 lessons and identify the different language items given in those lessons. Make a list of those under the following headings:

- vocabulary items
- structure items
- pronunciation items mention the textbook and class.

### 1.2 Teaching Points

The teaching point is the most important thing in a lesson. It is a linguistic point on which the lesson is based. In fact, the focus of a lesson is the teaching point. It continues throughout the lesson so that the learner learns a particular idea fully and thoroughly. The explanation provided in the lesson makes the teaching point clear and free from vagueness. The teaching point may be a point on grammar. It may be a structure. It may be a phrase or a usage. The teaching point is explained through a situation or context.

Get Across- বুঝতে পারা

The language used in the text should be appropriate; otherwise the teaching will be meaningless. If the language is too difficult for the learner the teaching point will not *get across*. It is the language point or teaching point which leads to actual language learning. In order to teach a language point effectively, a lesson should include adequate exercise for practice. The teacher should identify the teaching point in the lesson plan and help students practise it thoroughly. The explanation of the teaching point in a lesson will not do unless it is made clear through adequate practice activities and contextual use.

Teaching points should be practised sufficiently in class.

## Task 2

A. Look at the picture 3.1.1 and then answer the following questions:

- a. What is the teaching point in this lesson?
- b. What are the students doing?
- c. What is the teacher doing?
- d. What would be the best way for the students to learn the language point?

B. Look at the book, **English For Today** for Class Three. Choose any lesson and identify the teaching points.

**Task 3****A. Choose the correct answer:**

1. The selection of language items depends on
  - a. the learner.
  - b. needs of the course.
  - c. level.
  - d. reading.
  
2. Language items should be \_\_\_\_\_ for the learner.
  - a. acceptable.
  - b. practicable.
  - c. capable.
  - d. suitable.
  
3. The teaching point is one
  - a. on which a lesson is based.
  - b. which moves round the lesson.
  - c. which teachers write on their lesson plans.
  - d. which students enjoy learning.
  
4. The teaching point is explained through
  - a. structure.
  - b. vocabulary.
  - c. context.
  - d. usage.

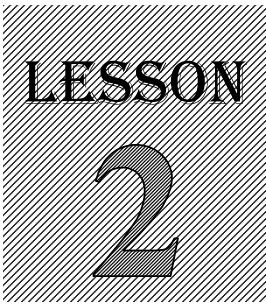
**B. Answer the following questions:**

1. What do you understand by language items?
2. Why is a teaching point important?

**REVIEW**

Language is taught through the teaching of various language items. For example vocabulary items, structure items, pronunciation items, etc. These items are chosen according to the level of the learners.

Teaching points are those language points that are taught in a particular lesson. Teaching points may be a *point on grammar*, e.g. the use of *walk* and *walked*, *vocabulary* e.g. *clean, safe*, etc. a *phrase* or *usage*.



## Vocabulary

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Objective:

This lesson will help you to–

- explain the meaning of vocabulary
- teach vocabulary effectively.

### 2.1 The Meaning of Vocabulary

The word **vocabulary** means all the words we find in a particular language. But it has other meanings as well. It also means the words of a particular trade and profession. Vocabulary in a textbook means the list of words used in the textbook with definition meanings and their use in context. The learning of vocabulary is very important in the context of learning a foreign language. If you want to express yourself clearly in a foreign language, you must have a good vocabulary.

The textbook should be made easily accessible and comprehensible to the learner. So, it is necessary to use appropriate vocabulary. There is need for control and selection of vocabulary. We should select those items of vocabulary which are important and most commonly or frequently used. Words which are not commonly used should be avoided. Also words which are less likely to serve practical purpose should be avoided. The textbook should have a glossary at the end giving the meanings of difficult words. This helps the students to understand the textbook. The teacher should encourage the students to make use of the glossary on their own.

Comprehensible-  
বোধগম্য

### Task 1

Read section 2.1 again and answer the question:  
What does the word vocabulary mean?

### 2.2. How to Teach Vocabulary

While teaching vocabulary we should remember that it should be taught in context. Words taught without contexts and in isolation are not meaningful. That does not help a learner at all. The learner should

be able to guess the meaning of words from the situation/context in which it is used.

In teaching vocabulary, the meaning should be given at first. The teacher can use different techniques to clarify the meaning of words. Some of them are discussed below.

### (a) Regalia

One way of presenting new words is by showing real objects in the classroom. Words like *Orange*, *rice*, *postcard*, *ruler* etc. can be presented in this way.

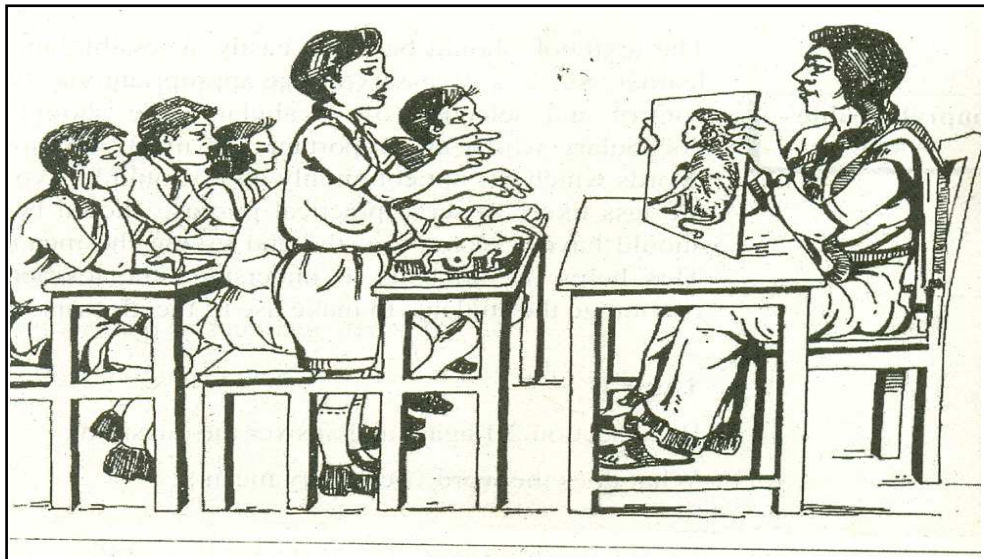
### (b) Mime, Action and Gesture

Mimes- মুকাভিনয়

Some words can be taught by using *mimes*, action and gestures. e.g. 'walk', 'smoke', 'read', 'dig' etc.

### (c) Pictures

Pictures can be used to teach vocabulary. The teacher can bring pictures, charts, flashcards and magazines or she can draw pictures on the blackboard.



Picture 2: Teaching vocabulary

### (d) Translation

The use of Bangla may be necessary in some cases. It is specially required with reference to abstract words. Words relating to quality



are also difficult to explain. In such cases the teacher may give Bangla meanings. e.g. ....(give examples)

**(e) Contrast:**

The teacher can present the meaning of a word by contrasting it with another. The word 'good' can be presented by contrasting it with 'bad', 'cold' by contrasting it with hot. Examples of the word should be contextualized. e. g. (give examples).

Anis is *honest*. He always tells the truth, but his brother Hasan is *dishonest*. He *doesn't tell* the truth, rather cheats' people.

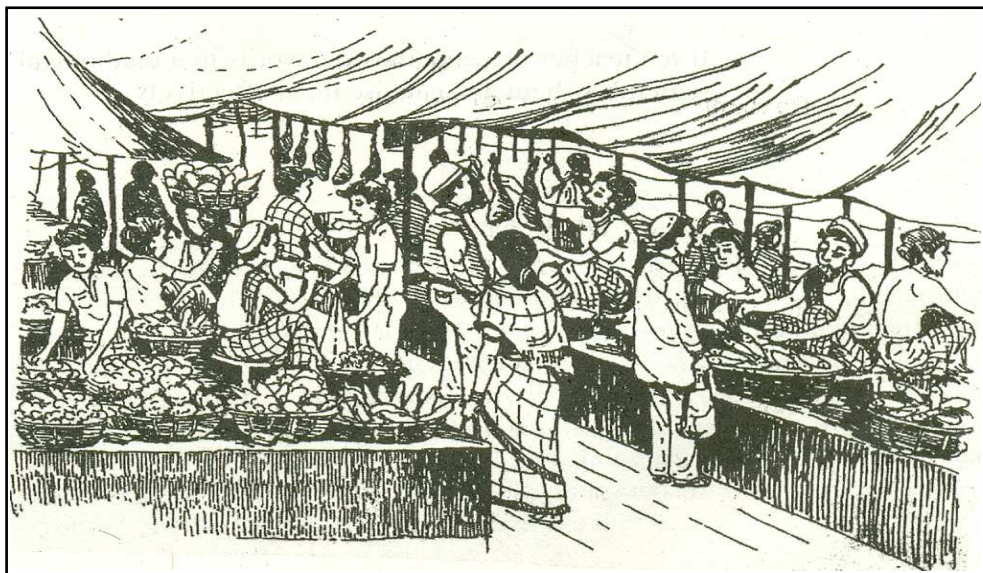
**(f) Explanation:**

The teacher should explain difficult words to make meanings clear. In the case of difficult words gestures may not work. The teacher should use easy and simple language while explaining such words through examples.

**2.3. Some ways of Presenting Vocabulary**

1. Show the meaning of words using one or more techniques discussed above.
2. Say the word clearly and get the class to repeat the word in chorus.
3. Write the word on the blackboard.
4. Ask questions using new words and elicit answers from SS.

This procedure is illustrated by the following example, in which the teacher is presenting the word 'market'.



Picture 3: Market

- T : (showing a picture of a market) Look at the picture. What can you see?
- SS : Shops, people.
- T : Do you know this place?
- SS : No.
- T : No? It's a market. Market. Everyone.
- SS : Market.
- T : Market. Again.
- SS : Market.
- T : Good. This is how we write it (Writes 'market' on the board).
- T : Do you live near a market?
- S<sub>1</sub> : Yes.
- T : Does your mother go to the market?
- S<sub>1</sub> : Yes.
- T : When does she go there?
- S<sub>2</sub> : In the morning.
- T : What does she buy?
- S<sub>2</sub> : She buys vegetables and *groceries*.

Groceries- মুদি  
দোকানের দ্রব্যাদি

If the teacher presents the new words in a methodical way, the students will remember them and can use them effectively.



**Task 2****A. Choose the correct answer.**

1. The word vocabulary means–
  - a) common words.
  - b) frequency words.
  - c) all the words in a language.
  - d) easy words.
  
2. Words should be taught–
  - a) in a context.
  - b) in isolation.
  - c) without a context.
  - d) separately.
  
3. Vocabulary should include words which are –
  - a) useless.
  - b) less used.
  - c) practical.
  - d) important.

**B. Answer the following questions:**

1. What should be the criteria of vocabulary selection?
2. How would you teach the words *empty* and *vegetables* to the students of class V.?

**REVIEW**

The word vocabulary means all the words we find in a particular language. The learning of vocabulary is very important in the context of learning a foreign language. As the goal of language learning is communication, the learners have to know the meaning and use of vocabulary. Teachers have the responsibility to teach vocabulary in an effective way. Many techniques have been developed for this. The teachers can use real objects, mimes, pictures, translation etc. to clarify the meaning of words. She should teach the words in context. If vocabulary is presented in an attractive way with context, the learners can remember and use it effectively.

## Structures

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### Objective:

This lesson will help you to–

- discuss structures
- present structures effectively.

### 3.1 Structures

A structure means a grammatical pattern or shape on the basis of which sentences are made or constructed. Depending on one pattern or structure it is possible to make an unlimited number of sentences. The three sentences in the following show a particular pattern:

1. He writes a letter.
2. Mr. Rahman teaches English.
3. The children play football.

The three sentences are different, because they give us different meanings. But the pattern of the sentences is the same which is like this: NP<sup>1</sup>+V+NP<sup>2</sup>. One can make hundreds and thousands of sentences on the basis of a structure or pattern.

### Task 1

Explain the meaning of the word structure.

### 3.2. Teaching Structures

In the series **English For Today** for the primary level some basic structures have been introduced. They are limited in number. The needs of the students of the primary level have been the basis for the introduction of these patterns or structures.

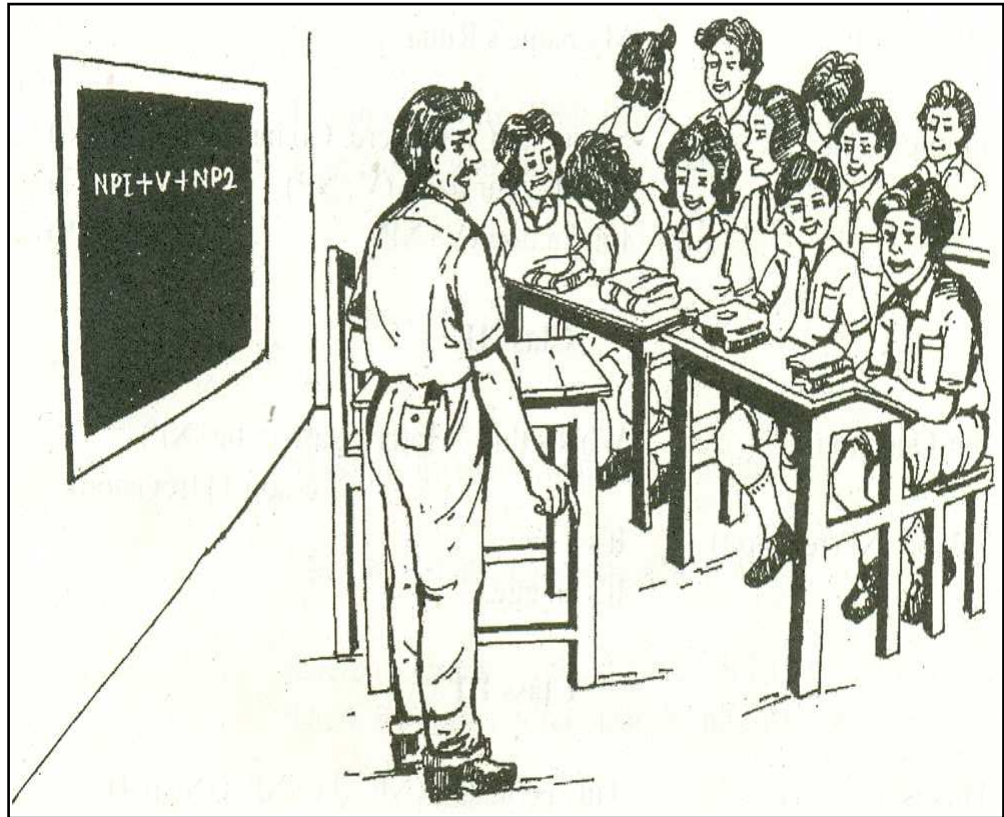
It would appear that some structures are quite easy while others are a little difficult. Keeping the ability of the students in view the easy ones have been given at the beginning of the English textbooks of the primary level. The difficult ones follow them. The principle that has been followed is to proceed from easy to difficult. The same structure has been repeated several times. This has been done for better understanding of the learners.

Structures should be taught in context.

In teaching structures you should give the learners a lot of real sentences based on the structure you are teaching, and let them practise those in pairs and groups. You should give the learners situations or contexts in which these structures could be used.

Mimes- মুকাভিনয়  
 Gestures- অঙ্গভঙ্গি

There are various ways of presenting structures. You could present them through situations, examples, *mimes*, *gestures*, pictures, etc.



Picture 4: Learners practising structures in pairs.

**Structure can be taught in the following ways:**

1. Show meaning through situations, examples, pictures etc.
2. Ask the class to repeat the sentence.
3. Write the sentence on the blackboard.
4. Ask students to give other examples.

If structures are taught methodically it will be quite easy for the learner to use them appropriately and confidently.

The following is a list of structures taught in classes' I-V.

### Structure

#### Class I

- |                          |      |                              |            |
|--------------------------|------|------------------------------|------------|
|                          | 1. : | Good morning                 | (Lesson 1) |
| 1. Exchange of greetings |      | Good-bye                     | (Lesson 3) |
| 2. Wh-question           | :    | What's your name?            | (Lesson 2) |
| 3. NP+be+NP              | :    | My name's Runa.              |            |
| 4. Simple                | :    | Stand up. Come here. Go back | (Lesson 6) |
|                          | :    | Touch your hand (V+NP)       | (Lesson 7) |
|                          | :    | Find a dog (V+NP)            | (Lesson 9) |

#### Class II

- |                       |   |                       |            |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. Wh-Question        | : | What's this?          | (Lesson 1) |
|                       |   | (Interrogative+be+NP) | (Revision) |
| 2. NP+be+NP(revision) | : | It's a bag.           |            |
|                       | : | It's an egg.          |            |

#### Class III

- |                                           |     |                                                       |                          |
|-------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. This is .....                          | :   | This is Salam. (NP <sup>1</sup> +be+NP <sup>2</sup> ) | (Step 4)                 |
| 2. This is a/an ....                      | :   | This is a pen. (Step 5)                               |                          |
|                                           | :   | This is an orange.                                    |                          |
| 3. This/That is .... 's (pen)             | :   | This is Salam's pen (Step 5)                          |                          |
|                                           |     | That is Helen's cup (Step 6)                          |                          |
| 4. This/That is ....<br>my/her/your ..... |     | NP+be+My/her/your                                     | This is my book (Step 6) |
| 5. Simple commands                        | :   | Take your doll (Step 7)                               |                          |
| 6. Wh-questions                           | :   | What is your name? (Step 8)                           |                          |
|                                           |     | Who is this? (Step 8)                                 |                          |
|                                           |     | Where is his book? (Step 11)                          |                          |
| 7. NP+be+Adverbial                        | :   | She is in class 3 (Step 13)                           |                          |
| 8. Yes/No questions                       | :   | In this/that a cup? (Step 9)                          |                          |
|                                           |     | Yes, it is not (Step 9)                               |                          |
|                                           |     | No, it is not (Step 9)                                |                          |
| 9. NP+be+Complement                       | :   | Ali is tall. (Step 10)                                |                          |
|                                           |     | Salam's cat is big (Step 10)                          |                          |
| 10. Plurals                               | :   | One pen and two pens (Step 12)                        |                          |
|                                           |     | Hasan and Arif are brothers (Step 13)                 |                          |
| 11. How many....                          | :   | How many chairs? (Step 14)                            |                          |
| 12. NP+be+V                               | - : | Hasan is writing (Step 15)                            |                          |
| ing/NP <sup>1</sup> +be+V-                |     | I am eating a mango. (Step 15)                        |                          |
| ing+NP <sup>2</sup>                       |     |                                                       |                          |

**Class IV**

1. Present simple : Muslims go the Eidgah at Eid (Step 5)  
NP+V+Adverbial
2. NP<sup>1</sup>+V+NP<sup>2</sup> : They like snake charmers. (Step 7)
3. There is ...There are... : There is a house in the picture. (Step 7)  
There are two children near the house.(Step 7)
4. Will : I will swim (Step 9)
5. or ... : Is it a frog or a football? (Step 10)
6. Can/cannot..... : Rahim can ride. (Step 11)  
Rahim cannot drive. (Step 11)
7. Year(s) old : The baby is one year old  
Rahim is ten years old. (Step 11)  
I am eleven years old. (Step 11)
8. Has/have.... : Helen has a cat (Step 13)  
Cats have fur (Step 13)
9. O'clock.... : It is six o'clock (Step 16)
10. Here is/Here are... : Here is an egg. (Step 16)  
Here are two chickens.(Step 16)

**Class V**

1. Past simple : They went to the zoo yesterday. (Step4)
2. There was/There were... : There was a shop near the school. (Step5)  
There were sweets in the shop. (Step 5)
3. NP<sup>1</sup>+V+adj+NP<sup>2</sup> : She wants a red dress. (Step 6)
4. Uncountable nouns : This is rice. (Step 7)
5. How much/How many.... : How much rice do you want? (Step 7)
6. Adverbs of manner : I arrived here safely. (Step 9)
7. Question with can/cannot: : Can you swim? (Step 11)  
What can you see in your home? (Step 11)
8. Questions with future simple : Where will you go? (Step 12)
9. Half past/a quarter past/a quarter to... : It is half past ten. (Step 14)

**Task 2****A. Choose the best answer.**

1. A structure means–
  - a) a sentence.
  - b) a group of words.
  - c) a shape.
  - d) a grammatical pattern.
  
2. Depending on one pattern we can make–
  - a) no sentences.
  - b) only one sentences.
  - c) many sentences
  - d) a whole speech.
  
3. Say which structure is different?–
  - a) The boys play football.
  - b) The man is honest.
  - c) We love children.
  - d) The girl eats rice.

**B. Answer the following questions.**

1. Chose a structure from **English For Today** for class 3/4 and show how you would teach it in the classroom.
2. Why should structures be contextualized?

**REVIEW**

Structure is the basis of which sentences are made or constructed. If structures are not known to the learners they cannot use language appropriately. So structures should be taught effectively. For understanding of the students meaning should be given before presenting structures. They should be taught in contexts.