

The Questions We Ask

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Bringing the world to the classroom and the classroom to life

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Andrew Walkley has 25 years experience as a teacher, trainer and materials writer. He is currently the co-director of Lexical Lab (lexicallab.com) an educational services provider specializing in course design and consultancy, material writing and teacher training. With Lexical Lab, he runs a variety of training courses for people in English Language education as part of a Summer school. He is the co-author of several coursebook series *Outcomes*, *Innovations* and *Perspectives* (National Geographic Learning) and the methodology book *Teaching Lexically* (Delta Publishing).



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lexicallab

Poll

What are the **principles** underlying the questions we ask?

Can we get better at asking and answering them

- at the **appropriate time**?
- for the **purpose** we want to achieve?

- Instruction checking questions
- Concept checking questions
- Comprehension questions
- Elicitation
- Chat
- Speaking fluency
- Input
- Practice language
- Student questions

Display questions:
teacher knows the answer –
Initiation, response, evaluation

Referential questions:
genuine information gap

Poll

- Instruction checking questions
- Concept checking questions
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- Elicitation
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- Speaking fluency
- Input
- Practice language
- Student questions

- Instruction checking questions display
- Concept checking questions display
- Comprehension questions display
- Elicitation display
- Student questions referential
- Chat referential
- Speaking fluency referential
- Practice language referential
- Input referential

Principle:

Feedback is central to good teaching
(Hattie)

Principle:

Learning takes place through breakdowns in interaction
(Long)

Poll

Display questions

How much **feedback** do they provide?

How do they lead to extending learning?

Sa I know cursa, I nila say nothing.

Am I talking about now, the past or the future?

For **grammar**, concept checking questions rely on:

- a full context
- an explanation or previous knowledge
- a concept

GRAMMAR

Present perfect continuous and past simple for duration

We can use both the present perfect continuous and the past simple to talk about the duration (how long something lasts) of an activity or situation.

8 Look at these extracts from the conversation. Then work in pairs and answer the questions below.

I: *So how long have you been doing judo, then?*
(present perfect continuous)

R: *Ever since I was a kid.*

I: *Really? How long were you out of action?*

R: *Well, I didn't do anything for a couple of months.*
(past simple)

I: *How long have I known you now? Six years?*
(present perfect simple)

- 1 Does Rika still do judo?
- 2 Is Rika still out of action?
- 3 Does Ian still know Rika?
- 4 Why don't we say: *How long have I been knowing you now?*
- 5 What's the difference between *for* and *since*?



Check your ideas on page 170 and do Exercise 1.

- How much **feedback** do CCQs provide?
- Are there other ways we can check **individual** students have understood concepts?
- Can we **extend** students' learning on grammar based on this feedback? How? (Pienneman et al)

CCQs applied to lexis

to shlock

- Does this mean I eat / drink a lot or a little?
- Does it mean I do it in a short time?

I was driving too quickly. A policeman stopped me. I had to **trad a krat**.

Did I give the policeman money?

I was driving too quickly. A policeman stopped me. I had to **trad a krat of 80 Euro**.

- Does this mean I gave the policeman money?
- Why did I give him the money?
- Does the policeman keep the money or the government?

go hossky means to go on strike.

So if you go hossky,

- are you happy or unhappy about your job?
- do you go to work?
- Is it a holiday? Do you get paid?
- Do you want something about your job to change?

- How much **feedback** do these CCQs provide?
- Can we **extend** students' based on this feedback?

LET'S look at some alternative kinds of Qs.

Have you ever gone **hossky**?

Who's **hossky** now?

Why might people go **hossky**?

What do you have to do to **hossky**?
How does it end?

Traditional concept checking questions are
not designed for vocabulary.

- generally no 'concept' but complex meaning!
- meaning and usage too multifaceted and slippery
- cultural issues may mean a yes / no 'display' is wrong!

Principle:

meaning is a small part of knowing a word

Good vocab checking questions:

- usually **include the key word(s)** in the question
- **impersonal** and based on *might* and *prototypes*
- **explore** what it is to know a word
- are **open** and/or generate connected language
- *may* have **unexpected** answers – not exactly display
- provide feedback that allows to **extend learning**

So good questions are open and generative, like these:

Why might people **go hossky?**

What do you have to do to **hossky?** How does it end?

What other things can you **binge** on?

What's the opposite of **leave halfway through**?

What do people do if they are **angry**?

What might you say if you were **pleased** with something?

What might you ask if it's **boiling** in a room?

What preposition follows **interested**?

Why might someone avoid a **rough area**?

What else might people **avoid** doing?

What form follows **avoid**?

What kind of buildings are usually described as **grand**?

What's an easier way of saying **contends that**?



ABOUT TOWN

VOCABULARY Buildings and areas

1 Check any new words in bold in a dictionary.
Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

- 1 What kind of buildings and other things might you see in an **affluent** area?
- 2 What kind of buildings are usually described as **grand**?
- 3 What might you want to do to a **hideous** building or monument?
- 4 Can you think of a place with a lot of **high-rise** buildings?
- 5 What might the government do to an **historic** area or building? Why?
- 6 What do you call the opposite of a **deprived** area?
- 7 What do you find in a **residential** area?
- 8 Would you recommend a tourist to visit a **rough** area? Why? / Why not?
- 9 What might a local government do to a **run-down** building or area?
- 10 What do you call the opposite of a **stunning** building?
- 11 What might you find in a **trendy** area? And what kind of people might live there?
- 12 What's usually happening in an **up-and-coming** area?

- Student questions referential
- Practice language referential
- Chat referential
- Speaking fluency referential
- Input referential

Answering student questions

Practice:
providing further feedback

Do you know anyone who has gone hossky? Why? What happened? Were they successful?

Have you ever left halfway through something? What were you doing? Why did you leave?

Is binge drinking a problem in your country? Why / Why not?

Are you avoiding anything or anyone at the moment? What? Why?

Do you know any rough areas? Where are they? Why do you think they're rough? Do you know any that used to be rough?

- Questions including key vocab are fine
- Be prepared to teach surrounding language
- Frame questions appropriate to student's experience
- Allow for reference to people as well as 'me'.
- Ask a variety of questions about a variety of vocab
- Don't expect all questions to be 'successful'!

Exploiting first day chat

How's it going?

Cheers.

Whereabouts?

You won't know it. It's

Are you from here ?

I to live there.

That sounds high-powered.

That must be good.

Me too/So I.

How long have you doing that?

> Ages

> 3 years on and

What did you do at the weekend?

I went shopping ...

clothes / things / compliments

I went to see my gran / sister

family / questions

I was in bed all weekend

illness vocab / sympathy / advice

I went to the cinema

types of film / film questions / adj's

I went to X.

What's it like? / what did you think of it?

I watched the X match

football vocab / opinion (should've)

I played X ...

how often? How long?

I was going to... but

weather / changed plans

I had to ...

obligation / work

I spent Saturday in A nd E

narrative tenses / accident vocab /
must've been

What questions and **responses** do we teach?

How many people live in Scotland?

What happened in 1066?

When can the British Police arrest you without reason?

What does CRE stand for?

What number do you dial for the emergency services?

Who speaks Cornish?

Who became Britain's first prime Minister in 1979?

Which political party use blue as its official colour?

Why do policeman stand outside the house in the picture above?

What happens on Guy Fawkes Day?

When did women in Britain get the vote in political elections for the first time?

Which English king had six wives?

Do you know it?

Did you enjoy it?

Have you studied here before?

Where are you based?

What are you doing there? Are you working?

How long have you been learning French?

Where do you live?

Who do you live with?

How long have you been living there?

Where were you born?

How long does it usually take you to get to work?

What did you do last weekend? Anything interesting?

Why are you studying at this school?

Have you ever been to an English-speaking country?

Does anyone else in your family speak English?

Has anyone you know ever lived abroad? Where?

Are you feeling better now?

Do you and your sister get on OK?

Where were you born?

Have you visited many foreign countries?

Have your parents met your girlfriend yet?

Where did your parents first meet?

How long have you been waiting?

How long has he been married?

Shall I make you a cup of tea?

Are you going to go to University?

Shall we eat out tonight?

What are you going to wear to the party?

Do you think it's going to rain tomorrow?

Can we have pizza for lunch?

Is that the phone?

Are you seeing a relative this weekend?

Are you having dinner with your family tonight?

Are you getting married soon?

Are you going out with your brother or sister tonight?

Are you going to have a new nephew or niece soon?

Are you going to leave home in the near future?

Are you going to have a big family reunion soon?

Are you going to go on holiday with your family this year?

Are you going away in the summer?

Why? What about you?

Do you have any plans for the weekend?

Why? What about you?

What are you thinking of seeing?

Are you going away in the summer?

What are you going you do in the summer holidays?

Do you have any plans for the weekend?

Do you have any plans for the weekend?

What are you doing after the class?

Are you going to do anything for your birthday?

Are you going to continue studying English after this course?

What are you going to do after you leave school / graduate?

Do you have any plans to change jobs?

So what are you going to do about it? Any idea?

What're you doing tomorrow? Do you have any plans?

Questions show how **coursebooks differ**

Principles:

- Grammar plus words or models and usage?
- Led by aims or by outcomes?
- 'Functions' - transactional or social interaction?
- Conversation driven or text driven?

Questions for development

Principle:

The focus of lessons should be real communication and language

- What did I learn about my students today?
- What did they learn about each other?
- What new language did they learn?
- Were there any / better questions I could have asked?
- What language did I teach that I haven't before?
- What questions did my students ask?
- Did I answer them well? How could it be better?
- Could I write material based on that?

Further information

Powerpoint and comments

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Outcomes Second edition

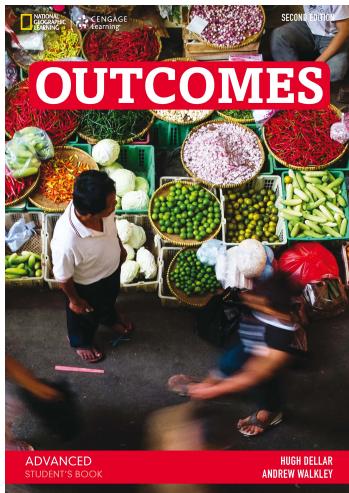
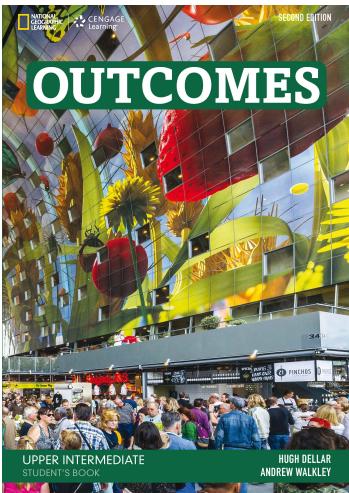
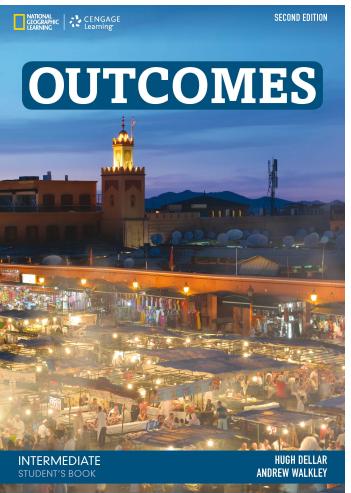
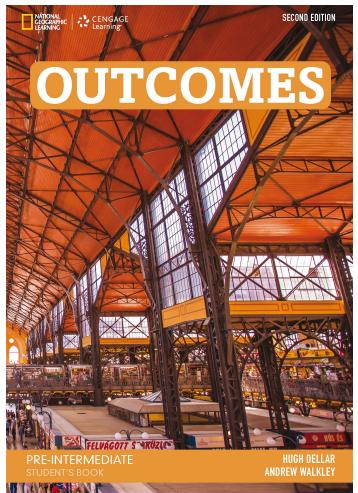
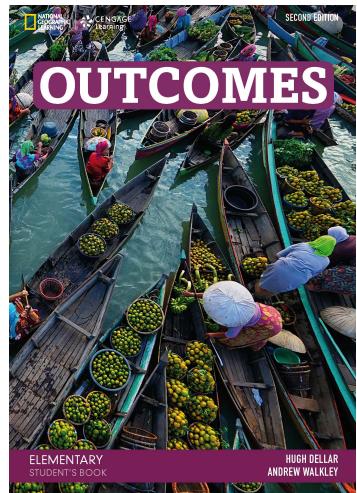
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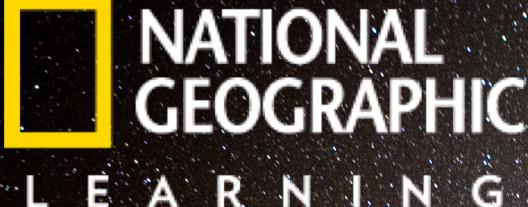
Teaching Lexically Methodology Book

<http://www.deltapublishing.co.uk/titles/methodology/teaching-lexically>

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