



月は第二言語における語彙習得の特集号です。そこで、この分野の著名な研究者である Batta Laufer, Paul Meara, Paul Nation の三氏に語彙習得のアイディア、ベスト10をあげてもらい、それらを6つの原則に基づいて David Beglar と Alan Hunt の両氏が総括します。



## Sharing our stories at JALT2005 — ストーリー共有 —

Tsuyuki Mura氏による Paul Nation氏へのインタビュー記事のあとには、3つの論考が続きます。まず、John Fujimori氏によるオーラル

・コミュニティにおける文科学認定テストにおける語彙分析、次に Jeffrey Shaffer氏によるテーマ別のリーディングテストの語彙分析、そして、Tsuyuki Mura氏による上級EFL学習者の語彙知識に関する考察があります。

その他にも、Todd Sauters と Richard Barber の両氏が語彙指導のテクニクをアイディアをマイ・シェアで紹介し、Brent Wolter と P.C. Blockson の両氏が語彙指導と多読について審評を寄せています。

### TIT / Job Information Centre Policy on Discrimination

The editors oppose discriminatory language, policies, and employment practices, in accordance with Japanese and international law. Exclusions or requirements concerning gender, age, race, religion, or country of origin should be avoided in announcements in the JIC Positions column, unless there are legal requirements or other compelling reasons for such discrimination, and these reasons are clearly explained in the job announcement. The editors reserve the right to edit ads for clarity, and to return ads for rewriting if they do not comply with this policy.

TITでは、日本の法律、国際法および良識に従って、言語、政策および雇用慣習の差別に反対します。JICコラムでは性別、年齢、人種、宗教、出身国（「英国」、「アメリカ」ではなく母語能力としての国）に関する、排除や要求はしません。そうした差別がなされる場合には、明確に説明されるべきです。編集者は、明瞭に求人広告を編集し、かつこの方針に添わない場合には求人広告を棄却する権利をもちます。

### Advertiser Index

Key: JFC = inside front cover, IBC = inside back cover, OBC = outside back cover

- Seido . . . . . 20
- MacMillan LanguageHouse . . . . . 28
- IIBC . . . . . 34
- EFL Press . . . . . 40
- Thomson Learning . . . . . 48
- Cambridge University Press . . . . . 50
- Longman Japan . . . . . 66

Please support our advertisers!

# Ten best ideas for teaching vocabulary

**Batta Laufer**  
University of Haifa

**1. Do not rely too much on un instructed acquisition**  
Picking up words from context has limitations, unless learners are flooded with input. When the main source of vocabulary is classroom learning, enhance it by form-focused instruction such as the explanation and study of words both in lists and in contexts of various lengths.

**2. Create your own lexical syllabus**  
Unless your institution has provided you with a lexical syllabus, create your own based on your teaching materials, frequency lists, and learners' specific needs. Check a word on your syllabus whenever you expose students to it. Try to provide six to ten exposures to each word during the course.

**3. Do not count on guessing strategies to replace vocabulary knowledge**  
Guessing is useful, but the most important condition for inferring word meaning from context is the understanding of the surrounding words that include the clues. Knowing 98% of the surrounding vocabulary is optimal for effectively guessing unknown words from context.

**4. Increase learners' vocabulary size**  
Some researchers suggest that learners need to know 5000 word families to reach a reasonable comprehension (70%) of authentic non-fiction texts. Others say that knowing 10,000 word families is the minimum for comprehending academic texts. When class time is limited, encourage learners to keep individual vocabulary notebooks or computer files as a strategy for increasing vocabulary size.

**5. Recycle words that have been introduced earlier in the course**  
Students are likely to forget words that are not repeatedly encountered or used. Therefore, reinforce their memory from time to time. Several minutes per lesson devoted to reviewing "vocabulary oldies" will improve the retention of these words.

**Batta Laufer**  
University of Haifa

**Paul Meara**  
University of Swansca

**Paul Nation**  
Victoria University of Wellington

web link: [www.jalt-publications.org/tit/articles/2005/07/index](http://www.jalt-publications.org/tit/articles/2005/07/index)

### 6. Give frequent vocabulary tests

Even if words are practiced in class, they are remembered much better after an additional stage of intentional memorization, and testing is one way to encourage students to do this. Suggest to students that they prepare and review cards with a word on one side and its meaning, grammar, and examples of use on the other side.

### 7. Draw learners' attention to "synforms"

Synforms are word pairs or groups of words with similar (though not identical) sound, script, or morphology, which learners tend to confuse. Examples are: cancel/conceal/counsel, embrace/embarass, unanimous/anonymous, and sensible/sensitive/sensual. Do not teach several new synforms together; instead, have the students practice them after all members of the pair or group have been encountered individually.

### 8. Pay attention to interlingual semantic differences

An L1 word may have several alternatives in English, an English word may have several unrelated translations in the L1, or have no L1 equivalent whatsoever. Many lexical errors, including fossilized ones, stem from such differences.

### 9. Do not ban the L1 translation of words

Use translation judiciously with words that have an exact or close equivalent in the L1. Learners translate unconsciously anyway. Research shows that L1 glosses provided by teachers or looked up in a good bilingual dictionary are beneficial for text comprehension and word learning.

### 10. Practice the use of collocations that differ from the learners' L1

Since collocations are easy to understand (e.g., strong coffee, make a copy), their difficulty is often unnoticed or underestimated. Learners, even advanced ones, make mistakes in the use of collocations that differ from their L1.



Batia Laufer is professor and chair of the English Language and Literature Department at the University of Haifa, Israel. Her areas of research are: vocabulary acquisition, lexicography, cross linguistic influence, reading, and testing. She has published several books and numerous articles in various professional journals, presented at many international conferences, and given invited lectures at over 30 universities in different countries.

## Paul Meara University of Swansea

### 1. Teach your students to use a mnemonic system

Learning words is hard work, and anything that makes it easier is an advantage for students. Mnemonic systems, like the keyword method, are amazingly effective, counteract forgetting, and help students remember words long enough for them to become part of their active vocabulary.

### 2. Set demanding vocabulary targets for your students

Serious language teaching outfits insist on students rapidly learning a large number of words. The British Army, for example, sets a target of 60 words for homework every day, and they test that students have actually achieved this target.

### 3. Teach words in context

Learning lists of words by heart in context is

sometimes easier than working with single words. A good way of doing this is to learn newspaper headlines containing just one word you do not know. The headlines provide a topical context that makes it easier to remember what the unknown word might mean and shows you how it is used.

### 4. Get the students to read something new every day

You cannot learn all the vocabulary you need just by attending classes. Research shows that most people increase their vocabulary by reading, and this works for second language learners, too.

### 5. Get your students to write something every day

Writing is a good way to consolidate your knowledge of words. It ensures that you know how to spell the words you think you know, and it reinforces the connections between the words you use in the same context. Also, writing does not put you under time pressure, so it lets you

access and rehearse vocabulary that you can then use later in speech.

### 6. Get students to review their vocabulary regularly

You will forget vocabulary if you do not review it regularly. You can now get computer programs that let you automatically review vocabulary lists and remind you of words that you are likely to forget.

### 7. Play word association games

Links between words are what make you vocabulary active, so any activity which involves students in making links between words is going to help turn passive vocabulary into an active lexicon.

### 8. Watch videos with subtitles

Subtitled videos are easy to watch and usually fun. If you watch them three or four times, you will probably know the dialogue by heart. Then watch the video without the subtitles. You should understand most of it. Avoid dubbed movies at all costs!

### 9. Listen to songs

Music is stored in a special part of the brain, and things you learn with music are often more

resistant to attrition than other kinds of learning. People with aphasia can often sing, even when they cannot talk, and people who forget their first language can often still sing in it.

### 10. Learn a book by heart

This is an amazing way to ensure that you will learn many words. Work with a book that is important to you, and learn whole sections by heart. This method is particularly good if you already know the book well in your L1. Even a short book will give you a vocabulary of thousands of words.



Paul Meara is head of research in the Centre for Applied Language Studies at the University of Swansea. Paul is best known for his innovative vocabulary assessment tools, some of which can be downloaded from the Swansea website <www.swan.ac.uk/cals/calres/ognosics.htm>. Paul also maintains a large bibliographical database on <www.swan.ac.uk/cals/calres/yazga/>. This database covers almost everything that has been written on second language vocabulary acquisition.

variety of ways according to the circumstances in which the language course is taught.

### 2. Approach high and low frequency words differently

Teachers should deal with high frequency and low frequency words in quite different ways, and teachers and learners should know whether they should be focusing on high or low frequency words. High frequency words deserve a lot of attention from teachers. When these are all known, teachers should concentrate on training the learners to use strategies for learning and dealing with low frequency words.

### 3. Use the four strands

A well-balanced vocabulary course (and indeed a language course) should have roughly equal proportions of opportunities for learning in each of the four strands of meaning-focused input (learning through communicative listening and reading activities), meaning-focused output

(learning through communicative speaking and writing activities), language-focused learning (form-focused instruction), and fluency development in the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This means that about three-quarters of the course time should be spent on communicative, message-focused activities, and about one quarter on the deliberate learning of language.

#### 4. Implement an extensive reading program

As part of the meaning-focused input strand of a course, there should be a substantial extensive reading program making use of a large number of interesting graded readers. Learners should read at least one book every two weeks and a major aim should be to gain pleasure from such reading with as little interference as possible from the teacher. An extensive listening program would also be a very good idea.

#### 5. Carefully design speaking and writing activities

The teacher should design speaking and writing activities so that there are good opportunities for vocabulary learning. This involves making sure that there is written or spoken input in the activities, that each piece of input contains about 12 words that may be new to the learners, and that the input is used several times in some changed way (e.g., use the word in an original context) in spoken or written output.

#### 6. Use a variety of activities aimed at fluency development

The fluency development strand of the course involves activities where the learners do not meet or use any new vocabulary; instead, they become more fluent at using what they already know. The fluency techniques I like are the *4/3/2 technique* for speaking, speed reading, ten-minute writing, and listening to easy stories.

#### 7. Provide extended training and practice in guessing unknown vocabulary from context

This can begin as a very deliberate strategy, but the eventual goal is to become fluent at guessing. Like the strategies described in the next two ideas, this strategy is very useful for dealing with both high frequency and low frequency words. It can be approached in many ways, but generally, it is best to use a bottom-up guessing strategy that

relies on language clues rather than background knowledge.

#### 8. Train students to use word cards

Learners should be trained in the strategy of learning words using word cards. Word cards are small cards with the foreign (English) word or phrase on one side and the L1 translation on the other. Using cards is a form of rote learning and it is an excellent way of quickly increasing vocabulary size. Forget all the criticism you have heard about rote learning and translation; research has repeatedly shown that such learning is very effective.

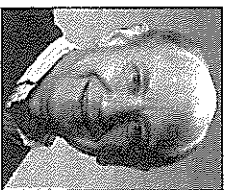
#### 9. Teach the high frequency affixes of English

Get learners to learn the most useful 15-20 English prefixes and suffixes. These affixes can be a very effective tool for helping learners remember the meanings of the many Latinate words of English. This word part strategy involves relating the meaning of the affix to the meaning of the whole word.

#### 10. Encourage learner autonomy

Encourage students to take informed responsibility for their own vocabulary learning. If students know what vocabulary to learn and how to learn it, their learning can be much more effective than if they are reliant on teacher prepared exercises and material. Students also need to be motivated and encouraged to make their own vocabulary learning decisions.

I had to limit myself to ten ideas so I had to leave out some that I would have added if I had written this on another day. They include avoid interference between related words, encourage depth of mental processing when learning vocabulary, and provide training in the strategy of effective dictionary use.



Paul Nation is a professor of Applied Linguistics and Applied Language Studies at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

He has taught in Indonesia, Thailand, the United States, Finland, and Japan. His specialist interests are language teaching methodology and vocabulary learning. His latest book is *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language* published by Cambridge University Press (2001).

# Six principles for teaching foreign language vocabulary: A commentary on Laufer, Meara, and Nation's 'Ten Best Ideas'

David Beglar

Temple University,  
Japan

Alan Hunt

Kansai University

Many linguists and cognitive psychologists place lexis at the center of human language processing and production. Thus, modern researchers have reached conclusions that are similar to those of many foreign language learners: vocabulary acquisition is a crucial, and in some senses, the central component in successful foreign language acquisition. Our experience with even highly advanced learners confirms that they are acutely aware of the *lexical gap* separating them from educated native speakers of the language.

Many of the suggestions made by Laufer, Meara, and Nation apply to beginners and advanced proficiency learners alike. Rather than simply synthesize their ideas here, we would like to interpret them in light of what we see as six principles underlying both successful second language acquisition and successful lexical acquisition. The first four principles, what we call *decontextualized and contextualized input, form-focused instruction, and fluency development*, are the same as Nation's four strands of a well-designed language course (Nation's ideas #1 & #3, in this issue). We have added two further principles, *enhanced motivation and effective strategy use*.

#### Principle 1: Provide access to decontextualized and contextualized input.

The first principle concerns learners gaining access to two types of input: temporarily decontextualized target vocabulary and large quantities of comprehensible, engaging, and contextualized input. These are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

In the case of decontextualized input, teachers need to be highly selective when choosing lexical items for their students to study (Laufer #2 #4; Meara #2). It is best for teachers of beginning and low intermediate learners to concentrate on introducing high-frequency vocabulary (Nation #2), while many intermediate and advanced students should focus on academic vocabulary (Coxhead, 2000) and useful technical vocabulary.

The second type of input is communicative, contextualized, and meaning-focused (Nation #3). It can take a number of forms including intensive and extensive reading (Meara #4, 10; Nation #4) as well as intensive and extensive listening (Meara #8 #9; Nation #4). The repeated exposure to large quantities of contextualized vocabulary found in engaging extensive reading and listening texts provides an excellent means of review and increases the probability of students retaining new and previously met vocabulary (Nagy, 1997). This type of input has been found to be "the best predictor of vocabulary growth between grades two and five" (Nagy, 1988, p. 30) for native speakers of English, a finding that foreign language teachers should note carefully. More information about extensive reading activities and programs can be found in a special edition of *The Language Teacher* (Waring, 1997; Ed.), Jacobs, Davis, and Renandya (1997), Day and Bamford (1998), Bamford and Day (2004), and at the Extensive Reading Pages website <www.extensivereading.net/index.html>.

### Principle 2: Encourage communicative output.

Output activities allow students to use the foreign language to develop a personal voice in the L2, try out new words that they have met in input activities, and gain feedback from others about the correctness of their use of new language forms. As Nation (#5) has stated, speaking and writing tasks can be designed so as to promote vocabulary acquisition at three points in a set of tasks. This can occur (a) during pre-activities, for instance through the use of semantic maps containing target vocabulary that students discuss in pairs (Stahl & Vance, 1986) and engaging students with reading or listening texts in which target lexis has been embedded and highlighted in some way; (b) in main activities, such as ranking activities and problem-solving activities in which target vocabulary that is useful or necessary for completing the task is placed on a handout for easy reference, and; (c) in post-activities in which students report their group's decisions and conclusions to other groups. At this stage, students should once again be encouraged to use the vocabulary on their handout as they work through the task. More information can be found in Chapter 4 of Nation's (2001) *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*.

### Principle 3: Provide form-focused instruction.

More exposure to large amounts of communicative input and output will often not result in highly accurate language use (Lauter #1). Form-focused instruction has two primary purposes. The first involves helping students to acquire the L2 lexicon more accurately by overcoming predictable problem areas in the foreign language, such as synonyms (Lauter #7), interlingual semantic differences (Lauter #8), and some collocations (Lauter #10). Without explicit teaching and learning, learners may avoid these areas altogether or acquire them incorrectly. The second purpose of form-focused instruction is to help students more efficiently acquire foreign language lexis that will serve them well in a wide variety of situations. These include high-frequency affixes (Nation #9), both of which occur with great regularity in written and oral texts, formal and informal language, and academic and nonacademic situations.

Temporarily decontextualizing vocabulary allows the students to focus on word form (e.g., spelling and pronunciation) and to make a connection to L1 meaning (Lauter #9). Target words may be temporarily isolated from context as a part of pre-reading exercises or during reading and then studied in relation to their contexts (Meara #3). Furthermore, once students know the meanings of words that can be broken down into stems and affixes, then teachers may want to teach some of the more common affixes and have students practice word analysis (Nation #9), a skill that can help them guess the meaning of newly met words. Teachers can promote the retention of target vocabulary through the recycling of previously studied words (Lauter #5) and by training students to make and review vocabulary cards (Meara #6; Nation #8). Recycling is most effective when students engaged in short, frequent review sessions over an extended period of time. One effective method of review has been provided by Mondria and Mondria-De Vries (1994). Decontextualized vocabulary should, soon after being introduced, also be encountered and reviewed in meaningful contexts.

### Principle 4: Promote fluency development.

The fourth principle requires that teachers and learners devote time to the development of fluency (Nation #6), which involves students in developing faster access to already known

lexis and larger lexical chunks. Effective ways to develop fluency include repeatedly meeting known and partially known words (a) through regular review (Meara #6); (b) in communicative tasks and course materials (Lauter #5); (c) in integrated tasks in which students study a single topic through a variety of reading, listening, speaking, and writing activities; (d) while engaged in narrow reading and listening (Krashen, 1981) involving students in reading or listening to several texts on the same topic (see Schaffer's article in this issue; Schmitt & Carter, 2000), and; (e) while reading and/or listening extensively (Nation #4). In addition to large amounts of repetition, many fluency activities should put time pressure on the students (e.g., speed reading and timed story retelling) and use familiar vocabulary and tasks. This ensures that accuracy is less compromised while emphasizing the quantity and speed of the input or output.

### Principle 5: Enhance student motivation.

Although none of the contributors mentioned motivation explicitly, important ways to motivate students are implicit in many of their ideas. For instance, autonomy (Nation #10), which has been characterized as a fundamental human need that all individuals seek to satisfy (Deci & Ryan, 1985), is potentially one of the most powerful motivators available. Research from general education has consistently shown that increased autonomy can lead to greater intrinsic motivation, which has in turn been tied to greater achievement (Gardner, 1985; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). In addition, the setting of vocabulary learning goals (Meara #2) is strongly related to Locke and Larham's (1990) goal setting theory, which states that motivation can be enhanced when goals are seen as important and possible to achieve. Past research has shown that specific goals (e.g., I will learn 20 words per week) are preferred to general ones (e.g., I will improve my English) and that difficult goals lead to higher performance than easily attained goals. Furthermore, increasing vocabulary size (Lauter #4) can occur relatively rapidly for all students (unlike, for instance, the acquisition of morpho-syntax or pragmatic competence), and success in learning vocabulary can help to establish or enhance student self-confidence, which has been found to be particularly important in foreign language situations (Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994).

### Principle 6: Develop effective strategy use.

Although effective strategy use is an integral part of each of the above principles, we believe it is worth highlighting because learners need extensive training in using strategies effectively and efficiently. As students grow as L2 learners, they need to expand their strategies and to develop a metacognitive awareness of when to use a given strategy or combine several strategies for a specific task (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994; Hulstijn, 1993).

The process of acquiring new words can be sped up by teaching learners how to effectively use vocabulary cards (Nation #8), the keyword technique (Meara #1), and to engage in regular review (Meara #6). Moreover, when learners meet unknown words in context they may choose to guess their meaning (Nation #7), ignore them, or check them in a dictionary (Hulstijn, 1993). Guessing from context and dictionary use can be combined, as guessing may promote depth of processing while dictionaries help to ensure accuracy in understanding word meaning (Schrofield, 1997). Indeed, as learners read or listen, they will need to decide which words deserve attention and which of these strategies would be the most effective to apply. Although it is ultimately the learners who must take responsibility for adopting a strategic approach to vocabulary learning (Nation #10), teachers play an important supporting role by providing opportunities to practice new strategies, encouraging learners to choose from a variety of strategies to carry out a task, and then monitoring and providing feedback on the effectiveness of strategy choice.

### Conclusion

One interesting aspect of the contributions by Lauter, Meara, and Nation is that some of their ideas significantly diverge from mainstream SLA. How many contributors to professional journals suggest having students use word lists (Lauter #1), word cards (Nation #8), and memorize large chunks of discourse (Meara #10)? Some would label such ideas as outdated and *behaviorist*. However, our experience as well as empirical research show that such ideas play an important role in speeding up lexical acquisition, particularly in EFL settings, provided that they serve rather than dominate more communicative approaches.



SLVA research has a rich history in which an impressively large number of techniques that can enhance vocabulary acquisition have been identified. When viewed holistically, these findings can be grouped into principles, and in lieu of a comprehensive theory of SLVA, we view such principles as the best general guidelines currently available for both teachers and students alike, as we believe that they will lead to more effective vocabulary teaching and learning.

**References**

Bamford, J., & Day, R. R. (2004). *Extensive reading activities for teaching language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chamot, A. U., & O'Malley, J. M. (1994). Language learner and learning strategies. In N. C. Ellis (Ed.), *Implicit and explicit learning of languages* (pp. 371-392). London: Academic Press.

Clement, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. A. (1994). Motivation, self-confidence, and group cohesion in the foreign language classroom. *Language Learning*, 44(3), 417-448.

Coxhead, A. (2000). A new academic word list. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34(2), 213-238.

Day, R., & Bamford, J. (1998). *Extensive reading in the second language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York: Plenum.

Fry, E. (Ed.). (1991). *The ten best ideas for reading teachers*. New York: Addison Wesley.

Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. London: Edward Arnold.

Hutisn, J. H. (1993). When do foreign-language readers look up the meaning of unfamiliar words? The influence of task and learner variables. *Modern Language Journal*, 77(2), 139-147.

Jacobs, G. M., Davis, C., & Renandya, W. A. (Eds.). (1997). *Successful strategies for extensive reading*. Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre.

Krashen, S. (1981). The case for narrow reading. *TESOL Newsletter*, 15 (6), 23.

Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (1990). *A theory of goal setting and task performance*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Mondita, J. A., & Mondita-De Vries, S. (1994). Efficiently memorizing words with the help of vocabulary cards and "hand computer": Theory and applications. *System*, 22(1), 47-57.

Nagy, W. E. (1988). *Teaching vocabulary to improve reading comprehension*. Urbana, IL: ERIC, NCTE, & IRA.

Nagy, W. E. (1997). On the role of context in first and second language vocabulary learning. In N. Schmitt & M. McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary: Description, acquisition, and pedagogy* (pp. 64-83). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Naton, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schmitt, N., & Carter, R. (2000). The lexical advantages of narrow reading for second language learners. *TESOL Journal*, 9(1), 4-9.

Schofield, P. J. (1997). Vocabulary reference works in foreign language learning. In N. Schmitt & M. McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary: description, acquisition, and pedagogy* (pp. 279-302). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

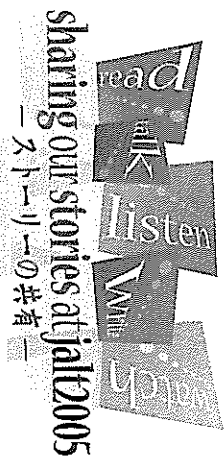
Sahl, S. A., & Vancil, S. J. (1986). Discussion is what makes semantic maps work in vocabulary instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, 40(1), 62-67.

Tremblay, P. F., & Gardner, R. C. (1995). Expanding the motivation construct in language learning. *Modern Language Journal*, 79(4), 505-520.

Waring, R. (Ed.). (1997). *The Language Teacher*, 21(5).

David Beglar is an Associate Professor at Temple University Japan. He is interested in vocabulary acquisition and language assessment.

Alan Hunt is an Associate Professor at Kansai University. He is interested in vocabulary acquisition, extensive reading, and dictionary research.



October 7 - 10, 2005  
 Granship Convention Center  
 Shizuoka, Japan  
**Plenaries, workshops, discussions,  
 food, meetings, papers, parties,  
 ... and LOTS of stories!**

(001 DK 72) (002 DK 72) (002 DK72) (