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A PRACTICAL PROCEDURE TO DEVELOP STUDENTS' AWARENESS  
OF ENGLISH IMPORTS INTO LANGUAGE

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RESUMO:

*O trabalho relata procedimento usado para despertar a atenção do aluno para palavras inglesas introduzidas no português. O objetivo é facilitar o processo de aprendizagem do vocabulário. A participação direta na coleta do material e o uso do universo do aluno são vistos como partes essenciais do procedimento. Incluem-se vários exemplos e uma amostra do material levantado.*

One of the most common complaints among our students is that they do not know enough vocabulary to understand English texts. Likewise, the teaching of vocabulary has long been a problem to any foreign language teacher. This is also a problem faced by ESP teachers who attempt to develop their students' strategies which will help them to cope with English texts and with new words.

Although I have not found any new technique or any "magic formula" I have adopted a practical procedure with my ESP classes which I find to be effective. Right at the beginning of the course I ask the students to try to make a mental, later, a written note of any English loanword(s) which they might come across while

watching TV, reading a newspaper, talking to others or even at the supermarket. They should take note of words like: *Close-up* (the name of a toothpaste); *band-aid*; *freezer*; words found in sentences like: O *stress* físico ou psíquico; o *performance* do Itaú; o *shiploader* está chegando; ... necessário para dar sentido ao *feedback*...; circulando nas rodas sociais com um novo *layout*.

The students then bring the words to class. Some times they come up with long lists where some of the words are neither English nor of English origin. At the beginning of each class I write about 10 of them on the blackboard for discussion. Then together with the students we discuss their meaning. Brief explanations are given of their origin (*freeze/r*, *jet-set*, *holiday*), relation to the object they refer (*taffmann*, *brown cow*), pronunciation (*blackout*, *blazer*), and grammatical implication (*best-seller*). Care is taken not to "overteach" each explanation. The main idea here is to call students' attention to English words which they come across. It is expected that they will associate them with other similar words in subsequent texts. In this way they will enrich their vocabulary, not through long lists of words, but from words actually taken out from their social and political world.

By the end of each month I provide the students with a typed list (in alphabetical order and with their meaning in Portuguese) of the words which were brought to class. This list is sometimes enlarged with suggestions from my other ESP classes. If new words appear they are discussed separately. From my experience I have found that such typed handouts are useful aids to those who did not learn the meaning of the words and who later want to recall the words or their meaning.

I have noticed that in each semester the list is slightly different in content. This is due to many factors such as: fashion, top hit songs, politics, economics and important events. A typical list usually

covers various categories of words like: foodstuffs (*bacon, cream-cracker, chips, corn-flakes*); toilet articles (*after shave, close-up, band-aid*); cigarettes (*Free, light, slim, Pall Mall*); clothes (*blazer, black-tie, shorts*); music (*blues, Purple Rain, Do you wanna dance?*); electrical appliances (*freezer, lady shave*); car race (*pole position, cock pit, grid*); drinks (*Royal Label, milk-shake, Old Eight*); sports (*game, match-point, set*); places (*Vip, Steak House, Candido's*); data processing (*software, bit, chips, output*); and many others.

While using this procedure I have noticed that students in general, do not try to find out the meaning of words by themselves. They rarely bother to look up the meaning of the words in the dictionary. They rather wait for the teacher to discuss them in class. A discussion with the whole group seems to help them to retain the meaning of the words for a longer period of time.

It is important to call students' attention to words now used in Portuguese with a different meaning from its original connotation (e.g. *lunch - lunche*) or to words like *taff* (from *Taffman*, a drink) which has borrowed its pronunciation from the word *tough*. Words like *refil* (Portuguese: objeto para substituir o que gastou) from the English *refill* usually cause a "Ah-ah" reaction on the students.

I must confess that students are not so skilful at associating meaning to words they encounter in texts. In fact, they take a longer time than one expects but at least they know they have come across the word.

Here are some examples of words which have appeared in texts:

1. *stress*: ... but he *stresses* that more studies are required.
2. *plot*: ... for accurate scientific *plotting* of our routes ...

3. *performance*: ... by means of a high-*performance* laser ...
4. *free*: ... the blood to circulate *freely* and ...
5. *shake*: ... the program had a *shaky* start ...
6. *rush*: ... customers *rushed* back to ...
7. *container*: ... the use of *containers* were less expensive.
8. *approach*: ... the *approach* to bed described ...
9. *shopping*: ... a security device for banking and *shopping* by telephone.
10. *freezer*: ... blood banks able to *freeze* blood.

This is a motivating activity which calls students' attention to words they use and hear nearly everywhere, on television, in newspapers, at the super market, etc. It is intended to be used as a "warming up" section of the class. Nevertheless, care must be taken by the teacher not to transmit to his/hers students a certain kind of admiration and workshop feeling to everything that is foreign. It is necessary that students see English as an international language for communication among people of various nationalities, in congresses, seminars, etc., not necessarily as the exclusive domain of native speakers. Thus the teaching approach should be an instrumental one rather than an integrative, enabling our students to preserve their Brazilian cultural identity.

## SAMPLE OF A LIST OF WORDS

<p><b>A</b></p> <p>affair after shave agreement apartheid approach</p> <p><b>B</b></p> <p>bacon background banana split band-aid barman behaviour best-seller betting bit blackout blazer blended bliss blitz blues brain-storm brown cow bus stop</p> <p><b>C</b></p> <p>camping catchup challenger charter check up</p>	<p>cheese-burger chips citizen close-up cockpit container copyright corn flakes country music country club cracker craft cream cracker</p> <p><b>D</b></p> <p>data deck design (er) dial Discovery display drive-in</p> <p><b>E</b></p> <p>Empire State enterprise expert</p> <p><b>F</b></p> <p>feedback feeling ferry-boat flash</p>	<p>flip top framework free freezer fresh money freshen up</p> <p><b>G</b></p> <p>gossip grid grip</p> <p><b>H</b></p> <p>hall hamburger hardware head phone hi fi hobby hot dog hovercraft</p> <p><b>I</b></p> <p>insight Iron Maiden input</p> <p><b>J</b></p> <p>jet set jingle jogging</p>
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<p>K</p> <p>kids</p> <p>king size</p> <p>know-how</p> <p>knock out</p> <p>L</p> <p>lady shave</p> <p>lay-out</p> <p>leasing</p> <p>leisure wear</p> <p>lifting</p> <p>living</p> <p>lunch</p> <p>M</p> <p>magazine</p> <p>manager</p> <p>marketing</p> <p>match point</p> <p>milk shake</p> <p>motocross</p> <p>moustache</p> <p>N</p> <p>new wave</p> <p>net weight</p> <p>O</p> <p>office boy</p> <p>offset</p> <p>open market</p> <p>outdoor</p> <p>output</p> <p>overlap</p>	<p>over night</p> <p>P</p> <p>partner</p> <p>performance</p> <p>pioneer</p> <p>play-ground</p> <p>plot</p> <p>pole-position</p> <p>pop corn</p> <p>pub</p> <p>purple</p> <p>R</p> <p>receiver</p> <p>replay</p> <p>roll-on</p> <p>round (s)</p> <p>Royal Label</p> <p>royalties</p> <p>rush</p> <p>S</p> <p>script</p> <p>self-service</p> <p>set</p> <p>silk screen</p> <p>sharp</p> <p>shell</p> <p>shiploader</p> <p>shopping center</p> <p>show business</p> <p>skate</p> <p>skin glow</p> <p>skip</p>	<p>slim</p> <p>snack-bar</p> <p>software</p> <p>spree</p> <p>spot</p> <p>spotlight</p> <p>spray</p> <p>staff</p> <p>stand</p> <p>steak house</p> <p>stone washed</p> <p>strawberry gum</p> <p>stress</p> <p>strip-tease</p> <p>suite</p> <p>T</p> <p>taff man</p> <p>tape</p> <p>tape deck</p> <p>tender leaf</p> <p>tuner</p> <p>U</p> <p>up-to-date</p> <p>ultra-light</p> <p>V</p> <p>video game</p> <p>vip</p> <p>W</p> <p>walkie-talkie</p> <p>waffle</p> <p>work shop</p>
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