

## DICTIONARY ERROR CORRECTION

### Learners correct errors using information from a monolingual learner's dictionary

<b>Level:</b>	<b>Pre-Intermediate - Advanced</b>
<b>Target Audience:</b>	<b>Secondary, Adults</b>
<b>Language / Skills Focus:</b>	<b>Vocabulary, Dictionary Skills</b>
<b>Activity Time:</b>	<b>10 - 20 minutes</b>
<b>Materials:</b>	<b>A worksheet with a collection of lexically-based errors made by your class One monolingual learner's dictionary for each pair of learners</b>

### MATERIALS PREPARATION

Note down 10 - 15 errors (written and / or spoken) made by your class and use these to compile a worksheet. The errors should be lexically-based, as in the following examples:

- Countability errors     *I need an information ...*
- Word-form errors        *They must development their infrastructure.*
- Collocation errors      *On Saturday, we made shopping.  
It is aimed for workers.  
It affects the lifes of all the people in the city.*

The keyword in each sentence (which learners will look up in the dictionary) should be written in capital letters. For example:

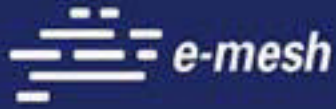
- 1 *They must DEVELOPMENT their infrastructure.*
- 2 *On Saturday, we made SHOPPING .*

In the first example, learners need to look up *development* to discover it is a noun – not the verb they need here.

In the second example, learners need to look up *shopping* to find an appropriate verb with which it collocates.

### IN CLASS

- 1 Divide learners into pairs or groups of three and give each group a monolingual learner's dictionary.
- 2 Give each group a copy of the worksheet (or write the sentences on the board) and explain that there is one error in each sentence. Tell the learners that they must look up the word in capitals and use the information in the dictionary entry to correct the error. If you wish, go through 1 or 2 examples to demonstrate the task.
- 3 Point out to your learners that the word they look up (in capitals) might not be the one which actually needs to be corrected (as in collocation errors) and that the information they need might be found in the example dictionary sentences.
- 4 Set a reasonable time limit and begin the activity. Make yourself available to give help and encouragement when needed.
- 5 Finally, check answers with the whole class by asking individual members of different groups to write their corrected sentences on the board. These can be discussed with the class. In some cases there might be more than one possible answer (e.g. *We did some / went shopping*).



www.e-mesh.com



teachers' centre

***lesson plans***

***dictionaries***

## COMMENTS

Depending on the level and nature of the class, you may choose *not* to check beforehand that the information learners need is in the dictionary. This itself is an important lesson - dictionaries do not have the answers to everything! The key point of the activity is to show learners how much valuable lexical and grammatical information they can glean from a dictionary entry (including the example sentences) - a great deal more than simply an explanation of a word.

**Julie Moore is a freelance ELT lexicographer and teacher based in Cambridge. After several years as an EFL teacher in Greece and the Czech Republic, she moved into lexicography and has worked on a number of learners' dictionaries including the CD-ROM version of the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English 2000* (Cambridge University Press).**