Teaching Chunks – video presentation

These notes accompany the video, *Teaching Chunks*, which is available on YouTube: https://youtu.be/jdUtDT0YI3w
As you watch the video, read these notes and make notes as appropriate.

Slide: Knowing about chunks

Pause the video here and look at each of the bullet points and think about what each of them might mean and why they might be of interest to language teachers. Make some notes that you can compare with later questions.

Slide: Two points of departure

Humans chunk information. Our working memory …
In the context of Linear Unit Grammar, what does *linear* mean? What are the noun forms of this word? Clue: one has 4 letters, the other has 9.
Were the authors of LUG interested in written language, spoken language or both?

Thinking questions

How do you think chunking contributes to our fluency? Why would the use of chunks make our speech and writing more native-like?

Slide: Pandas

Do you know what subjects, verbs, objects, complements and adjuncts are? Make sure you do. They'll be in the test ☺.

Slide: Paradigm (blue and yellow)

It is an interesting way of looking at how language works, isn't it?

By the end of this presentation, you should be able to explain to other people the differences between M and O language.

We will soon see why M language is not referred to as chunks.

Slide: Message language

Apart from Linear Unit Grammar, why isn't M language referred to as chunks?

True or false:

- a clause has a finite verb
- a phrase has a finite verb
- a collocation is a grammar pattern
- all verbs need an adjunct to complete their meaning
- adjuncts provide information about the verb in the clause

Slide: Adjuncts

As you look at the prepositional phrases for each semantic category, can you think of a verb that they might be adding information to? For example, *The archaeologist studied the map in detail.* You'll need to pause the video.

Slide: Some structures

Learning at least two things at once. Which things?
What do CLIL, EMI and ESP stand for?

Slide: What do we teach?

What types of knowledge do we combine?
Fortunately, we don't have to construct/create everything from scratch. What does this mean?

Slide: Organisation/Orientation language

This is where we see how our mental processing of O language is different from that of M language.

There are two general types of **context**, namely …

We saw that **adjuncts** provide extra information about the verb and they are part of the clause. But **conjuncts** and **disjuncts** are not part of clauses – they are parts of sentences that say something about or comment on whole clauses.

Slide: Tasks

Are you going to accept the challenge and try to think of some skills lessons tasks that involve M and O language? If so, the first step is to stop the video!

Just add it to your lesson plan! Each of the activities suggested here are lesson segments, which might take 5 to 10 mins. It is assumed that the students have already worked with the text in other ways by the time they do these activities.

Slide: Topic-based texts

Choose your texts wisely. What are some criteria for choosing texts?
Btw, is *choose wisely* a collocation?
Using reading and listening texts as models for writing and speaking. How does this work?

Slide: Bottom up approach

What is a bottom up approach? What is the opposite?

Slide: Jumbled words

What are the advantages of putting words and phrases on cards?
Does it take the teacher a long time to prepare cards?
Can the same cards be used for other activities?
Pause the video and read the 7 steps here.

Slide: Note-taking

An important listening skill. What do the students write when they are taking notes? What do they do with their notes?

Slide: Speaking and writing

What does labelling a picture richly involve?
Btw, is *label richly* a collocation?
When we task students with creating a written or spoken text, why should they know the register and genre?
When you ask students to write a dialogue for homework, … ?

Slide: Word profiles

What is the role of collocation in creating word profiles?
How do the students turn a set of sentences into a text in this activity?

Hits per million

This number tells us about the frequency of the word or phrase.
The SkELL corpus has about one billion words. A word that has an HPM of 1 is in the corpus about 1,000 times.
Choose wisely has 0.22 HPMs, *label richly* has 0.0 HPM.

Michael Halliday and John Sinclair were both students of J R Firth and these three men are the most important British linguists of the 20th century.

Slide: The four skills and systems

It should be clear by now that we get better at the four skills by learning more of and more about the four systems. And it should be clear that writing and speaking depend heavily on Organisation/Orientation language. And that the appropriate Organisation/Orientation language is determined by the register and genre to some extent. And that teachers play a big role in developing their students. Teachers need to know what and then how.