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Series editors' preface

There was a time when teaching and learning a foreign or second language was viewed primarily as a matter of controlling its grammar. 'Methods' as different as ALM and Grammar Translation had mastery of structures as their main goal, and vocabulary development was approached as some kind of auxiliary activity, often through memorising decontextualised word lists. The relatively minor importance attached to the lexicon was also visible in the scant attention paid to it by second language acquisition researchers until the last decade.

Fortunately, not everyone held this view, and a handful of pioneers in Nottingham, Swansea, Amsterdam, Haifa and elsewhere set out to rectify the situation through what were initially rather isolated research programmes. Among the first was Paul Nation, now recognised as one of the world's leading authorities on L2 vocabulary. He and a small group of colleagues, plus a succession of fine graduate students, have made Victoria University of Wellington a leading centre for almost every aspect of research on the lexicon, including a great deal of widely respected corpus-based work.

Nation's latest book, *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*, makes a substantive contribution to an area now recognised as of central importance for grammarians, acquisition specialists, language teachers and language learners alike. Writing in an engagingly direct style, the author provides a comprehensive overview of what research findings show it means to 'know' a word; how best to teach words and collocations; vocabulary in L2 listening, speaking and writing; specialised lexicons; vocabulary learning strategies, and strategies for inferring the meaning of unknown words in context; chunking and collocation; vocabulary testing; and course design for vocabulary development. The bibliography is extensive and up to date, and will be a valuable resource for graduate students embarking on theses and dissertations. The volume constitutes a welcome addition to the field and to the Cambridge Applied Linguistics Series.

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