

# From the authors

## Hugh's story

The seeds for this book were planted in the early 1990s. I had qualified as a teacher and was living in Jakarta, Indonesia. When I started trying to teach myself Indonesian, I was unconsciously using a 'grammar + words' approach, memorising single words and studying grammar forms and rules. The results were mixed, to say the least!

It took me a while to realise that a sentence like *anjing itu menggonggong* – 'the dog is barking' – wasn't a good example of how the present continuous was generally used, nor was it representative of what is said about dogs or barking. In short, it was a sentence I'd learned to somehow get to grips with the language, yet which had no real utility. At the same time, what was helping me was learning repertoires of relatively fixed questions and answers (often featuring grammatical structures I'd not yet studied, but was able to use within limited contexts), common phrases I heard a lot, and so on. Of course, there was also lots of repetition and practice.

When I read *The Lexical Approach* (1993) by Michael Lewis, I found my language learning experiences had inadvertently brought me to a lexical view of language – and his book provided me with a clearer way of thinking about this. I later came to understand that Lewis was simply one writer working within a long tradition of lexically-oriented thinking.

However, while my initial reading of *The Lexical Approach* energised me, it also confounded me as I felt many of its ideas about putting this way of seeing language to practical use weren't as developed as they might have been. The activities suggested often seemed tokenistic, and didn't amount to a thorough reconstruction of practical pedagogy.

In the years that followed – through my classroom practice, my writing of classroom material, and my conversations with students, colleagues and other EFL professionals – I came to the ideas laid out in this book: our attempt to make lexical teaching more accessible and more widespread!

Hugh

## Andrew's story

My route to a lexical way of teaching probably started with my failed attempts to learn French at school. It was only after I started teaching in Spain that I had any real success in speaking a foreign language – a success that stemmed far more from using the language than from studying grammar rules.

I started out with no training, but my main approach was to not do to others what my teachers had done to me! Instead, I mainly chatted to my students and told them some words when they asked about them. We listened to songs and watched videos.

Grammar finally came back into view when I did my CELTA course. I learnt how you could present grammar via dialogues, and how it could be related to real-life communication. I also discovered the *Collins Cobuild English Course* (1988), which based its syllabus around frequent words, and *Conversation Gambits*, from the same year, which contained chunks for conversation.

These experiences primed me to receive *The Lexical Approach* when I read it on my Diploma course. However, I was also taking on other (sometimes contradictory!) ideas – such as teaching skills, and teaching grammar through comparing sentences and discussing differences in meaning.

When I first met Hugh, we were both beginning to wonder about where a lexical approach might go: what would the syllabus be? What should materials and classes be like? We continued to be influenced by other writers, our classroom experience and discussions with colleagues. Getting involved in writing and teacher training brought this into focus, because, when you're paid to share materials and practice, you want to be clear about your own beliefs and principles.

So for me, this book is an outline of where we have both got to so far in determining our beliefs, how these inform our own practice and how we can explore and share that practice. It's *a* lexical approach, rather than *the* lexical approach, *a good way* of teaching, rather than *the only way* of teaching – and we hope it helps you on your own journey.

Andrew

# Contents

From the authors Page 3

## Part A Page 7

Teaching lexically Page 7

## Part B Page 33

### Chapter One Page 34

#### Teaching vocabulary lexically

What's the 'word'?	Page 35
Choosing words to teach	Page 36
Giving explanations 1	Page 37
Giving explanations 2	Page 38
Giving explanations 3	Page 39
Giving good examples 1	Page 40
Giving good examples 2	Page 41
Giving good examples 3	Page 42
Giving good examples 4	Page 43
Asking questions about words 1	Page 44
Asking questions about words 2	Page 45
Asking questions about words 3	Page 46
Asking questions about words 4	Page 47
Asking questions about words 5	Page 48
Asking questions about words 6	Page 49
Using vocabulary exercises 1	Page 50
Using vocabulary exercises 2	Page 51
Using vocabulary exercises 3	Page 52
Using vocabulary exercises 4	Page 53
Single-word exercises	Page 54
Collocation exercises	Page 55
Whole-sentence exercises	Page 56
Sentence-matching exercises	Page 57
Memorisation tasks	Page 58
Grammar exercises	Page 59

### Chapter Two Page 60

#### Teaching grammar lexically

When? Why? Who to?	Page 61
Checking answers to grammar exercises 1	Page 62
Checking answers to grammar exercises 2	Page 63
Getting more from exercises 1	Page 64
Getting more from exercises 2	Page 65
Getting more from exercises 3	Page 66
Teaching grammar as lexis	Page 67
Grammar in vocabulary exercises 1	Page 68
Grammar in vocabulary exercises 2	Page 69
Translation and grammar	Page 70

### Chapter Three Page 71

#### Teaching speaking lexically

Before students speak	Page 72
Preparation	Page 73
Scaffolding speaking tasks 1	Page 74
Scaffolding speaking tasks 2	Page 75
Feedback on speaking 1	Page 76
Feedback on speaking 2	Page 77
Feedback on speaking 3	Page 78
Beyond correction	Page 79
Chat	Page 80
From speaking to materials:	Page 81

### Chapter Four Page 82

#### Teaching reading lexically

Reading lessons	Page 83
Preparing for a reading lesson	Page 84
Before the text 1	Page 85
Before the text 2	Page 86
Before the text 3	Page 87
Reading aloud	Page 88
Comprehension tasks	Page 89
Talking about reading texts	Page 90
Retelling texts	Page 91
Mining texts for language	Page 92
Exploiting and expanding on lexis	Page 93
Other kinds of speaking around texts	Page 94



# Contents

Encouraging further responses	Page 95
The benefits of extensive reading	Page 96
Appendix	Page 97

## Chapter Five Page 99

### Teaching listening lexically

Similarities and differences with reading	Page 100
Analysing language	Page 101
Highlighting the stream of speech	Page 102
Generating appropriate language	Page 103
Withholding the correct answer	Page 104
Gapping texts	Page 105
Using scripts	Page 106
Beyond the listening lesson 1	Page 107
Beyond the listening lesson 2	Page 108
Beyond the listening lesson 3	Page 109
Beyond the listening lesson 4	Page 110
Appendix	Page 111

## Chapter Six Page 113

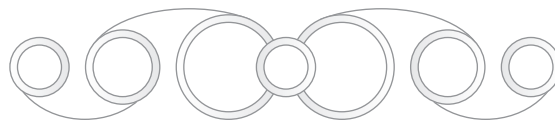
### Teaching writing lexically

Issues around writing	Page 114
Assessing written texts	Page 115
Helping students organise written work	Page 116
Linking words and phrases	Page 117
Exploiting model texts	Page 118
Process writing	Page 119
Completing the process	Page 120
Using criteria for feedback	Page 121
Providing language-focused feedback	Page 122
Other reasons for writing	Page 123
Appendix	Page 124

## Chapter Seven Page 125

### Recycling and revising

Recycling	Page 126
Revising	Page 127
Revision activity 1	Page 128
Gapped sentences and dialogues	
Revision activity 2	Page 128
Language-generating questions	



Revision activity 3	Page 129
Personal questions	
Revision activity 4	Page 129
Using translations	
Revision activity 5	Page 130
Student-to-student elicitation	
Revision activity 6	Page 130
Choose three expressions	
Revision activity 7	Page 131
Text reconstruction	
Revision activity 8	Page 131
Repeat (and extend) activities	
Revision activity 9	Page 132
Test and remember	
Revision activity 10	Page 132
Team games	

## Part C Page 133

Choosing, using and writing lexical materials	Page 134
Assessing materials	Page 135
Teaching one-to-one	Page 136
Teaching low-level learners	Page 137
Teaching young learners	Page 138
Teaching EAP	Page 139
Teaching exam classes	Page 140
Teacher training	Page 141
Schools and teacher development	Page 142
Organising courses	Page 143
Writing your own materials	Page 144
Bibliography	Page 145
Glossary	Page 147
From the editors	Page 151
From the publisher	Page 152