

WORDS DON'T COME EASY: LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF VOCABULARY IN MAGIC BOOKS

**Thomai Alexiou, Marina Mattheoudakis, Dionysia Saratsli
and Alexandros Vagenas**

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Abstract

The present study focuses on the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) coursebooks *Magic Book 1* and *Magic Book 2* that have been designed and developed for third graders in the Greek state primary schools under the PEAP project. It aims to examine the lexical items selected for those coursebooks and set out the criteria that render them a useful tool for teaching EFL to young learners. More specifically, this paper aims to: (a) examine the frequency of the vocabulary included in the two books by using the frequency data of the *British National Corpus* (BNC), (b) compare the vocabulary of the books with the *English Vocabulary Profile* (EVP) issued by Cambridge University Press, and (c) examine the thematic areas covered in these books in order to investigate the extent of their continuity with the interests and needs of the target age group.

1. English as a foreign language instruction in Greek primary schools

In Greece, English has been gradually established as the compulsory foreign language that is taught in schools, at the primary and secondary educational sectors (Alexiou and Konstantakis 2009, Mattheoudakis and Nicolaidis 2005). There have been substantial milestones through the years that led to the prevalence of English as a Foreign Language instruction (EFL) in the primary sector. In 1987, EFL was introduced as a compulsory subject to the 4th grade of most primary schools and in 1991 it became a mandatory subject in all schools. Almost a decade later, in 2003, EFL was expanded to the third and the last two grades of primary education and in 2010 it was introduced on a pilot basis in the first grade of 800 state primary schools (Alexiou and Mattheoudakis 2013a). As of 2016, all learners have been required to take English language classes starting from the first grade at Greek primary schools.

Magic Books 1 and 2 were designed within the framework of the National Strategic Reference Frameworks (NSRF) Programme, Act “New Policies of Foreign Language

Education at Schools: English for Young Learners”. The books were created under the English for Young Learners –EYL project, commonly known in Greece as the ‘PEAP programme’ (<http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/peap/en>) (Alexiou and Mattheoudakis 2015). The particular project proposed the introduction of EFL instruction at the first grade of primary schools (6-7 year-olds), reflecting the contemporary views regarding the importance of early foreign language education, promotion of multilingualism and multicultural education. The early introduction of EFL teaching had important implications for the design of teaching material as well as for the training of EFL teachers who would teach these very young learners. With respect to the material, the PEAP project aimed to design and produce appropriate teaching materials for young language learners as well as organise the EFL curriculum for the first 3 grades of primary school taking into consideration the transition from one grade to the next.

2. Magic Books: Content and design

Despite the fact that originally the program aimed at developing educational materials for the first two grades of the primary sector, the need to establish continuity in terms of the curriculum and the learning process led to the development of materials for the teaching of English in the third grade as well. The authoring team for this grade comprised academics from the Aristotle Thessaloniki of Thessaloniki as well as EFL teacher practitioners.

Two books were designed for the 3rd grade of primary schools, namely *Magic Book 1* (Alexiou and Mattheoudakis 2014) and *Magic Book 2* (Alexiou and Mattheoudakis 2013b)¹. *Magic Book 1* (MB1) was intended for learners who are complete beginners and have not had any EFL classes in the previous two grades, whereas *Magic Book 2* (MB2) is intended for learners who started learning English in Grade 1 and followed the PEAP curriculum. At this point, however, it is important to mention that as stated above, as of 2016 all Greek learners have been attending EFL classes in the first grade of primary school but only for one hour weekly.

Both books were designed under the same principles and philosophy and include many innovations (for a detailed account of these innovations, see Alexiou and Mattheoudakis 2015). They follow a story-based framework where each unit revolves

¹ Magic Book 2 was shortlisted for the 2014 ELTons awards:
<http://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/eltons>

around a different story, has a plot and usually a moral at the end therefore offering a more holistic development of the child. The books are child-centred, process-based and meaning-focused and have a solid pedagogic orientation. They also aim to familiarize young learners with literacy while providing exposure to a variety of reading materials of different topics that are relevant to them. It has been found that the vocabulary intake rates tend to increase when the topics are familiar to the learners and derive from their everyday life experiences (Slabakova 2016).

The books also emphasize the importance of contextualized learning, prioritise the teaching of receptive skills over the productive ones and encourage learners to experiment with the language. The activities engage learners in the language learning process by involving them in interactive and motivating activities (in groups or pairs), such as crossword puzzles, board game-like tasks, etc. but also cognitive tasks that facilitate EFL acquisition and are related to aptitude (Alexiou 2009) e.g. memory games, inductive learning, spatial ability etc. The activities do not only promote the importance of meaning over structure, but they also incorporate a holistic and experiential approach of learning (Fahim and Vaezi 2011).

All these allow learners to acquire L2 vocabulary in a more natural way while caring for various learning styles and different intelligences (Gardner 1983, 2007 cited in Mirzaei, Rahimi and Rahimi 2016, Mattheoudakis and Alexiou 2015). Taking into consideration the dynamicity of a person's learning styles (Oxford 2011) and the learners' individual differences, language learning is facilitated and becomes an enjoyable process (Charalambous 2011 cited in Mattheoudakis and Alexiou 2015, Oxford 2011, Peacock 2001).

The books adhere to the principles of communicative language, by activating the child's physiology, emotions and cognition, while they link language to their 'world' meaningfully, encouraging experiential, hands-on learning (Goswami 2011, Mattheoudakis and Alexiou 2010).

Interestingly, a recent study has indicated that both books are characterized by a prevalence of visual modality activities. This may be attributed to the "effectiveness of visual stimuli within the foreign language teaching context, but also to constraints imposed both by coursebooks and actual teaching time" (Mattheoudakis and Alexiou 2015: 13), while a similar finding was noted by Šímová (2011) in the EFL coursebooks for Czech 3rd graders. However, it is stressed that there is also a rich

array of auditory and kinaesthetic input included in the activity books, which compensate for the particular imbalance.

The two books also incorporate features of the Lexical Approach (Lewis 1993), as they place emphasis on the use of lexical chunks and phrases, which are contextualized and implicitly taught through meaningful activities rather than through drilling. Language teachers are faced with the challenge to view language as consisting of phrasal units rather than single words and this is also noted in the growing lexicalisation of teaching materials over the last decades (Granger 2011). Recent studies suggest that emphasis should be placed on the processing and storage of lexical phrases and collocations rather than on the openly constructed language (Ellis, Simpson-Vlach and Maynard 2008) while both Milton (2007) and Lewis (2008) claim that these chunks are also easier to learn because it is easier to deconstruct a chunk than to construct it and therefore are more memorable for learners.

Using the lexical approach means ceasing to deal with the word as a single fragile unit and handle language learning as a holistic, multi-dimensional phenomenon. This way the significance of co-text and context is highlighted by integrating the word in meaningful chunks and consequently in larger fixed expressions, which are closely intertwined with the communicative role of language (Conklin and Schmitt 2008). In a similar vein, Schmitt (2008) suggests that it is central for teachers and material designers to make these relationships directly observable and explicit, by shifting from individual lexical items to multi-word units. Moreover, Davis and Kryszewska (2012) as well as Boers (2018) point out the need for the lexical phrase as the pedagogically applicable unit of prefabricated language as it contributes drastically to fluent and natural L2 use. Since the rationale of the books clearly rejects drilling, rote learning and decontextualized memorization, the Lexical Approach that promotes incidental learning was adopted throughout the books. An ideal framework to include lexical chunks and repetitive patterns and also one of the most appropriate frameworks in teaching young learners is the story-based framework (Alexiou, Roghani and Milton in print) and this is one of the reasons that stories were consciously selected as the main focus of each unit.

However, as yet there is no good method for analysing and describing the content of course books in chunks. Thankfully, there are methods of analysing the lexical content of single words being used in coursebooks and it is a very useful way of

establishing the suitability of the content for teaching and for learners. For this reason, this study methodically and systematically provides a vocabulary analysis of the two course books.

3. Vocabulary size and selection

There are two questions that are at the basis of vocabulary selection for the purposes of EFL teaching and learning: (a) how many words EFL learners need to learn at each level, and (b) what kind of words these will be. These questions correspond to the issues of vocabulary size and vocabulary selection respectively, and they comprise a highly controversial issue in the field of vocabulary research (Nation 1990, Nation and Waring 1997, Sinclair and Renouf 1988).

Starting from the aspect of vocabulary size, language proficiency has proved to be highly correlated with the number of words learners seem to know (Milton 2009, Schmitt 2010). The more words second language learners know, the better they can respond to different linguistic contexts and in a variety of social communicative settings (Schmitt, Jiang and Grabe 2011 cited in Hummel 2014). Efforts have recently been directed towards relating young learners' vocabulary size with their level of general proficiency in English. Actually research has indicated that 2000 to 2500 most frequent English words can be set as a threshold for young learners of A2 to proceed to B1 (according to CEFR, Council of Europe 2001) (Milton and Alexiou 2009). The implication of this finding is that at least one of the criteria for the vocabulary selection targeting young learners should be based on frequency criteria and that coursebook writers and language teachers should give priority to the first 2500 most frequent words in the English language. As text coverage is important to comprehension, incorporating highly frequent words in the language learning coursebooks is essential to learners' ability to comprehend different texts. Vocabulary research confirms that the frequency factor should be regarded as the 'shaping force of the vocabulary content of teaching materials' (Nation 1990 cited in González-Fernández and Schmitt 2017: 282). The reason behind the particular argument is that frequency of occurrence seems to be an indicator of which words are more likely to be encountered by learners and consequently, to be more useful to them (Chen and Truscott 2010, Milton 2009, Nan 2018, Webb 2007). This aspect of usefulness is particularly important as it is related with the motivational part of the learning

process, especially for young learners. Young learners need to see that what they learn can be frequently met and utilized in the target language. What is more, frequently encountered vocabulary items are more likely to be learned due to stronger memory traces (Gor and Long 2009, Milton 2009). This interrelation of frequency and learnability has been a recurring idea in vocabulary studies and it has repeatedly been proven in frequency profile studies (Milton 2009, Wesche and Paribakht 1996).

However, it is essential to note that this regularity needs to be combined with thematic content (Milton 2009). Especially in the case of young learners, it is essential for the selected vocabulary to be relevant to their world and to be within the scope of their interests so as to lead to effective learning (Alexiou and Konstantakis 2009). Consequently, an amount of highly infrequent words is expected in young learners' coursebooks (Milton 2009).

4. Our research study

4.1 Aim and research questions

The aim of this paper is to examine the vocabulary included in the books that have been designed for the third grade of state primary schools in Greece, namely *Magic Book 1* and *Magic Book 2*. The questions of the particular study are as follows:

- (a) How many words are introduced in the two books?
- (b) How frequent are the lexical items included in the two books according to the first three frequency lists?
- (c) Is there an overlap between the vocabulary of the books and English Vocabulary Profile?
- (d) What are the main thematic areas around which the books are designed? Are they appropriate to learners' age and language level?

4.2 Research materials and tools

In order to address the above research questions, a corpus for each one of the two books *Magic Book 1* and *Magic Book 2* was created. Each corpus was then compared (a) to the baseword lists created by Nation based on the British National Corpus, and (b) to the English Vocabulary Profile words and lists provided by Cambridge University Press.

Nation's base-word bands are lists of lexical items, which were based on the British National Corpus. They are placed in an alphabetical order, and classified according to the grammatical phenomenon they are associated with. The English Vocabulary Profile (EVP) contains lexical information on headwords and phraseological entities such as collocations and idioms, based on learners' knowledge at each level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR, Council of Europe 2001). EVP actually indicates not what learners are expected to know at each level, but rather what they actually know by the time they reach any of the CEFR levels. Consequently, the aim underlying the comparison between the vocabulary of *Magic Book 1* and *2* and EVP is to observe whether the lexical items to which third graders are exposed to, are, actually the items that EFL learners know at those levels - A1 up to A2.

4.3 Research design and procedure

The research analysis took place in three broadly divided stages: firstly, the two books were compared against each other; subsequently, each book was individually compared to the first three 1000-word frequency lists and, finally, the Corpus of MB1 and the Corpus of MB2 were compared to the EVP wordlist in which the lexical content corresponds to the levels A1 and A2 of the CEFR.

The main software tool that has been used due to the comparative nature of the analysis is the AntWordProfiler 1.4.0.0 freeware programme as it enables a plain way of comparing level lists and corpora. The second software programme used was the AntConc 3.2.4 freeware corpus analysis toolkit. The particular software allowed us to generate wordlists from corpora files.

5. Results and discussion

The present study aimed to examine the vocabulary included in the books that have been developed for the third grade of state primary schools in Greece, namely *Magic Book 1* and *Magic Book 2*. According to our results, research questions are now revisited and answered.

(a) *How many words are introduced in the two books?*

The quantitative analysis of the corpora compiled provided us with useful information regarding the vocabulary input of each coursebook. More specifically, in *Magic Book 1*, there are 637 types and 5.698 tokens, while in *Magic Book 2*, there are 779 types and 7.352 tokens. The amount of words is larger and therefore the input richer than what is usually provided in coursebooks at this age and level-usually 350-500 types (Alexiou and Konstantakis 2009, Konstantakis and Alexiou 2012). This is important as it is essential to provide vocabulary that is sufficient in quantity to allow language targets of CEFR levels to be met, and generally it seems that coursebooks do not provide this volume (Milton and Alexiou 2012).

(b) *How frequent are the lexical items included in the two books according to Nation's first three frequency lists?*

The corpus of the two books was compared against the first three 1000-baseword frequency lists produced by Nation based on data from the *British National Corpus* (BNC). The percentages follow a descending order starting with a high percentage of correlation between the books and the first list and decreasing in the second and third list as can be seen in Table 1.

	1k types/tokens %	2k types/tokens %	3k types/tokens %
<i>Magic Book 1</i>	57.77 / 77.45	17.11 / 9.42	7.06 / 4.39
<i>Magic Book 2</i>	57.12 / 78.76	17.84 / 7.51	6.16 / 3.67

Table 1: Overlap between Magic Books 1 and 2 and Nation's frequency wordlists

Comparing *Magic Book 1* with the first 1000 most frequent words in English (henceforth, 1k), it was found that more than half of all the words found in the book belong to the 1k list. The common tokens reached up to 77.45% while the remaining 22.55% indicated the percentage of words found in the book but were not identified in the wordlist. Moving on with the comparison of the second 1000 word list (henceforth, 2k), the change is quite noticeable as there is a considerable drop in the type and token percentages (17.11% and 9.42% respectively) compared to the ones in the previous comparison with the 1k wordlist. What is interesting to note here is that the percentage of common tokens is lower than the percentage of common types and

this indicates that although there are some words in MB1 that are found in the 2k, some of them at least are not recycled but presented only once. When compared to the third 1000 frequency word list (henceforth, 3k), it is obvious that a very low percentage of vocabulary items from MB 1 belong to this list. In particular, the common types reach 7.06 % and the common tokens is 4.39%; this is perhaps to be expected because the coursebook addresses complete beginners of English. The results actually indicate that two thirds of all the running words found in the book are also found in the 1k wordlist. This is an important finding as it shows that the vast majority of the most highly frequent words introduced in the book are frequently recycled and this implies that the book provides repeated exposure to these words so as to ensure that young learners will learn them and memorize them.

A closer look at these highly frequent words found in *MB1* reveals that the commonest of those words are function words and highly frequent, often polysemous, lexical words. This is an expected finding, as we know that some of the most frequent words in the language are function words. At the same time the recycling of those function words increases learners' exposure to them and promotes incidental learning of various grammatical structures. As the book places no emphasis on explicit grammar instruction, this is an important feature of the book because learners manage to acquire various structures while placing emphasis on meaning.

Moving to *MB2*, results indicate here as well a very high percentage of common types and tokens (57.12% and 78.76% respectively) with the 1k wordlist, whereas much lower percentages of common words between the vocabulary items in the book and the second and third lists (see Table 1). Lower percentages of common types and tokens in the 2k wordlist are also found here; the implication of this finding is that the book provides exposure to less common words – not found in the first 2k wordlist – and that there is considerably less recycling as the percentage of running words or tokens indicates. Even lower percentages are yielded compared to the comparison with the 3k wordlist, with common types reaching only 6.16% and common tokens at 3.67% of the words. Once again, the token percentage is lower than that of type and therefore, we know that at least some of these words are not recycled.

These percentages indicate that *Magic Book 1* and *Magic Book 2* share similar percentages of different words within the frequency lists. The fact that there appears to be a slightly increased percentage of common tokens between MB2 and the 1k wordlist compared to the corresponding results of MB1 indicates that recycling in

MB2 is more extensive. In general, the similar percentages obtained from the comparison between the two books and the first three frequency lists indicate that both books include a large number of the most highly frequent words in English; the most highly frequent words (1k) are extensively recycled in both books, while highly frequent words of the next two thousand word lists (2k and 3k), also included in the book, are much less regularly recycled; this is to be expected as both coursebooks address beginner EFL learners.

It is important at this point to stress that because of the thematic areas chosen for this age, an amount of infrequent words is also noted. Themes such as fairytales, animals, school and environment require the use of particular vocabulary that is not expected to be frequent in the language of adults and, therefore, in the adult corpora employed in this study (Alexiou and Konstantakis 2009). What follows are examples of words related to the themes found in the two coursebooks. Most of them are encountered only in the 3k wordlist and some of them are even less frequent but this is actually expected:

- Fairytales: *magic, emperor, captain, treasure, beast, pirate*
- Animals: *feathers, shell, penguin, hare, mouse, monkey, parrot*
- School: *school, lesson, pencil*
- Environment: *sea, planet, recycle*

(c) *Is there an overlap between the vocabulary of the books and EVP?*

Interesting results emerge from the comparison between the vocabulary found in MB1 and the EVP (see Table 2) as an impressive percentage of common types and tokens were found (61.85% and 81.34% respectively). With respect to MB2, similar results were obtained. In particular, the comparison between the vocabulary of MB2 and EVP yielded a high percentage of common types and tokens (60.21% and 80.31% respectively).

These findings demonstrate that both books expose young learners to the majority of the vocabulary items they are expected to learn and know at this level (A1). What is more, the token result indicates that several of those words are recycled throughout the book. Perhaps we should note here that in the respective comparison between EVP and *MB 1*, the corresponding results for types and tokens were slightly higher than

those concerning the comparison between EVP and MB2. This difference can be possibly attributed to the fact that different stories are included in the two coursebooks, and, therefore, differences in vocabulary choices can be reasonably expected.

	types/tokens %
<i>Magic Book 1</i>	61.85 / 81.34
<i>Magic Book 2</i>	60.21 / 80.31

Table 2: Comparison between Magic Books 1 and 2 and English Vocabulary Profile

(d) What are the main thematic areas included in the books? Are they appropriate to learners' age and language level?

Magic Book 1 and *Magic Book 2* cover particular thematic areas (see Table 3) and the majority of them are in common.

<i>Magic Book 1</i>	<i>Magic Book 2</i>
School	Family and friends
Animals	Animals
Toys	Places
Places	Colours and numbers
Weather and seasons	Environment
Environment	Home
Colours and numbers	Food and drink
Family and friends	Clothes
Food and drink	Body and Face
Home	School
Daily routines	Sports and Daily routines
Body and Face	Weather and seasons

Table 3: Thematic areas of Magic Book 1 and 2

The vocabulary content of the two books reflects the thematic areas that run through the different units. In the results section, the themes of the books were identified and

the majority of them are common (see Table 3). *MB1*, also included the themes of toys while *MB2* also included the themes clothes and sports. These thematic areas seem to be largely in accordance with the list of themes identified in five different coursebooks intended for the particular level of young learners (Alexiou and Konstantakis 2009).

Moreover, it is important that the thematic areas found in the two books are compatible with young learners' age and interests as learners can be further motivated to participate in class when they deal with relevant and engaging materials (Csizér 2017). At this young age, learners need content that will ignite their imagination and fantasy and at the same time this content has to be familiar to them so they can relate to it (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011). The particular content relates to familiar concepts and therefore, their schemata and background knowledge are activated; this, in turn, facilitates the process of building a network of associations and establishing memory connections (Bruce 2011, Nattinger 1988, Pound 2013, Zareva and Wolter 2012 cited in Men 2018). Finally, this thematic organization is attuned with Milton's proposal for combination of frequent vocabulary and appropriate themes that can appeal to young learners (Milton 2009).

6. Concluding remarks

This paper investigated the vocabulary coverage in the two EFL books designed for Grade 3 learners in Greece. The analysis of the two books showed that the lexical loading is considerably larger compared to other books for the same age and level and therefore the input provided is much richer; this is actually quite remarkable. The comparison of the books with the first three frequency lists has shown that highly frequent vocabulary is incorporated in both. This inclusion of highly frequent lexical items as part of the vocabulary to which young learners are exposed is considered to be greatly beneficial for their language acquisition process. A minimum threshold for effective comprehension at the onset of learning is around 2000 to 2500 most frequent words (Ma 2009, Milton 2009, Nation 2001). Both books assist in the construction of this initial threshold as they incorporate highly frequent vocabulary and therefore, learners have the opportunity to be exposed to frequent vocabulary and start building their network of associations that will later enable them to attain higher levels of comprehension.

Furthermore, high frequency words have been interrelated with the factor of utility as learning these words results in better comprehension and consequently, in arousing the feeling of satisfaction (Csizér 2017, Dörnyei and Ryan 2015, Milton 2009, Nation 1990). On the basis of this, the factor of utility will work as a motivational factor for these young learners as they will start realizing that the vocabulary to which they are exposed can be applicable and useful in a variety of contexts, ranging from the school and classroom setting to the long-term goal of reading and comprehending a text written in English.

The vocabulary introduced through the books largely overlaps with the A1 level of proficiency according to the EVP that proves the appropriateness of the words selected. The thematic areas are also considered and agree with topics from previous studies (Alexiou and Konstantakis 2009).

Finally, there is considerable recycling of some of the vocabulary items included in the two books; in other words, at least some of the words introduced in one unit, are repeated in one or more other units of the book. This facilitates learners' vocabulary development due to the fact that multiple exposures create strong memory traces that subsequently facilitate consolidation and recalling of vocabulary (Gor and Long 2009, Milton 2009, Nation 1990, Schmitt 2010). Along the same lines, repeated exposures to vocabulary items can enhance the already established network of associations and enable learners to build a large sight vocabulary (Webb 2007).

References

- Alexiou, T. (2009). Young learners' cognitive skills and their role in foreign language vocabulary learning. In M. Nikolov (ed.), *Early learning of modern Foreign Languages*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 49-61.
- Alexiou, T. and N. Konstantakis (2009). Lexis for young learners: Are we heading for frequency or just common sense? In A. Tsangalidis (ed.), *Selection of Papers for the 18th Symposium of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics*. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 59-66.
- Alexiou, T. and M. Mattheoudakis (2013a). Introducing a foreign language at primary level: Benefits or last opportunities? The case of Greece. *Research Papers in Language Teaching and Learning*, 4: 99-119. Available at <http://rpltl.eap.gr>
- Alexiou, T. and M. Mattheoudakis (2013b). *Magic Book 2*. Athens: Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, Culture and Sport. Available at <http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/peap/node/2362>

- Alexiou, T. and M. Mattheoudakis (2014). *Magic Book 1*. Athens: Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs & Computer Technology Institute and Press 'Diophantus'. Available at <http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/peap/node/2362>
- Alexiou, T. and M. Mattheoudakis (2015). A paradigm shift in EFL material development for young learners: Instilling pedagogy in teaching practice. In C. Giannikas, L. McLaughlin, N. Deutsch and G. Fanning (eds), *Children learning English: From research to practice*. IATEFL YLT SIG book. Reading, UK: Garnet publishers Ltd., 77-96.
- Alexiou, T., S. Roghani and J. Milton (in print). Assessing the vocabulary knowledge of preschool language learners. In D. Prosic-Sandovac and S. Rixon (eds), *Integrating assessment into early Language Learning and Teaching practice*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Boers, F. (2018). Learning lexical phrases. In A. Burns and J.C. Richards (eds), *The Cambridge guide to learning English as a Second Language*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 176-182.
- Bruce, T. (2011). *Early childhood education*. London: Hodder Education.
- Chen, C. and J. Truscott (2010). The effects of repetition and L1 lexicalization on incidental vocabulary acquisition. *Applied Linguistics*, 31(5): 693-713.
- Conklin, K. and N. Schmitt (2008). Formulaic sequences: Are they processed more quickly than nonformulaic language by native and nonnative speakers? *Applied Linguistics*, 29(1): 72-89.
- Council of Europe (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Csizér, K. (2017). Motivation in the L2 Classroom. In S. Loewen and M. Sato (eds), *The Routledge handbook of instructed Second Language Acquisition*. New York: Taylor & Francis, 418-432.
- Davis, P. and H. Kryszewska (2012). *The company words keep: Lexical chunks in language teaching*. Peaslake: Delta Publishing.
- Dörnyei, Z. and S. Ryan (2015). *The psychology of the language learner revisited*. New York: Routledge.
- Dörnyei, Z. and E. Ushioda (2011). *Teaching and researching motivation* (2nd ed.). Harlow: Longman.
- Ellis, N.C., R. Simpson-Vlach and C. Maynard (2008). Formulaic language in native and second-language speakers: Psycholinguistics, corpus linguistics, and TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41(3): 375-396.
- Fahim, M. and R. Vaezi (2011). Investigating the effect of visually-enhanced input on the acquisition of lexical collocations by Iranian intermediate EFL learners: A case of verb-noun lexical collocations. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(3): 552-560. doi: <https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.2.3.552-560>
- González-Fernández, B. and N. Schmitt (2017). Language acquisition. In S. Loewen and M. Sato (eds), *The Routledge handbook of instructed Second Language Acquisition*. New York: Taylor & Francis.

- Gor, K. and H.M. Long (2009). Input and second language processing. In W.C. Ritchie and T.K. Bhatia (eds), *The new handbook of Second Language Acquisition*. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Ltd.
- Goswami, U. (2011). *Blackwell handbook of Childhood Cognitive Development*. U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Granger, S. (2011). From phraseology to pedagogy: Challenges and prospects. In T. Herbst, S. Faulhaber and P. Uhrig (eds), *The phraseological view of language*. A tribute to John Sinclair. Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 123-146.
- Hummel, K. (2014). *Introducing Second Language Acquisition: Perspectives and practices*. UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Konstantakis, N. and T. Alexiou (2012). Vocabulary in Greek young learners' English as a foreign language course books. *Language Learning Journal*, 40(1): 35-45.
- Lewis, M. (1993). *The Lexical Approach*. United Kingdom: Heinle.
- Lewis, M. (2008). *Implementing the Lexical Approach: Putting theory into practice*. United Kingdom: Heinle.
- Ma, Q. (2009). *Second Language vocabulary acquisition*. Bern: Peter Lang AG.
- Mattheoudakis, M. and T. Alexiou (2010). Identifying young learners' learning styles in Greece. In M.C. Varela, F. Javier, F. Polo, L. Gómez García and I.M. Palacios Martínez (eds), *Current issues in English Language Teaching and Learning. An international perspective*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 37-51.
- Mattheoudakis, M. and T. Alexiou (2015). Young learners' learning styles in *Magic Book 1* and *2*: Mission accomplished? In C. Gkonou and M. Daubney (eds), *Humanising Language Teaching, Current Issues in the Psychology of Language Learning and Teaching*, 17(4): 1-33. Available at: <http://old.hltnmag.co.uk/aug15/index.htm>
- Mattheoudakis, M. and K. Nicolaidis (2005). Stirring the waters. INSET in Greece. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 28(1): 49-66.
- Men, H. (2018). *Vocabulary increase and collocation learning: A corpus-based cross-sectional study of Chinese learners of English*. Singapore: Springer.
- Milton, J. (2007). Lexical profiles, learning styles and construct validity of lexical size tests. In H. Daller, J. Milton and J. Treffers-Daller (eds), *Modelling and Assessing Vocabulary Knowledge*. Cambridge: CUP, 45-58.
- Milton, J. (2009). *Measuring Second Language vocabulary acquisition*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Milton, J. and T. Alexiou (2009). Vocabulary size and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. In B. Richards, H. Daller, D.D. Malvern, P. Meara, J. Milton, J. and J. Treffers-Daller (eds), *Vocabulary studies in first and second language acquisition: The interface between theory and application*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 194-211.
- Milton, J. and T. Alexiou (2012). Special issue: Vocabulary, Part II: Input and uptake. *Language Learning Journal*, 40(1).
- Mirzaei, A., M. Rahimi Domakani and S. Rahimi (2016). Computerized lexis-based instruction in EFL classrooms: Using multi-purpose LexisBOARD to teach L2

- vocabulary. *ReCALL : The Journal of EUROCALL*, 28(1): 22-43. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0958344015000129>
- Nan, J. (2018) *Second language processing: An introduction*. New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Nation, I.S.P. (1990). *Teaching and learning vocabulary*. Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle Publishers.
- Nation, I.S.P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nation, P. and R. Waring (1997). Vocabulary size, text coverage and word lists. In N. Schmitt and M. McCarthy (eds), *Vocabulary: Description, acquisition and pedagogy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 6-19.
- Nattinger, J. (1988). Some current trends in vocabulary teaching. In R. Carter and M. McCarthy (eds), *Vocabulary and language teaching*. Essex: Addison Wesley Longman Ltd., 62-82.
- Oxford, R. L. (2011). *Teaching and researching language learning strategies*. Harlow: Pearson.
- Peacock, M. (2001). Match or mismatch? Learning styles and teaching styles in EFL. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 11(1): 1-20.
- Pound, L. (2013). *Quick guides for early years: Cognitive development*. London: Hodder Education.
- Schmitt, N. (2008). Review article: Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research*, 12(3): 329-363.
- Schmitt, N. (2010). *Researching vocabulary: A vocabulary manual*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Šimová, K. (2011). *Accommodating learning styles in EFL coursebooks for young learners*. Masaryk University of Brno, Czech Republic.
- Sinclair, J. and A. Renouf (1988). A lexical syllabus for language learning. In R. Carter and M. McCarthy (eds), *Vocabulary and language teaching*. London UK: Longman, 140-160.
- Slabakova, R. (2016). *Second Language Acquisition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Webb, S. (2007). The effects of repetition on vocabulary knowledge. *Applied Linguistics*, 28(1): 46-65.
- Wesche, M. and T.A. Paribakht (1996). Assessing second language vocabulary knowledge: Depth versus breadth. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 53: 13-40.

Dr Thomai Alexiou is an Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics at the School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She holds an MA in TEFL from Canterbury Christ Church University and a PhD in Applied Linguistics from Swansea

University, UK (full scholarship). Her expertise is in early foreign language teaching and learning and material development for young learners. She has participated in research projects such as PEAP (English for young learners educational project), ELTons awarded DysTEFL2 , CLIL-Prime etc. She has been invited as a speaker and teacher trainer in Greece, Europe, Australia, Russia and the UAE. She is the co-author of Magic Book 1&2, Teaching packages for the teaching of English at Grade 3 in Greek state schools. Magic Book 2 has been shortlisted for the MacMillan Education Award for New Talent in Writing (ELTons 2014).

thalexiou@enl.auth.gr

Dr Marina Mattheoudakis is a Professor in Applied Linguistics at the School of English, Faculty of Philosophy, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She is a graduate of the School of English and holds an MA in Teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language (University of Birmingham, U.K.) and a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from the School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Her research interests lie in the areas of second language acquisition, bilingualism and bilingual education, language teaching methodology and corpus linguistics. She has participated in various research projects (one of them being the teaching of foreign languages to learners with dyslexia, DysTEFL2, which was awarded the ELTons Awards, 2014).

marmat@enl.auth.gr

Dionysia Saratsli is a PhD student in Linguistics and Cognitive Science at the University of Delaware. She is a graduate of the School of English and she holds an MA in Theoretical and Applied Linguistics from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She is interested in exploring the pragmatic factors involved in language using behavioural and neuro imaging techniques.

dsaratsl@udel.edu

Alexandros Vagenas is a PhD student at the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He is a graduate of the School of English and he holds an MA in Theoretical and Applied Linguistics from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. His research interests concern linguistic development in early language learning as well as the interrelation of language and thought, psychology and individual differences in foreign language teaching.

alexandrosvag58@gmail.com