



## PREROGATIVE OF THE LEXICAL APPROACH IN COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

**Mersad Dervić<sup>1</sup>,**  
**Senad Bećirović<sup>2i</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>International Burch University, Bosnia and Herzegovina,  
PhD Student (English Language and Literature), Teaching Assistant,  
Francuske revolucije bb, 71210 Ilidža, Sarajevo,  
Bosnia and Herzegovina

<sup>2</sup>International Burch University, Bosnia and Herzegovina,  
Dr. (Education), Associate Professor,  
Francuske revolucije bb, 71210 Ilidža, Sarajevo,  
Bosnia and Herzegovina

### Abstract:

The development of the Lexical Approach through Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in TEFL has been hindered by disagreement as to the cause of L1 prior knowledge awareness of some lexis. The Lexical Approach theory claims that the most important difference is the increased understanding of the nature of lexis in naturally occurring language, and its potential contribution to language pedagogy. A review of studies investigating the effectiveness of the Lexical approach advanced by proponents of the Communicative approach (CLT) supported the validity of this phenomena. However, competing theories emphasise the importance of naturally occurring lexis features not addressed by CLT methodically. This article aims to critically assess and elaborate on how the emphasis on the lexical features of language use and learning are changing the methodology of TEFL nowadays. It was concluded that, while effective to some extent, the CLT is too restrictive to account for a full range of naturally acquired 'chunks', so cannot alone provide a comprehensive account of language practice.

**Keywords:** TEFL, lexical approach, CLT, teaching methodology, lexis, pedagogy

### 1. Introduction

During the last few decades, numerous pedagogical theories have emerged within the field of language teaching. Some have created lively debate and raised contentious issues, while others have received severe criticism in academic circles (Brown, 2001; Cook, 1993; Cunningham & Moor, 2005; Ellis, 1985/2005; Harmer, 2005; Krashen, 1981/1982/1985;

---

<sup>i</sup> Correspondence: email [mersad.dervic@ibu.edu.ba](mailto:mersad.dervic@ibu.edu.ba), [senad.becirovic@ibu.edu.ba](mailto:senad.becirovic@ibu.edu.ba)

Lewis, 1993/1997; Littlewood, 1981; Nattinger, 1980; Richards, 2006; Van Ek & Alexander, 1975; Widdowson, 1990; Willis, 1990). Despite the wide variety of reactions, it can be said that all have contributed in some way to shifts in approaches to the teaching of English as a foreign language (TEFL).

Nowadays, teachers are very much aware that the areas of classroom practice, curricular development, and teaching methodologies require a flexible attitude that will enable organic and forward-thinking teaching/learning processes (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2004; Cook, 2016; Kryszewska, 2003; Rahimia & Momeni, 2012; Widdowson, 1990). Traditionally, the teaching of the English language often hinged on student focus on specific grammar rules that were taught in a deliberate order (Kovačević, Brdarević-Čeljo, & Bećirović, 2018). These were practised, often in sentence structures that were out of any relevant context, until the teacher felt they had been mastered and then the next point would be introduced. Students were encouraged to keep vocabulary books that contained lists of single words with their direct meanings. Often a number of these words were given as homework and the learner was expected to memorise the list for a future test. In this way, vocabulary was built up, but often the learner was unable to use the words effectively in any practical output. Language learners who received English in this way could construct accurate sentences on paper, but frequently had difficulty speaking with fluency, as oral practice generally tended to take second place in the language classroom and the grammar textbook ruled (Harmer, 2005).

Fortunately for contemporary language learners, there is now a much greater emphasis on the communicative classroom (although not in some cultures where the 'old' methods are still respected and followed) and students are encouraged to participate actively in lessons. The move away from rigid and tedious grammar drilling can be attributed to language theorists such as Wilkins and Van Ek, who challenged the teacher-centred approach in the early 1970s. They maintained that a language syllabus should not centre on PPP (presentation, practice and production), but should be designed to enable students to acquire language within a wider context (Van Ek & Alexander, 1975; Wilkins, 1972). The term CLT was coined during this period and language teaching began to undergo a revolution. This approach was based on the use of real tasks in the classroom which initiated communication. It decreased emphasis on grammar and increased emphasis on meaning and communication (Littlewood, 1981; Lewis, 1993; Nattinger, 1980; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Richards, 2006).

This paper aims to review the theory and practical application of the Lexical Approach through CLT and provides examples of its advantages in the respective classroom setting. This extension of the Communicative approach is maintained to respond to the real needs of language learners since more meaning is carried by lexis in naturally occurring language than merely by grammatical structures. This means that focus on communication necessarily implies an increased emphasis on lexis, and decreased emphasis on structure (Lewis, 1993). However, the article critically assesses and provides more detailed information on how the emphasis on the lexical features of language use and learning are changing the methodology of TEFL. Ultimately, it answers

the question of whether the aforementioned approaches are obtaining their stated goal of comprehensive English language learning and teaching nowadays.

## 2. Discussion

### 2.1 The Image of the Lexical Approach

The Lexical Approach perceives language as being made up of 'chunks': multi-words, sentence heads, and institutionalised sentences. For example, the verb 'make' is difficult to explain to students when it stands alone. A dictionary definition may be 'construct' or 'fabricate', but this does not explain common phrases such as: "*make a mess*", "*make your mind up*", "*make your bed*", "*make amends for*", "*make out*" (I can't see/hear it, I can't make it out), "*make-up*" (cosmetics, restore friendship, invent).

Thus, the function of this verb cannot be explained by one term or even rationally. It is often impossible for a teacher to provide a reason for the use of certain lexis and Lewis (1993) as well as many others (Brown, 2001; Cook 1993/2016; Cunningham & Moor, 2005; Ellis, 1985/2005; Harmer, 2005; Nattinger, 1980; Richards, 2006; Willis, 1990) maintain that it is best to admit this as a considerable amount of language is arbitrary. He cites the examples: "*Happy New Year*", "*Happy Christmas*", "*Merry Christmas*", "*Happy Birthday*"; but never "*Merry Birthday*". Hence, there is no lexical explanation for this (Lewis, 1993).

The Lexical Approach regards teaching functions as less important than the CLT because it perpetuates that students already know the functions in their L1, thus all they need to learn is how to use them in the English language. Functions without lexis are not useful, what students need to learn is all the lexis they need to express for the function that they are learning. The Lexical Approach regards students' prior knowledge and experiences important to the learning process. In the CLT part of the language for functions was irrelevant, therefore it was time-wasting. In the Lexical Approach instead of teaching irrelevant language, collocations can be presented. Authentic language is relevant to the lives of students and they will be more likely to acquire if the teacher offers useful lexical phrases so that they can produce coherently (Cook, 2016; Ellis, 2005; Harmer, 2005; Lewis, 1997; Richards, 2006; Willis, 1990). Interestingly, Lewis (1993) concurs to an extent with the controversial linguist Stephen Krashen (1985) that there is a similar process involved in L1 and L2 acquisition. He states that most people acquire their mother tongue 'naturally' and many learners have "*acquired an L2 in precisely the same way*" (Lewis, 1993, p. 54). As the majority of second language learning happens in a classroom environment, then there is a valid case for "*making language use in the classroom resemble, rather than be different from, real language*" (Lewis, 1993, pp. 54-5).

However, he does not advocate a spontaneous and unplanned teacher approach because, without direction, the learner is unlikely to be empowered. Nor does Lewis (1993) advocate the total omission of taught grammar from language lessons. Although quite complex messages can be communicated through lexis on its own, the ability of the producer to grammaticalise is, of course, important but it is not the basis of language

acquisition, it has a useful *“role to play, but not a pre-eminent”* one (Cook, 2016; Krashen, 1985; Lewis, 1993).

## 2.2 Lexical Categories

The most basic category of a lexical item is the ‘familiar one’ of words. Words occur in a variety of formats such as; contractions (*“can’t”, “don’t”*) which may be treated as one word, polywords (*“by the way”, “up to now”*) which may be treated as one ‘chunk’, de-lexicalised words (*“thing”, “point”, “put”, “have”*) which carry no clear meaning on their own and need additional words to create recognisable language. The latter group is often common in idiomatic phrases (*“put your feet up”*). Some words, particularly nouns have their information content. For example, *“cat”* gives a picture, but we would have more information if an adjective preceded it, such as *“ginger”*. The word *“palace”* for example contains more information and gives a clearer picture without a qualifying adjective.

The same is also applicable to verbs; for example, the different level of information content between *“sit”* (in a chair) and *“slump”* (in a chair). Nouns form the majority of the words in the language and prepositions are the minority. *“On”, “in”, “under”, “at”* etc carry no meaning if they are isolated from a comprehensible context. Lewis (1997) proposes a general rule that the less meaning a word carries, the more frequent it is and the more collocates it needs. Rarer words tend to have fewer strong collocates and have more information content (Lewis, 1997).

Collocations can also be referred to as a word partnership and these are the combination of words which occur naturally with greater than random frequency. These are not concepts, but words which co-occur and often it is not possible to generalise rules for their use (Kryszewska, 2003; Rahimia & Momeni, 2012). For example, *“thoughts go round and round”* but emotions don’t, they go *“up and down”*. Lewis (1997) cites the example that people drive cars and drink coffee in Britain. However, when these actions are vocalised, they don’t! For instance: *“How did you get here?” – “I came in the car.”* (not *“I drove the car.”*); *“Do you want a coffee?” – “No thanks, I’ve just had one.”* (not *“I’ve just drunk one.”*). Therefore, if a language learner were to ask the reason why the second options are not usual, there is no rule to explain, except *“we just wouldn’t say that”*. Of course, if a non-native speaker were to use the second replies, they would be understood quite clearly but it would be fairly obvious that English was not their L1. The replies are perfectly possible and grammatically accurate; however, they are not ‘usual’ (Lewis, 1997, pp. 25-6). Students’ questions such as *“Why we get in a boat, in a taxi, in a car, but we get on a bus, on a train?”* have no apparent logical answers.

Hana Kryszewska from Poland referred to this linguistic phenomenon in her article *“Why I won’t say good-bye to the Lexical Approach”* published in HTL Magazine in 2003. She is a non-native EFL teacher who learned English in the late 1960s. She was taught in a traditional PPP manner and found that she could ‘speak in English’, but she ‘didn’t speak English’. She cites the example that when she answered the phone, she would reply to the question *“Can I speak to Hanna please?”* with *“Hanna is here”*, rather than *“speaking”*. She further noted that learners who had been exposed to a native speaker of English generally said *“the right things”* despite having much less knowledge of

grammar and vocabulary than she had. She thus concludes that she had not been exposed to the relevant ‘chunks’ when going through the learning process (Kryszewska, 2003).

It is propounded by the Lexical Approach theorists (Lewis, 1993; Willis, 1990) that without being taught collocations, it becomes more difficult and hesitant for learners to communicate with native speakers.

The following examples in Table 1 demonstrate the relationship between two words and groups of words that are frequently put together to make common expressions.

**Table 1:** Examples of Common Relationship between Group of Words

Word Groups	Common Expressions
verb + noun	take a bow or permit entry
adjective + noun	square meal or rough justice
verb + adjective + noun	take vigorous exercise or make happy
adverb + verb	hardly believe or surely be
adverb + adjective	thoroughly exhausted or totally useless
adverb + adjective + noun	absolutely unacceptable behaviour
adjective + preposition	nice to / sad about / pleased with
noun + noun	jacket pocket / door step

Lewis (1993) maintains the importance of “*fixed expressions*” as these represent a major lexical category and the majority of language textbooks outline fixed expressions such as i) social greetings (“*Good morning, afternoon, evening!*”, “*Nice day, isn’t it!*”, “*How are you?*”, “*Lovely weather*” etc.); ii) politeness phrases (“*Yes, please!*”, “*No, thank you!*”, “*I’m fine, thanks!*”, “*I’ll have to be going.*” etc.); iii) “phrasebook” language (“*Can you tell me the way to..., please!*”, “*I’d like a double room, please!*” etc.); and iv) idioms (“*You’re making a mountain out of a molehill*”, “*Don’t shut the stable door after the horse has bolted.*” etc.) (Lewis, 1993).

Lewis (1997) argues that despite some mockery of these “*old fashioned*” phrases, they are in common usage and need to be acquired as whole “*chunks*” just like individual words or very strong collocations. Semi-fixed expressions, on the other hand, are numerous and range from very short to very involved sections of language, such as the extended expressions often found in academic writing and formal letters. He goes on to illustrate that the language teacher should focus on what is “*probable*” and ultimately useful for the learner. Semi-fixed expressions often have slots that can be filled in only a limited number of ways. By this, he means that expressions such as “*I’ve got a splinter in my finger.*”, can only have the nominal substitution by a few alternatives e.g. “*I’ve got a thorn/piece of glass in my finger*”. He cites that we *can* say something like “*I’ve got a banana in my finger.*”, however, this is a ridiculous statement and it is highly improbable (Lewis, 1997, p. 9-11).

The Lexical Approach aims to focus on language that is “*actually-occurring*” and not on all the possible sentences that are never likely to be used, as has been the practice in the past (Brown, 2001; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2004; Harmer, 2005; Kryszewska, 2003; Lewis, 1993; Rahimia & Momeni, 2012; Willis, 1990). Quite often, what may be grammatically sensible can appear odd. L2 learners may tend to translate word for word

if they have not acquired the appropriate “*chunks*” and they may attempt to follow a perceived grammar pattern that is not “lexically sanctioned”. For example: “*Please, don’t bother to call me.*” – “*I’ll bother to call you.*”. This response seems grammatically acceptable, but it sounds strange and would not occur in native speech. (Lewis, 1997, pp. 34-6). This suggests that the input received by the learner needs to be relevant to real-life situations and not merely based on morpheme structures that can lead to the ambiguous and/or unrealistic and odd output.

### 2.3 Input Hypothesis (SLA)

Theorists such as Stephen Krashen (1981) have highlighted the importance of comprehensible input if the language learner is to continue to acquire useful language. His Input Hypothesis attempts to explain how the learner acquires a second language. This theory relates to the acquisition, not the “*learning*” of a language and is the progression along with the “*natural order*” as the learner improves and receives “*input*” that is a step beyond his current stage of linguistic competence (Dervić & Spahić, 2018). Krashen (1982) maintains that language can only be acquired when the learner understands a message or receives “*comprehensible input*”. When this happens, “*we move from  $i$ , our current level, to  $i+1$ , the next level along with the natural order*”. The learner can comprehend language that contains not acquired grammar if the communication is within a clear context and builds on previously acquired linguistic competence. Krashen (1985) cites how young children learn their first language from the parent or guardian who uses simple structures repeatedly within a context that is generally concerned with the “*here and now*”. He suggests that language teachers similarly deal with beginner learners, using appropriate visual aids and simple sentences that are associated with familiar topics. He cites the following two corollaries for the Input hypothesis:

- (1) “*Speaking is a result of acquisition*” and it emerges on its own without being taught due to the building of competence through comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985, p. 2).
- (2) Grammar is provided automatically if the input is understood and there is enough of it. This means that the “*language teacher*” does not need to formally “teach the next structure along with the natural order” because it will be in “*the right amount and automatically*” reviewed if there is enough understandable input (Krashen, 1985, p. 2).

Krashen (1985) also accounts for what he describes as the “*silent period*” in the language learning process. He states that the spoken words of the new language are not the beginning of acquisition because the learner; particularly the young learner; will have a period where nothing is spoken until expressions and vocabulary have been assimilated. Often this can be a silent period of a few months until what has been heard is made sense of and the learner develops the confidence to speak. When the learner receives comprehensible input over some time, he can then develop competence in his own time (Krashen, 1985).

### 3. The Theory in Practice

Interestingly, Kryszewska (2003) has found the key elements of this theory useful in practice. She has designed her method of encouraging young learners to speak with some confidence during class. The fact that young learners are more motivated for language learning (Bećirović & Hurić-Bećirović, 2017) further contributes to the success of the method. She aims to elicit conversation from beginners by building on vocabulary that they already possess and in a way that produces quite sophisticated dialogue without using full sentences; i.e. “*chunking*” (Kryszewska, 2003). As her students grow in confidence, she offers more input that is comprehensible and in a realistic and relevant context. She cites one particular conversation with a beginner that would normally require the past simple tense (not yet acquired):

T: *Maciek. Your weekend... Tell me.*

S: *Oh, nice. Very nice.*

T: *Your grandmother's house?*

S: *Yes, in Malbork.*

T: *A long walk?*

S: *Yes, to the castle.*

T: *And later?*

S: *Computer games.*

T: *How long?*

S: *2 hours. My limit. You know.* (Kryszewska, 2003, p. 2).

She was surprised when the boy aged 11 suddenly took charge of the conversation:

S: *And you?*

T: *Oh typical.*

S: *Much work?*

T: *Well, some.*

S: *And then?*

T: *A film on TV*

S: *What title?*

T: *Don't remember. About the war.*

S: *No walk?*

T: *No, too lazy.*

In this case, the learner discovered that he could sustain a meaningful dialogue with the little language he had at his disposal. Kryszewska (2003) goes on to maintain that in her experience, communication through “*chunks*” was also well received by low-level adult learners. She puts this down to the fact that they enjoy communicating without fear of making grammatical errors and her experience echoes the theorists when she cites that “*an adult learner will often delay engaging in conversations until he/she is sure of error-free utterance*”. Thus, this may delay authentic communication (Kryszewska, 2003, p. 3), which seems to be the case in many different EFL contexts (Dervić & Spahić, 2018; Rizvić & Bećirović, 2017).

#### 4. Communicative Power through Lexical Features

The building of the “*student’s communicative power necessarily implies a large, inadequately grammaticalised vocabulary in the early stages of learning. Partially grammaticalised lexis – acceptable pidgin – must be perceived as successful elementary and intermediate behaviour, rather than defective*” (Lewis, 1993, p. 116). Lewis (1993) states that for input to become intake, the following further three factors need to be considered:

- 1) student’s attitude,
- 2) student’s motivation, and
- 3) the authenticity of teaching materials.

Lewis (1993) cites Widdowson’s notion of the authenticity of materials, wherein he purports that it is not necessarily the authenticity within the actual language presented that is “*authentic*”, but how the material is used (Widdowson, 1990, p. 67). For instance, if a text that is relevant and interesting for the group is then treated by the teacher as a traditional comprehension and structures are analysed with exercises, then it loses authenticity and might as well be “*an extract from the Highway Code*” (Lewis, 1993, p. 27; Widdowson, 1990, p. 67). Thus, it is suggested that in achieving the desired approach, the teaching methods are more influential on the outcome than the material itself. As Lewis reiterates, it is not enough in the field of communicative language teaching just to address the content of textbooks and other resources, but it is also crucial to foster the appropriate mindset in the teacher if the change is to be effective and enduring. For the Lexical Approach to become an “*approach*”, the role of the teacher is to enable lexical awareness in the learner, so that lexical items are accessible and comprehensible. In classes of lower-level students, in particular, the onus is on the teacher to deliver large quantities of relevant input, to expect an only limited response, to avoid correcting errors constantly when there is a response, to avoid continual use of non-contextual exercises that require slot-filling and to provide stimulating, appropriate and engaging material and so on (Lewis, 1993; Willis, 1990).

Modern technology has enabled linguists to study large sections of naturally produced spoken English. The Co-Build Project has produced dictionaries with records of word frequency. In the past there was no record of spoken English grammar, therefore textbooks emphasised the written language which did not always help students in understanding communication (Harmer, 2005, p. 145). The Collins Co-Build Dictionary is a direct product of the move towards the Lexical approach. Its definitions are not linear as in more traditional dictionaries, but collocation boxes are designed to offer the student a variety of related “*chunked*” expressions that can be readily used.

In Table 2 below, Lewis (1993) illustrates the following:



**Table 2:** An Example of Collocational Box

<b>a sheet of</b>	<b>paper</b>
(a large flat piece)	glass
	ice
	flame
	stamps

In this way, the learner can access new expressions and add them to his/her repertoire (Lewis, 1993, p. 126). Kryszevska (2003) highlights the effective nature of good modern dictionaries as *“students see for themselves that words function in all kinds of chunks”* (p. 2). She points out that many learners, unfortunately, seem to like their old bi-lingual dictionaries, that for example indicate the meaning for ‘take’ by listing a few other verbs but fail to offer any comprehensible explanation or usage. She goes on to recommend two models of teaching that encompass the Lexical Approach and Spoken Grammar: Jim Scrivener’s ARC model (Scrivener, 1994) and Task-Based Teaching method (Estaire & Zanon, 1994). She concludes that the Lexical Approach, Corpus Analysis of the language and Spoken Grammar are *“here to stay”* (Kryszevska, 2003, pp. 2-5).

Furthermore, concerning the teaching pronunciation Lewis (1997) suggests EFL teachers rethink the conventional way in understanding the instruction of pronunciation. That is, many teachers believe that learners’ difficulties are with individual words or even individual sounds. As stated before, the Lexical Approach insists that the *“language consists of grammaticalised lexis, rather than lexicalized grammar”* (Lewis, 1997, p. 74). Therefore, a vital task in implementing this approach is to chunk the language correctly (Kryszevska, 2003). In older methods such as audio-bilingualism, the pronunciation was largely identified with accurate production of isolated sounds or words (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Unquestionably, listening skills are vital for the language learner, but not as a means of separating single bits of lexis and concentrating on their pronunciation for a whole lesson. This, in most cases, maybe found counter-productive, whereas listening to the radio, TV and so on can provide a more stimulating and natural aid (Harmer, 2005).

Listening, as a language skill, is so intertwined with language learning that it can be difficult to define. However, it can be taught with the Lexical Approach (Cook, 2016; Kryszevska, 2003; Rahimia & Momeni, 2012). For example, the teacher could show students a photo of a car that has been wheel-clamped. From this question may be asked such as; *“What law has the driver broken?” “What will happen next?” “Are cars clamped in your country?”*. Students may then be asked to think of other regulations that apply to activities such as smoking, flying, drinking etc (Cunningham & Moor, 2005, p. 114). Additionally, the teacher might also play tapes or CDs from which pertinent questions can be formed and discussions and ideas ensue.

Teaching writing within the Lexical Approach may appear difficult, but with appropriate methods, the student may be able to write a variety of coherent sentences in a relatively short time. When teaching with the Lexical Approach, the onus is not on grammar and technical accuracy, such as writing *“I am, you are, he/she/it is”* in non-contextual isolation, but on chunking words that can be used in a real way. For example, offering pictures of situations that require a written explanation, such as *“He is happy”*,

*"She is not happy", "She is sad", "They are eating, smiling, writing"* etc (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2004, p. 227). The teacher could give jumbled sentences, such as *"cold/winter/is/weather/the/in/the"* and the student can put the individual words in a coherent order *"The weather is cold in the winter"* or *"In the winter, the weather is cold"* (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2004, p. 230).

There are numerous methods of eliciting the spoken word, by asking students to read out loud, repetition exercises, oral question and answer sessions, role play and so on. (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2004, pp. 144-160). Transactional dialogue can be encouraged by choosing an interesting topic that has some relevance to the class and initiating opinion giving/argument etc. (Brown, 2001, pp. 273-274). In this context, students contribute interactively where lessons become more dynamic and reflect the use of language in the real world outside the classroom.

The Lexical Approach will introduce sentence structures as unanalysed wholes. The second language learner will be aware of this but encouraged to use such sentences *"both before and parallel with any analysis of them"* (Lewis, 1993, p. 117). Unanalysed sentences whose pragmatic meaning may be understood from context must be valued as a resource that aids mastery of grammatical competence rather than being produced by it (Lewis, 1993, p. 117). Also, *"vocabulary learning and acquisition can be aided through classroom procedures which help students identify lexical items correctly, encourage recording in a helpful, non-linear format and encourage transfer from short-term to long-term memory"* (Lewis, 1993, p. 117). It means that the acquisition of vocabulary has the power to encourage a second language learner as it will enable the development of language and later on facilitate the understanding of grammatical points.

### **3. Conclusion**

The emergence of the CLT and subsequently the Lexical Approach has created a dramatic turn-around in the field of language teaching. It is difficult to assess how successful the movement away from the traditional methods has been, but it is clear that emphasis is being placed on the communicative classroom; not only in the field of language teaching but also across the subject range in educational establishments. The Lexical Approach is a current 'buzzword' amongst language teachers and trainers and the fact that it is a holistic approach rather than just a suggestion for new syllabi means that it will be much harder to implement as often people are resistant to change. Some teachers are no doubt set in their 'methodological ways' and even if new texts and syllabi emerge, this does not necessarily mean that they will be delivered in a way conducive to the Lexical Approach. However, this approach requires a change in attitude towards the whole language teaching and learning process. The major space generally is taken up by the teaching of verb tenses and many limited grammar aspects and voice needs to be freed up for learners to receive lexically oriented input. More importantly, Willis (1990) points out that it would save time and complexity if the teaching of the conditionals is confined to making sure that *if*, *might* and *could* are understood and that some hypotheses are unreal. If that practice is not adopted, then language learners will continue to have problems

with acquiring this aspect of grammar. The Co-build English course does not ignore grammar but presents it within real expressions that relate to real situations. Most exponents of the Lexical Approach concur that it speeds up the language acquisition process because students are exposed to 'chunks' of language that are readily available for use. Most also claim that it is easier to remember a whole expression than to remember lists of disassociated words. Since language is so arbitrary and many words, for example, do not translate directly from the positive to the negative without creating the wrong or a ridiculous meaning, it is helpful to learn expressions in context and not patterns that may or may not hold to be true in most cases. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that, while effective to some extent, the CLT is too restrictive to account for a full range of naturally acquired 'chunks' and thus cannot provide a comprehensive account of language practice on its own. Respectively, the Lexical Approach may take some time to establish in the language classroom, but it will doubtless endure as teachers begin to get to grips with its real essence and rapidity.

## References

1. Bećirović, S., & Hurić-Bećirović, R. (2017). The role of age in students' motivation and achievement in learning English as a second language. *Journal of Linguistic and Intercultural Education - JoLIE*, 10(1), 23-35. doi:10.29302/jolie.2017.10.1.2
2. Čeljo, A. B., Bećirović, S., & Bureković, M. (2018). The use of imaginative conditional clauses by Bosnian University-level English-majoring students. *Journal of Linguistic Intercultural Education*, 11(2). doi:10.29302/jolie.2018.11.2.2
3. Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2004). Language assessment. *Principles and Classroom Practices*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.
4. Brown, D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. Addison Wesley Longman. Inc. USA.
5. Cook, V., & Cook, V. J. (1993). *Linguistics and second language acquisition*. London: Macmillan.
6. Cook, V. (2016). *Second language learning and language teaching*. Routledge.
7. Cunningham, S., & Moor, P. (2005). *Cutting EDGE*. Spain: Logman.
8. Dervić, M. & Spahić, N. (2018). An Evaluation of Five Key Aspects of the Language Acquisition (LA) – A Critical Review of Krashen's Theory. *ILUM*, 16(16), 391-408.
9. Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
10. Ellis, R. (2005). Principles of instructed language learning. *System*, 33(2), 209-224.
11. Estaire, S., & Zanon, J. (1994). *A Task Based Approach*. Macmillan.
12. Harmer, J. (2005). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. Malaysia: Longman.
13. Kovačević, F., Brdarević-Čeljo, A. & Bećirović, S. (2018). Opportunities and Challenges Facing Bosnian High-School EFL Learners. *European Researcher*, 9(4). doi:10.13187/er.2018.4.298

14. Krashen, S. D. (1981). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
15. Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
16. Krashen, S. D. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications*. Essex: Longman.
17. Kryszewska, H. (2003). Why I won't say goodbye to the lexical approach. *Humanising language teaching*, 5(2), 1-11.
18. Lewis, M. (1993). *The Lexical Approach*. Hove: Language Teaching Publication.
19. Lewis, M. (1997). *Implementing the Lexical Approach*. Hove: Language Teaching Publication.
20. Littlewood, W. (1981). *Communicative Language Teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
21. Nattinger, J. R. (1980). A lexical phrase grammar for ESL. *TESOL Quarterly*, 14(3), 337-344.
22. Rahimi, M., & Momeni, G. (2012). The effect of teaching collocations on English language proficiency. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 31, 37-42. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.12.013
23. Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative Language Teaching Today*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
24. Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2 ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
25. Rizvić, E. & Bećirović, S. (2017). Willingness to Communicate in English as a Foreign Language in Bosnian-Herzegovinian EFL Context. *European Researcher*, 8(3). doi:10.13187/er.2017.3.224
26. Scrivener, J. (1994). *Learning Teaching*. Heinemann.
27. Van Ek, J., & Alexander, L. G. (1975). *Threshold Level English*. Oxford: Pergamon.
28. Widdowson, H. G. (1990). *Aspects of Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
30. Wilkins, D. A. (1972). *Linguistics in Language Teaching*. London: Edward Arnold.
31. Willis, D. (1990). *The Lexical Syllabus: A new approach to language teaching*. London: Collins.

Creative Commons licensing terms

Author(s) will retain the copyright of their published articles agreeing that a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) terms will be applied to their work. Under the terms of this license, no permission is required from the author(s) or publisher for members of the community to copy, distribute, transmit or adapt the article content, providing a proper, prominent and unambiguous attribution to the authors in a manner that makes clear that the materials are being reused under permission of a Creative Commons License. Views, opinions and conclusions expressed in this research article are views, opinions and conclusions of the author(s). Open Access Publishing Group and European Journal of Education Studies shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability caused in relation to/arising out of conflicts of interest, copyright violations and inappropriate or inaccurate use of any kind content related or integrated into the research work. All the published works are meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed and used in educational, commercial and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).