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Building Lexical Awareness
through Sustained Authentic Text

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes an experiment to implement a lexical approach in the context of a High-intermediate ESL classroom. The vehicle for building students' lexical awareness was Sustained Authentic Text (SAT). SATs, a term I coined, refers to texts like newspapers, TV programs, etc. covered for a prolonged period—a month or more, as opposed to one-off lessons, or traditional textbooks. The students were young adults studying in a non-credit Intensive English Program (IEP) in San Francisco and the paper focuses on one two-month period during which time the SAT was the TV sitcom, *Two and a Half Men*. The paper begins by describing the context and explains the reasons for changing my approach to the teaching of the class. This is followed by a brief overview of a lexical approach and the justification, or why I thought it was important for these students to learn lexical chunks. Chapter Three discusses three specific lesson plans that were taught and the final chapter offers an evaluation of the experiment.

ERIC descriptors:

Second Language Learning
Formulaic Language
Lexical Grammar
Lexical Approach
Curriculum Planning

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Introduction

As a language teacher, my decisions in the classroom are often based on the experiences I have had as a language learner. When something has helped me learn, I consider how it might also help my students learn. For example, while living in Venezuela and studying Spanish intensively, I found that watching TV at home was an excellent source for input. Of course, initially as a beginner, it was impenetrable, much more than i + 1, but over time, it became more accessible. One reason it became more accessible was because my Spanish was improving from classroom study and using it in my daily life, but another huge factor was that I had chosen to follow one particular TV show, a *telenovela* (Latin America's version of the soap opera). Watching the same show, every day, helped me become familiar with the characters, their names, and the story, all of which increased my motivation for learning the language they were using. To me, one of the most striking features of the language being used on the *telenovela* was that it was like the real language I heard being spoken on the streets and by my Spanish speaking colleagues—filled with colorful idioms, slang, and informal phrases. Therefore, my motivation for learning the language being used on the TV show was twofold, to better understand what was happening on the show and, more importantly, to better understand what was happening all around me.

In one intensive year, I went from being a Novice Mid to Intermediate High Spanish speaker according to the ACTFL guidelines (see Appendix A, p. 52) and I give a lot of credit to the *telenovela* (and, of course, to my patient and engaging

teachers). This experience made me keenly interested in the role of television in the language learning process.

As an ESL teacher an opportunity arose to experiment with using TV in the classroom in December of 2008, when I had a group of students who had been studying English for a long time and were bored with the typical ESL materials. The timing was right to re-conceptualize course content.   I was teaching in an intensive English program (IEP) in San Francisco and the curriculum for the school was organized around the textbook series *American English File* (Oxenden, et al., 2008), but each teacher had the freedom to add and adapt as much as they wanted. Earlier that year, while pursuing my MA in Teaching at SIT Graduate Institute, I had become interested in a lexical approach. A lexical approach, in contrast to traditional vocabulary teaching (i.e. individual words), emphasizes multiword units, which are considered prefabricated wholes, aka lexical chunks. Lexical chunks include phrasal verbs (*get along with*), idioms (*play it by ear*), collocations (*rancid butter* and *spoiled milk*) and everyday expressions (*catch you later, what's up*). See Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion

These two factors, my interest in the role of TV and a lexical approach, led me to change the way I taught this class. Graves' (2000) first question to be answered when conceptualizing content is, "What do I want my students to learn in this course, given who they are, their needs, and the purpose of the course?" (p. 38). To build lexical awareness, was my answer to this question. By lexical awareness I mean an awareness of lexical chunks and the ability to process them fluently and accurately.

I came to answer the question, what do I want my students to learn, from the striking contrast of learning challenges I encountered in my class between students from Latin America/Europe and Asia. I noticed that the former often had lots of things to say in English but were generally lacking in accuracy, whereas the latter, students from Asia, were generally much more reticent, but tended to be more accurate. For example, Yuko from Japan never volunteered answers or opinions to the whole group but when I asked why past perfect was used in the sentence, "Alan had known Judith for one week when they got married," she said, "because got married is second." There were numerable examples and not always stereotypical. The rich diversity in our classroom did not allow for a simple answer.

Therefore, in other words, my answer to Graves' question was that I wanted my students to learn how to use English fluently and accurately.

The "organizing principle that pulled my syllabus together" (Graves, 2000, p.38) was Sustained Authentic Text (SAT), a term I coined from adapting the array of existing ESL models to designate the specific kinds of materials that were used to supplement the textbook in our class. SAT refers to texts like newspapers and TV programs not made specifically for ESL and which are followed for an extended period of time, rather than a single lesson.

This paper describes my experiment of implementing a lexical approach with SATs. The first chapter gives the background on my context and how I came to the innovation of using SATs as an organizing principle.

Chapter 2 defines some key terms associated with a lexical approach, for example, *lexical chunk*. Then three taxonomies are outlined and an explanation for

teaching lexically is offered. This presents the justification for the innovation. In other words, why it was important for my students to learn about lexical chunks.

Chapter 3 provides a discussion of lessons and activities that we used in our classroom. Outlines for the lessons are provided in the Appendix and can be adapted, or modified, for other classes or contexts. This presents the process of the innovation—ways to teach lexically using SATs.

The final chapter offers an evaluation of the innovation and critical insights, which will inform my teaching in the future.

Chapter 1

Background—The Impetus for Sustained Authentic Text

This investigation will describe the class I taught for eight months and focus specifically on one two-month period. My students were upper-intermediate adults at a private language school, an IEP, which was non-credit. By upper-intermediate, I mean B2 on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR, 2001**)**. See Appendix B for a description of the Framework's rubric. My students were young adults, median age 24, who had come to the US to improve their English, have fun, and live abroad for awhile before returning to their native countries. They came from all over the world, with the majority hailing from Asia (Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, China, and Thailand); others were from Turkey, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and various parts of Latin America.

Problematizing

In addition to my interest in a lexical approach and TV, three specific challenges in my teaching context prompted me to re-conceptualize the content of the course: needing something beyond a textbook, open enrollment, and the business realities of an IEP.

As mentioned in the introduction, my students had been through a lot of ESL in their lives. They knew the tried and true topics inside and out. Our class met four days a week for four hours. We used Oxford's *American English File 3* (Oxenden and Latham-Koenig, 2008) as a textbook, but it was not reasonable to think that my

students could only use a textbook for sixteen hours a week. They would have gotten bored. We needed something else.

The second challenge was the fact that the school, like many IEPs, had open enrollment. Students could start on any Monday (and often other days as well). The average student stayed for about six months, but it was not uncommon to have a student for only a month. Occasionally, a student would appear one day for class and then never be seen or heard from again.

Finally, there was the reality of the school as a business. In order to stay in business, we needed to retain our students and ensure that there was good word of mouth. If students felt they were not learning and/or were bored, there were plenty of other IEPs in the city for them to transfer to.

These three factors combined to create my particular teaching challenge. As my class went along following the textbook, I would ask myself, "What are these students really learning?" and wondered, "How can I better help my students learn?" If a new student actually began class on the first day of a new quarter and followed the textbook through from beginning to end, took the final exam and scored significantly better on the achievement test than they had on the placement test, then there was concrete evidence of student learning. However, the reality was that students would enter or leave not at the beginning or end of a quarter and the textbook curriculum did not lend itself to this. Both the students and I needed something different.

My first attempt at a solution was to implement a variety of threads (Woodward, 2001). Threads are short, recurring activities that weave in and out of

a course over time. The idea is that students become familiar with the process for a

particular thread, which makes it quick and easy to implement. Beginning every

class with a warm up activity could be considered a thread. One example would be a

daily Jazz Chant thread, which could help students practice intonation and rhythm.

Another example of a thread is a vocabulary building exercise, which we

tried in our class, called *an animal a week* (in Woodward it is explained as *an animal*

a day, but we adapted it). On Monday I would introduce an animal, for example *cat*,

and students would brainstorm vocabulary: *whiskers, purr, meow, claws, feline, etc*.

With this list of words, students would quiz each other. The following day we would

revisit the vocabulary and try to add more words. From this expanded list, I might

ask them to write a short dialog. The third day I would see if they could add any

idioms to our list, and I would be prepared with several of my own: *raining cats and*

dogs, to be catty, a game of cat and mouse. The final day I might ask them to create a

role-play using as many of the new vocabulary words as possible.

This thread, *an animal a week*, helped me with my weekly planning. It was a

useful way to breakup the class time and not just rely on the textbook. The *animal a*

week thread was different from anything in the textbook and the students enjoyed

the novelty and the large number of new words. I was motivated to use animals,

rather than some other category, for three reasons: one, simply following

Woodward's example; two, the fact that animal vocabulary was not something

students had generally studied; and finally, the large number of idioms associated

with animals. Since my students were always coming and going, this *animal a week*

thread provided a supplement to the textbook that was easy to pickup or drop at

any point. Therefore, I felt that threads could solve the challenge and be the best way to re-conceptualize course content.

However, in the back of my mind I worried that my students were not learning anything useful and so I continued to ask myself, "How can I *better* help my students learn?"

Mainly what I felt missing was some sort of bridge. How could we bridge the learning from the classroom to the real world? In other words, my students were indeed learning new vocabulary from the various threads we had implemented, but I did not feel that it was truly addressing their needs, which was to improve their fluency and accuracy.

Sustained Authentic Texts—SATs

While pursuing my MA in TESOL, I had read about how the use of *sustained content* improved writing skills among ESL college students (Pally, 2000) and how *narrow reading* (Krashen, 2004) improved students' ability and motivation for reading. I was interested in doing something similar with listening and speaking.

Drawing on examples from "models for integrated teaching with a communicative focus" (Hinkel, 2006) such as Content-based instruction (CBI), Task based, Text based (also called Genre based), Project based, and Krashen's *narrow reading*, I coined my own variation, Sustained Authentic Texts (SATs). By Sustained Authentic Text I mean some text, written or oral, which is not made specifically for ESL. What makes SATs different from the kinds of authentic texts presented in ESL

textbooks is that they continue for a prolonged period—a month or more. The prolonged period is a key point.

American English File includes a number of authentic listening and reading texts but there is little opportunity for recycling. The topics change from chapter to chapter and the students do not have multiple opportunities to encounter familiar topics, texts, and vocabulary. Like Content-based instruction and Sustained content, Sustained Authentic Texts offer students opportunities to become familiar and comfortable with the narrative, and content, rather than focusing on the language. "The acquisition of both structure and vocabulary comes from many exposures in a comprehensible context" (Krashen, 2004, p. 17). From my own experience with the *telenovela*, I experienced how the context became more and more comprehensible as I followed the program over time. This familiar context made me more attentive for new "structure and vocabulary."

Our class explored a variety of SATs, including a novel, a newspaper, a TV drama, and a TV sitcom. These SATs benefited our class primarily by helping students build vocabulary, addressing the revolving door of students, and making a bridge to the real world. With the newspaper, for example, one day students perused the local paper to find a story they found interesting and would like to follow over time. At that time, Proposition 8 banning gay marriage in California was in the news. My students chose to follow this story. Each time I saw an article about the story in the newspaper, over the next eight months, I would bring it into class. This SAT worked well because it gave the students who had been there for earlier articles a chance to re-encounter some of the same vocabulary, which increased the

likelihood of hitting that magic number needed in order to internalize new vocabulary. (What is that magic number? Nation (2001, p. 81) found a range "from five to seven repetitions," with a few learners requiring more than twenty repeated meetings). For the students who had been around for longer, they had to explain the background information to the newer students, giving them more practice using the vocabulary. It also worked well as a one-off for students who were just in class for a short time because it was informing them about something big in the news. Finally, for all the students it provided opportunities to develop newspaper-reading skills, such as skimming and guessing meaning from context. These skills bridged the learning from the classroom to the real world.

Using a variety of SATs in the classroom helped engage students and remain interested for sixteen hours a week. We still used the textbook so that they felt like they were getting opportunities to improve their grammar, which in their needs analysis they always said needed improving. In addition, the textbook provided a consistent source for formative assessment, which was particularly relevant for the curriculum of our school since we had 5 levels, one for each level of the textbook series. However, the time spent with the SATs was always the most lively.

The SAT that the students found most engaging and useful was a TV sitcom. I will describe the process of choosing and following the sitcom, before describing the important role of formulaic language in the process.

A sitcom

As mentioned in the Introduction, one of my motivations to use a TV program in the classroom came from my own experience learning Spanish. The challenges of my teaching context: bored students, open enrollment, and the realities of business, along with the freedom I was afforded, encouraged me to re-conceptualize course content.

Initially in my class, students watched an hour-long TV drama, *Six Feet Under*. I had never seen the show but it came highly recommended from several colleagues for its creativity and rich portrait of American culture. I enjoyed watching the show with my students but, in general, they found it difficult to understand. Despite having four hours a day, trying to watch an hour-long drama was too much. We were never able to watch an entire episode in one class. In the end, we only watched three episodes over the course of a month.

This experience led me to consider the sitcom format, which without commercials clocks in at around 22-23 minutes—a good length for a solid 90-minute lesson. First, I asked my students to discuss American sitcoms they had seen and which one they would like to follow in class. As expected, many mentioned *Seinfeld* and *Friends*. I had fun adding my own suggestions to theirs and made a list for them to vote from (see Appendix C, p. 53).

The voting created a unanimous winner: *Two and a Half Men*. Having never seen the show, I was a bit reluctant to use it in class. But the students had voted and following student choice is critical to motivation (Dornyei, 1998), and keeping student motivation high is particularly crucial to the success of Sustained Authentic Texts. For example, watching a video-clip as a one-off in class does not require

much motivation from the students, because if they are bored, they know that their boredom will soon be over. On the other hand, following a show for an extended period of time, as students do with SATs, requires their sustained interest for weeks, or months, in order for significant language acquisition to take place.

The procedure we followed in class was to watch one episode every Wednesday. The monthly calendar was posted on the door and handed out prior to the beginning of each month. In theory, if a student had to miss a Wednesday class, she/he would know which episode we watched and could watch it on their own (episodes are available for purchase on iTunes for $0.99, or for free with some searching online).   In reality, it never happened but I suspect that in a context with grades, it certainly would.

We began by watching the pilot episode and followed the first season through the first eight episodes. The show begins its seventh season in the fall of 2009, so there are well over one hundred episodes for students to watch, if they are so inspired. In Chapter 4, I will give some details regarding this aspect of the experiment—inspiring students to follow one program, as I had done with the *telenovela*.

Segue

Faced with the challenge of teaching high-intermediate adult ESL learners in a non-credit school with open enrollment for 16 hours a week, I came to the innovation of Sustained Authentic Texts. A variety of SATs were introduced into the curriculum and finally we settled on a TV sitcom as a particularly effective and

motivating text. What made a sitcom so effective? Although humor is not universal

and often gets lost in translation, there are elements of situational comedies that

seem to be funny to almost everyone. But humor was not what made watching a

sitcom such an effective educational tool in my classroom. It turns out that sitcoms

are full of lexical chunks.

The next chapter will define some key terms from a lexical approach and

outline three prevalent taxonomies. Chapter Three will then come back to my

classroom and give three examples of actual lessons we used while watching *Two

and a Half Men* with an eye towards building lexical awareness. On the way to the

next chapter, I invite the reader to consider what percentage of (spoken and

written) language consists of lexical chunks, as opposed to novel language, which is

generated at the time of production? Take a guess.

Chapter 2

A lexical approach—The Justification

The three challenges I spoke of in Chapter One, open enrollment, the business of an IEP, and students wanting something beyond textbooks, prompted me to re-conceptualize my course content. The positive language learning experience I had from following one *telenovela* led me to Sustained Authentic Texts (SATs), which were the organizing principle. However, one piece is still missing. The three challenges were the reason for the change, or the *Why* and the SATs were the *What*. But to what end—what is the *So What,* or justification? I did not simply want to entertain my students, because, after all they were taking classes in order to improve their communicative competence. Therefore, I drew on my interest in a lexical approach, which I hoped would help my students use English more fluently and accurately. This chapter defines some of the key terms associated with a lexical approach, outlines three different taxonomies, and concludes with a justification for teaching lexically.

At the end of the last chapter, readers were invited to guess what percentage of language consists of lexical chunks. Schmitt and Carter cite studies that range from 32.3% to 58.6% for both spoken and written native speaker discourse (Schmitt, 2004). Consider the data and the implications. With the observed widespread use of this kind of language, it only makes sense that it should be equally represented in the classroom. The next question is, what constitutes *this kind of language*?

Defining Terms

The terms *formulaic language*, *formulaic sequence*, and *lexical chunk* will be used interchangeably for describing *this kind of language* because each are used throughout the academic discourse. Before defining this kind of language, I will give some background on *a lexical approach,* which describes the teaching of this kind of language.

I have chosen to use the term *a lexical approach* rather than *The Lexical Approach*. The latter comes from the work of Michael Lewis (1993 and 1996) and provides valuable insight into teaching lexically. However, as Thornbury points out, "The Lexical Approach is not an approach, not in the strict sense" (1998, p. 12) described by Richards and Rodgers (1986) since it lacks explicit syllabus requirements. Nonetheless, the term *lexical approach* "is now firmly entrenched in the discourse of ELT professionals" (ibid., p. 12) and it provides an accessible and clearly defined pedagogical focus from which teachers can begin. In the end, a lexical approach, versus The Lexical Approach, may be a matter of semantics and how much one wishes to give credit to Lewis. No doubt he was an important figure in popularizing the idea but he was not the first to notice the importance of lexical chunks in language.

Central to a lexical approach is the idea of language chunks. What is a chunk? There is not universal agreement and to illustrate, in Wray (2002, p. 9) we find a list of some of the various aliases:

> amalgams, chunks, clichés, co-ordinate constructions, collocations, complex lexemes, formulaic language, frozen phrases, gambits, holophrases, idiomatic,

lexical simplex, lexicalized phrases, listemes, multiword items/units, petrifications, phrasemes, praxons, preassembled speech, prefabricated routines and patterns, ready-made expressions/utterances, routine formulae, sentence builders, set phrases, stereotypes, stock utterances, unanalyzed multiword chunks, units…

In the academic literature, *formulaic language and formulaic sequence,* seem to be used equally. With my students I use the term chunk, because it is a word that they will encounter in contexts beyond the classroom and it conveys the idea of what kind of language is being dealt with, "a thick, solid piece of something" (Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary, n.d.). While it goes by different names, Wray provides a useful definition often cited in the current scholarship (see for example, Myles, 2004; Boers, 2006; and Granger and Meunier, 2008): "a sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other elements, which is, or appears to be, prefabricated: that is, stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar" (2002, p. 9).

The key aspect of Wray's definition is this idea of language that is prefabricated. A chunk is a unit of language that is whole, or prefabricated, in the brain. Common examples of prefabricated language are idioms (cost an arm and leg), phrasal verbs (put up with), and everyday expressions (how's it going?). These prefabricated chunks of language are stored whole in memory and do not like to be broken or changed (*cost a leg and an arm).

Idioms, phrasal verbs, and everyday expressions are indeed examples of lexical chunks but in order to gain a better appreciation for what is prefabricated,

what is not, and some of the challenges inherent in classification, we will next look at three widely referenced taxonomies.

Taxonomies

There is not consensus in the academic literature on how to categorize formulaic language or chunks. I have chosen three different but widely cited examples in order to illustrate some of the similarities and differences. In general, taxonomies are useful because they provide teachers with a way to think about and identify formulaic language. However, they are limited in their practical value for teachers and students. At the end of this section, I will describe how my students and I categorized lexical chunks.

The three taxonomies presented here come from Becker (1975), Nattinger & DeCarrico (1992), and Lewis (1997). Becker was one of the first credited with differentiating, or categorizing, formulaic language, Nattinger & DeCarrico elaborate and adapt Becker's categorization by emphasizing the important role of function and pragmatics in lexical phrases. Finally, the Lewis taxonomy simplifies.

Becker's (1975, p. 61) taxonomy describes a six-way division:

- polywords (e.g., *(the) oldest profession; to blow up; for good*)
- phrasal constraints (e.g., *by sheer coincidence*)
- meta-messages (e.g., *for that matter*…(message: 'I just thought of a better way of making my point');…*that's all* (message: 'don't get flustered'))

- sentence builders (*(person A) gave (person B) a (long) song and dance about (a topic)*)

- situational utterances (e.g., *how can I ever repay you?*)

- verbatim texts (e.g., *better late than never; How ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm?*)

Becker's categorization aimed to move beyond what he saw at the time as structures that were "being swept under the rug" (1975, p. 61) of a single category, which were Idioms. His hierarchy moves from the fewest words, polywords, to the most words, verbatim texts.

Nattinger & DeCarrico distinguish between fewer categories, only four as opposed to Becker's six, but they distinguish more details between the categories. Their four categories are: polywords, institutionalized expressions, phrasal constraints, and sentence builders. We see many similarities between their categories and Becker's, for example polywords and sentence builders are the same in both. What Nattinger & DeCarrico call institutionalized expressions, Becker calls situational utterances. One major difference from Becker that emerges in Nattinger & DeCarrico is the articulation that the boundaries between the categories are fluid. "In applying these criteria, it is again necessary to think in terms of a continuum" (1992, p. 38). This insight is particularly relevant when teachers consider how they plan to help students encounter and clarify chunks. For example, is it more salient for students to know how to categorize "better late than never" (as a verbatim text), or when and how to use it?

The Nattinger & DeCarrico taxonomy, shown below in Figure 2.1, is useful

not because it describes how to teach, but because it identifies lexical phrases in

terms of structural and functional characteristics (1992, p. 45).

Figure 2.1

	Grammatical level	Canonical/Non-canonical	Variable/ Fixed	Continuous/ Discontinuous
Polywords	word level	both	Fixed	continuous
Institutionalized expressions	sentence level	canonical	Fixed	continuous
Phrasal constraints	word level	both	somewhat variable	mostly continuous
Sentence builders	sentence level	canonical	highly variable	often discontinuous

Michael Lewis (1997, p. 8-11) provides a more simplified, four-tiered

taxonomy whose audience is much more clearly aimed for teachers, rather than

academics.

- words (traditional vocabulary)

- collocations (e.g., *make a mistake, play tennis, go skiing*)

- fixed expressions (e.g., *What's up?; hit the road; wing it*)

- semi-fixed expressions (e.g., *I was struck by ____; Would you mind

____*)

The similarities with the previous taxonomies are evident here, for example

with fixed and semi-fixed expressions, which echo sentence builders and situational

utterances. However, one striking difference is the reminder that old-fashioned

vocabulary, i.e. words, is an important category to keep in consideration. This

seems like a strategic move aimed at helping teachers, and students, conceptualize

the other pieces of the taxonomy more clearly. For example, Lewis illustrates that

nevertheless falls into the category of words, since it is after all in dictionaries listed as "a word." But this opens the door to his other examples, like *bread and butter* and *by the way*, which are not considered "words" but seem to be as inseparable as *nevertheless*, when they are used for specific meanings, such as, "I eat bread and butter for breakfast everyday" and certainly not "I eat butter and bread."

This brief overview of three taxonomies illustrates some of the similarities and differences for categorizing lexical chunks.

In my classroom, we more or less followed the Lewis taxonomy, simply because it was the one I was most familiar with. We focused on collocation and expressions. Lewis described two types of expressions, Fixed and Semi-fixed. Fixed expressions do not change, like the idiom, *to cost an arm and a leg*. Semi-fixed expressions, on the other hand, have an element that can change, which struck me as incredibly useful for students. Another way to think of these expressions is as *frames* and *slots*. For example: *she is driving me* _____ is a frame. The open slot could be filled with words like *nuts*, *crazy, insane*, and *wild* but not with words like *happy, sick*, or *tired*. Therefore, being aware of the frames and slots of Semi-fixed expressions opens the door to a vast range of communicative possibilities.

When one teaches lexically, it is necessary to contend with ways to categorize formulaic language, if for no other reason than to differentiate it from its opposite, novel language. Traditional vocabulary teaching and learning may seem more straightforward than the messiness of the wide array of chunks. Unfortunately, "There is no sharp boundary separating these categories" (Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992, p. 46) for formulaic language and, therefore, it is helpful if

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teachers can decide on a strategy. The strategy may depend on the material, the context, and the students' needs, among other things. In my class the focus was on noticing and using chunks, not on differentiating between kinds of chunks.

The Justification

We have seen some of the challenges inherent in defining lexical chunks and similarities and differences of three taxonomies for lexical chunks. The *So What*, or justification, for implementing a lexical approach was in order to help my students use English more fluently and accurately, in speaking and listening in particular. In my own process of reflection during my teaching and for the writing of this paper, I have considered these questions regarding a justification: Why implement a lexical approach using SATs? And, how does a lexical approach help students use English more fluently and accurately?

The answer to the first question, why, is because Sustained Authentic Texts (SATs) lend themselves to an investigation of lexical chunks for three primary reasons: they are full of chunks, they recycle these chunks, and they are the real language chunks used by native speakers.

Soap operas are one vivid example of an SAT chock-full of lexical chunks. These programs air five days a week, for sixty minutes a day (minus commercials), all year round. The writers for these shows have very little time to produce scripts and the actors have even less time to memorize their lines. Therefore, the language that is used on soap operas is extremely formulaic. Earlier it was noted that roughly 30-60% of all language used is formulaic (Schmitt, 2004), and even without data for

support, I would venture to guess that upwards of 75-85% of soap opera language is formulaic.

Inherent to the success of a lexical approach is allowing students to have multiple opportunities to clarify, remember, and use the chunks they encounter. One benefit of SATs, due to the fact that they are sustained, is that there is a lot of repetition and recycling. For example, earlier I described the SAT project following newspaper stories about Proposition 8 in California banning gay marriage. From this SAT, students encountered many new legal expressions and collocations, like *supreme-court justice, proponents of the amendment*, etc. Rather than just encountering the language one time, students were able to follow the story over several months through articles read in class, outside of class in the conversations that people were having, the posters, bumper stickers, tee-shirts, and propaganda that was everywhere. These repeated encounters with the language offered the recycling necessary for acquisition. To illustrate, the conversations that students were able to generate using the lexical frames were really sophisticated: "I agree with the opponents of Proposition 8, who contend that marriage should be a right for everyone, because...". Rather than just being able to say, "I disagree (sic) Proposition 8 because..." students were able to produce these longer sentences, which made them sound more fluent and more accurate.

The final primary way that SATs lend themselves to a lexical approach follows from the preceding point about what students encounter outside of the classroom, which are a lot of lexical chunks. My experience as a learner had been watching a *telenovela* while studying Spanish. Meanwhile, while living in a Spanish

speaking country, I was acutely aware of the real language being used all around, on the streets, in the hallways, and in the stores. The classroom, textbook language in school did not sufficiently represent what I was really hearing. Authentic texts, in contrast to textbook language, use a lot of lexical chunks. Therefore, in order for students to use and understand authentic language, they need to use and understand lexical chunks. The fact that SATs are: full of chunks, recycle the chunks, and exemplify high-frequency chunks used by native speakers, are explanations for why it makes sense to implement a lexical approach with these kinds of authentic texts (SATs).

The next question was how does a lexical approach help students use English more fluently and accurately? The answer, and primary justification for teaching lexically, is because this kind of language, formulaic language, eases processing. By processing I mean the steps, and time, that it takes to understand and/or produce language. Becker describes the timesaving process of lexical chunks by saying:

> [they] give us ready-made frameworks on which to hang the expression of our ideas, so that we do not have to go through the labor of generating an utterance all the way out from S every time we want to say anything (quoted in Wray 2000, p. 473).

In other words, learning lexical chunks makes communication more fluent and accurate. When we are learning to speak another language, our goal is to be able to say the things we want to say without having to think about them. For example, when I was first learning Spanish in Venezuela and had to go to the bakery to buy bread, I would have to rehearse the conversation I would have in my head beforehand. I had to remember to use the second person singular polite form, *Usted*, as opposed to the familiar form that I used at school with my classmates and

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teachers. However, once I was able to automatize the lexical chunks used in normal

bakery conversations, I no longer had to plan and think about what I would say. My

mind was free to consider other things, for example all the new and different pastry

options. Figure 2.2 below illustrates the relationship between formulaic language

(used by me in the bakery in Venezuela and on soap operas) and novel language.

Figure 2.2: Challenge vs. Ease Teeter-Totter
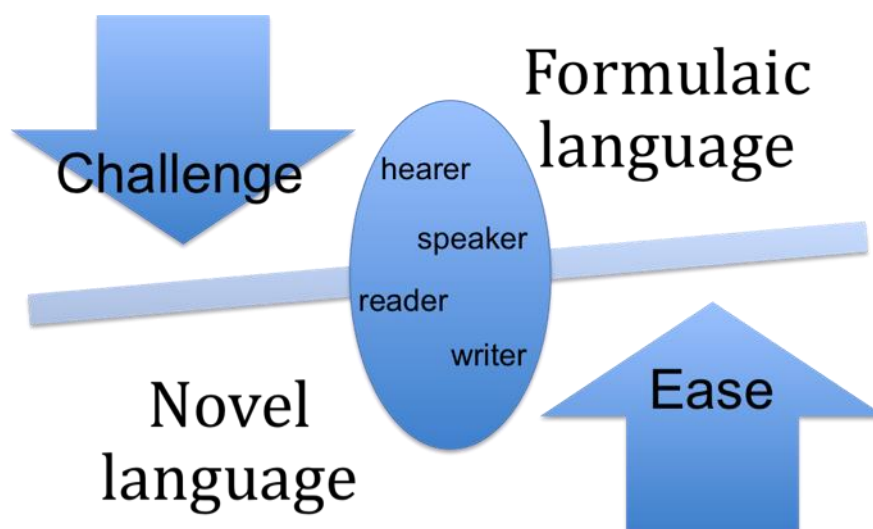
Students often wrongly believe that simply learning more vocabulary is the key to

their language learning success, and while it is important (Schmitt, 2008), nothing

will help them more than improving their use of formulaic language because this is

what ultimately helps ease, or "bypass," processing the most. The above Challenge

vs. Ease Teeter-Totter image represents how I conceptualize the interplay between

novel and formulaic language. At the fulcrum are the producers and receivers of

language: hearer, speaker, reader, or writer. The greater the amount of formulaic

language, the greater the ease for the producers and receivers. At the other end, the

greater the amount of novel language produces a greater amount of challenge. One example of explicitly novel language is poetry. Consider for a moment the lines: "into the women-coloured twilight/i smiling/glide" (cummings, 1923). The poet clearly intends to make some demands on processing. I have never encountered the collocation "women-coloured twilight" so I have no ready frame of reference to know exactly what it looks like. However, after a moment or two, I can conjure up some pretty rich imagines. Of course, most language moves back and forth across this teeter-totter, from being more formulaic to less, and back again.

Another example supporting the challenge of novel language can be seen from the experience my class had trying to watch *Six Feet Under*. The characters and themes of the show were much closer to the realities of my students lives than the characters and themes of *Two and a Half Men* (THM), and yet they found *Six Feet Under* much more difficult to understand. One explanation is the fact that language used in THM is much more formulaic.

As these examples illustrate, once these "ready-made frameworks" are in place, formulaic language makes processing easier.

Summary

In this chapter, we saw how prevalent formulaic language is in the real world (30-60%) and, hence, the obvious need to include it in our classrooms. There is no simple way to define and categorize formulaic language, but I chose to focus on the things that I thought would most help my students and were most accessible in the SATs we explored. For example, students recorded and practiced with fixed and

semi-fixed expressions encountered in a sitcom. The following chapter describes this process in more detail.

Implementing a lexical approach in my context provided students with a tool for becoming more fluent and accurate users of language by easing processing. As the Challenge vs. Ease Teeter-Totter visual in this chapter illustrates, this process, or interplay between novel and formulaic language moves back and forth. Ultimately, the interplay of novel and formulaic language intimates the realities of language and its spectrum of use: from buying bread in a bakery to describing the beautiful and mysterious colors of twilight.

Chapter 3

Lesson Plans—The Process

This chapter presents discussions from three sample lessons taught during three different classes in which we watched the TV sitcom, *Two and a Half Men* (THM). Each lesson ran for roughly 90 minutes, however, since my class met for 4 hours, I was not averse to letting these lessons run longer and often they did take two hours. The lesson plans will follow the PDP framework, a three-stage model for a receptive skills lesson: a Pre-stage for activating schema and preparing students for listening (or reading); a During-stage in which students have multiple opportunities to engage with the text; and a Post-stage where students can use the information/skills they learned from the text in some other way.

For each of the three lessons, there is a discussion of the highlights, or critical issues, that arose from the teaching. The Appendices D—K (p. 54-65) include my lesson outlines as they were taught, handouts for the students, and the excerpts of the transcripts used. My intention in including the materials is two fold: to illustrate more concretely what my students and I did in class, and to provide sample lessons and materials for other teachers to use and adapt.

Sample Lesson 1—Discussion

This sample lesson was for the Pilot episode and was the first encounter with THM (*Two and a Half Men*) for the students. The aim of the lesson was twofold: one, students would build awareness of lexical chunks by noticing/encountering 8 of them in the text using a Lexical Chunk Grid (see below, Figure 3.1), and two, be able to write a dialog using 2 to 3 of the 8 lexical chunks they had encountered in the text. Overall, the lesson was successful because students did achieve the aims.

The lesson had three significant elements which will be discussed: how students encountered vocabulary in the Pre, the steps for viewing in the During, and the Chunk Grid used in the Post for noticing.

Pre

This lesson began with a variation on a Vocabulary Splash, which I coined a "Vocabulary Splash & Dash," because it adds a kinesthetic element (dashing) missing from the original Splash. Each student in class received one of the key vocabulary words from the text written on a strip of paper. Then everyone stood up, and they all asked three classmates if they knew the word/chunk written on their strip. This gave students an opportunity to peer teach, discuss, move around, and interact. Meanwhile, I wrote two columns on the board: *Words We Know* and *Words We Don't Know*. After asking three peers, students wrote their word/chunk in one of the two columns. Examples of words/chunks included: *pilot episode, clingy woman,* and *S.O.B.*

Next I asked the students who wrote the words/chunks in the *Know* column to read theirs aloud and explain meaning/use, or give an example sentence. I also asked the class for guesses from the *Don't Know* column. For example, one student knew that *S.O.B* was a "bad" word but did not know what it meant exactly. I tried to encourage as much guessing as possible.

Finally, I asked the students to not use their dictionaries to look up the words from the *Don't Know* column and to wait to see if they could infer the meaning from context. At the end of the lesson, we returned to the list and made sure that everyone had a chance to clarify these words.

My rationale for encouraging guessing and asking students to not immediately use their dictionaries (i.e. tolerating ambiguity) was in order to practice behaviors associated with successful autonomous learning. It is important to note, one key aspect of this process, practicing behaviors, was that the behaviors were pointed out, labeled, and discussed. In other words, it was important, in my opinion, for students to know what we were doing and why.

The significance of this Pre activity, in addition to practicing these strategies for autonomous learning, was that students were encountering lexical chunks in a collaborative, fun, unthreatening way. The activity provided students with lots of time to encounter, begin clarifying, and noticing word partnerships by themselves and with peers. This encounter helped prepare the students for the viewing since they would be hearing these words and the goal, of course, was that they would begin to recognize not just individual discrete words, but rather the whole lexical chunks.

During

   This phase of the lesson consisted of reading some discussion questions, then watching individual scenes and answering the questions. For example, before watching Scene One, I wrote on the board: *Alan says that his wife "threw him out."* *What does that mean? Guess, why do you think she threw him out?* In the scene, there were multiple opportunities for students to infer that his wife had told him to leave. Students were able to guess the meaning of "threw him out" and then in pairs students brainstormed reasons she might have done this. It was not necessary for students to understand specific details in the scene, because they could use prior knowledge about reasons for getting thrown out.

   One aim of this piece of the lesson was to introduce students to the content in a way that was not dependent on their understanding of every single word. Often, it seems like students who watch TV and film on their own become addicted to subtitles because they are worried that if they miss a single word, they will not be able to understand what is going on. In class, we never used subtitles. The process of this lesson was trying to make them comfortable with not understanding every word by giving them lots of opportunity for discussion. These discussions brought out the wealth of prior knowledge brought to bear by the students, which was generally more than enough to capture the main ideas. In addition, the discussions, in pairs and then as a whole group, continued to foster a collaborative atmosphere.

   Another aim of these discussions was to give students time and opportunity to use lexical chunks encountered in the text. This was a crucial thread, which ran throughout the SAT. For example, "threw me out" used by Alan in line 16 (Appendix

F, p. 57) was a new chunk for many students and the discussion following the viewing gave them chances to ask and answer questions using the chunk.

Post

Finally, in the Post activity, after watching the entire episode, the students were given an excerpt of the transcript (Appendix F) for the first two scenes and a handout with the Lexical Chunk Grid (see below). The directions were to use the excerpt and fill in the missing words. Students first worked alone and then checked their answers with a partner. With their partners, I encouraged them to guess the meaning of the chunks from the context, however I did not want to make this a focus. Therefore, rather than making the right-hand column of the handout "Meaning," I made it "Notes" so that students could write what they wanted.

Overall, this Post activity was successful because the students were able to fill in the grid. The grid was useful for students to begin to recognize how words strung together effect meaning. For example, one student was particularly struck by the significant difference between "*sleeping with someone*" and "*sleeping at someone's*." The grid was a visual, which helped him notice a difference that he had heard many times but not been aware of.

The three elements of this lesson discussed contributed to a successful first meeting with the sitcom for the class. In addition, the lesson initiated routines that ran throughout the SAT, including multiple opportunities for students to use lexical chunks encountered in the text. On the idea of routines, the following sample lesson discussion will diverge.

Figure 3.1 Lexical Chunk Grid

Use the transcript from Act I and II (see Appendix F, p. 57-58), and fill in the blanks with the missing words.

Line #	Lexical Chunks			Notes
	went		with	
	no		deal	
	the will			
		them back		
		Settle		
		to (pronoun)	senses	
	sleep		(*someone*)	
			nap	

ANSWERS

Line #	Lexical Chunks			Notes
12	went	out	with	Dated
16	no	big	deal	not important
16	the will	to	live	desire to live
39	bring	them back	together	reunite them
40	things	settle	out	return to normal
40	come	to (pronoun)	senses	realize one's mistake
51	sleep	with	(*someone*)	have sex with
51	take	a	nap	short sleep during the day

Sample Lesson 2—Discussion

This sample lesson was the fourth in our series of eight and the overall flow was quite different from previous lessons. My rationale was to change things up. Students often get bored with too many predictable patterns and find variation motivating (Dornyei, 2006). Therefore, this lesson focused first on reading the transcript, then later on viewing the sitcom. In addition to the emphasis on reading, there were two new significant differences to this lesson from the previous lessons: an extended Pre activity focusing on the Character Profile worksheet (Appendix E, p.

56) and the frequency for pausing the show for discussions. The overall aim of the lesson was to provide students opportunities, in the Pre, Viewing, and Post, to remember and internalize lexical chunks by using them.

Pre

The Character Profiles were something that we had begun doing before watching the show for the second time. The idea was that students would continually compile information, subjective and objective, for each character. This served two main purposes: first, since we were only watching the show once a week, and many students were rolling in and out, this provided some continuity. Like any sit-com, it was not necessary to have seen previous episodes in order to understand the current one but it did help comprehension if students had some schema. Second, the Profiles were an additional place where students could record new lexical chunks. In addition, by associating the new chunks with a specific character, they were more likely to remember the chunk, and know how and when to use it.

For this episode, and for all of the following, the Pre activity had the students look over their Character Profiles and fill-in any new information they remembered from the previous episode. (During later lessons, I asked the students to fill in the Profiles immediately after the episode, as part of the Post activity). This task was intended to be collaborative and they worked together in small groups. For the students who had missed previous episodes, it was a chance to get caught up. For the students who had seen the previous episodes, it was a chance to recycle

vocabulary and practice summarizing. (See Appendix G, p. 59 for an example of a student's work).

Throughout the SAT project, the Character Profiles worked exceptionally well because they gave the students their own resource for content and language. Students would constantly refer back to these "logs" for reference. For example, the Post activities often entailed writing imagined dialogs between the characters, therefore these Profiles were useful reminders of language and information that students had gathered on them.

Reading

As noted earlier, the biggest difference with this lesson was the focus on reading an excerpt of the transcript first, before viewing (see Appendix I, p. 62-63). There was an advantage and a disadvantage to reading before viewing. The advantage was that from the reading, and the accompanying task, we had created a need to for the viewing; the disadvantage was that students became more hung-up on the language, in other words, the bigger picture, what was happening in the story, got lost in the smaller picture, the words on the page.

The manner in which students were hung-up on the language manifested itself in an overemphasis on meaning. This occurred after the Pre activity when I gave the students the transcript and a series of reading tasks that progressed from a more general to a more specific understanding. For example, first they had to scan the scene and identify how many characters there were and what their names were. As the tasks became more specific, it became more necessary for the students to

know the meaning of more words. Because the students were reading the transcript, they did not have the visual clues from the actors and this caused them to focus more on the meaning of the words.

This overemphasis on meaning became most apparent in the next step, while working with the Lexical Chunk Grid. The focus was supposed to be on filling in the grid as quickly as possible, but students spent a lot of time trying to decipher meaning. On the other hand, it is useful, and natural, for students to encounter language and immediately begin to think about meaning/use. In the future, I will experiment with changing my directions. For example, I could ask students to cover, or fold under, the "Meaning/use" column so that they primarily focus on getting the chunks. Also, I could emphasize a time limit and make doing the activity a race, in order to discourage thinking about meaning/use. What seemed crucial to me at this stage was providing students with a variety of ways to encounter and clarify lexical chunks in context. Later in the lesson, Step III on the handout, there was separate time to focus on meaning/use.

The advantage of reading before viewing came about through the final reading task, which required students to predict. Students put a check next to each line in the transcript, or part of the line, where they thought the audience would laugh. The task utilized both bottom-up and top-down processing in order to guess, or predict, humor. The bottom-up processing required that they understand specific words and how they might be humorous. For example, students would need to know the meaning and use of "guinea pig" and "vermin" in lines 15-16 in order to find any humor in the exchange between Charlie and Alan. If they were not

able to recognize the fact that we normally do not consider pets, like guinea pigs, to be vermin, then they would not predict laughter from the audience.

The top-down processing encouraged students to use their background knowledge, for example, what they already knew to be humorous about the show. One example from the show they knew already quite well was that Charlie often made sarcastic remarks, which invariably generated laughter from the audience. In addition, top-down processing allowed students to use general knowledge they had about humor, generally, and American culture, specifically. In this case, the students all knew that it was funny when Jake said, "See those little black things? That's his poop."

Because of this element of prediction, the students found this exercise to be particularly engaging. While watching the scene, they got immediate feedback about their predictions. For example, all the students had underestimated how many laughs the text would generate. Therefore, through this prediction activity students were able to glean more nuances from the language than they otherwise would have. In addition, this focus on humor led to a rich discussion of cultural differences surrounding what people find funny. The result of this tangent was a follow up class session in which students created and presented posters using Moran's Framework for Cultural Knowings—About, How, Why, and Oneself (Moran, 2001) regarding one type of traditional humor, or common joke, from their culture.

Viewing

The final significant change in this lesson from the previous lessons was our approach to pausing and discussion. For first time, I asked them how they would like to watch the show. In other words, I asked them if they wanted to watch the whole episode and then discuss it, or pause after each scene and discuss, both of which we had done for previous episodes. It was one of my students who suggested that we pause after 3 or 4 scenes (around 7 to 8 minutes). This was a great suggestion! Pausing after every scene had felt too frequent and broke the rhythm of the show but watching the whole show had felt too long and caused widespread TV-coma. By pausing in this manner, students were able to hold enough of the story in their mind to be able to summarize with a partner and use some of the lexical chunks they had encountered. To facilitate this process I also wrote some chunks on the board (see Appendix H, p. 61, #8).

Overall, the flow of this lesson was quite different from previous ones, but the key element remained unchanged: multiple opportunities for students to use lexical chunks encountered in the text. The next, and final, sample lesson builds off of all of these earlier opportunities in order to turn students loose.

Sample Lesson 3—Discussion

This was our last lesson with the sit-com THM. For the first time, students were asked to begin picking out their own chunks, which was important for building learner autonomy. Since the students had now had seven previous lessons in which I provided a structure for finding lexical chunks, they were familiar with the process. The next step in the process of developing lexical awareness was for them to do it on

their own. This discussion will focus on two components that were new to the SAT

lessons: the aim of students identifying chunks on their own and a collaborative

student-centered listening task.

Identifying Chunks

In general, one challenge for students is finding the "correct" length of the

chunk. This is not an easy task, even for scholars in the field (Wray and Perkins,

2000). Lewis identifies the "magic number" of words in Expressions "consist of

between two and seven words, and most interestingly, they do not normally exceed

seven words" (1997, p. 33). He goes on to give the examples, *I'll see you soon* and *it

takes two to tango*, to which we could add from our text: *to walk the face of the

Earth, going on under my roof*, and *have a bite to eat*.

A specific example of this challenge, finding the correct chunk length,

occurred in this lesson for the students using Handout C (Appendix K, p. 67). They

identified "bite to eat," used by Judith in the second line. They correctly identified

bite to eat as a lexical chunk but I had to ask if there was more language that could

be added to the chunk. In this case, I wanted students to notice the verb, *have*, that

collocates with the noun phrase, *bite to eat*. With this example I also asked my

students if there were any other verbs they had heard collocated with *a bite to eat*,

but they did not know any. I wanted them to encounter (in addition to *have*) both

get and *grab* because I knew from having done an earlier concordance search that

these verbs, get and grab, occurred frequently with *bite to eat*.

As the above example illustrates, and the scholarly debate confirms, asking students to identify lexical chunks is not a simple proposition. One role of the teacher is to ask if more language can be added to the chunk, as I did with "a bite to eat." However, the goal is to improve students' fluency and accuracy and to this end they need tools to become successful autonomous learners. The challenge in this lesson, students identifying lexical chunks on their own, made me aware of the valuable role that concordances can play in this process of becoming autonomous. In the following chapter, this will be addressed as an insight for future teaching.

Collaboration

The second new component to this lesson was the collaborative student-centered listening task. This listening task was different from previous lessons because it came directly from the students, rather than me, which created more cooperation and motivation. The task had three primary steps. For the first step, in three groups, the students read three separate excerpts of the transcript (Handouts A, B, and C; Appendix K, p. 65-67) and identified lexical chunks (between 4 and 7) with their peers from their excerpt.

In the second step, the groups wrote their chunks on the board and we had a brief discussion. The aim of the discussion was to familiarize the students with the chunks identified by the other groups and for me to suggest modifications. For example, one group wrote, "it was vital that we create a wholesome atmosphere for Jake" (Handout A, Appendix K, p. 65). I suggested that the chunk be shortened to

just include, "create a wholesome atmosphere." After the discussion, students wrote down the lists of chunks.

The third and final step was to watch the episode in three segments, and each of the segments contained an excerpt from one of the groups. The listening task was to identify the speakers of the chunks from the other groups. In the above example, "create a wholesome atmosphere," many students were able to correctly predict that the speaker was Alan before even watching. The speakers for other chunks were not easy to predict, but because the task was completed in groups, it was achievable. After each segment, the groups discussed which of the chunks they had encountered and who the speakers were. This task was made easier by the fact that the chunks were organized into three separate excerpts. In other words, while viewing, the students could narrow down which list they were listening for.

Both elements in this lesson, letting students identify the chunks and dividing the text into three separate excerpts, helped to create mutual interdependence within the class. Mutual interdependence is a cornerstone of cooperative learning and is tantamount to building a motivating classroom environment (Dornyei, 2006). These factors, cooperation and motivation, played a large role in the success of this lesson, and were tools the students could use to become successful autonomous learners.

Summary

The three lessons presented here are representative of the scope of lessons covered in my classroom for the duration of the eight weeks we followed the TV sitcom *Two*

and a Half Men, and throughout the year as we worked towards building lexical awareness through a variety of SATs (Sustained Authentic Texts), including a TV drama, a movie, a novel, and a newspaper. These lessons further illustrate steps we followed in class and provide ideas and materials for other teachers to use and adapt.

The process was generally similar for all our SAT projects. First, students encountered new lexical chunks in the context of an authentic text that was stimulating and interesting to them. After encountering the chunks, different activities were used to encourage students to notice this language as chunks, for example filling in the Lexical Chunk Grid. At this stage in the process, it was my role as the teacher to identify what I thought were significant lexical chunks in the text, and significant for my students as language learners. In other words, my aim was not to identify *all* the lexical chunks, just the most relevant. After students had opportunities to encounter and clarify the chunks in context, they were asked to practice with the language in order to foster remembering and internalizing. The final stage of the process was for the students to actually be able to fluently and accurately use the new lexical chunks in their own everyday language. (For a more detailed discussion of the ECRIF framework: encounter, clarify, remember, internalize, and fluently use, see Kurzweil and Scholl, 2007).

The goal was for students to build lexical awareness through a SAT, in this case *Two and a Half Men*. In the next and final chapter this goal will be assessed. Common themes running throughout the lessons were cooperation, motivation, and autonomous learning. These themes reflect my answer to the question, "How can I

better help my students learn?" because of my belief that cooperation, motivation,

and autonomous learning, not only help students become better language learners,

but, in general, create more successful learning environments.

Chapter 4

Summary—The Evaluation

How well did my experiment work? This final chapter begins by offering an evaluation of both the success of the innovation, SATs, and the effectiveness of the goal, students building lexical awareness. The chapter concludes with three critical insights, which will inform my teaching in the future.

The experiment was born from my successful experience as a language learner watching TV and an interest in a lexical approach. These two interests, combined with the three teaching challenges: students wanting something beyond the textbook, open enrollment, and the business realities of an IEP, prompted me to re-conceptualize my course content and implement SATs into the curriculum.

Evaluation

My first attempt at re-conceptualizing course content entailed introducing threads into the curriculum to supplement the textbook. One example described earlier was the *animal a week* thread. In general, threads achieved the aim of overcoming some of the challenges I faced. For example, their loose and flexible structure aligned more realistically with the nature of open enrollment in our school than did the fixed structure of the textbook.   However, the threads left me pondering, "What are my students really learning?"

Eventually, I came to the innovation of SATs. Considering the three challenges above, the experiment was a resounding success. From my perspective

as the teacher, it was an energetic and enthusiastic time for students in the classroom. The class grew is size to the point that it had to be split into two classes. Planning and preparation for class was much easier than it had been for me in this school during any other time and I attribute this partly to the structure that the SATs afforded. The SATs offered the class a familiar and comfortable place to hang our hats each week. Besides being familiar and comfortable, which textbooks can also be, the SATs were interesting, entertaining, and thought provoking. A further benefit was that because many of my students had jobs and would not regularly attend class, the SATs provided stable content, with more meat on its bone than the threads offered. This stable content was something that students could jump right back into, whereas in the textbook much of the material built on previous material, so when students had missed the previous material, it made it particularly hard for them to get back up to speed.

From the students' perspective they wrote things in the class evaluation like: "Honestly Jeff's class was most helpful for me. Because class was fun, interesting. So automatically, I could remember the new vocabularies." "I think it was a good balance. Unfortunately, all students didn't come to school every day. I think that was kind of difficult for you to teach the class, so that you did really well." The class "often gave me a motivation to learn English…I promise I will read novel in English."

Regarding motivation and student autonomy, it was exciting to read in the Follow-up Surveys (Appendix L, p. 68) that students filled out three months after the class had ended, that many were still watching TV programs (including *Two and a Half Men* and *Lost*, which seemed to have become popular with several students)

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and had read other novels (for example, *Twilight*). Of course, because no data was collected before the experiment began, it is impossible to accurately credit these behaviors to learnings from the class.

For as much as the experiment was clearly a success in overcoming the teaching challenges, it was much less clear regarding the goal of building lexical awareness.

In the introduction I defined lexical awareness in terms of both awareness and ability: an awareness of lexical chunks and the ability to process them fluently and accurately.

I did not collect data on my students' ability to process lexical chunks fluently and accurately. However, in Boers, et al. we find experimental evidence supporting this ability in terms of "perceived oral proficiency" (2006, p. 254). The experiment divided students into two groups, both at the same level and studying with the same teacher. The experimental students were made aware of lexical chunks, while the control students did not explicitly have their attention drawn to lexical chunks. At the end of the course of instruction, the perceived oral proficiency of the experiment group was noticeably higher than for the control group and the authors were able to corroborate this part of their hypotheses, "an instructional method that raises language students' awareness of L2 formulaic sequences can bring benefits to the way these students' oral proficiency is gauged by others (in our experiment, by teachers)" (2006, p. 257).

The data that I did collect in the Follow Up Surveys (Appendix L, p. 68) indicates that my students' awareness of lexical chunks was underwhelming. In the

surveys, none of my former students were able to recall any lexical chunks from the sitcom. (Interestingly, one student did recall some chunks, for example *funeral home*, from the brief SAT project we had done six months prior with the TV show *Six Feet Under).* In addition, their answers to questions 6 and 7, "What is a chunk?" and "Why are chunks important?" were less than inspiring. Three students said that chunks are a kind of idiom, while not being the answered I had hoped for, it does at least have the right idea. Another student wrote, "Chocolate or bread? Etc. A thick piece?" which led me to believe she did not remember and used her electronic dictionary.

Nonetheless, I was happy with how this experiment worked overall for my students and me. While the data collected does not indicate that SATs directly helped my students build lexical awareness, I can confidently conclude that they can. SATs are a much better source of lexical chunks than ESL textbooks, and TV sitcoms in particular are full of them. The question is not *if* SATs will build lexical awareness, but rather *how* the classroom can best facilitate the building. The remainder of the chapter will look at three critical insights from the process, which will inform my teaching going forward.

Critical Insights

The challenge of re-conceptualizing course content and developing the idea of Sustained Authentic Texts (SATs) was a rich and exciting experience. One of the most valuable aspects of the experience was my process of reflection, which

produced many new insights. I will share three critical insights in particular which emerged from this process of reflection.

First, there is an obvious relationship between corpus linguistics and a lexical approach. The data available using concordances is valuable in giving insight and information regarding frequency of word (and chunk) use. In addition, concordances are a powerful tool students can be taught to use on their own, which helps them become more autonomous learners.

Chapter 3, p. 37, described the difficulty that students had transitioning from using the lexical grids created by me, to being able to identify lexical chunks on their own without the grids. Having students do controlled activities with concordance searches would be one way to help scaffold this transition. For example, Appendix M, p. 69, is the kind of activity that would provide students practice with lexical chunks, in this case the collocation *spend time.* The first step in the activity requires that students scan the text and identify the chunk. After students have found *spend time* in each line, they are asked to identify patterns. One pattern that occurs in lines 1, 38, and 41 is *spend time* followed by *verb+ing.* Another pattern to notice is the chunk followed by the preposition *with.* The reason for the off numbering (1, 34, etc.) is that these lines correspond to the ordering of the concordance search results from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies, N.D.). Rather than choosing all the results, I selected the concordance lines that would best illustrate the two patterns I wanted students to notice.

The final step in the activity asks students to write their own example sentences using the patterns. This could be done with a partner using A/B dialogs:

A: What are you doing this weekend? B: I'm spending time with my girlfriend. And you? A: I will spend some time studying for the quiz on Monday and…. As this example illustrates, pair dialogs are one way to give students personalized practice using the patterns.

Besides having difficulty identifying lexical chunks, my students often did not have enough time to remember and internalize the new language. Of course, the benefit of the SAT was that some of the language would recycle and this would increase the chance that students might remember, but not all the lexical chunks would repeat. Lewis (1997) goes to great length detailing the important role of lexical notebooks. While my students did keep a portfolio, including the Character Profiles (Appendix E, p. 56), they did not keep a notebook. In the future, I will require students to keep a lexical notebook because it seems like an effective tool for helping students to remember and internalize lexical chunks.

The lexical notebooks are the second critical insight. However, it is not just a matter of keeping the notebooks, it is also a matter of creating opportunities in class, and out, to use the information which has been recorded. A simple way to do this might be to ask students to regularly quiz one another, so for example, students could exchange notebooks with a partner and then ask each other questions from the notebooks.

Included in a lexical notebook, I would consider asking students to keep a section specifically for journaling. The SAT Journal would be an extension of, and expansion on, the Character Profiles. For example, at the end of each episode they

would write a summary about what they saw and a reaction to how they felt about it.

This process of summary-reaction writing in an SAT Journal would serve two purposes. One, it would expand on the lexical notebook as a way to include the new lexical chunks in their own writing. This would help them with remembering and internalizing, and ultimately, fluently using the lexical chunks. Two, the SAT Journal would provide an element of assessment.

The role of assessment is the third and final critical insight. Assessment is crucial to all learning and although there were opportunities for assessment during the class, for example tests and quizzes, opportunities for more kinds of authentic assessment were missing. By authentic assessment I mean assessment that "can be a means to promote learning, not only describe or monitor it" (Katz, 2009, p. 6). One benefit of authentic assessment is that it can foster "a shared understanding of the learning goals for activities in the classroom" (ibid). A shared understanding is particularly salient for an undertaking like "building lexical awareness" because it is likely to be unfamiliar to students from past experience. Therefore, the more ways in which students can be encouraged to buy into the process, the more likely it is to be successful.

These three critical insights, incorporating practice with concordances, using notebooks, and varying authentic assessment, along with the experience itself, will inform my future attempts at building lexical awareness through SATs. However, rather than being a prescriptive list, this process of reflection highlights the fact that

each context, like each student, is different and there is no single formula for improving fluent and accurate use of language.

Conclusion

As a language teacher, my decisions in the classroom are often based on the experiences I have had as a language learner. In addition, my decisions are often based on my previous experiences as a language teacher. This paper described one of these experiences, with my students building lexical awareness though SATs (Sustained Authentic Texts). It began by describing the context, challenges, and process of re-conceptualizing course content. This was followed by defining key terms, like lexical chunk, which is, to paraphrase Wray, a prefabricated sequence of words (Wray, 2002). A justification for teaching lexically was given. Finally, three sample lesson plans were discussed and I offered an evaluation of the experiment, including three insights for the future.

Lexical chunks are everywhere, they are a dime a dozen! Lexical chunks are not the Holy Grail to language learning, there may be as many ways to acquire language as there are different chunks, but they are one more effective tool to that end. In the beginning, my goal was to help students use English more fluently and accurately, in order to be better understood, and to better understand what was happening all around. In the end, I learned more than I could have ever imagined about lexical chunks. Along the way, my students and I all were changed.

Appendices

Appendix A—Summary of ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines

ACTFL Scale	Definition
Native	Able to speak like an educated native speaker
Distinguished	Able to speak with a great deal of fluency, grammatical accuracy, precision of vocabulary and idiomaticity
Superior	Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations
Advanced Plus	Able to satisfy most work requirements and show some ability to communicate on concrete topics
Advanced	Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements
Intermediate - High	Able to satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands
Intermediate - Mid	Able to satisfy some survival needs and some limited social demands
Intermediate - Low	Able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements
Novice - High	Able to satisfy immediate needs with learned utterances
Novice - Mid	Able to operate in only a very limited capacity
Novice - Low	Unable to function in the spoken language

Adapted from http://www.actfl.org

Appendix B—European language levels - Self Assessment Grid

		B1	**B2**	**C1**
U N D E R S T A N D I N G	Listening	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.
	Reading	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.
S P E A K I N G	Spoken Interaction	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my
	Spoken Production	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.

Note: *Writing,* as well as the A1, A2, and C3 levels have been omitted from this copy.
Retrieved from: http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/LanguageSelfAssessmentGrid/en

Appendix C—TV Show Survey

Watching an entire TV series, from beginning to end, can be a great way to improve your English and have a glimpse into a different culture. Which of the following sit-coms would you most be interested in watching? (Please √ only one or two).

√	**Show Name**: description
	Two and a Half Men: from 2003 to now. Carefree bachelor Charlie's life is interrupted when his brother Alan moves in along with his son, Jake. Set in Los Angeles.
	Everybody Loves Raymond: from 1996 to 2005. The show revolves around the life of Italian-American Ray, a newspaper sportswriter from Long Island, New York. He is married, has three kids, and his parents and brother live across the street.
	Friends: from 1994 to 2004. You know the story.
	Seinfeld: from 1989 to 1998. The show about nothing set in Manhattan.
	The Cosby Show: starring Bill Cosby, from 1984 to 1992. The show focused on the Huxtable family, an upper-middle class African-American family living in Brooklyn, New York.
	Family Ties: from 1982 to 1989. It reflected the move in the United States from the cultural liberalism of the 1960s and 1970s to the conservatism of the 1980s. Staring Michael J. Fox as a Young Republican and his hippie parents.
	All in The Family: from 1971 to 1979. The show broke ground in its depiction of issues previously considered unsuitable for U.S. network television comedy, such as racism, homosexuality, women's liberation, miscarriage, breast cancer, menopause and impotence.
	I Love Lucy: from 1951 to 1960. Set mostly in New York City, it centers on Lucy her Cuban-American husband Ricky who is a singer/ bandleader.
	Others?

Appendix D—Lesson Outline for **"Two and a Half Men"** (THM) 1.01—Pilot Episode

Materials: Handouts 1, 2, 3 (Appendices D, E, and F); TV with THM DVD; board.

<div align="center">Handout 1: THM 1.01—Pilot Episode</div>

<u>Pre</u>

1. Vocabulary "Splash & Dash" for listening: *pilot episode, clingy woman, S.O.B., get spanked, suffocate, chiropractor* (one word for each student, taken from the episode)

2. Predictions: What do you already know about the show? What can you say/guess about the show from the title?

<u>During</u>

3. Half the class **<u>listen</u>** (no video) to part of Scene One (up to line #__). Then report to the other half. Describe what you hear. How many people? What do you think is going on? Where do you think they are?

4. Together watch Scene One with these questions in mind: A. What non-verbal behavior/actions do you notice? B. How well do Charlie and the woman know each other? How do you know? What clues do you get? C. Alan says that his wife "threw him out." What does that mean? Guess, why do you think she threw him out?

5. Watch Scene Two. Are Alan and Charlie close? How do you know? Give examples of things they do and say.

6. Pause after each scene. Summarize to your partner, what happened? What adjectives, nouns, or details can you add to your Character Profiles h/o (handout 2)?

<u>Post</u>

7. Use the transcript from Act I and II (see Appendix 3.1), and fill in the blanks with the missing words.

Line #	Lexical Chunks			Notes
	went		with	
	no		deal	
	the will			
		them back		
		settle		
		to (pronoun)	senses	
	sleep		(*someone*)	
			nap	

8. Imagine the scene before the show began when Alan's wife throws him out. What did they say to each other? With your partner write a short dialog (8-12 lines), use 2-3 of the lexical chunks or new vocabulary words you encountered in the show. Practice your dialog for _____ minutes and focus on word stress. Then present your scene to your peers.

Appendix E—Handout 2: Character Profiles

Name	Objective: facts, details, history, etc.	Subjective: adjectives, characteristics, etc.	Chunks

Appendix F—Handout 3: Transcript, Two and a Half Men 1.01 – Pilot, Act I and II

1. Girl: So, what do you think?

2. Charlie: Wow. It's for you, right?

3. Girl: It's for both of us. Don't go away.

4. Charlie: Don't worry. There's not enough blood left in my legs to go anywhere.

5. Machine: Hey, it's Charlie. Do your thing when you hear the beep.

6. Rose: [On machine] Listen, you lousy S.O.B. I will not be treated like this.

7. Rose: [on machine] Either you call me, or you are gonna be very, very sorry.

8. Rose: [on machine] I love you, Monkey Man.

9. Girl: Charlie? [He appears from the floor.] Who was that?

10. Charlie: Damn telemarketers.

11. Girl: A telemarketer who calls you Monkey Man?

12. Charlie: I'm on some weird list. Okay, it's a woman I went out with once and she got a little clingy.

13. Girl: You are a bad, bad boy.

14. Charlie: And yet, you're always the one getting spanked. Jeez.

15. Machine: Hey, it's Charlie. Do your thing when you hear the beep.

16. Alan: [on machine] Charlie, it's Alan. Your brother. No big deal, just wanted to touch base. My wife threw me out and I'm kinda losing the will to live. So, when you get a chance, I'd really love to… I don't know…

17. Charlie: [picks up the phone] Oh hey, Alan, I'm sorry to hear about that.

18. Charlie: [on phone] So, where you gonna go, to a hotel or… [to girl] Wow! [on phone] Huh? Well, yea, I guess you could stay here. Okay, I'll see you when you get here. [hangs up. To Girl] We better hurry.

19. Alan: Oh, is she staying over? Because I may have parked behind her.

Act II

20. Alan: Twelve years, and she just throws me out. I mean, what was the point of our wedding vows? You know, till death do us part. Who died? Not me. Not her.

21. Charlie: How did you get in my house?

22. Alan: Okay, Charlie, the key in the fake rock, only works if it's among other rocks. Not sitting on your welcome mat.

23. Charlie: Excuse me, but if you put the fake rock in with a bunch of other rocks, it's impossible to find when you're drunk.

24. Alan: You know, I'm a good husband. I'm faithful.

25. Charlie: Is she?

26. Alan: Is she what?

27. Charlie: Faithful.

28. Alan: [makes a kind of choking noise] Don't be ridiculous. Judith doesn't even like sex. I mean, all she kept saying was she felt suffocated, you know? She kept going on and on, "I'm suffocating", "I'm suffocating". What does that mean, you know? Has a woman ever said that to you?

29. Charlie: Well, yea, but not a woman who doesn't like sex.

30. Alan: And Jake, this could just destroy Jake.

31. Charlie: Jake?

32. Alan: My son.

33. Charlie: Oh, yea, teenagers are pretty sophisticated these days.

34. Alan: He's 10.

35. Girl: Charlie, I'm going to go.

36. Charlie: Oh no.

37. Girl: You two need to talk. I'll call you tomorrow. I'm sorry to hear about you and your wife.

38. Charlie: Oh come on, you leaving isn't going to bring them back together again.

39. Alan: Look, this is just until things settle out, okay? A couple of days, max. She will come to her senses.

40. Charlie: Yea, that's what women do. Look, you can have the guest room. I'll grab some sheets.

41. Alan: That's okay, I brought my own.

42. Charlie: You brought your own sheets?

43. Alan: I like my sheets.

44. Charlie: Okay then, good night.

45. Alan: No, no, wait, wait. Charlie, I mean, we hardly ever talk to each other.

46. Charlie: What do you want to talk about Alan?

47. Alan: I don't know. Uh, I was named Chiropractor of the Year by the San Fernando Valley Chiropractic Association.

48. Charlie: Okay then, good night.

49. Alan: No. Charlie, what about you? What's going on with you?

50. Charlie: Well, Alan, there's not much to say. I make a lot of money for doing very little work. I sleep with beautiful women who don't ask about my feelings. I drive a Jag, I live at the beach… and sometimes in the middle of the day, for no reason at all, I like to make myself a big pitcher of margaritas and take a nap out on the sundeck.

51. Alan: Huh. Okay then, good night Charlie.

52. Charlie: Good night.

53. Rose: Goodnight Monkey Man.

Appendix G—Character Profile Sample, adapted from student work.

Name	Objective: facts, details, history, etc.	Subjective: adjectives, characteristics, etc.	Chunks
Charlie	*-job is make music for commercials* *-lives in front of ocean, in Malibu, CA* *-is pretty rich* *-is a bachelor*	*-not responsible* *-likes to hang around with girls* *-doesn't want a relationship, just wants to enjoy* *-obnoxious* *-funny*	*-laid back* *-go out with* *-tip (s.o.) off*
Alan	*-is Charlie's brother* *-is a chiropractor* *-separated from wife* *-has a son, Jake*	*-picky* *-uptight* *-conservative* *-serious and boring*	*-anal-retentive* *-hit the road*
Jake	*-Alan's son* *-likes video games* *-is 10 years old*	*-lazy but smart* *-cute and independent* *-curious* *-mature*	*-got busted for*
Judith	*-Alan's wife* *-thinks she might be a lesbian*	*-angry* *-loving mother* *-serious, not funny*	*-move on* *-just for the record*

Appendix H—Lesson Plan for THM 1.03 Go East on Sunset Until You Reach The Gates of Hell

Materials: Handout 1 (Appendix I); TV with THM DVD; board.

<p align="center">Teacher's Outline</p>

<u>Pre</u>

1. From Portfolios, students look at Character Profile h/o (Appendix 3.2). Fill-in what they know/remember. New students get information from other students.

2. Write title for 1.03 on the white board ("Go East on Sunset…"). Students brainstorm/predict.

<u>During</u>—Appendix 2

3. Reading Task #1: Give transcript (Appendix 3.3.). Students scan for, "How many characters are in this scene and what are their names?"

4. Reading Task #2: Fill-in the Lexical Chunks Grid.

5. Reading Task #3: Read closely and put a star (*) next to the lines they think are jokes/where the audience will laugh.

<u>Post</u>

6. Use 3-4 of the lexical chunks and write a short dialog imagining what might happen later in the show.

<u>Viewing</u>

7. Watch the first scene. Follow the transcript and put checks (√) where there is laughter. "How did you do predicting the stars? Was there more or less laughter than you predicted?"

8. Continue watching the episode. Teacher will pause 2/3 times and during the
pauses students will practice summarizing what just happened trying to use the
same language. Teacher notes down a few "key" lexical chunks, boards them during
the pauses and asks students to discuss who used the chunk, when, why, and
meaning/use.

Appendix I—Handout 1: THM 1.03 – Go East on Sunset Until You Reach The Gates

of Hell

I. Scan the transcript. How many characters are in this scene and what are their names?

1.   Charlie: If you've got bugs. If you got ants. If you've got bugs and flies and slugs and things that crawl.

2.   Alan: We're here.

3.   Jake: Mom, come see my room!

4.   Judith: I'll be right there, honey.

5.   Jake: Hey, Uncle Charlie.

6.   Charlie: Hey, Shorty.

7.   Judith: [unfriendly] Hello Charlie.

8.   Charlie: Hi Judith. What are you doing here?

9.   Judith: If you must know, I'm here to help Jake set up his room so he feels like nothing's changed.

10. Charlie: Really? You don't think he'll notice that his dad's living here and his mom's dating chicks?

11. Judith: Could you say that a little louder? Jake might not have heard you. And just for the record, I'm not dating anyone and I threw your brother out because he was sucking the life out of me.

12. Alan: Could you say that a little louder?

13. Jake: Uncle Charlie hasn't met Porky yet.

14. Charlie: I don't suppose that's a Rubenesque 19 year old girl?

15. Alan: Porky's his pet guinea pig.

16. Charlie: You're bringing vermin into my house?

17. Jake: [holds up the cage] Uncle Charlie, check him out. Isn't he awesome?

18. Charlie: Yea.

19. Jake: See those little black things? That's his poop.

20. Charlie: Awesome.

21. Judith: [returns from Jake's room] I don't want him in the water this weekend, he might have an ear infection.

22. Jake: Oh, mom.

23. Alan: Oh, no, it's okay, pal. We can go to Disneyland. We'll have a great weekend. We can, we can play miniature golf, go bowling, bike riding, whatever you want.

24. Charlie: Alan, relax, you're starting to sound like a tampon commercial.

25. Judith: [shakes her head] Jake, why don't you go and put Porky in your room?

26. Jake: Okay.

27. Judith: Alan, I'm very concerned. He's just a child. I don't know whether he can deal with this.

28. Charlie: Oh, give your son some credit, he's an incredible kid.

29. Judith: I was talking about you.

30. Charlie: That's fair.

31. Alan: Yea.

II. Use the transcript and fill in the blanks with the missing words in _____ minutes.

Line #	Lexical Chunks					Meaning/use
	If	(_____)	must			
				record		
	sucking			out		
	I			suppose		
		(him)		out		
		miniature				
		bowling				
	deal			*this*		
		(_____)	some			

III. Go back to the text and try to infer the meaning/use of the chunks from the context.

Answers

Line #	Lexical Chunks					Meaning/use
9	If	(__you___)	must		know	For emphasis (rhetorical); used when someone doesn't really believe the other person needs to/must know.
11	for		the		record	To make something known; there may have been doubt or question about it before.
11	sucking	the	life	out	of	Making feel miserable
14	*I*		don't		suppose	Rhetorical, I don't think; I doubt.
17	check	*(him)*		out		Command: Look at
23	play	miniature		golf		*Collocation*
23	go		bowling			*Collocation*
27	deal	with		*this*		handle something, someone, or a situation
28	give	(_your son__)	some	credit		Give praise; recognition

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Appendix J—Lesson Plan—THM 1.07 If They Do Go Either Way...

Materials: Handout A, B, C (Appendix K); TV with THM DVD; board.

Teacher's Outline

<u>Pre</u>

1. Revisit "Character Profiles" and discuss with a small group.

2. In small groups, students read one excerpt from today's episode and pick out 4-7

chunks. Write the chunks on the white board. Quick group discussion (for example,

is the chunk a collocation? If so, what other words collocate with it. Is the chunk the

students chose too long, or too short? Look at the language surrounding the chunk.)

Students write down the three lists of chunks.

<u>During</u>

3. Listening Task: using the three student generated lists, students listen for these

chunks and identify the speaker for each chunk. Watch the episode in three

segments, so this task repeats three times. (When the segment of the episode is

playing for the group that wrote the chunks from that segment, their task is to try to

describe, or elaborate on, the meaning/use of chunks.)

4. After each segment, in pairs students A. summarize and B. discuss the chunks

they identified.

<u>Post</u>

5. Use the chunks that were identified and create a role-play using a situation from

their own life.

Appendix K—Handouts A, B, and C for THM 1.07

Handout A—THM 1.07 [Back into the kitchen. Cindy has just put her shorts on and is sorting her

bag]

Charlie: Hey Cindy.
Cindy: Hey Charlie. How you doing?
Charlie: Not bad. How about yourself?

Cindy: Thanks again. [she kisses him on the cheek] I'll see you soon.
Charlie: Anytime.

Cindy: [to Alan] Bye. [She exits.]

Alan: [frowning] "How you doing?" "Thanks again"? Charlie, casual sex is one thing but this is just lazy.
Charlie: What are you talking about? I didn't have sex with her. She just surfs out on the Point, uses my shower and goes to work.

Alan: So, you're not sleeping with her?
Charlie: Jeez, Alan, I don't sleep with every buff surfer chick that uses my shower. What kind of guy do you think I am?

Alan: I think you're the luckiest bastard to walk the face of the earth, but that's not my point. I don't want women flashing their butt tattoos at my son.

Charlie: Cindy has a tattoo?

Alan: Yes, a butterfly.

Charlie: Huh. Right cheek or left? No, wait, don't tell me. I want to be surprised.

Alan: So, you're not sleeping with her but you want to?

Charlie: Well, yea. What kind of guy do you think I am? [they go through to the next room]

Alan: Charlie, when I moved in here, I said that it was vital that we create a wholesome atmosphere for Jake. And you said "I understand".

Charlie: Alan, there's something you should know about me. When I say I understand, it doesn't mean I agree. It doesn't mean I understand. It doesn't even mean I'm listening.

Alan: Then why do you say it?
Charlie: It seems to make people happy and that's what I'm all about.

Alan: Well, that's very altruistic, but I would prefer if you'd just be straight with me.

Charlie: Fine. [Charlie starts to go up the stairs.]
Alan: All I'm asking is that you keep in mind that we have an impressionable 10 year old boy living here.

Charlie: I understand.

Alan: Thank you. [Alan turns away, then realizes.]

Handout B—THM 1.07 [Cut to Charlie's bedroom. Alan is shaking Charlie violently to wake him up.]
Alan: Wake up! Wake up! Wake up!

Charlie: [groggy] What? I was having a great dream.

Alan: Your girlfriend and my wife. Surfing. Showering. Rubber suits.

Charlie: Okay, this might be better. [sits up]

Alan: Charlie, Charlie, you've got to do something.

Charlie: You're right.
Alan: Yea.
[Charlie goes into the bathroom.]

Alan: Charlie? What are you gonna do?
Charlie: [through the door] What do you think? I just woke up.

Alan: Come on, come on! They could be lathering each other up right now.

Charlie: [through the door] Alan, you're not helping this go any faster.

Alan: I can't believe this is going on under my own roof. Well, under your roof. God knows what's going on under my roof.

Charlie: [through the door] You know, there is good news here.

Alan: Oh really? What's that?

Charlie: [exits the bathroom] Now we know why I never got anywhere with Cindy.

Alan: Hello? Me?

Charlie: Okay, listen. What do we really know here? Your wife has taken up surfing. We're good so far, right?
Alan: Uh-huh.

Charlie: She made a new friend. Still good?

Alan: Yea, I guess.

Charlie: Do we know for a fact that they're showering together?
Alan: No.

Charlie: Okay. So what do we know for sure about Cindy and Judith?

Alan: Cindy's not interested in you, and Judith thinks she's gay.

Charlie: Huh. Well, there you go.

Handout C—THM 1.07 [Alan opens the front door to Judith.]

Alan: Hey, you know, I would have been more than happy to drop Jake to your house.

Judith: Oh, no problem, this worked out great. I've been surfing all day with Cindy and we just had a bite to eat.

Alan: Isn't that nice. Listen, are you in a hurry? Because there's something I wanted to talk to you about.

Judith: No, I guess not. What's up?

[Alan shows her in, and she sits on the sofa, while he stands.]

Alan: Um, I just wanted to let you know that I'm okay with this. More than okay. [Judith grins] I understand, love and respect you for your courage to explore things.

Judith: Thank you. I'm really starting to enjoy it.

Alan: And I support that.

Judith: Yea, I've only done it on my knees so far but Cindy says I'm almost ready to try it standing up.

Alan: You know what? I don't need to hear the details. The more important thing is that I accept you and Cindy as lovers. [Judith realizes.] And more power to you, sister.

Judith: You pompous, assuming bastard.

Alan: Uh oh.

Judith: [stands up] You think I'm sleeping with her?

Alan: No. No.

Judith: I just got out of a 12 year marriage and you think I would jump into bed with someone I just met? Man or woman?

Alan: No. No.

Judith: You should be ashamed of yourself.

Alan: I am. I am.

Judith: Two women become friends and you jump to the conclusion they're having sex. Where do you get that kind of sleazy thinking?

Appendix L—Follow up Survey

Jeff's High-intermediate class
FOLLOW UP SURVEY

1. What was the name of the novel we read in class (in April and May)? Write down any words or chunks you remember from the book:

2. Have you read any novels (in English!) since then, and if so, what?

3. What was the name of the TV show we watched in class (in April and May)? Write down any words or chunks you remember from the show:

4. Have you watched any more episodes from the same show?
--If so, where (internet, on TV), and about how many:

--If no, why not?

5. Have you watched any TV programs in English in the past few months? Explain.

6. What is a chunk? Give a definition and/or an example.

7. Why are chunks important?

8. What part of Jeff's class helped you the most with your English?

9. What was your overall evaluation of the course? (Consider the clarity of course objectives, the effectiveness of the course materials, the instructor's ability to stimulate interest in the subject, and how much you learned.)

Appendix M—Sample Lexical Chunk Practice Activity

Examine a word/chunk in a concordance (concordance data retrieved from http://www.americancorpus.org)

01 less is more. A few details can tell you. Real people seldom spend time noticing their surroundings if they are familiar with them anyway. Domestic chores are

34 every week or every month at a local mentoring organization to read, tutor or spend time with kids and teens. That bit of time will change their lives.

35 wheels through an original score and electric pinks, greens, and blues hourly. Spend time in the galleries, and then peruse the gift shop full of creative and

36 is more likely to occur if students are properly led. By encouraging students to spend time alone with poems and paintings and problems, teachers help each student to drink

37 that it is hard to learn to perform. I went to New Zealand to spend time with the two very inventive fellows who developed this very elegant surgical technique.

38 weekend routines by limiting extracurricular activities to, say, one per child, and spend time together going on walks, hitting a tennis ball in the backyard or at

39 be there to listen. " As adults, we tend to choose how we spend time with the kids. But they have their own interests, " says Ragan

40 allow your children to dictate what's right for you. Amanda: When I spend time with your kids, I see what kind of mother you are. They

41 care of chores, occasionally have lunch with a friend in another room, or spend time focusing on my girls, whom I've really missed during all this,

I. What chunk/chunks can you find? What patterns and generalizations can you describe?

II. Write _____# of your own sentences using these patterns.

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