TRAINING FOR SUMMER COURSE TEACHERS

PART 1

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AIMS OF THE COURSE

Why hold a training session?

At first glance the answer seems obvious – to train the staff to do the job they are employed to do. But there are several points under that staff training 'umbrella' which are maybe not so obvious and are worth highlighting.

- **To introduce you to off-site members of staff**
  If you have a question over teaching material, your salary payments or anything else, you should know who you need to speak to, and feel comfortable about doing so. Training sessions give you the opportunity to meet these people.

- **To ensure good communication**
  Good communication throughout an organisation is vital for any company which hopes to succeed. The bigger the company, the more difficult communication becomes, and the more problems arise as a result. The management team at LSC Ltd is actually very small, so communication should be relatively easy, but no-one can afford to be complacent, particularly when most of the staff we recruit are either fairly new to TEFL or new to LSC.

- **To explain our product**
  Our courses are not exactly the same as every other summer course – we think they are better. However, it is no use having a grand plan if it is not being delivered by the teachers, so a thorough product knowledge is essential. It is also important that teachers understand that factors outside the classroom can affect their situation in the classroom. These can include such things as the background of individual group leaders, requests from agents for international classes, a shortage of classrooms at peak times, and many others.

- **To maintain and improve the quality of our product**
  We are essentially selling a service, and the quality of that service is heavily dependent on the ability of all the staff to deliver it to the required standard. The nature of the summer EFL industry in the UK means that the numbers of returning staff each year are quite low, so thorough training sessions every year are vital. We always make an effort to listen to feedback on our courses (wherever it comes from) and make changes from year to year, so everyone can be part of the improvement process.

- **To standardise the quality of our product**
  We have to be able to offer the same quality product to all our customers, no matter which centre they are in, or whose class they are in. The only way we can achieve this is to have a clear framework within which the teachers work, and to provide all the tools to do the job – this training session is one of those tools and it should make the rationale behind the teaching framework clear.

- **To invest in our staff**
  Clearly the main aim of the course is to enable our teachers to do a good job on our courses. But a very real secondary aim of this course is to provide training which will benefit our teachers in the future. This is why the course will probably seem longer and more in-depth that the training provided by some of our competitors for similar summer courses. I have tried to include a fair amount of thought-provoking material from various ELT authors as these are issues which are not only relevant to summer courses in the UK, but to language teaching generally. There is often a belief among EFL teachers that everything there is to know about language teaching is covered on an RSA CELTA course or equivalent, and many teachers never progress beyond this initial stage. However, it is worth remembering that the British Council, the body which accredits language courses in the UK, refers to teachers who hold an RSA CELTA qualification or equivalent as 'TEFL initiated'. It is only teachers who have the RSA Dip. TEFLA or equivalent who are described as 'TEFL qualified'.

Are there any pre-requisites for this course?

This course is described as 'post-CTEFLA' since it focuses on areas of language teaching which will probably only have been touched on in CTEFLA courses, if at all. However, one does not have to have been on a CTEFLA course to follow this course; the issues and ideas discussed here are all quite easy to understand, particularly for people who have been involved in some way with teaching or learning languages.

WORDS OF WISDOM?

Read these ten statements and mark each one 'A' if you agree and 'D' if you disagree.

1. "When I plan my lessons I always try to include at least one grammar point."
2. "I find that students often panic when they are exposed to texts which contain a lot of unfamiliar language and more advanced grammar items than they are used to, so I try and avoid it."
3. "I often come across quite advanced students that still make third person –s errors or other quite basic mistakes."
4. "I generally spend more class time explaining grammar points than I spend doing pronunciation practice."
5. "When introducing new language in class I usually follow the present-practise-produce model."
6. "I spend more class time on activities which focus on accuracy rather than fluency – you've got to, haven't you?"
7. "In class I try to keep teacher talking time to a minimum – that was the first thing I learnt on my CELTA course."
8. "I think pronunciation is important, but I wouldn't try and teach the 44 phonemic symbols to teenagers on a two-week summer course."
9. "The basic rule for using 'some' or 'any'? That's an easy one - some for affirmative statements, and any for negative and interrogative statements."
10. "I often photocopy a page of grammar exercises to do in class – it's good practice for the students and it keeps them happy, and it gives me a bit of a break."

Now read on; don't worry about your answers for the moment.

COURSE CONTENT

The course is divided into two parts, theoretical background reading and a practical training day. This first theoretical part can be covered at your own speed, at any time before the practical. The practical element will be held at different locations on different days during the month of June.

The thinking behind this course is neatly summarised by these extracts from two well-known ELT professionals. The first is from Michael Lewis (*The Lexical Approach* 1993):

> I do not believe that there is a method, or set of methods which guarantees successful learning and is appropriate in all circumstances. Language and learning are complex phenomena, and the simple answer of 'the best method' will always be an unhelpful over-simplification. But eclecticism is sometimes an excuse for confusion. There are principles, and research evidence. Language teachers need to have a theoretical over-view so that they may select from a range of strategies and techniques but in a principled way.

The second is from Michael Swan (*ELT journal* Volume 39 1985):

> Teachers do not always appreciate how much new approaches owe to speculation and theory and how little they are based on proven facts. We actually know hardly anything about how languages are learnt, and as a result we are driven to rely, in our teaching, on a pre-scientific mixture of speculation, common sense, and the insights derived from experience. Like eighteenth-century doctors, we work largely by hunch, concealing our ignorance under a screen of pseudo-science and jargon. Speculation, common sense, and experience do not necessarily provide a bad basis to operate on, in the absence of anything better, and somehow our students do manage to learn languages. However, the lack of a solid empirical 'anchor' of established knowledge about language learning makes us very vulnerable to shifts in intellectual fashion. A novel piece of speculation can have an effect out of all proportion to its value, especially since the purveyors of new doctrines are rarely as humble or as tentative as the situation merits.

In other words, where language teaching and learning is concerned, don't believe everything you read or hear, because there is much speculation out there which is dressed up as fact. However, as a language

teacher it is essential to be informed about the theories and research that abound, to consider them carefully and let them inform your teaching accordingly.

In order to kick-start this process I have selected a number of extracts from various EFL authors and linguists who, I believe, have done most to take the language learning debate forward over the last twenty-five years. I must point out that my choice of extracts is necessarily selective, firstly in order to maintain relevance to the practicalities of our summer courses, and secondly because this is an enormous field of study and we can only really scratch the surface here.

Let's begin with a brief summary of some of the developments in linguistics and language teaching methodology that have got us to where we are today:

LINGUISTICS & ISSUES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

A very brief history

The study of language in a scientific way began at the end of the 18th century as philology, which dealt exclusively with the historical development of language. In the present century, the subject has broadened to include a whole range of subject matter.

New developments and theories in the field of linguistics do not automatically have an immediate impact on language teaching methodology since linguists are generally concerned with analysing language and how we learn our first language (L1) rather than the teaching of foreign languages. However, two important theories of language learning should be mentioned here. These definitions are from David Crystal and he goes on to provide a summary of language teaching methods:

The Behaviourist View In this view, foreign language learning (FLL) is seen as a process of imitation and reinforcement: learners attempt to copy what they hear, and by regular practice they establish a set of acceptable habits in the new language.

There are several problems presented by this account of FLL. One of these is that imitation alone does not provide a means of identifying the task facing learners, who are continually confronted with the need to create and recognize novel utterances that go beyond the limitations of the model sentences they may have practised.

The Cognitive View The main alternative to the behaviourist approach sees as central the role of cognitive factors in language learning. In this view, learners are credited with using their cognitive abilities in a creative way to work out hypotheses about the structure of the foreign language. They construct rules, try them out, and alter them if they prove to be inadequate. Language learning, in this account, proceeds in a series of transitional stages, as learners acquire more knowledge of the L2. Error analysis plays a central role in this approach, and since the 1970s cognitive approaches to FLL have been in the ascendant, and error analysis in particular has attracted a great deal of attention.

A very great deal has been written about learning and language learning since scientific interest in the psychology of learning and the nature of language first gained wide currency in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Surprisingly, however, although we know a great deal more than we used to know about these fields, we are still relatively ignorant about the processes involved.

In the long search for the best way of teaching a foreign language, hundreds of different approaches, or *methods*, have been devised. Each method is based on a particular view of language learning, and usually recommends the use of a specific set of techniques and materials, which may have to be implemented in a fixed sequence. Ambitious claims are often made for a new teaching method, but none has yet been shown to be intrinsically superior. The contemporary attitude is flexible and utilitarian: it is recognized that there are several ways of reaching the goal of FL (foreign language) competence, and that teachers need to be aware of a range of methods, in order to find the one most appropriate to the learner's needs and circumstances, and to the objectives of the course. It is frequently necessary to introduce an eclectic approach, in which aspects of different methods are selected to meet the demands of particular teaching situations.

The grammar translation method This method derives from the traditional approach to the teaching of Latin and Greek., which was particularly influential in the 19th century. It is based on the meticulous analysis of the written language, and learning mainly involves the mastery of grammatical rules and memorization of long lists of literary vocabulary. There is little emphasis laid on the activities of listening or speaking.

This approach dominated early work in modern language teaching. A minority still find its intellectual discipline appealing; but the vast majority of teachers now recognize that the approach does little to meet the spoken language needs and interests of today's language students.

The direct method This approach is based on the active involvement of the learner in speaking and listening to the foreign language in realistic everyday situations. No use is made of the learner's mother tongue; learners are encouraged to think in the foreign language, and not to translate into or out of it. Formal grammatical rules and terminology are avoided.

The direct method continues to attract interest and enthusiasm, but it is not an easy approach to use in school. In the artificial environment of the classroom, it is difficult to generate natural learning situations and to provide everyone with sufficient practice.

The audio-lingual method This approach derives from the intensive training in spoken languages given to American military personnel during the Second World War, which resulted in a high degree of listening and speaking skill being achieved in a relatively short time-span. The emphasis is on everyday spoken conversation, with particular attention being paid to natural pronunciation. Language is seen as a process of habit formation. There is little discussion of grammatical rules. Language work is first heard, then practised orally, before being seen and used in written form.

The approach can instil considerable conversational fluency in a learner, and was widely used, especially in the 1950s and 1960s. Its reliance on drills and habit formation makes it less popular today, especially with learners who wish for a wider range of linguistic experience, and who feel the need for more creative work in speech production.

More recent developments

In the early 1970s, possibly as a reaction away from audio-lingualism, the 'methodology pendulum' began to swing back towards the explicit teaching of grammar again, but this time with the added consideration of the functional view of language. The belief was, that for the teaching of a language, it is better to define its various parts by what they are used for in communication, rather than in purely grammatical terms. E.g. the conditional structure 'If I were you I'd …' becomes 'giving advice' when defined in functional terms.

By the early 1980s a Communicative Approach was in the ascendancy; coursebooks were defining language In functional terms in order to show what students must learn in order to communicate effectively, and more importance was placed on the appropriacy of language, but explanations of the rules of grammar were also included. Repetitive mechanical classroom exercises were replaced by far more interesting activities which focused on creating a real purpose for communicating, and a genuine transfer of information. For anyone going on a CTEFLA course in the 1980s and using contemporary coursebooks it was hard to belief that there was any other way to teach languages, but while the communicative approach began to dominate coursebook design and the EFL classroom, some linguists, such as Michael Swan (*ELT journal* Volume 39 1985), were advocating caution:

> Arguments for the current view (the Communicative Approach) are invariably highly speculative, extremely plausible, and advanced with tenacious conviction; if one looks back fifteen years, one can see that the arguments for the previous approach (now totally discredited) were equally speculative, just as persuasive, and put forward with the same insistence that 'this time we've got it right'. Each time this happens, the poor language teacher is told to junk a large part of his or her repertoire of materials, activities and methods (because these are no longer scientific) and to replace them by a gleaming new battery of up-to-date apparatus and techniques. The students, as a rule, learn about as much as before.

The next shift in language teaching methodology derived from the Cobuild project at the University of Birmingham, which produced the Collins COBUILD English Course, written by Dave and Jane Willis. Dave Willis describes it in *The Lexical Syllabus 1990*:

> The coursebooks were to be a part of the COBUILD research project in lexical development, a major computing and publishing venture involving cooperation between Collins and the English Language Research Department at Birmingham University.
>
> The first part of this project had involved the assembly on computer and subsequent analysis of a 7.3 million word corpus (later extended to over 20 million words) of spoken and written English. It was proposed by John Sinclair, Professor of Modern English Language at Birmingham and Editor-in-chief of the COBUILD project, that this computational analysis should provide the basis for a new coursbook syllabus, a *lexical* syllabus. Sinclair advanced a number of arguments in favour of the lexical syllabus, but the underlying argument was to do with utility and with the power of the most frequent words of English.
> The 700 most frequent words of English account for around 70% of all English text. That is to say around 70% of the English we speak and hear, read and write is made up of the 700 commonest words in the language. The most frequent 1,500 words account for around 76% of text and the most frequent 2,500 for 80%. Given this, we decided that word frequency would determine the contents of our course. Level 1 would aim to cover the most frequent 700 words together

with their common patterns and uses. Level 2 would recycle these words and go on to cover the next 800 to bring us up to the 1,500 level, and Level 3 would recycle those 1,500 and add a further 1,000. We would of course inevitably cover many other words in the texts to which students were exposed, but we would highlight first the most frequent 700, then 1,500 and finally 2,500 words in the language.

The Collins COBUILD English Course not only used a lexical syllabus, but also moved away from the Present-Practice-Produce methodology. Here Willis outlines his motivation for doing this and explains what is meant by task-based methodology:

There is general agreement nowadays that we learn a language best by using it to do things, to achieve outcomes. Communicative activities involving games playing and problem solving have become a more and more important part of the language teacher's stock in trade over the last fifteen years or so. Some writers display great ingenuity in devising such activities and there is a wealth of supplementary material which exploits these activities. Yet in spite of this virtually all coursebooks rely on a linguistic syllabus which 'presents' the learner with a series of linguistic items.

It seems that communication is good fun and well worthwhile for a bit of variety, but that the serious business of language learning needs to have a firm grammatical basis resting on the assumption that the grammar of the language can be broken down into a series of patterns and reconstructed in a way accessible to the learner. Even coursebooks based on a notional-functional syllabus specification, which takes units of meaning as syllabus items, still rest on a methodology which 'presents' learners with a series of patterns. The notional-functional syllabus is communicative in that it tried to specify the syllabus in terms of meaning, in terms of what was to be communicated. But the methodology which realises the notional-functional syllabus is little different from the methodology which realises the structural syllabus which it seeks to replace. Both depend on a three-part cycle of presentation, practice and production.

My dissatisfaction with this methodology has a theoretical basis but it is strongly reinforced by experience in the classroom. The theoretical base draws on the work of people like Prabhu (1987) and Rutherford (1987) both of whom point to the glaring inadequacy of pedagogical grammars. They argue that we cannot begin to offer anything like an adequate description of the language on which to base a pedagogical grammar. Given this, our only recourse is to depend on the innate ability of learners to recreate for themselves the grammar on the basis of the language to which they are exposed.

The conclusion is similar to that drawn by interlanguage theorists like Corder (1967) and Selinker (1972) and classroom researchers like Ellis (1984). Teachers and researchers have been aware for many years that 'input' does not equal 'intake', that what teachers claim to be teaching bears only a tenuous relationship to what learners are actually learning. But in spite of this, coursebook writers continue to act on the assumption that language can be broken down into a series of patterns which can then be presented to learners and assimilated by them in a predictable sequence. It does not seem to worry people a great deal that this flies in the face of our experience as teachers.

My experience in the classroom, like that of all teachers I suppose, has seen both failures and successes. On the one hand I found that students often failed to learn what I thought I was teaching them. On the other hand most of them showed an ability to transcend the limited language which I had so carefully presented to them. It was clear to me that my efforts to present the grammar of the language met with very limited success, yet in spite of this my students' English *was* improving. It is encouraging to know that so much learning is taking place in the classroom. It is sobering to realise just how little control the teacher has over what is being learned. The obvious conclusion to be drawn from this is that students learn a great deal directly from exposure to language through reading and listening, without the need for the teacher to impose a description on what is learnt.

Task-based methodology

By a task I mean an activity which involves the use of language but in which the focus is on the outcome of the activity rather than on the language used to achieve that outcome. Most teachers are well aware of the value of tasks in language learning. Most teaching centres have shelves full of books which help teachers bring activities of this kind into their classrooms. But tasks have rarely been used as the basis of published coursebook materials. This is because there is a basic contradiction between the structural syllabus and the use of tasks. The structural syllabus depends on grading language patterns according to certain notions of difficulty, and then presenting these patterns to the learner one at a time. Control of language is essential to the structural approach.

A task-based methodology on the other hand, does not control in the same way the language demands placed on the learner. It encourages learners to make the best use they can of whatever language they have. It assumes that learners will find ways of encoding the meanings they need in order to achieve the desired outcome, but it does not try to predict or control the language that will be used to achieve the outcome.

A shortcoming of task-based approaches is that they make it difficult to specify syllabus content, and as teachers we cannot be sure what is being learnt in the course of a given language activity or a given unit. What we can do, however, is define a learner's corpus which covers the most important meanings and patterns in English. We can then exploit that corpus by using it as a source for language awareness activities, and we can enable the learner to exploit it by

referencing and recycling the material it contains. An approach of this kind takes account of the fact that we cannot describe the logic by which a learner's system develops. We must equip learners to take advantage of whatever learning opportunities occur, not by presenting language to them a piece at a time, but by enabling them to look more and more critically at their own language experience.

Krashen

Willis's ideas echo some of the theories of the American linguist Stephen Krashen. Krashen has been writing about and modifying his hypothesis since about 1975, and reaction to his theories have been mixed, and often very critical. However, they do offer great food for thought for language teachers. He makes a distinction between learning and acquisition which Ellis describes thus *(Understanding Second Language Acquisition, OUP 1985)*:

> **'Acquisition'** for Krashen, consists of the spontaneous process of rule internalisation that results from natural language use, while **'learning'** consists of the development of conscious L2 knowledge through formal study.

Michael Lewis explains this distinction (*The Lexical Approach* 1993) and goes on to offer an insightful critique on some of Krashen's other theories:

For Krashen, learning is always conscious, the result of study, and can be planned. In contrast, acquisition is unplanned and unconscious. His most controversial claim is that conscious learning does not aid unconscious acquisition. For him, the two are totally separate. It will be seen immediately that this suggestion represents a radical challenge to all formal teaching, stating as it does, that what students take from any activity, and what benefits them, is totally independent of the activity in which they are consciously engaged.

Input and Intake
I return to Krashen's central assertion: *We acquire language when we obtain comprehensible input, when we understand what we hear or read in another language.*

Input is language presented to the students through reading and listening. Clearly the relative value of reading and listening may differ for different groups of students depending on facts such as their age, knowledge of Roman script or learning purpose.

Radically different attitudes to input may be found in the history of language teaching. Traditionally, the amount of input was severely restricted, and rigorously sequenced. Classroom procedures such as grammar drills, intensive pronunciation practice, and intensive reading, were based on the assumption that students would master each new language item as they met it. Having mastered one piece of input, the next step could be introduced. Input was essentially atomistic, and based on two central assumptions:

a. It is possible (and desirable) to sequence language.
b. Learning is a step-by-step process, and too much input would confuse.

These assumptions are totally at variance with the way we know people acquire their first language. Babies are surrounded by, and bombarded with input of many kinds, some of it clearly useless to the child in the first months of life. Far from trying to restrict input, however, parents and later nursery schools tend to overwhelm the child with spoken language, frequently paraphrasing, repeating and playing with language with, at first, little or no response from the child. The question of whether second languages are acquired in the same way as mother tongue is a contentious one but it seems more reasonable to assume that the two processes are in some ways similar than to assume that they are totally different. Most modern theorists would now agree that large quantities of diverse input are highly desirable, and a real aid to second language acquisition. It is clear, however, that not all input is equally useful to the learner. Not all input will result in **intake** – the language which the student benefits from and is, in some way able to integrate, either partially or totally into his or her own repertoire. Sadly, we all know from our own experience that intake is not necessarily the same thing as input. In all subjects, not just language, we have all had the experience of reading or revising some material only to feel the next morning that we will have to re-read the same material – we have forgotten it, or for some other reason been unable to incorporate it into our knowledge or thinking in a way which allows us to re-access and re-use it. Many factors influence the relationship between input and intake – tiredness, interest level, attention, motivation, to mention only a few. Most of these factors apply to all learning but what factors influence the relationship between language input and language intake? Once again, Krashen's Natural Approach advances two hypotheses in answer to that question.

Firstly he refers to comprehensible input as the basis for acquisition. Intuitively this tallies with our general learning experience – if we read a book or listen to a lecture which we simply do not understand, it is self-evident that it is of no lasting value to us. What seems to help, again in general rather than specifically language learning, is material which **relates to** what we already know, but in some way **modifies or extends** it. Krashen's Input Hypothesis summarises this

experience in relation to language acquisition. He suggests that we acquire (not learn) language by understanding input that is only slightly beyond our current level of acquired competence. The implication is that we use meaning – the understanding of new messages – to help us acquire language. He says16;

To state the hypothesis a bit more formally, an acquirer can 'move' from a stage **i** (where **i** is the acquirer's level of competence) to a stage **i + 1** (where **i + 1** is the stage immediately following i along some natural order) by understanding language containing **i + 1**.

Another of Krashen's hypotheses is the Natural Order Hypothesis. Lewis continues:

According to him, grammatical structures are acquired in a predictable order, independent of any order in which they may be learned. He does not insist that the order is precisely the same for all learners, but that certain structures tend to be acquired early, while others tend to be acquired late, independent of any attempts by textbook or teacher to alter that order. The most striking example in English language teaching is the third person –s. In all learning programmes this item is taught early, but it is a commonplace – indeed a source of endless frustration to teachers – that it is acquired late. This is unsurprising when we consider that the third person –s is always semantically redundant – the information carried by that morphological feature is invariably carried elsewhere in the sentence. Whatever the truth or otherwise behind the Natural Order Hypothesis, it is at least plausible that students work simultaneously on a much wider range of language, of which they have various degrees of mastery, than traditional syllabus construction and classroom procedure would lead us to believe.

In his (Krashen's) terms, 'finely-tuned' input is achieved when the textbook material, language used by the teacher, and exercise material concentrate almost exclusively on a particular structure, such as 'the present continuous used for future.' Such teaching is based on the assumption that we know where students are, and therefore how we can lead them step-by-step through a (predominantly linear) syllabus. Many textbooks, and much classroom teaching, at least up to intermediate level, is still conducted on this basis. In contrast, Krashen advocates what he calls 'roughly-tuned input'. This is probably what many competent teachers use when not formally teaching', but rather just talking to their class in the target language. In such circumstances, the teacher instinctively chooses language so that it will be understood. This necessarily involves language below, at and just above the student's current receptive level. Krashen's claim is that acquisition is essentially based on comprehensible input, and it may be that teachers are doing most for their students when they behave least like teachers:

When we 'just talk' to our students, if they understand, we are not only giving a language lesson, we may be giving the best possible language lesson since we will be supplying input for acquisition.

According to Krashen, a necessary criterion for input to be of use to the student – to be potential intake – is that that it should be partially, or largely comprehensible. As his phrase 'roughly tuned' suggest, however, it is not necessary that it should be totally comprehensible. When we use language outside the classroom we do not demand of others, or of ourselves total, explicit, comprehensibility. Language is essentially a means to an end, and it is sufficient that the pragmatic purpose of utterances is achieved. It is, therefore, another paradox that language teachers, and probably their students, frequently insist that what is understood is a complete and explicit understanding of the language introduced into the classroom.

The lexical approach

Michael Lewis's theories, like those of Krashen, have also attracted criticism, but he continues to strike a chord with language teachers and his books are an accessible and engrossing read. Scott Thornbury (*MET Vol. 7 No. 4* 1998) sums up the basis of Lewis's theory:

Lewis insists that his lexical approach is not simply a shift of emphasis from grammar to vocabulary. Rather it is a shift of perspective away from both grammar and vocabulary: 'Language consists not of traditional grammar and vocabulary but often of multi-word prefabricated chunks' (*Implementing The Lexical Approach* 1996 p. 3) These chunks include such things as collocations (to catch a cold, a broken home), fixed and semi-fixed expressions (nice day for it, that's/it's not my fault) and idioms, (to beat about the bush; to go hell for leather. Following Pawley and Syder (1983), Lewis argues that these multi-word prefabricated chunks occupy a crucial role in facilitating language production.

These comments of Lewis's on a variety of issues are certainly worthy of consideration.

Coursebooks

All coursebooks, however out of date or inadequate provide four things: programme, sequence, balance and authority.

Teachers who like to teach without a coursebook sometimes forget that students may need the reassurance of a programme, and the feeling of 'getting somewhere'. Working through a coursebook – perhaps omitting bits, and almost certainly supplementing it – is almost always better than working entirely without a coursebook. Advocates of entirely

tailor-made courses often forget that most teachers teach twenty or more lessons per week – while it may be possible to prepare twenty individual lessons it is almost impossible to guarantee effective sequencing and balance. Selective use, and supplementing of a coursebook is more likely to be effective than a totally open approach. Finally, the printed word of the coursebook can authenticate and endorse ideas and activities. Awareness-raising, and learner-training activities can direct students' attention to areas which they have overlooked, or where they have unhelpful or unrealistic expectations. It remains the case that in our literate society it is the printed word, rather than any suggestion from the teacher which is more likely to be accepted by the student. Books should, and many modern ones do, encourage and endorse helpful attitudes to language and language learning.

A word of warning is necessary – coursebooks are commercial ventures. Lavishly illustrated 4-colour books are very expensive to originate. Inevitably, content and layout are chosen to maximise sales. In recent years this has produced well-designed books, but often influenced by strong commercial pressure towards rather conservative content and methodology. Most mass market textbooks in the UK are influenced by what teachers expect from previous experience. In particular, this has 'protected' the grammatical syllabus, and grammatical sequencing long after serious work in linguistics has discredited such a lock-step approach.

Activities and exercises

Exercises should form a **small** part of any coursebook. The emphasis, however, should be on activities or tasks. Ideally, many of the tasks should have as their primary focus a non-linguistic outcome – the solution of a problem, winning of a game; completion of a table, creation of a poster etc. In the real world language is always instrumental; this intrinsic nature of language should be reflected by classroom activities.

This suggestion is in clear conflict with the constraints of the mass market coursebooks already outlined. Tasks or activities do not have fully predictable outcomes, or unique 'correct answers'. If theory changes, methodology should change too; if methodology changes, coursebooks should change; if coursebooks change teachers' attitudes and expectations must change and if they do not any theoretical advance will be thwarted. But coursebooks remain conservative because teachers remain conservative – my colleague Jimmie Hill has remarked many times that teachers over-value explanation, correction, accuracy and artificial contextualisation. It is these key elements of the teacher's mind-set which provide the most potent impediment to change.

Regrettably, many teachers' methodology is derived almost exclusively from coursebooks, rather than from a coherent theoretical over-view of the nature of language and learning. For commercial reasons, coursebooks are understandably cautious or conservative. Coursebooks and teachers reinforce each others' conservatism long after demonstrably better materials and methods are available.

I would add here that on classroom activities and exercises, Willis, Krashen and Lewis seem to be broadly in agreement. Willis (*The Lexical Syllabus* 1990) says:

> The best way to ensure that learners really use language is to put them in a situation which makes them *want* to use language. We must catch their interest in some way, or present them with a challenge they feel motivated to meet. They will then be predisposed to use language in order to communicate their interest or to meet the challenge of a game or problem.

Krashen (*Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition* 1982 pp 162- 175*)* suggests that the classroom activities which are best at creating the most 'acquisition-rich' environments are 'conversation', 'pleasure-reading' and 'subject-matter teaching'.

Back to Michael Lewis (*The Lexical Approach* 1993):

Learner training

The printed word can lend authority to what the teacher says. This is particularly the case in encouraging a helpful attitude in the learners' approach to language and learning. A coursebook should provide explicit opportunities for teacher and student to discuss classroom methods and activities, and learning strategies and expectations. Although every learner is different, some predictions can be made of how learner training can help redress the imbalances which many students bring to the language classroom.

Firstly, Learner Training must give students a metalanguage to articulate their experience – if they do not recognise successful language as successful, and experience it only as inaccurate, they will inevitably over-value accuracy, increase their anxiety and lower their perception of their own achievements. Students need to be taught that where they perceive defective language, they may be producing effective language. Many students are poor judges of their own performance, and even of their own needs. Doing particular activities – most notably explaining grammar, doing grammar practice, and correcting – 'because my students ask me to' is frequently a cop-out. Teacher and material must redirect the students' expectations towards strategies and attitudes which will be more helpful for long-term acquisition.
In general Learner Training will decrease:

- students' concern with accuracy
- the tendency to believe L1 word = L2 word
- the demand that they understand every word in a text
- perception of failure
- anxiety

Learner Training should produce corresponding increases in:

- general language awareness
- monitoring skills – both of their own performance and of the ability to 'chunk' material to which they are exposed
- perception of the value of reflection and silence
- a willingness to hypothesis or guess
- a willingness to take risks, to try out new language
- self-awareness, both linguistic and personal

pp. 184-185

The Nature of Error

A teacher's attitude to mistakes and correction is central to what is done, avoided and valued in the classroom on a day to day basis. A misguided, or more likely unformulated, view of error and correction can undermine everything else. It is also a matter upon which dogmatic positions are rather thoughtlessly taken.

For a long time, language teaching employed a methodology which sought to avoid mistakes. Many teachers remain influenced by this. Many students quite naturally 'feel silly' when they make mistakes, so they too have a tendency to avoid them; often silence seems better than saying the wrong thing; but it isn't. Teachers must encourage students whose motto is *The student who never said anything never made a mistake* to see the reality: *The student who never made a mistake never learned anything.*

Accuracy

Very rarely is language used with accuracy as a primary focus; sometimes it is - a mis-spelt application form will lose you a job; certain mistakes in an exam have a significance there which they would have at no other time; language which is too full of mistakes can mean people find you tiring to talk to and simply avoid you. Accuracy may matter, but it is a special case. Teachers need constantly to bear in mind that if they over emphasise accuracy, it is at the expense of other aspects of the successful use of language.

Language in the school curriculum

Most school subjects lend themselves to partial, sequential presentation. Multiplication is dealt with before division, linear equations in a separate lesson from quadratic equations; the French Revolution and the American Revolution at different times. Language cannot be sequenced in this way, however much syllabuses may try. A linguistically simple question may need a linguistically complex answer: students almost inevitably meet English outside the classroom; most textbooks ask students about their own experience so, if they wish to answer honestly, they may try to say something beyond their current linguistic level. The organic, holistic nature of language means that it does not lend itself to linear presentation in the way most school subject do.

An elementary student who says in *We don't must to school tomorrow. It is Saturday* has not produced correct English. At the same time, it is nonsense to say *it is wrong*; it contains a mistake, but most of it is correct. Even the part which is 'wrong' successfully conveys the student's meaning. It is methodologically absurd, and positively anti-educational to see such language as exhibiting failure; it shows partial mastery of English, and partial success. Ultimately, language is not about right or wrong but about successful or unsuccessful communication.
pp. 166-167

Sources of error

'Incorrect' language may be produced for many reasons such as tiredness, inattention, or a lapse of memory. It is, however, helpful to think of three possible linguistic sources of error:

- Interference
- Lexical deficiency
- Partial mastery

Students usually try to get language correct. If they produce an interference error this is, presumably, because they did not know how to say the same thing correctly. They had to choose between an unprincipled guess, and a principled guess, using L1 as a resource. However irritating interference errors are to teachers, particularly those who share the students' L1, they are signs of intelligence at work and should be viewed positively.
Many errors result from students trying to say something for which they do not have the linguistic resources. If I do not know the word *sister-in-law*, I could guess: *the wife to my brother*. If the student says that, the temptation is to correct it

to my brother's wife, treating it as a grammatical error. The real problem was a defect in the student's **vocabulary**. Similarly, a student may say *We made some studies to get informations about what the people want*. Again, the temptation is to see a student with grammatical problems. The student would have little problem with the grammar if (s)he knew the collocation *market research*: We made some market research. There would be no problem if the student knew the collocation *do market research*. Too often once the student has produced some language – either writing or speech – the teacher moves in to 'correct' the grammar mistakes. This can be very time-consuming, and very time-wasting. Many grammar mistakes are caused by vocabulary deficiency, and particularly by lack of collocational power. Recognition of the centrality of lexis in language readily suggest that the teacher's response to student error may need to be lexically rather than grammatically orientated.

The successful learner

The successful language learner will be confident, fluent, accurate and creative. Whatever teaching strategy is employed, accuracy is always achieved last. Over-emphasising accuracy in the early stages of learning is to demand the impossible of the student, and often to inhibit confidence, fluency and creativity. Accuracy has a part to play, but it is characteristic of **terminal** behaviour. Almost all elementary and intermediate language will be highly inaccurate. This defective language is an essential stage on the way to long-term competent language use. Language mistakes are not sins, they are creative experiments. The shift of mind-set required to see this is so great, that it is hardly surprising that the teacher's attitude to mistakes is perhaps the single most important element in determining what (s)he does and values in the classroom.

It is necessary to reiterate – error is intrinsic to learning, and any strategy of error avoidance will be counter-productive. Anyone who learns a foreign language to a reasonable level of proficiency will inevitably make thousands of mistakes on the way. Correcting every one is an impossibility. Fortunately it is also highly undesirable.

Teachers must recognise that, whatever their normal practice or received opinion in their school or education system, correction of language error needs to be justified. It is **not** self-evident that correction helps. Indeed, I know of no research evidence which suggest that it does. On the other hand, it is self-evidently time-consuming, and often inhibits students. Equally, every teacher knows that it is frequently ineffective. Such evidence as there is suggest that it is either a useless procedure, or at best an inefficient use of teacher and learner time. Curiously, teachers often correct because they and their students see it as the teacher's role, and they wish to give students value for money. In fact, correction is rarely a cost effective use of class time, and what we know of SLA suggests that, even well done, it plays only a marginal role in aiding acquisition.

The problem with teacher training courses

Lewis states correctly that there are many elements of language teaching which are based on false principles rather than sound linguistic evidence, that commercial coursebooks are conservative in their ideas and methods and that the four-week CTEFLA type course plays a part in perpetuating certain teaching myths. His main criticisms of these courses are listed in the following extract:

Many native speakers claim to be 'qualified' after a course lasting only a few weeks. This is absurd, and those who employ such teachers calling them 'qualified' need to look critically at their professional standards. Being a native speaker can be a help in teaching the language, but much more is required. Many native speakers are linguistically insensitive, and not reliable informants on what is or is not possible within the language. More importantly, it is an extensive knowledge of language as a phenomenon and learning theory, together with the personality to use this knowledge effectively in the classroom, which makes for a good teacher.

Specific criticism of initiation courses can be identified:

1. Method is valued above knowledge.

Trainees are thrust in class on the first or second day with no knowledge of English as a subject. The emphasis then falls on surviving, relying on personality and certain activities, with no knowledge of their theoretical standing, objectives or over-view of the role they play in a balanced programme.

2. Lesson 'recipes' are valued above theory.

Teachers look for lessons or ideas that 'work'. Little or no analysis is offered of why they work, and whether other things might work better.

3. A single method dominates.

Trainees are frequently left with the impression that there is a way of teaching; alternatives are not mentioned. The trainee assumes the universal acceptability of what is presented – whether classes are large or small, monolingual or polylingual, in the UK or abroad, to adults or children, with general or ESP needs.

4. An outdated model prevails.

Most 4-week trainees implicitly assume at the end of their training that the basic teaching paradigm is based on Present-Practise-Produce. This is a convenience for the trainers, allowing them to break the language and teaching sequence

down into steps for individual trainees. Unfortunately, the model is discredited and reflects neither the nature of language nor the nature of learning.

5. Too much emphasis is placed on 'getting the students to talk'.
The PPP paradigm endorses the belief that you learn to speak by speaking. The teachers who are introduced to this simplistic methodology as part of their EFL initiation often remain unhelpfully wedded to it in circumstances where it is hopelessly inappropriate, and when many better and more effective alternatives are available.

6. It is assumed students are not active if they are not speaking.
Silence, and reflective cognitive involvement are positively discouraged. The emphasis is on activity at all costs, and as such the implied methodology is almost explicitly anti-intellectual.

7. 'Reduce' Teacher Talking Time' is assumed to be a self-evident maxim.
Since well-directed listening is the best, perhaps unique, way of acquiring the spoken language it is clear that this absurd methodological over-simplification is the precise opposite of the truth in many circumstances. What matters is the kind of TTT, and its purpose, and the strategies and techniques through which it is employed. It is a matter of critical awareness, knowing what you are doing.

8. Language sensitivity is largely ignored.
To be an effective teacher of your own language you need to be knowledgeable about it, observant of it, and able to control your own use very precisely. Without these skills, no technique will make you effective. Many people do not have these skills, and they certainly cannot be developed in four weeks. Such courses solve this dilemma by ignoring it.

9. 'The pink card syndrome'.
Despite the many thousands of language teaching books in print, and the enormous range of real material readily available, initiation courses frequently encourage teachers to make their own material. Gimmicks are exalted above theory and knowledge. Instead of playing with scissors and pink cardboard, trainees could more usefully study the principles which underlie the selection and organisation of materials of some of the excellent course books which are readily available.

10. Survival is equated with competence.
This complaint underlines and summarises all the others. Teachers who survive 45 or 90 minute classes are thought to have achieved something. Survival is based on recipes and gimmicks, and 'success' supported by the claim *It works*. We may usefully distort Chomsky's competence/performance distinction – many trainees at the end of their initiation course are merely incompetent performers. Such courses should lay considerably more emphasis on teacher competence – understanding of language and learning – and much less on the teacher as a performer.

Putting theories in perspective

Having given prominence to the Willis's Collins COBUILD English Course, Dave Willis's The Lexical Syllabus and Michael Lewis's The Lexical Approach, I also include below some reactions to these books and the ideas therein.

Guy Cook (ELT Journal Vol. 52/1 Jan 1998) says:

> Very often writers are carried away by a single insight into language, taking it illogically to be sufficient to change language teaching. Thus Willis (1990) elevates frequency count to the guiding principle for his lexical syllabus. Lewis (1993) considers the high occurrence of lexical chunks as a cue to decree (in a diatribe characterized by bombastic assertion rather than reasoned argument) that language teaching has changed forever, to be replaced by 'the way forward' (p. 196), with an ominously authoritarian definite article: his own lexical approach.

Scott Thornbury (MET Volume 7 No 4 1998) says of the *Collins COBUILD English Course*:

> … the focus is on key lexical items, and their associated syntactical environments, but without reference to traditional grammatical labels.
>
> It was perhaps this absence of overt grammatical labels, along with the innovative task-based approach, which scared off potential converts, and which accounts for the fact that the Collins COBUILD English Course was less than a runaway success. Reading Willis's (1990) tightly argued rationale for the course, one can't help regretting that this was the case. In a market where publishers are conspicuously reluctant to back innovation, the failure of a project so brave and so principled was the publishing equivalent of the Titanic going down.

Thornbury points out some shortcomings and also the positive in Michael Lewis's *Lexical Approach* 1993 and *Implementing The Lexical Approach* 1997 in these extracts:

It is clear that Lewis does have a consistent theory about the nature of language: 'Language consists of grammaticalised lexis, not lexicalised grammar' (LA p.vi). Nevertheless, it is not so clear what implications this view of language has on syllabus specifications.

Nor is it clear whether Lewis has a coherent theory about how languages are learned. He is clearly sympathetic to Krashen's view as to the necessity (if not sufficiency) of comprehensible input: 'Listening, listening and more listening' (LA p. 193). Like Krashen, too, he places more faith in acquisition than in learning, and claims that 'there is no evidence that explicit knowledge helps performance' (LA, p. 62).

In short, the Lexical Approach is not an approach, not in the strictest sense, since it lacks a coherent theory of learning and its theory of language is not fully enough elaborated to allow for ready implementation in terms of syllabus specification.

However, in the light of the widespread interest and even enthusiasm generated by these two books, such criticisms may seem at best academic and, at worst, sour grapes.

By publicising a feature of language that has until recently been largely ignored in EFL courses, and by offering accessible pedagogical practices with which to highlight and practise it, Lewis has enriched classroom practice considerably.

When reading theories about good teaching practice it is important to remember that any theories should be considered in the light of your own experience of learning or teaching languages. For example, I have no particular reason to support any of the claims made by Krashen, Willis , Lewis or anyone else. It just happens that a lot of what they say about certain aspects of language learning is borne out by my own experience as a language learner and a language teacher. I learnt French and Spanish for many years at school and university through the grammar translation method, and when I got to those countries I could barely order a beer. Looking back now I realise that I was approaching those languages with the same mindset as for other subjects, so I learnt enough to achieve my goals, which were always 'to pass exams', and never 'to be able to communicate comfortably in the language from day to day'. Naturally my French and Spanish improved greatly when I was in those countries and had to communicate, even though I never took any more language lessons. Equally I had friends who spoke Spanish fluently but had never had a Spanish lesson in their life. The conclusions I draw from my language learning and teaching experience may be different to the conclusions you draw from your own experience, yet neither of us can be sure that the other is wrong, and in fact both conclusions may in fact be valid. As we have seen in the past, there has been a tendency to throw the baby out with the bathwater when changes in methodology are suggested, and I am certainly not advocating another teaching revolution. It should be noted that just by highlighting various theories here I am not suggesting slavish adherence to them.

The other thing we must always keep in mind is that however much we learn about how we acquire our first language in the real world, all our teaching takes place in the artificial environment of the classroom. We can attempt to bring elements of that 'real world learning' into the classroom, by doing real life activities such as puzzles and quizzes, for example, but we have to recognise the physical and temporal restrictions of the classroom.

Having considered some of the issues then, it is time to outline the factors which have influenced the design of this syllabus.

- Language and learning are complex phenomena about which we still know very little.
- There is no single 'best teaching method'.
- The best way to ensure that learners really use language is to put them in a situation which makes them *want* to use language.
- In order to progress students need to be exposed to new language which is understandable to them.
- What we try and teach and what our students learn are often totally unconnected.
- A wide vocabulary is more useful for communication than a thorough knowledge of grammar.
- We learn better when we are interested and engaged.
- We are most interested and engaged when we can see relevance to our own situation.
- Out of fluency comes accuracy. This is as true for foreign languages as it is for our first language.
- If we know that 70% of the English we speak and hear, read and write is made up of the 700 commonest words in the language, we should consider word frequency in syllabus design.

- The Present-Practise-Produce model has been discredited.
- Most coursebooks are conservative in their approach and perpetuate outdated ideas – the fact that they are commercially published ventures does not *per se* make their approach more valid.

THE COURSEBOOK SYLLABUS

Designing to the needs of the students

When designing any syllabus the background, age and needs of the students must be considered, together with the length of the course and where it will be delivered. On a short summer course such as the ones we offer, we also need to consider what and how the students have been taught previously, and what and how they will be taught in the future; I have called this 'teaching experience'.

Background Most of our students come from Western Europe, with the highest percentage coming from Italy on our residential courses, and from Scandinavia on homestay courses. Outside Europe we occasionally have groups of Brazilians and Chinese students. Most of our students have a lower intermediate level of English, but many Scandinavian students are upper-intermediate to advanced. Every year we also get groups of students who turn out to be beginners.

Age The majority of students are in the 13 – 16 age range, but we do get some students as young as 10 on some residential courses, and as old as 20 on some city-based courses.

Needs The needs of our students can be quite varied; Italians and Chinese may need quite structured help with pronunciation, while Scandinavians require opportunities to use their English in discussions.

Course length Most students come for 2 or 3 weeks, but some Spanish groups (particularly those on government grants) come for 4 weeks.

Location Originally all our courses were based in England, but we now have centres in Scotland, Ireland and Malta as well.

Teaching Experience A crucial factor in our syllabus design is how our summer course fits with our students' previous and future experience of English language teaching and learning. Most of our students will have started learning English at round about the age of ten, and while the majority of them will not attend formal English language classes after they leave school or university, the fact that English is currently the global language means that most of them will continue to use (and therefore learn) English throughout their lives. In this context of lifelong learning then, how can we best assist our students during the few weeks they are with us? Regardless of any preference for one particular teaching approach, it seems that grammar is best left to either bilingual teachers with mono-national classes who are very familiar with the problems of speakers of their own L1, or to self-study textbooks which contain exercises, answer keys and grammar reference sections. In addition to this, there is also the composition of our classes to consider: while we group our students into classes according to ability, within one group there may be students who use a certain grammatical structure effortlessly, and others who have never met the structure before. Selecting a grammatical point to teach on this basis will be very haphazard, and unlikely to benefit all the students in the class.

An important factor which influences how students learn English in their own country is how English Language as a curriculum subject fits into their lives. They will take exams in English, most of which will be written, and will be marked predominantly on accuracy. So one of the reasons for the focus on grammar in language learning generally is that it provides a workable framework for testing – testing oral communicative ability is much more difficult to assess in any meaningful way. On our courses things are different: while we do give the students a final test which we hope will indicate some improvement, this is not a pass/fail test which will have consequences in other areas of their life. So we are not in a pressured environment where we have to teach something then test it to demonstrate

that it has been learnt. Instead we have the luxury of being able to provide an alternative learning environment than the one they are used to, where we can focus on the areas which are commonly overlooked in more traditional language teaching: communication practice, vocabulary development and pronunciation. In addition to this we can also focus on learner training, i.e. equipping students with language learning techniques that they can use long after they have left our classroom and returned home.

The timetable

The daily timetable is arranged like this:

Time	Activity	Notes
0900	COURSEBOOK UNITS	• magazine format – small chunks, easy to read • no long texts with comprehension questions • 'real' exercises – puzzles, quizzes, exchange of personal facts and opinions • no grammar! • Trinity exam topics
1000	PRONUNCIATION & VOCABULARY	• gradual introduction of phonemic symbols • recognition of symbols essential for dictionary work – learner training • time to drill, give students the chance to make new sounds
1040	DIARY WRITING	• need to be able to write short texts e.g. emails • souvenir of the course, useful for all levels
1100	MORNING BREAK	
1120 1220	EXCURSION WORKSHEETS, PROJECT WORK, OTHER ACTIVITIES AND GAMES	• essential to give students information about excursion destinations • teacher has to make the information accessible • ideas in Teacher's Guide • chance to do your own thing

Testing

The placement test: Testing the language ability of students, particularly in large numbers, has always been difficult. As language is first and foremost a spoken medium, a written test is not the ideal method of assessment. However, given the short length of a summer course, it is the only practical testing method available to us, and the multiple-choice placement test is only used to assess the students' ability on arrival and help us divide students into classes at the beginning of the course. The placement test is linked to the stages of the Trinity College exams, so the results should give an indication of which grade a student should be entered for if they are going to take the exam.

The final test: Many students (and parents) expect some kind of formal test at the end of any period of study, and language courses are no different from any other courses in this respect. However, as the main aim of the course is to develop oral confidence and fluency it is very difficult to design a practical test which will accurately reflect achievement in this area, particularly if we have nothing with which to compare the result. Students will take a formal test under exam conditions at the end of the course which will be marked and returned, but it is their performance in other areas of the course which is more important. Comments on their certificate of achievement refer to spoken and written course work and general participation rather than test results.

Language levels

Assessing the language ability of students and attaching labels to classes can cause practical problems when dividing students into classes. Often low level students do not want to be referred to as ‘beginners’ or ‘elementary’, or students who have previously been told they are ‘advanced’ are upset when they are put into an intermediate class. For this reason we avoid having any labels that refer to language ability on our coursebooks. Michael Lewis’s comments on the language level of students are illuminating:

> Perhaps a class of zero beginners are truly ‘all at the same level’, though even this is doubtful in the modern world where some accidental exposure to English is almost inevitable. For all other classes, the idea that all the students are ‘at the same level’ is clearly an illusion. Almost all language learners are intermediate. Frequently this concept is sub-divided into pre-intermediate, intermediate, post-intermediate. However necessary schools may find this double-talk, in some sense it is a vacuous concept – the students know something, but not everything, and we are not quite sure what. Unquestionably true, and equally unquestionably unhelpful.

So where does that leave us? The units in Everyday English are designed as a springboard for discussion, and cover topics which are on the syllabus of the Trinity College London examinations in spoken English for speakers of other languages. Clearly there are many activities that can be carried out by students with different levels of language ability – there will be differences in the way the activity is handled by the teacher, the length of time it takes and the end result. For this reason many topics and activities are repeated from one level of Everyday English to another. At the advanced end of the ability range it is important that students are still focused on practising and improving their practical communication skills, rather than learning obscure vocabulary and grammar items. As Michael Lewis says:

> … observation of language teaching texts suggests the equation is *advanced = obscure*, but fluent educated native speakers do not pepper their conversation with words such as *mendacity* and *somnambulist*. (Both taken from a recent ‘advanced vocabulary’ book.) Advanced grammar is no more clear. How many readers would feel comfortable saying *Were you to ask me …* or *Should you need any help, don’t hesitate to ask*. Are those ‘advanced structures’ or just the kind of language used by a particular kind of person to express pomposity and pretentiousness?

THE NEXT STEP

This course should have given you an insight into the thinking behind our courses. The practical part of the course will be held in June at various locations across the country, where you will get the chance to meet other teachers, evaluate the course material, pick up some practical teaching tips and, of course, ask questions. *Attendance is compulsory at one of the practical sessions, and you must bring the originals of your degree certificate and any TEFL qualifications you have mentioned on your application form for verification – the latter is a requirement of the British Council.*

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REVIEW

Now choose ending (a) or (b) to complete these sentences. Do all ten without referring back to the text, then go back to check your answers.

1. Michael Lewis believes that …
   a) language teachers should have a theoretical over-view which is the basis for the technique they employ in the classroom.
   b) the Lexical Approach guarantees successful learning and is appropriate in all circumstances.

2. The idea that drills are a useful classroom activity comes from the …
   a) behaviourist view.
   b) cognitive view.

3. The audio-lingual method …
   a) involved the explicit teaching of grammar.
   b) emphasized spoken conversation and natural pronunciation.

4. The most frequent 2,500 words in English account for around …
   a) 70% of all English text.
   b) 80% of all English text.

5. Willis says that breaking language down into a series of patterns and then presenting them to learners to be assimilated is …
   a) an idea that goes against all our experience as teachers.
   b) the best way to teach English as a foreign language.

6. For Krashen, acquisition is …
   a) the spontaneous process of rule internalisation that results from natural language use.
   b) the development of conscious L2 knowledge through formal study.

7. Talking to students in simplified language which they can understand would be described by Krashen as an example of …
   a) comprehensible input.
   b) the Natural Order Hypothesis.

8. Michael Lewis believes that the content and methodology of most coursebooks …
   a) reflects the results of research into language learning.
   b) is conservative and cautious for commercial reasons.

9. Michael Lewis believes that Learner Training should increase a student's …
   a) willingness to take risks and try out new language.
   b) concern with accuracy.

10. Michael Lewis says that error correction …
    a) always aids language learning.
    b) is time-consuming and often inhibits students.

11. Now look back at the statements you agreed with in the Words of Wisdom section at the beginning of the course. Have you changed your mind on any of these issues?
    a) Yes
    b) No