# Goal-based & lexical: a great approach to words & grammar

Find out more about the goal-based lexical approach as applied in Great! Klett's new English course for adults – and then go ahead and try it out in practice.

Most of us have long established our own personal approach to language teaching. Nonetheless, in this article, I want to provide you with a practical introduction to the goal-based lexical approach, as applied in Great!, the new Klett English course for adults for levels A1 - B2. I'm convinced you'll find it an approach worth trying out in practice!

## **Goal-based lessons**

We are all well aware of the importance of having goals or targets in all walks of life. It's a recognized fact that with a clear goal in sight, the learning process becomes tangibly more effective.

For teachers a goal-based lesson simply means setting clear goals for a lesson and then deciding on the best way to achieve them. For learners, seeing the goal and recognizing that they can achieve it, will increase their motivation and ultimately their progress.

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Here's how you can make your next lesson a goal-based lesson:

Before you start preparing the lesson, decide what you want to achieve, i.e. what your goal(s) for the lesson are. Of course, your goal or goals will be determined by various factors: what's coming up in the course book, what stage you are at in a semester, maybe current events, last but not least your students' requirements and ability. An example of goals for a lesson at A1 level might be:

- Learn numbers from 0 to 20
- Ask for and give telephone numbers Prepare your lesson with your goals firmly in mind! Then before you begin the lesson, write the heading 'Today's goals' or 'Today's agenda' on the lefthand side of the board and add your chosen goals under the heading.

Today's Agenda · 0 - 20

- · What's your number?
- · How old are you?

Great! A1 Teacher's Pack. page 18

Tell your students that these are the goals for this lesson. Remind them of the goals, e.g. by pointing to the board, as they carry out relevant tasks and activities. If you're doing this for the first time I'm sure you'll be surprised how much more effective your lessons become, simply by having a goal!

In the complete *Great!* series, each unit was developed by first setting specific communicative goals appropriate to the level. In the Teacher's Pack which accompanies each level of Great! examples for agendas are provided in the boardscripts and details of goals are given in the Detailed lesson plans.

Students learn and practise numbers from 0 to 20 and telephone numbers. SB, page 10

Great! A1 Teacher's Pack, page 19

### Focus on lexis

Research has shown that meaning is primarily conveyed through vocabulary. British linguist David Wilkins (1972) put it this way: "While without grammar little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed." So it makes sense to focus primarily on lexis, with grammar having its place but taking a back seat. (The Great! series implements this lexicallyfocused, back-seat grammar approach throughout.) Here are some easy-to-do ideas for giving your lessons a more lexical focus:

Next time you deal with a text or dialogue in class focus on words and useful phrases rather than exploiting the material for grammar purposes! Depending on the text or dialogue you could:

- Focus your students attention on complete phrases used in a specific context.



#### Great! A2 Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch, page 35

 Ask your students to identify and collate words or phrases belonging to a specific context.

Иak	ing compliments
	look great!
_	
	Responding to compliments
	Thanks!
ıski	

#### Great! A2 Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch, page 35

 Draw students' attention to useful (idiomatic) phrases and have them make comparisons with their own language.

6a What do you think the sentences mean? Match them to the pictures.
I've got green fingers.  It costs an arm and a leg. Can you give me a hand? I'm just pulling your leg.
6b What would you say in your language?

Great! A2 Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch, page 26

 Devise a multiple choice quiz – or better still, get your students to devise quiz questions – focusing on language items.

#### 1. Which clothes are formal?

- a. a suit, a shirt and a tie
- b. jeans, a T-shirt and sneakers
- c. an evening dress and heels

#### 2. Your birthday suit is

- a. a suit you only wear on your birthday.
- b. a special suit you got when you were born.
- c. no clothes at all.

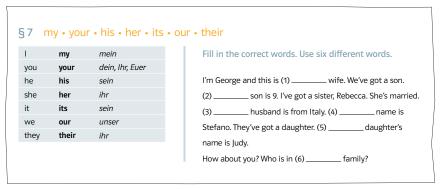
# 3. What's another word for *trousers* in American English?

- a. underpants
- b. pants
- c. slacks

# Don't forget the grammar!

Of course, grammar still plays an important role. After focusing on lexis, go on to identify any relevant grammar points that occur in a particular context. For example, when learning to talk about families, A1 students will first need to become familiar with the words for members of their families, but they will also need to master use of possessive pronouns in order to be able to say anything meaningful. Add relevant grammar points to your set of goals and provide activities which demonstrate and practise the point in the relevant context.

#### Great! A2 Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch, page 41



Great! A1 Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch, page 140

