Lexico-grammar
Roger Hunt

Language is traditionally described as grammar and lexis ie: separately. Lexico-grammar sees language as meaning conveyance of words working in grammatical parameters. To an extent this follows Ferdinand de Saussure's ideas on syntagmemic grammar.

Consider the meaning changes in the following:
1. (Poor) John ran away (poor)
2. She ran up a huge hill/bill
3. The man with a dog saw me/The man saw me with a dog.

Lexical substitution
“If Tony Blair does not grasp the nettle now and replace Mr Blunkett, it is difficult to see why he should remain in office any longer himself.”

( George Jones. Daily Telegraph 1st November 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If</th>
<th>TB does not grasp the nettle now and replace MB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>refuses to act at once by replacing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decides not to take action immediately</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soon forthwith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| it is difficult to see why he should remain in office any longer himself |
|---|---|---|---|---|

Why did the writer use the reflexive pronoun ‘himself’ himself?

Reformulation
You almost certain need spend time very begin course orientate self toward new environment
You will almost certainly need to spend some time at the very beginning of your course orientating yourself towards your new environment.

From: Success on your certificate course. Brandt. C. Sage 2006

Translation
Most translations websites are not very accurate, which is what makes them so usable. I put in:

“He got married last Valentine’s day after his wife got pregnant. They had a party.”

This translated to:

“Él consiguió el día de Valentine pasado casado después de que su esposa consiguiera embarazada. Tenían un partido.”

I then translated this back to English and got:

“He obtained the day of married last Valentine after her wife obtained pregnant. They had a party.”

- The obvious lexical error here is the word ‘obtained’ – we can neither ‘obtain’ married, nor pregnant: these are beyond the parameters of what can be obtained.
- The ‘day of married’ is also of interest as it is not an acceptable lexical phrase CF: ‘Wedding day’.
- The possessive adjective ‘his’ has been changed to ‘her’ – this is a perennial problem for Spanish speakers.
- Note also that ‘Valentine’s day’ has become simply ‘Valentine’.

A simple procedure for using the resource:
- Give each pair of students a sentence in English to translate to their L1.
- Exchange their translation with another pair who translate back to English.
- Compare their result with the original sentence and with the Babel fish translation
- Discuss differences

Go to:

http://babelfish.altavista.com/babelfish/tr
Concordances
http://www.lextutor.ca/concordancers/

Look at these examples of the word ‘even’. How many different ‘uses’ can you identify?

- It was so posh, you know. They **even** served champagne at breakfast.
- The task might be difficult, **even** impossible.
- My dad’s cooking is so bad **even** the dog refuses to eat it.
- Crashes are rare, but **even** so, there should be stricter regulations.
- **Even** now, after all these years he can’t mention her name.
- **Even** the floor’s not in our flat so all the tables and chairs wobble.
- **Even** these days I’m going for a more balance between work and recreation.
- **Even** the room should be kept at an temperature, around 20 degrees.
- **Even** She argues that things were worse under the last government.
- **Even** then the French system will be better.
- **Even** to spend 13 million on the railways but
- **Even**... to spend 13 million on the railways but

The following definitions come from the *Macmillan Advanced Learners Dictionary*. Match the definitions to the examples above.

- **Used for adding a more extreme word to what you have just said.**
- **Used for showing that you are saying something that is surprising**
- **Equal in amount**
- **Used for emphasising that although something is, for example, big, good, bad, etc, something else is bigger, better, worse, etc**
- **Used for saying that it is surprising that something still continues Flat and level without any holes or raised surfaces**
- **Used for saying that something is surprising after what has happened**
- **Used for introducing a statement that seems surprising after what you said before.**

*From: On-line vocabulary course. IH Barcelona*
**Colligation**
Colligation is the habitual grammar that words keep. For example the verb ‘ban’ is almost invariably used in the passive voice as in: “Smoking should be banned in restaurants.” Or “Smoking was recently banned in all public places in California except those few designated....”

The following is a copy of the board work I built up with my students recently when teaching vocabulary relating to social customs when meeting and greeting people and other social norms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>gerund</th>
<th>‘consider’ (passive)</th>
<th>Optional (formal)</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Russia</td>
<td>hugging</td>
<td>is considered</td>
<td></td>
<td>friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In China</td>
<td>kissing</td>
<td></td>
<td>(to be)</td>
<td>rude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Spain</td>
<td>shaking hands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Uk</td>
<td>bowing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>unacceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>blowing your nose</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>obscene</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>